Damnificado

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DAMNIFICADO

Powder of a drowned horse
at my feet. As if he had cut the walls
of this canyon with the sure
color of his hooves, running
as the new river chases,
slams into him with its noise.

He drifts and then dries
into an outline of ribs and an ear
beneath the slow field of the sky.

Bone colored rain carved this riverbed.
Above us are the tatters of harvest.
And dirt on hot air

like movements of tired people –
and the crowns of trees –
twitching, and then still.

Down the floodplain
is the arc of a young
man’s swing. Neck bent, breaking

open ground like wind
through the stretch and hiss of wet clouds,
toward clean water.

His cattle surround the hole and he
is working on a name for the few
more hours left in the day.