

Summoned by the desert washed smell of water  
we go down into high ken of rock and river,  
wind-stirred trees along the blue shimmer  
running wild loud over hard dry fodder.  
Hawk and redwing trill above bullfrog gutter.

It's been centuries since I heard this sound over and over.  
Cold water touches an old well, makes me remember  
the hands of long ago, silted root, rock and alder  
buried under longing to know, the same slow circle  
eddying and eddying in the current's middle.

Time, incomprehensible, is the river moving at dusk.  
Bodies of water come from water, in this grotto  
we yield to it all the fury of the heart: what was sought  
and not won. Children lost, unsung. The world  
of dreams laid open. You, whom I loved, gone.

Look. Up, under the sagging bridge a swell  
of swallows swirls over the water, plunges, arcs  
up in mid-air, glitters green against white cliffs,  
flies to the beating rushes, sings through trees  
while the river below breathes through each

body, aware. We have come to the great  
mystery, always emptying, always there,  
*the dearest freshness deep down things,*  
this open canyon rippling river water,  
these light fluttering blankets of wings.