

Familiar Landscapes

—a black boy's story

It's what he told himself
as the blues oozed from his lips.

He used to dance on sundown streets
until his hands raised heavy as stone.

He was a ripple in the sea of tough skin,
ripe as fruit in the season of reign.

He was as strong as a quaking aspen —
carved his name in the scars of its bark;

an eyewitness to his own fatal fire —
a fallen timber in the breath of a forest;

a craftsman of unsung songs,
the ghost of rioting repetition.

He told himself he saw no legacy.

Now the light is all he sees.