

Life-Cycle of the Lily-Beetle
By James Siegel

I look for lily-beetles
 out this Easter Sunday.
Scores of six footed
 femme fatales with tiny
mouths devour my lilies.
 Like a costume-jewelry
ruby necklace, whose
 link is broken, they fall.

I pop the coiled eggs
 hidden beneath the taper
of green leaves and feel
 the crystal casings smear
like the skin of jell-o
 melting on my fingers.
Squishing the fecal shielded
 larvae with my thumbnail,

I crucify their instars
 to end their cyclic binge,
their wanton beauty. An adult
 beetle rises — her wing's
casings, red as the gaudy
 doors of a sports car, hinge
up — but she travels in
 the clumsy arcs of mortals.

First Prize Winner of the 2011 Friends Baxter Memorial Library Writing Contest ~ Adult Poetry
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