

## Fourth Heart Sound

1.

The first sound we learn to hear becomes  
the most real part of us—like catching  
your breath or waking from sleep,  
steady rivulets that pulse down interstates.

2.

Then it starts the rushing, a flooding valley,  
banks of steep slopes and cresting waves,  
blood and heat crashes with anticipation  
from the moment she whispers in your ear.

3.

In the late season, she is quiet and familiar.  
Soft and sometimes sad. The sound hides  
alone in a room with her healthy rituals—  
a small island that will reconcile, eventually.

4.

The fourth heart sound is black and nefarious  
and shallow as a lagoon, the grackles laugh  
in their branches, they hang heavy curtains  
of Spanish moss in their houses of live oak.