

## HANDMADE PRAYER

by Janet Ruth

Rough Zuni hands carve stone that once was wood—  
compressed by ages into darkest jet—  
a raven peers from turquoise eyes. A flood  
of raindrops streams from coral clouds, inset  
on wings dreamt into life by fingers bent  
and worn from carving—feathered plea dark-born  
from stone. He hopes this handmade prayer will end  
the drought consuming fields of beans and corn  
that rustle, bleached beneath sun's blazing eye.  
Below, the plaza's ancient dances bring  
bearers of rain. His lifted raven flies  
high into cloud-rift torn by beak and wings,  
then plummets back to earth on bolts of flame  
and drums of thunder, feathers soaked with rain.

—first published in the *2025 Form Slam Competition Anthology*, National Federation of State Poetry Societies (Buster Bodhi Press)