

He Said Turn Here

and then Tony showed us the lake
where he had thrown some of his sadness last summer
and it had dissolved like powder
so he thought maybe the lake could take
some of the radiant, isotopic kind
he'd been making lately.

And it did.

It was a perfect lake,
none of the paint had chipped off,
no bolts showing, the arms that Dante
and Virgil would have to hack through
not even breaking the surface.

Mumbling Italian to itself,
it had climbed down two wooden stairs
back to the beach now that the rains were done.

How strange to be water so close to the ocean
yet the only other water you get to talk to
comes from the sky. Maybe that's why
it seems so willing to take on

Tony's sadness which sometimes corrodes
his friends, which is really

many different sadnesses, smaller
and smaller, surrounded by more
and more space, each a world and
at its core an engine like a bee
inside a lily, like buzzing inside
the bee. It seems nothing

could change its color although
we couldn't tell what color it was,
it kept changing. In the summer,

Tony says he comes down early each day
and there's no one around so the lake
barely says a thing when he dives in

and once when his kitchen was on fire in Maine
and he was asleep, the lake came and bit his hand,

trying to drag him to safety
and some nights in New Mexico,
he can hear it howling, searching
for him in the desert
so we're glad Tony has this lake
and we promise to come back in August
and swim with him across,
maybe even race.