

ALICE MILLER

THE LAKES

The lakes were incapable of being
owned. They turned

wild. Their phones rang noon
and night, lines curled round and lingering

off bright cliff-faces. And the lakes, they kissed
those faces; they dangled their voices

off precipices. The lakes always
remembered their mothers; they could

will any dry eyes wet.
They did not stand, as we do,

trying to turn street corners
into wetlands by spitting.

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During the avalanche, you stooped under
an awning to suck the light up

from my ankles. You bent low, under
slapped-down snow like a paperclip,

but as it turned out, anklelight wasn't
suckable and you couldn't clip

the ground together. So,
we fell well short; well, so what?

*

It was late when we learned
we ourselves were hungry lakes, waiting

to burst our own stiff banks, waiting
for the world to crack

right across—just so our mouths
might slip, so we might slide

and tip
our liquid bodies

till one poured into the other.