

Jeanna Padan

Of Earth

(after "The Negro Speaks of Rivers" by Langston Hughes)

I've known the earth's dust:
I've known the congenial coolness,
easily moved atop the solid ground, easy to take with you
in the clefts of your bones

I've learned how to move
like dust.

I sunk into the ease of the land when I was still in my mother's womb.
I walked along the desert floor under the moon rays
with the company of travelers
singing lullabies beside me.

I have pull my inkling body strongly out of the mountain's side,
felt the calves of my legs brush the stubble of the hill
allowed my knee caps to write their names in the dirt.

I have known the earth:
an old, old earth.

I have learned to move like the dust of the earth.