

Glass

The stained fringes of the shore
remember the water.
And the skins of the stones
sketch their memories of the waves.
In the silt, the white roots
of heavy gums, once hemmed
in ripples, wait, though
the lake has been dry since winter.

She watches. The cracks
widen into quietness. She stands
at a window, a flat, eastward eye
in a room that hums with the stillness
of its shadows. By her chair,
a wooden table where she has placed
her red and yellow cup,
her white plate, in the weep of time.

On the glass of the window,
at the level of her lips, the faint
fog mark of her breathing – proof
or a figment, she cannot tell.
Is this, she wonders,
how it feels to be that
man or woman who
cannot walk while the tribe

travels on out of the weather.
She moves the cup
to the kitchen and returns
to the fog mark of her lungs.
There is no tribe. The walkers
are the image of herself,
trailing away from her.
She is silent.

She believes the hour
would say to her: *the day*

is unfolding, the heat
you hold still joins you
to all I am... She would touch
the life in it, the cacophony.
But cannot move. Time
slips ahead of her.

She dreams of a hand
stretching back into the haze
of her being here. The tremor. Its slim
breadth, the grip. And the glass,
finally, thrown open.
There is drought – all of us
beside her, the rain of our warmth
brimming in our chests, not

knowing how to hold her, not
holding even ourselves. This chance.
Her lips are the stones. In the dry
waves of her words, the shadow
of herself – her eyes, windows,
her breath on the glass. This
chance. That we walk away
or cannot walk, that we let

go... that we embrace.
Can rain simply end.
We watch. We tell her...
We tell her none of us
are angels, all of us moving stones
to quench the need for water.
We tell her, here – palms
cupped in the air – drink,

drink until the stone grows lighter.
Hurl what you can into the cracks.
We wait. We forget. In the vines
of our own weather.