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**[YOU—IN A STILL POND]**

by Cherise Bacalski

Brief as the shining out before the body  
was coming into the world,  
my body for miles.

The slow-danced afternoon, all  
hiked along  
and crooked  
making sounds—  
small, strange—  
red flowers in a still pond,  
the turning *again and again*,  
like our earth wanting to shout.

I was often a lightning then, a dozen dirty white pelicans, beaks  
raised to the dying tree to the rain swelling across the lake  
and then to the storm clear and silent one fish startled a hook  
in his gut with his fish head in the water as though the water  
were the only one.

I am the only one—  
now the flat gray storm,  
this rumbled thunder felt, now the small tent I am, you are  
the dance I swim,  
the *this is you are*,                      and later, your shore lapping  
against my pond,

the sleek shining of you, slippery, and  
brushed with the red rust you once were  
before you left, were not only a  
rusted metal hook  
in a still pond.