

Samsara Counts

Mycenae

From the entrance gate, twin lions greeted us
with blank stares as we passed, frenetic
as sunlight seared our skin and the ground
burned our feet. We raced to sanctuary:

a passage, tall as Atlas, a monument swallowed
by the earth, a beacon of shade. In that shadow:
the ancient stone of a tholos and me,
no visible limit or capstone to break
my chest, heaving, drawing in cool air, the caress

of its damp palms resting on my cheek.
Leaning back, I gathered my hair,
exposing my neck, letting its heat radiate
into the shadows. Here we reclaimed our pursuit

of the enduring: of each morning a reflection
on a past, solid as the walls around us,
evenings uncertain but prepared for.
You were so much more whole, then: living

had not abraded the soul now entombed
within you. The ancients encompassed you then
and remain with you now, amused as you scratch
at their immovable walls, desperate to reveal

crumbling ruin, finding only stone. You will always
find only stone. The bricks, woven together,
circle in, protecting the empty tomb long beyond
our days to end.