

# The Old Pond

by Katie Beswick

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*After Matsuo Bashō*

Slade Ravine            last summer            I heard a splash!            In my gravid belly,  
the tadpole turned too.            & we saw a frog, leaping by the old pond – its piebald  
slimy self.

Silent, lumbering jumps.

I knew now what it was to be heavy.

Time came upon me.

I was lithe & young again, crawling over logs by this same pond; moss-mush gross on  
my hands & knees.

Silence.

Listen!            There was a moment after I slipped when an algae bloom appeared like grass  
that might break my fall.            But oh!            I plummeted into blue-black.

Held there by my own weight            I drowned.

I            lay            dead.

Crisp packets & coke cans decayed alongside me.

I lay dead for one thousand years – until, in the next new millennium, something slithered  
suddenly through my rotted lips & the tadpole hatched inside my body, stirring it to life.