

Replenished

The time of dust is behind us.
The lungs of the lake breathe easily.
No part of any wetland is paved.

After the collapse, we painstakingly restored ghostyards once called ports, helped by brilliant mycelium who had evolved to eat asphalt. Fungi revived the freeways, now endless ribbons which bloom and sigh and sway. There is a remnant of a prison on the shore, but we have long since learned better ways. There is no division between the parts of lake body formerly called arms, just the trace of a tourniquet.

The lake is whole again.

Rivers are free.
Waters are sovereign.
Dams are done.

We uphold the rights of lakes and rivers and islands. Pelicans thrive in stick nests protected by waves on all sides. Each spring, diverse migrations darken midday skies. Millions of phalaropes glitter the sea air each summer. Eared grebes confuse the radar when they lift from the lake on a late fall night. They are that large together.

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In winter, elders retell the story of how the great heart nearly died, how close we came. Remembering the dust, the choking skies, those of us who were here then breathe in deeply and close our eyes.

We too, see the resplendent sea.
And yet, at times we tremble,
as if still on that precipice.