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Fishing

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Fishing

by Mikaela Lane

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When I watch the news
I get a good dose
of death then walk

away and do something
like make myself a cup
of tea or practice Latin dance

on the veranda, indifferent
to the fifty thousand Chinese
swallowed by the earth.

When I was five
I went fishing with my father
and the black gardener.

The sun smudged
pink across my nose
and water licked my thighs

as I stood in the lake
holding my little bamboo rod
with the bright orange bobber.

And then the gardener
splashed me and hissed,
“I’ve got one.” I thrashed

through the waves and dodged
water reeds to watch
the winching of the catch.

As he wound the reel,
the sun rolled over the sweat
that covered his body like Clingfilm.

“Here it comes.”
A trout lurched into
the sky and dangled,

hanging before being
seized and slung
to the ground.

The trout slapped
its tail and gasped
against the suffocating air.

I screamed and reached
for the fish, but the gardener
elbowed me away, sliced

the fish down the silver
center and scooped out
its glistening guts.

My watching father strode
over and tugged
me to the lake,

placed my makeshift rod
with the bright orange bobber
back in my hands,

and left me standing.
The sun's face shattered
across the water

into a thousand little pieces.