Hangnail
_for S.S._

On the first day of my hike in the mountains,
I catch my eponychium, that bit of skin
the Greeks called “the little claw”
on the dry air of Alberta and a pin size laceration opens.
All things become measured on this
micro-millimeter of blood.
The wail of the wound echoes down the valley wall
to the nearest living doctor
and in the manner that all small things
have the potential to become large;
and the cuticle throbs louder than quads
on each step of each walk up the tunnel mountain
it whines its way through all cells.
The lunula complains to sky of . . . not much
and when the brain and the eyes turn down to see
the microcosm of devastation
it emits enough irritation to rive the body into its sum of parts
like some people I know,
or could think of today,
in their offices and homes bellyaching away.

Be still, I say, be still
little thing
you aren’t the universe.