

Versal

The wood is not a negro with tree in the farm-split sand
for almighty, not a road to bend over,
not a lakeside, or sideways log stump, not
a sidelong, not a strangler clutch

or fruiting body of fungus. The warn
of wood is not hiding in bark, deer suit,
or elk piss musk, not in camouflage. Not
a snowshoe a negro, not a cowhide stripped

or oversprawl. The tree is not a loner type, not
a sleeper cell, not a jumpy trigger.
The foliage low hangs a lake I like, an ice cave
shot, a hit tide, frozen in place.

And a black girl is standing on it, over a river, rocking.
Sidebank isn't thug among us, not
a rush gang, not a flower snatched from sidewalks,
which isn't breaking in root. Nothing

for jewels, isn't watching through windows. The black meadow
isn't sniper squatting, cheapening the field reek,
eyesore cattail driving down
the sound of stream driveby. The wood

is an eager, a Negus among us, a runner like eagle
a brown sighting, root system gathered in growl
of curl, of amassed vein feed. Say it with us.
The wood is a falcon, a clean stretch of might.

The dark bark is humming. Night stretched.
A reserve is craning in its path glow, pitch fall.
Matted grass atrament, blowing night
like long husk. And a black girl is standing in it.