

## **Pokédex Entry #1: Bulbasaur**

*A strange seed was planted on its back at birth. The plant sprouts and grows with this Pokémon.*

Root wrapped around spine,  
    pre-flower, vine under bud,  
what do we call what we carry  
    on and in our backs,  
        what burns under our skin  
    and ties itself to our nerves  
and endings? I was born  
    with bad blood and the makings  
of napped hair and crackled skin  
and all the things the doctor  
    makes me list: the family  
        history of depression and addiction  
        and cancer—and maybe there are  
some patterns we can't break.  
    Research says trauma  
from our parents may live  
    in our DNA. The bulbous  
nucleus at the center  
    of each cell like a bulb  
ready, dangerous, the sprouting collage  
    in each of us. I let  
    my seed grow, sprout, open,  
everything given to me  
at birth: awesome and visible,  
    my awful nourishment.