Twenty-eight Elk Drown After Falling Through Ice

Calvin Olsen

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/inscape

Recommended Citation

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by BYU ScholarsArchive. It has been accepted for inclusion in Inscape by an authorized editor of BYU ScholarsArchive. For more information, please contact scholarsarchive@byu.edu, ellen_amatangelo@byu.edu.
Twenty-eight Elk Drown After Falling Through Ice
by Calvin Olsen

at Lucky Peak Reservoir, January 2004.
The ice is thick enough to stand the weight of a few, if far between (strength in numbers remains dependent on strategy). Herds plunge into the water year after year, beating their way to the shoreline with their hooves. However, a particularly bitter season of snowfall condensed the ice, rendering it unbreakable.

Somewhere between instinct and panic, hypothermia set in, lethargically killing them as a full moon clung to the spillway. From the cliffs the frozen tomb looks like a muddy footprint, toe pointed toward the highway, corpses lining the perimeter—the only evidence that providence lies buried somewhere underneath 28,800 acre-feet$^2$ of recreational water storage. They're still there, floating bloated in the Idaho sun.
They'll bob all afternoon, but overnight the surface water freezes, solidifying each carcass a little farther away from the others, like continents.