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Ceremony

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Ceremony

by Parker Long

Ice retreated to water
Tackle boxes were organized
Reels rebuilt
Hooks honed
Bait bought

He stood on my left
Gear was tied
Lines wet
Hopeful of luck
In the murky shallows.

We spoke softly
to not scare the bass
We cast and watched
Spider wire sparkle
Over the water

Reeling plastic worms
Against the muddy bottom
Feeling the new lakebed
Finding fallen trees
Navigating weeds

All day spent in search
Of the one fish
Who would make the day
And make us fight
And wake our senses

He always showed:
Biting hard
Fighting for each inch
Leaping through air
Earning his release

Tackle boxes were packed
Hooks put through guide-eyes
Line tightened
Stories regaled at Mom
Who had no stomach for fishing
But loved the ceremony.