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The Walking Gods

The weight of the descending flow—heavy, cold,
dedicated to places downstream—confronts you
while you stare alone for giant cutthroat,
mythic, in the deepest pools.

There are gods in these woods, pounding slopes
and meadows, the immense weight of seasoned legs
plunging spongy hole to hole.

A river never forgives or compromises
its vision. The biggest boulders thunder
as they trundle on the bottom.

Deep in the old growth, you feel a presence,
a recent breath, catch the deepest scent on rocks left traced
by the navigation of mosses.

A walking stick and a steady step prevent accidental
drowning. The river's intimate tug presses
its indifferent love like a rope. Elsewhere, the tall gods
busy themselves. The stubborn bole leans over
like the oldest, strictest teacher.