



Photograph: "Trespass" by Suzanne Simmons. "Eco Echo: An Oldster's Tale" was written by Devon Balwit for Rattle's Ekphrastic Challenge, July 2016, and selected by Simmons as the Artist's Choice winner.

Eco Echo: An Oldster's Tale

BY DEVON BALWIT

old man remembers
before we were here

what it was like there
he says listen before he forgets

old man says green breathed
bulged into food

took sun and made air
reached unfurled hung down

old man says green lived
that got under nails

in dirt stuff
hid things that crawled

old man says green was noisy
mouth blowing tiny

happy or warning
he shows me

old man jumps off furniture
trying to be light

like green's singers
but he can't lift up

old man says green
cold made it brown

changed color
heat yellow

old man says it spoke
he rubs his palms

went hush hush in fast air
and makes them whisper

old man says green held him
hid in its belly

that he climbed on its shoulders
gathered its scraps

old man makes me feel
green was like that he says

knobbed knuckles and toes
but rougher and stranger

