

from *Water and Blood*

by Jan Probst

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Female, sixties-seventies

Lucille has lived on a little lake in the Midwest her entire life. Many years after it happened, she recounts this story to the brother of the little boy who died.

LUCILLE

It was warm and friendly like a thousand other summer days. Then a stillness come over it, and this wail started up, a sound so deep I thought it was inside of me. But it was a little girl, no more than seven. And even louder than that, was the silence of her mother beside her. No one saw her little boy go into the water. We all saw him come out. Draped over his father's arm. Sirens announced it. Firetruck arrived. We all gathered, we all watched, as people do. They put his little body on the picnic table, and they worked on him. But it was too late. By a second... by a minute... by a lifetime of hopin'. I have known six to lose their life to this water. And I have been blessed that none was from my own family. But I remember them. Every last one.