

# Anca Vlasopolos

## *The Birth of Psyche*

*on my mother's 29<sup>th</sup> yahrzeit*

on our way down from the Acropolis  
an improbable swallowtail hovered over parched stones  
landed      light as petals      on your extended hand

you said my father's soul had found you  
picked you from the throng  
given you ephemera's knowing kiss

the birth of Psyche    as other births  
grows out of gore    liquefaction of ravenous worm  
its inverted interrogation

crammed into emerald pulsing fruit  
she feeds      as souls do      on flesh of yore  
breaks out tremulous      in her scaled glory

benignity of air carries her  
—portage on rivers invisible to us— to where souls gather  
her brush with our gross selves      amazing grace

**Anca Vlasopolos** is the author of the award-winning novel *The New Bedford Samurai*; the award-winning memoir *No Return Address: A Memoir of Displacement*; four collections of poems, *Often Fanged Light* (Adelaide Books, 2019), *Cartographies of Scale (and Wing)* (2015), *Walking Toward Solstice* (2012), and *Penguins in a Warming World* (2007); three poetry chapbooks, a detective novel, *Missing Members*, and over three hundred poems and short stories in literary journals.