

1975

# Slapped the Water

Samuel Makidemewabe

Howard Norman

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## Eyebrows Made of Crows / Samuel Makidemewabe

If you looked hard enough CROWS were there!  
in those eyebrows that lived  
on his forehead. Thick crow eyebrows, yes,  
and when this boy yawned  
those crows went UP  
then landed back down over his eyes.

When he began to get tired,  
to yawn, the crows WOKE UP MORE.

This happened when he laughed hard  
too.

One time joking stories were being told,  
one after the other. This boy was laughing,  
LAUGHING at each one. The crows  
were rising and landing ALL THE TIME  
on his forehead. The harder the laughing got,  
the higher those crows went!  
We got worried they would fly away.  
So we put maple-pitch on those eyebrow  
crows, to keep their feet stuck  
home.

## Slapped the Water / Samuel Makidemewabe

This girl knew pond noises  
well, beaver tail-slapping and the sound  
of trees falling into water  
because of beavers. You could find  
her footprints going down to the pond  
and sometimes see her listening IN THE POND  
through a reed.

She must have  
heard other water noises that way,  
but I didn't ask.

I didn't ask her about that, no,  
but once I saw her slap the water  
with her hand and laugh.  
Later, I looked in her teeth

for bark chips!  
Then we both laughed.

I don't think she ever did  
any tree chewing though.  
I didn't ask her.

*Translated by Howard Norman*

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POETRY / HALPERIN, BELL

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Spring Morels / Mark Halperin

The light stripes, flecked with a red  
like the cheekplates, longed to fill  
the nearest hole. Tendril  
and tongue—what swayed was a stalk  
and flowerhead, a snakehead  
and flowing, a slip of scales, muscle  
laying itself over itself in coils.

I stood in myself and kept quiet.  
I inched back, making room  
as it wound around a stone,  
curves sharper, as it brushed  
a stick and seemed to announce: this visit  
is over, thinner, half memory, lost  
in the distance, when I noticed the first,

the last thing its tail had flicked then  
left, a spring morel, one  
mushroom in a field of mushrooms.

On the mornings I come  
to scatter last year's leaves and pick them  
I wonder how I missed them in the past,  
knowing, in the night light, they can't last.

The Wild Cherry Tree Out Back /  
Marvin Bell

The leaves are kites.  
What are their goals?