Walk the edge of the slim river, over tiny clacks
of tumbled stones, the cool bristlegrass with its slanted lettering
and slight leaves like the sway that squints the eye.
Walk the edge, place each stone in your mouth, suck it
as if you’re cooling a felled star. Let the stone cosy your cupping tongue.

The slick cobblebank is scoured by years of topple.
The granular-white river bottom, even and iridescent,
where the trout float above their zeppelin shadows.
The grasshopper makes a run between rocks. The fish
sees ticked circles of water and slips the hopper down its throat.

The eel steers through the water, copying the river’s meander.
The moon coughed up its first drop of blood.
Once a woman swam here, the baby trout found her opening
and swam inside, their tiny fins a shudder so gentle.
The river sleeps with the soft-stepping people at its bank.

The rustle of a gurgling stream over smooth, epoch stones.
The stone remembers nothing. You can’t hear the fish laughing.
The old trees moan like a boat. We might survive this.
Everyone makes love tonight. I think a lot about how things
might turn out. All the women and men flash red tonight.

The fish are awake, they are the colour of old spoons. My feet
roll on clumpy ground. The stone in my mouth seems to soften
like a peeled and whole boiled egg. A clump of stems float past,
as if the hands have fallen off the clocks. A full in the stomach,
a stone’s breath in rescind of self and a life to clean your body of river.