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From the Rocks above Bass Pond

James Owens

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From the Rocks above Bass Pond

I bang fist-sized stones together. Once.
Stones cool with the smell of dirt
from lying in the ferns.
My palms love their gritty sides.

The hollow tonk plucks at air
like a first raindrop hitting a spider's web,
the shape of a word
whose only content is attention.

The solemn turkey buzzard shrugs higher.
Grey moss cracks underfoot.
Juniper and blueberry clench small.
Here, wind and weak sun --

below, the fur of trees ruffles,
the pond glints,
losing track of my failures.

I would lie and wither like the moss
and rise in a year, language as hard
and unused as a scatter of pebbles,
to find my own crossed thighbones here,

stripped sticks
to knock together for prayer.

About James Owens

Two books of James Owens' poems have been published: *An Hour is the Doorway* (Black Lawrence Press) and *Frost Lights a Thin Flame* (Mayapple Press). His poems, reviews, translations, and photographs have appeared

widely in literary journals, including recent or upcoming publications in *The Cortland Review*, *Poetry Ireland*, *The Cresset*, and *Town Creek Poetry*. He lives in central Indiana and northern Ontario.