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Bear Lake

Edward L. Hart

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Bear Lake

A fog follows the levee  Bear Lake lies in the sand
Along the drain canal.  From the pumps to the Wasatch wall.
The lake is drawn from the valley  In its evening levels swell
Leaving sand and shell.  Black shadows of the land.

Ice is hiding the river,  Planting the upland fields,
Snow covers the sand,  I heard a far sound of flails,
Thick-lipped winter bends  And the wind washed by in a wave
The willow wands till they totter.  Like the sway of swinging wheat.

Winter weakens to spring,  Now the thin fringe of leaves
The fog scatters out to the benches,  Has darkened and heavied to brooding.
Unbending willow prongs  Wind from the mountains crowding
Lean up from the snow by the fences.  Scatters the petals and seeds.

The wind blows away the sound  Water is gone from the marshes,
Of straining pumps at Lifton,  Pumps in silence are lying,
Within me I hear them in vision  Grain in the valley flourishes:
Turning the lake into sand.  All but the land will be dying.

Mountains rise out of the water  —Edward L. Hart
The bottomlands sag into swales,
Sloughs are festered with frogweed,
In the mud lie leeches and shells.

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