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Noemi

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Fifteen years old

In the suicide-truck, the woman
asks me what my name is. Do you
have a middle name?

The suicide-truck
is rushing from the
San Francisco museum, they have
confiscated my Tennyson, my love.

I tell her my middle name
the sirens are not on, it
is not an emergency, they said.
People move anyway.

That's so beautiful, she tells me,
is it your grandmother's name?
It is not Spanish, it is not her name.
The woman chuckles when I tell her that

the name is Romanized from
the Hebrew.
Meaning, "pleasant." Call me Mara, for
I am bitter.
We arrive.

The woman eases me out of the red
suicide-truck, chuckles again.

I did not know etymology was funny.
She tells the doctors I talk the mouth off
a parrot.

If I had known that to know one's name
was to be cured, would I not have started
years ago?

Noemi

LILIANA LOPEZ