

Clatter of Hooves

I.

The mind buckles.

Knead-under by river water,
what I snag on: willow berth, you
say, *Oh you*, whisper of arrow:
by my ear, the flush of feathers,
my own small ignition,
the smell of your darling bones
through your skin, net that keeps
me, the earth breaking
into clumps, gnawed
shore bits, then silt, gravel, then
upwards

in the body

of water, like a word

inside (*you*) hold me

like a word, like a cupped

sparrow. You say: *my sadness took* *and scissors too*
to our letters, (mouths

in our hands), trees folded,

forest, my ignition: you,

you, and more . Did I mention

the way clouds break

and never remain

where I want them, there,

in their shapes:

saying, *now*,

now *you can hold me*

—I can't
because of the way (I said already)
they break.

Water and another skin
parting around me—
the river surrenders, renders
you surrounded by strange
blue flowers, I'll render me
without you. A tree falls and the light
catches it. Reach
a hand inside torn tree
center: feel this bark,
my . River ripples. How long after me
does water stitch closed,
, ? My reflection seeps through;
the darkness, after.

II.

—but my mind, skittish—.

You said, *We hand a piece of ourselves away*—
and now its river memory and how to seep
under the shadow of a current, how not
to darken water with the weight of me.
How to give right into event, weather.
There were times I didn't know where your mouth
began—it was so much

the rest of you. I mean weight
of you: water appears solid
until I fall through its debris,
appears air—when suspension
doesn't require feathers. I'm tossing

horseshoes by the shore
to feel their weight lifting from me

and away. Where in this wet terrain
did I leave my name? *We hand*
a piece of ourselves—open a drawer,
stuff a bottle, toss it all
into the river. I'll wait downstream. But that's not
the logic of water: the glass catches,
the current drags it somewhere
else. What does water hold?

Once I watched hail on a lake,
and under that tapping—coinage, invention, a wishing
well—hail either melted or settled
to the bottom. Did I mention clouds clipping
over waves? Their floating is real,
but they exist somewhere else. Did I mention
trees? You say, *I've forgotten*

how to get there. If by place
you mean horse; I still dream of that animal.