

TERRY SAVOIE

*Two Poems on Pickerel Lake*

1. 1951

Five & I am buoyantly on my back  
while looking up under the girlish

under-skirts of willows leaning out  
over the shoreline as Mamma calls

from the safety of her screened-in  
cabin porch on the hillside, calling

for me to hurry in, can't I see how  
thunderclouds are moving in fast?

I splash in & run up the hill to her  
cold arms & a beach towel, shivering

in the sudden cool, uninvited breeze,  
looking back into the trees behind me,

their supple limbs bending, submitting.

2. 2001

A cool September evening & my boat

in perfect lullaby, gently rocking to  
the gibbous moonrise near the drop-

off where I fish alone for milk-eyed  
walleye down deep just beyond

stagnant algae & inside a rim  
of coontail & green cabbage weed.

Drifting a jig-&-minnow, I wait for  
the tap-tapping of a whiskered father

beneath me before setting the hook  
& calling out to him to rise as I imagine

Lazarus once rose from the dead, Lazarus  
who, at first, couldn't believe his unimagined

fortune, the seemingly impossible just made  
possible, a second chance, a miracle until

he noticed, as each star-struck fish I pull  
from the depths notices, a barbed hook

far back & planted deep in his soft gullet.  
In the moonlight, I watch nervous water-

striders, those Jesus-bugs, as they walk  
on the water beyond the boat's bow,

their spindly shrews' legs skittishly  
skating the lake's surface under

the month's full moon shining  
down, a fuller moon shining up.