

DOROTHY DIRIENZI

Rocky Mountain Song

We don't talk in the silk night air, stream
murmuring on the right, moths'
apostrophes in the lantern's glare.

Fingers touching, hand to hand, we wait
on small premises, listen to the hum
of furred bodies slipping

through brush to trees,
the virtual hush of life
busy in itself—so long ago

we can't remember when
we too were among the shoots,
our leaf-veined otherness etched
beneath an arching skull, eyes
schooled in soil, smell the only text:

October rut of elk, all neck and hackles,
the rack skewed to each bugle,
stanching his losses.

O but who could deny him: the fire in his stare,
the chamfered hoof,
earth bare.