

New Poetry by Paweł Grajnert: “Michigan”



PARTICLES THAT FLOAT / *image by Amalie Flynn*

Michigan

Before the salmon-full,
the alewife-less,
tropic blue
Mussel-filtered water,
Was a green lake
of indigenous fish.
A fishing industry.
Before that logging.
After eradication.
Before that trading.
Before that, words of people
comprehensible over
and around us –
Before most of ours –

that's the take,
if you're wondering –
Describing the bounty.
The ease of it.
The rise and fall
Of waves on an inland sea,
One of the great
Cycle-keepers.
Let the gunk go down its gullet
Is one way back to the true
Inheritance of all that violence.
The other is to let
The moist, rising earth –
the great Kankakee –
Absorb – more than once more
The particles that float about,
and entomb them
In some future peat.