

Michael T. Young – Two Poems

Ring

On the day we married,
I wrapped all my shadows
around your finger.

That was how I vowed
you would always be able
to find my sources of light.

Swimming in the Stream behind My Uncle's House

A careless 8-year old
and only just learning to hesitate
at the brink of things,

I jumped in, agitating the bottom
into a brown storm cloud, dragged around the bend,
under the shade of overhanging willows.

Their leaves wrote in the water,
a gurgling language of allure.
Diving under was such acceptance:

soft embracings pushed and parted before me,
the danger of too much giving way, minnows
and cattails yielded to my thin arms.

The current buffeted my ribcage, tugged
at my limbs, until I rose into the polished understanding
of my own limits, my short breath

unable to merge to the very thing I'm made of.
But it's how I learned to let the muddy waters
grow steady, their surge within me calm,

until their clouds settled and cleared, and I became
a place where sunlight can shine and dance
all the way to the bottom.

Michael T. Young's third full-length collection, *The Infinite Doctrine of Water*, was published by Terrapin Books. His other collections include, *The Beautiful Moment of Being Lost*, and *Transcriptions of Daylight*. He received a Fellowship from the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and his chapbook, *Living in the Counterpoint*, received the Jean Pedrick Award. His work has appeared in numerous journals including *Cimarron Review*, *The Comstock Review*, *The Cortland Review*, *Lunch Ticket*, and *Valparaiso Poetry Review*. He lives with his wife, children, and cats in Jersey City, New Jersey.