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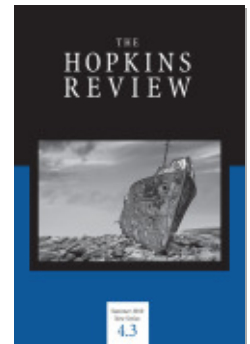
Girl, 2, Pulled from Pond

Peter Filkins

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Peter Filkins

GIRL, 2, PULLED FROM POND

Was it the light
 that caught you,
recondite
 as angel breath,
was it the light
 that drew you
in your summer dress?

Was it the song
 of a blackbird
con-quer-ing
 with its call,
was it the song
 of a blackbird,
and that was all?

Was it the scent
 of sweet clover
that, dizzying, sent
 you into the field,
was it the scent
 of sweet clover,
that so appealed?

Was it the cool
 feel of water,
the pond's muddy ooze
 sucking each toe,
was it the cool
 feel of water
that tempted you so?

A jitterbug shadow
 with wide-open arms
crossing the meadow
 that parted like air;
soon everywhere howls
 sown by alarm
and you not there.