

## Seed of who we become

*Shaine Melrose*

Our story pulsed in xylem, in phloem,  
this land expanded inside me, layers embedded  
like genes of generations and water crossings –

particles of other landscapes hid within cracked  
worn soles, travelled in threadbare fabric,  
settled in the coats of livestock.

Trees of genesis, understory of memory  
wind and pollen in my name, mountains hold me.  
Granite my bones, red soil my flesh.

Creek, moss and ferns sprout from my skin,  
beetles march through leaf litter  
and chant, *be brave, be brave.*

Father's icy river, dammed at my aorta,  
pulled everything I knew into microflora,  
until I became the dark filaments in earth.

Below a plateau of silence  
I reach into the dirt where they blended you,  
the many lightning struck branches.

This land expanded inside me, our story pulsed  
in xylem, in phloem. Tiny seed scattered long ago  
becomes a tall forest of family.

**Shaine Melrose** lives in the Adelaide Hills on unceded Kaurna land. Shaine's poetry recently has been published in *Cordite*, shortlisted for the Robyn Mathison Poetry Prize 2021, and Highly Commended in several competitions. On a good day she is in her garden and vegie patch.