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Reginald Shepherd

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REGINALD SHEPHERD

Eve's Awakening

I woke and was alone in some new world—
there wasn't world before, or wasn't me
to see it, call it world. Birds made as if to speak

to someone I couldn't see, trees waved green arms
like flags swimming light winds, echoing clouds
that ornamented blue. Everything

echoed there, held conversation
with itself, or with some likeness
of itself. I was alone, and woke

into the sound of world: rose
into that colloquy of purple and yellow flowers
I couldn't name. I heard some waters

calling me, rose and walked
toward that music, and lay down beside a sky
that had laid itself down for me, the sky laid low

with waiting for me, having given up
above. My face waited for me
in the singing water, welcomed me

with my own gaze; my own lips
rose up to kiss my name
into my voice. But then another voice

called me away from me, calling my face
his likeness, and made me
half, who had been whole, beside myself

lying there beside the lake of sky.
He called me by a name I'd never heard,
tried to enclose my hand in his: that garden

suddenly seemed small, enclosed
on every side by God, something that said
to call him that. Everything sang me

but him; I heard a voice and turned away.