Alyse Knorr

In which Jane tells Then-Jane
the fate of their beloved

Flower bloomed deep in his hip-gut
brown and smelling of wet suede:
took root and reached toward its sun
higher each day. Once he told me
of a moon lost in rings—ancient
infant Earth just ready to wake.
Lakes of methane, crystal clouds,
rain slow as snowflakes sculpting
a tortured surface. Ready to begin.
Jane he said you must remember
this: life is no miraculous thing.

Monologue of Then-Jane

And of his mouth and of his resin—
time-bound blossom I carried up
through layers of flat, cold
heaven—gone. He could not wade
as far as I, through cosmic light
and brown rock rain, past melted moons
and ice volcanoes bursting straight up
into black. Termination shock
puckered the probe and its golden—
my golden—face, and I sang quieter,
sunk to a pause between stars.
My love circled the sun under me
and I, stuck in the sap of stars
forever. Now chiseled out and voiced,
revived, late for the party
fifty years ahead, and my love long
gone for the heavens I mapped.
I return to no Penelope, for
I was already home. The shroud
unraveled nightly was his own.