

# GOLDEN SHOVEL AT THE SHORE OF LAKE LANIER

Black folk tell you that if you wade  
beyond Lanier's sand-soft shoreline, in  
its murky ripples, you'll encounter the

town's worth of bones haunting the water.  
Mamas and aunties talk about wraiths that wade  
across the lake, the cursed souls in

search of their remains scorched beneath the  
waves. In 1912, before white folk brought the water  
to dam the damned, Oscarville's Black children

likely kept away from the streets, learned to wade  
past the billowing smoke of porches. To quell the fear in  
the autumn air, a preacher might've claimed the

love of Christ should flow from hearts like water.  
Uncles say two boys were lynched & suddenly none of God's  
commandments meant jack. How God gonna

expect us to love, they say, if we find nothing but trouble  
on our doorsteps? What good is an exodus if the  
only thing we find is blood in the water?