

Ladybirds

I try to call you every three weeks to conjure you again.
Today's a good day, with your morning and my evening,

we span the in-between. You ask about me—
how I've been, my husband, my work—and I share,

like this is routine. I reciprocate, mention your heatwave
blazing across our wintered news. You say it's been hot,

but not a patch on the summer after I was born,
the hottest on record and when the ladybirds came.

You tell me again how you didn't know what to do
with me, tried to keep me cool by putting my pram

in the shade veiled in white cotton. I try to picture you
cooing and fanning to keep me appeased, and can't.

Instead, I see a rippling swathe of ladybirds, a delicate
sea of red, lifting their skirts for any promise of breeze.

J V Birch

J V Birch. 'Ladybirds'.
Transnational Literature Vol.11 no.1, November 2018.
<http://fhrc.flinders.edu.au/transnational/home.html>