

They Carved an Animal

In a cave somewhere they carved an animal
jumping: that leap stayed. Across the world
in other caves a light gleamed, once.

I stand on a porch under the rain,
and somewhere, you on yours—the rest
of the world leans out, an animal stilled.

There's a leap that lasts in every cave,
but things go on: lights pull into the stars,
a forest springs, I hear the rain.

I touch old boards.

—William Stafford