Blackwood

Kevin Gillam
Blackwood by Kevin Gillam

colour of my shoe, frothing, full up on winter

and you, crickling out your name

I imagine you as a crease, curling around a thumb on a palm cupped for rain, as nerve endings of sea working into the land, I imagine you as a thought, sudden then dwindling, fat but thinning, fanning out and light goes to ash, blurs with words on page and a chorus of frogs on the far bank finds voice

you lap at your name a waterbird's wings on surface out of sight break the air into syllables and I've remembered everything but not found stopping as you slink by, gauze bandage unravelling, a test tube on its side, syringe in use spending yourself in sea

you spill out your name

the congregation of tuarts stands shabby while your surface has gone to pewter and the difference is ocean has barlines of waves and the measure of tide while you are one endless bar played at gravity's tempo and a chitta-

chitta flits electric and the sky?

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the sky unpaints itself
there's a
moist fungi whiff to your name

this polyphony of drips from
leaves into bracken, you below
moving like slow animation as
stopping starts to intinct and a
raven arcs and measures the width
of silence that dwells here and
there, lights in the A-frame wink,
hint at warmth
and you've scabbed
and grieved for your name
I've come
to you between light and none,
late afternoon luminescent and soon
rain will pucker your skin as a
clutch of small birds thumbtacks this
hessianed scape, the A-frame sitting
brighter and somewhere South fresh
gifts to brine

your name gushes from the mouth

though your eyes are large
with moon now you are the blind river,
a reminder, creek become creed,
mantra to my stopping and A-frame
tugs at this page of none and
night clouds smirr
you seep both sides
of your name

Kevin Gillam is a West Australian poet with work published in numerous Australian and overseas journals. He has had two books of poems published, Other Gravities (2003) and Permitted to Fall (2007), and his most recent publication is a chapbook entitled Closer to Now by Picaro Press.