

Julie Dunlop

CAVERN

The sky fills
with everything
but the rain
filling the cavern
strung hip to hip,
its contours
shaped by voices
carved by the moon.

Heavy with bent rock,
the weight of it all howls.
Fossils begin to shake
free from the stone,
their flattened selves
rising up into a roar.

THE CURRENT, THE RIVER, AND THE RAIN

The riverwaters gleam
a glistening black, the recent rainwaters
quivering the current. It is night
and there is nowhere to go
but everywhere. The spilling of one thread
into the next.

And this flow
does not stop does not stop does not stop.
It opens into the wingspan of morning
coasting in over the night's sprawl,
over the first sleep, second sleep,
last sleep.

The river of breath
spilling over the crests and banks
of the bones, slipping in and out
of the corridors of the lungs,
sending its currents rippling into the farthest reaches
of toe tips and palms,

the curl and curve
of all that gives and all that gives way,
the edges letting go into something softer,
sweeter, the mirage of goodbye breaking
apart,

the weight of a construction crane
reduced to a bright yellow leaf floating
on the Gihon River which is Powell River
and the Potomac and the Rio Grande and every river
brushing the earth with smooth, sure strokes
shaping the tides of live and the tides of die
that speak each time we breathe.