

Goodbye is too small a word

The hill is because we do not want to end.
The sun has gone and the stones
timeshift with their shadows.
We choose a pace
that will overcome the tremor in us,
though our hearts still insert their O, O, their holler.
The steepness, sweat trickling on the skin
we would give each other,
spills through us, as if we fall as we ascend.
And then there is the world below us,
and the sharp stones where we sit
under the moon... stars caught like claws
on the tips of gums
enjoining us: stay, stay in this long dusk.
We lean into the hollow of each others' hearts.
And we yield what is good in us
to the stones, to the trees,
to the moondust,
descending in the night's tide,
in the shallows of our breath.

And because
we cannot climb again,
we pull away – that small
emptiness... at the tips
of our fingers, in our forearms,
its web in our chests,

the hill,
a fracture in our lungs.