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Stepping out on Lake Ontario in Mid November

Bryan Mahoney

St. John Fisher University

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Cover Page Footnote

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Stepping out on Lake Ontario in Mid November

As my cold gaze mimics the
temperature
of the fog-laden ice pond, I
relax; sit, stare
watch the midnight black earth
crumble and soften beneath my heel,
the burnt wood smell
slithers over the ground behind me,
creeping up my back,
covering my head ears eyes nose

Early morning energy invades,
burns my lungs, heavy breathing
gets slower as I watch the smaller puffs
of breath join their brethren over the pond.
I ask myself, "Where have all
the boats gone?" I look for
the ice shanties that bespeckle the surface
of the mushy blue waters
like kernels from a pepper shaker.
They have all left me alone
with a small seagull at my side
looking up at me as if to ask me,
"Where have all the boats gone?"
The sky, melting away its look
of the inside of an eggshell,
returns my blank gaze,
beckoning me to go and forget
this cold and lifeless dream of ice.

--Bryan Mahoney