

Trout Heart

*I've been told the heart
will run out of blood but I doubt it.
— Jim Harrison, "She"*

When the trout is hooked deep
in his throat and held above the river,

water on his jaw is first more water
than blood, then more blood

than water, until only water is left.
But if the heart does run out of blood

will the muscle accept water?
I love myself enough to believe

my heart is a trout. The trout in my beloved's
chest is of the same small stream as mine.

Can you tell me how many years
it will take for trout and all other

gilled things to swim without blood?
I think, one day, enough of us will

have died in rivers that hearts can soak
under stones and young people will hand

each other warm, waterlogged hearts,
which become the trout in their chests,

the bleeding fish with tails
kicking out into the current,

their fading, white bellies rising
toward the cradled moon.