

A Desert Wind

I.

The gorge winds say blow
and we say where. Where
will our selves come from
and where will they return.

II.

There are days in the canyon when the wind and the sun
switch places. Places where the wind tells us the time
to bring in the tents and the wash and the fragile first leaves
of the seedlings. A sudden brisk clarity in the abstract hours
of the afternoon, when we are made to know the stakes
and the pins and the roots won't hold.

III.

Around fragrant fires of piñon and mesquite, stories
of the hoodoo are told and retold. Retellings mimicking
the mutability of water and the slaps of sand shaping
our place. We place our breath alongside the wind, hoping
to weather the communal imperative to stand and
to withstand.

IV.

Anything of importance that has ever happened
to us has happened along the steep scree slopes
of the Sangre de Cristo range, in this wind
that licks the snows from the valley floors
and bolsters us upright at the edge as we
lean into the horizon. The horizon emptied
of all other sound. Sound other than wind.

V.

The wind says blow
and we say how much. How much
of us will be buried, and how much
of us will be lifted away.