

## SWIMMING HOLE, BUCK CREEK, SPRINGFIELD, OHIO

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Like an echo,  
it comes back,  
the bend in the creek,  
like a uterus'  
bleeding flow,

tangible again,  
as memory revisits,  
with unusual  
concreteness,  
territories of the past,

rebounding, circulating,  
surging, vexing,  
panning our naked  
bodies – some of us  
in the water, loin-deep,

making animal sounds;  
some of us out,  
wistfully small,  
under a depthless sky –  
all of us boys still,

like blossoming buds,  
bending under  
the paw of some  
hormonal energy  
that lingers now

in memory's tunnel,  
like an air prowling  
around us, vaguely  
ornery, urging:  
“Begin what you are,”

though not intended  
to belittle me  
for my unmasculine traits,

but, instead,  
to lift me up,

allowing new light  
to enter in, its strong  
broad rays in free fall  
against my flesh,  
as if through blades

of pungent grass,  
piercing me  
even deeper now, to say,  
“Be kind to him,  
stranger that he is.”