

**WHITTNEY JONES****Pleuropulmonary Blastoma**

The mud-suck
of a sandal caught
as I stomp the soaked
earth around a hibiscus

teetering, and we already knew
it was just for this summer,
because we can't have
live plants indoors with

a sick kid. I go out
between storm-waves
to jam my heel down
next to its pencil-thin trunk

again, cussing that one
vibrant blossom to keep it
up. It's clearly meant
for a different air than soybeans

and cornfields. I can't believe
it pulled the nutrients for that deep
of red, when the cashier said
not to expect much if we planted

it. It can't survive our winter.
And all the rain this year, turning
every hard surface to muck. I gather
clumps of upturned clods

to fortify the base and sink
my palms down into everything
that's loose. I already buried
the roots. I can't go back

from here. Type three. Stage
three. Pray for the bones
and the brain. ●