

# Driftmouth

by Faith S. Holsaert

In the second growth woods  
if you followed the path above the house  
you'd find strawberries: red sugar buds

among the mosses and below the brambles;  
if you followed on up and off the path,  
past the tree where the dogs barked all night,

there under dead saplings is the open secret,  
the drift mouth: portal into the hill, the mine  
abandoned when the coal ran out.

There, teenage boys drape themselves  
over the felled saplings and hang into  
the drift, their weight dangling

from sinewy arms. They dare  
the exhausted pit with their shouts,  
their sneakered feet bait  
for the omnivorous dark.