Time

We stand in a river

but it is us that moves, not the water

first we are here, then we are there,

and behind us is a place that we never return to

your blinders serve no purpose:

the river is a thing of beauty and danger,

and these are always worth remembering

we may have an idea of what is ahead,

but we can never know for sure:

the river bends and twists

and the scenery changes every time

(which is always)

that we move from place to place

forgetting the past means ignorance of the future

but forgetting the present means ignorance itself

a muddying of clear waters —

there is something to be said

for seeing only the portion of the river

in which you stand

but it is only something to be said

and is as much a lie as a truth

our river is full of ghosts

as we are ghosts

and they wish us well or evil or nothing as we travel

because the water does not flow

there are hills under the standing waves

we flow up and down, as gravity and change dictate

but we never stop, not even for love

not even for love

some have said

that time is a circle

and that we flow back to where we have been

this is a cherished illusion, a poetic truth

if it is true, then it flows so hugely and slowly

that our lives are the width of one molecule’s moment

and not even our most distant children will ever know what we know

and their river is not ours any longer

as we travel further down the river

we slow in our progress

and our children travel ahead, turning to wave from time to time

but it is their river, not ours

and soon we seek the tributary that flows to the sea

this is a good time, although hued with sadness

the sea is all the rest of time

spread out before us

and the horizon is a place we never reach

but we swim now

with the myriad creatures

and at last we have a name:

goodbye