

AMBER MCBRIDE
DESECRATE

Turned inside out, tugged the spine
and yanked searching for a reason—
the pink skin beneath the scab.
Something to point at and say, *aha!*

Disrobed woven clothes,
knocked on each ruby—
unrolled only to sew back up tighter,
trying to squeeze out a moth
older than first dust to jar and catalogue.

It doesn't work that way.
The dead don't puppet
they don't give you
what they think you want.

Un-blessed the blessing.
Unwrapped the body nestled
like a sunset in a sarcophagus.

Called them *mummies*—
within these museum walls
masquerading as an excuse,
a gauze with no ritual attached.
These tiny signs explaining nothing short of,
but I have black friends.

Where is Peter on display?

Da Vinci's bony fingers in the Louvre
beside Mona Lisa's upturned mouth?
Why are the caskets of dead kings sealed shut?

When museums are erected on the moon.
Will my black body stay sleeping
in the place I asked to stay?