

Anita Sullivan

Afternoon in an Old Growth Forest

Sun on a pin.
Three elders lean in.

Hemlock, Fir, Cedar.
We regard the geometry of their collusion.

How they stand days
and nights stand in the rain.

The hollows of their soggy turf
resemble tide pools 100 miles West.

Epicormic buds swell, adventitious
along the boles.

This is the house of the forest.
We are not out of doors.

Each tree vaults up, tips converging
like railroad tracks. We squint.

Sun a carbuncle on a top branch,
partly eclipsed.

Beneath us, a whole other forest
probes, crumbles, flows—vaults

down. Why do we not hear
at least the echo of its vast

aqueducts, inside that ancient,
our common bowl?

The eldest
speaks with high clear voice

as in the minor unremembered part of a dream.

From Blue River Writers Gathering 2008