

The Body in the River

The pollen explodes off the trees in clouds
as we walk Highway 149 to town.
We've done this a hundred times. The road
follows the Lake Fork's winding path,
and we always look into the water
that rushes over the rocks and gives
our walk the sound of life. Two days
earlier we'd been to the Grand Canyon
where the sheer power of its vastness
overwhelmed us. We told Simon
to stay back from the edge--all his
nine-year-old energy pent up
in him wanting to burst out and fly
like these clouds of pollen do now
as water from someone's sprinkler hits
the pines and releases half a new life.
We always look into the water--
this year higher and faster than ever.
We talk of how hard it will be to fish,
if it is worth it.

Tree swallows
swoop and bank in the air. A raven
glides effortlessly over the gulch,
but we always look into the river.
At first, he is a large, pale stone
and then a deer or a dog, but finally,
he can only be a man, stuck
on the shallow rocky bar that keeps him
from drifting further downstream,
the water rolling over him as it does
everything else, cold and fast
from the melting snow. We do not know
that the town has been looking for him,
his truck in the river a few miles
up the mountain road. He becomes
the image we cannot stand to imagine
and cannot help but see of our boy
who has no fear of cliffs
or the bare wild force of a river
that just keeps running towards forever.