San Jose State University

From the SelectedWorks of Alan Soldofsky

Summer 2012

Recovery at Lake Tahoe

Alan Soldofsky, *San Jose State University*

Available at: https://works.bepress.com/alan_soldofsky/5/

Alan Soldofsky

Recovery at Lake Tahoe

The rocky beach shines in mid-August
late afternoon sun between shadows
of Ponderosa pines. Ripples stripe the water
near shore. Across the lake blue deepens
into troughs of indigo. Far out, I imagine,
the wind swells. But here it is benign,
the leaves of manzanita, at the
periphery already beginning to yellow,
barely move. A brownish blackbird,
probably female, chirrups beneath a thicket
of deerbrush, while a Chris-Craft throttles
back its engines approaching the pier
reggae blaring. The young man driving
and his passenger shed their sky blue t-shirts
as they pass, letting another kid jump on
before roaring out again, spraying up
a frothy wake. I try to stay in the present,
disengaged from what seems to move too fast.
Around me the world strives to maintain
a good mood. Two girls in red swim suits,
approaching adolescence, half-immersed, agitate
in the mottled water. Everything seems
to be calling out, *too soon*, *too soon*.
A blackbird flashes its yellow eyes
as it plunges its wing feathers into the
glassy curl at the shoreline's edge.
Euphagus cyanocephalus.
The end of summer presses down
through the alders with an urgent sweetness.
We do what we can to deny what Keats
with some reluctance was forced to accept—
the exhaustion of the inexhaustible. So I
must learn to look more closely, to count
the number of pine needles in a cluster,
to know things by their proper names. To smell
wood smoke hovering over a metal picnic table
set with a checkered cloth for a family.
Five little girls in bright towels and hoodies
scuffing the rocks. While a blackbird fluffs
its feathers on a lakefront post beside
an empty table, standing on one foot.