

Mountain Lion

A creature cries out of the dark,
interrupts the trees' wist-
ful sighs, a rough wail, stark.
I am no naturalist—

a screech owl? Then I recall
that people of these hills know
the mountain lion's mating call
sounds like a woman crying. Below

me, down the cliffside, on a moonlit stone,
powerful muscles slack, golden coat
sucking starlight for its own,
she sings that haunting note.

I know the pathos of that wail
when I call to you out of bright
sadness. A true hunter, you trail
my cries in the blue-dark night.