When I danced in darkness
and chaos, the shells round
my ankle bones sounded life to come,
 juddering iambic cosmic thunder.

But for the shapeless stones,
I was potent and alone. Gyre-footed,
moss-breathed and beautiful, my body
leaped and spun and I shook my gourds
over shadows and sleeping forms.

They awoke, and milk flowed
from their breasts. In this way
I went through the world, imagining
Life—heron and mantis, squid
and mammoth, fish, berry and fern.

First crease of dawn light, then music
as humans learned to purse their mouths,
to whistle against their fears.
As they had feet and limbs,
they also danced, and beat their skins,
and rubbed hollow sticks together.

Sky flashed and there was fire.
I made the river, flowing with tinctures
and all manner of rind,
and crossed it like a roaring wind.

There was no religion, only tears
and laughter, and sometimes low moaning
when clouds ghosted the valleys,
the sky’s fontanel grave with portent.

When it grew silent,
and all things were afraid
and weary of unmitigated cold,
I took them under my skirts.

There was melt and saturation
and great upheaval.
In this way the world began.