

“Encore”

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**Encore**

The audience claps as the curtain opens  
My own show, on stage for its debut  
My bare feet stuck to the wet wood, a lake sprawled out before me  
I walk with the pace of a thousand snails  
And observe my reflection in the abyss  
The audience is one the edge of their seats  
Someone bites their nail until it bleeds  
The time has come  
My demise is nothing special,  
It has no more importance than a gallon of expired milk  
The eyes and hands of strangers move like a freight train in my mind  
And I fall  
The frozen water greets me with warm arms,  
“Come to me child, and you shall have rest,”  
The paralysis was nice, it numbed and comforted.  
The audience is on their feet now,  
I sink, convulsing like someone trying to hold in a cough.  
And they cheer.  
They yell “Bravo” and phrases of endearment,  
But they have clapped too long,  
And now, only the stinging in their palms remain.