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In Charge of Baby Brother

Shoshauna Shy

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In Charge of Baby Brother

by Shoshauna Shy

When he sank
it almost seemed
like he had planned it,
big grin till the river
slipped above his cheeks.

I dove to scoop him—
slid small hands
through weeds, fists
meeting muck.

A hundred times we plunged,
yet not one fingertip tangled hair,
touched jeans, the mud bottom deeper
than we could reach.

On grass we heaved, howled, fought
over who got to race the dirt mile back,
who had to wait for what, in time,
would surface

