

POEM WITH A CLOUD AND FRANK OCEAN LYRICS

poem by Jose Felipe Ozuna



Image: “Kennedy Lake” by M-A Murphy. “Poem with a Cloud and Frank Ocean Lyrics” was written by Jose Felipe Ozuna for *Rattle*’s Ekphrastic Challenge, June 2022, and selected as the Editor’s Choice.

August 2016 and the sky and lake bleed
into each other. I’ve spent the weekend
trying to download Blond on my phone

with shoddy WiFi at my friend’s cabin,
where I take my shirt off outside for
the first time in years and we use nets

to try to catch minnows shooting through
the water like scaled bullets. I don’t remember
catching anything. Or showering. I know it

can’t be true but in my head the sky was lower
back then, close enough to touch. If I had
reached my hand out I could’ve stolen a cloud

and crushed it in my palm small enough to fit in my pocket,
so I would always have that sky with me. By the end of the trip
my arms will be darker and my cheeks rosy, something I didn’t

know could happen to skin like mine. In the car ride home
I don’t cry when Frank sings *we’ll never be those kids again*.
I doubt I really heard it. I don’t know how to swim, but that summer

when my friends jump in the lake so do I, and I aim where I can
see the bottom so I don’t sink too far. So I can come up for air.
The sky isn’t pink and white. But it’s blue. And it’s there.