**Blood and Soil**

Jay Udall

I come from this ground where my ancestors still breathe—

prokaryotes and eukaryotes feeding rhizomes feeding leaves

and creatures like me, I’m pure as dirt, cousin to weeds

and worms, my blood recalls before the kingdoms cleaved

and knows it flows from the one river, remembers climbing

green canopies, chattering in other tongues before branching

across continents, ages, through veined hands and eyes, coursing

further and further into difference—do you recognize me

across this distance? I come from the only family, like you,

and any blood we spill is our own.