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Shot by Boy Hawkins and Lee Die in a Flooded Quarry

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David Dodd Lee

Shot by Boy, Hawkins and Lee Die in a Flooded Quarry

We were dying and we were invalid,
the moths coming up off the water and all that blue
dust

and the dusty beeches
swimming away from the holes
like falling rivers of noise flickering
under the shafts of the moon.

Boy was something else doing the dance
of the living right there on the embankment,
his belt of spoons singing.

His burned hands hissed in the rain
that stirred the leaves
poking inch-deep holes in the nearby Blueberry
River,

or so Hawkins described it to me,
imagining it, drifting near dead on his back,
an old sassafras root in one hand,
the bird of his God in the other.

Meanwhile, I'd passed from flesh
but was still alive underwater.

I remembered my first walk near the quarry
as a dream I had in which my parents rode away
on white horses. Then here, with Boy dancing,
I could see the fleck in his eyes that was like a
window

and his nerves were on fire. Of the ways to be born
this was called drowning in sin, the slick uterine
roots twisting tight, the sunlight bleeding away
so that all I could hear was Boy

pretending to cry, his voice like a knife
cutting leather, and I felt the sight leave my eyes
and I moved my arms in the warm shirt.