Coffee
By Sarah Martin

Ancient conversation whispers through the vapors of a brew steeped dark brown.

Small beans begun as berries, once plucked, and before roasting, are fair.

Trade of hand over hands on steamers crossing oceans move oval brown burlap sacs,

oval like a coffee bean, with tight seams, straight as blades of persistent plantation grass.

Now, civilized roasters teach raw beans to be less fair, more earthy, and brown. Ground and steeped. Tendrils of steam, an arabesque of vines, a jungle, and tawny hands spiral away from a mug opalescent in dictatorship over its aromatic tenant.