F. J. Bergmann - Permanent Resident

His dream had been to live near water. He had bought the lake house after forty years of teaching high-school trigonometry, before the change. Its sewage drained into the lake, grandfathered in, through a pipe along the bottom.

Just because the muck was thickest close to shore, in the tangle of old tires and junk, that didn't mean it was safe. He swam slowly, watching for the sickle-moon glint of a fish's belly. Only bottom-feeders, damn near poisonous, were left, mostly deformed—like him.

He thought there were new lumps on his face, but the quivering interface of the lake at night, when he dared surface, was an unreliable mirror. This winter, when the lake finally froze under thick ice, he would take the bait and let himself be dragged up into the stifling air.

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