

Benjamin Harnett

Hollow

“In the hollow of my hand” may be
a place of sheer fact, dictionary
definition and all that; I grew up
in a hollow, in a house in new woods
at the foot of one hill and the head
of another. Now a pair of beavers
have dammed up the stream

so that it is swollen into the valley,
laps the bases of some grand old willows,
will kill them, eventually, by a slow
rot. It was all a goat farm
once, shorn clean of tree and branch.
Just brilliant meadow, a one-room
schoolhouse for the kids,
blacksmith shop,
the white farmhouse
with green shutters,
a horse and trap to town.

My parents built a home there
with their own hard labor.
I can almost see it at the corner
where the crease of my lifeline
makes a road through my hand.

Metaphora means “moving.”
Modern Greeks splash it
across their trucks.
The hollow is a metaphor,
and, like a mover,

I’ll fill it with all this stuff.