

Green Beetles

Hannah Lowe

The night before your seventh birthday
we play a game –

I must ferry you, a prince, from room
to room

Your bare feet mustn't touch the floor
or else

green beetles everywhere!

I laugh and lug you down the hall to stand you
in the bath.

For weeks now I've been yanking down the blinds
to block the sun

which beats our kitchen window
a solemn drum,

but while our game plays on there's thunder
then a rain so hard

it shakes the bathroom's frosted pane

Rain, Mum! Can you hear the rain?

I brush your teeth and shift you on my hip

but how much longer

can I keep your feet from emerald beetles,

scorching pavement, rising

water? I drop you gently on the sofa.

Green beetles everywhere –

On the news we see the iceberg

broken off Antarctica

is on its way towards South Georgia.

It's three years old, the scientist says.

But that's nearly half of me.

Hannah Lowe

Hannah Lowe is a writer based in London. Her first poetry collection, *Chick* (Bloodaxe, 2013), won the Michael Murphy Memorial Award. In 2014, she was named as one of 20 Next Generation British poets and won a Cholmondeley Award in 2020. Her third collection, *The Kids*, will be published by Bloodaxe in 2021.

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A recording of this poem can be found on the WritersMosaic website at

writersmosaic.org.uk

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