Esther

by Jeff Geiger

cool dark drip wet fading glow brighterbrighter illuminating the blue cave but only the center not the exit stony path snakes over under water stalactites stalagmites stalactites stalagmites are natural jail bars in this mouth of madness —but then another glow gets **BRIGHTER** the moon is the pupil of the cave's eye flotsam, and jetsam litter the spirit level like failed escapees but she steps over the wooden bodies and night air warms her rows of lumber stretch like fingers from the cave face into the water she is the ghost that walks clouds shift and blink the eve she is still free crossing the sandy flesh she runs her weak legs to the mountainside day rocks light

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more rubble than road but the horizon calls

grass

birds

to her left

this old house

a new landmark

but decayed life

wind and rotation move her along a valley gully path direction

they point to a new eye

new color—red

on a new spire in a new city lost and found a new hope? or old despair?