The Gardener

I watch your head
caught between light and light—
a shifting of air
as the rays fall sideways
to you on your knees
in the garden: hands
plunged in a blue soil
and bloodied with roots.

The wind like a loose sleeve
holds your wrist
as you shovel and sift and shape
leafmold, water, earth
until
your hands are on fire with peonies.

I stand and watch;
the silence slides.
I smell the ache of violets
crushed in secret places,
and the fierce scent of thyme.

—Barbara Powis

Finding Wood Beneath the Earth

Finding beneath dark earth
red wood
soft old wood knit by the fungus blind
I’ve stopped my spade.
Someone walked this wood up from the water
and sunk it in this hill’s brow
wrapped around its treasure

metal iron shapes
a plow and a propeller
my treasure’s cutting edges

Finding beneath wood
blades
I lay my spade aside
and climb through wood and earth
to churn the air.

—Paul Belserene