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Catherine Greenwood

The River's Edge

Where the battered metal boat is
waiting, tethered to saplings that cling
to the steep, disintegrating shoreline.
With sly insistence the river
slurps at the aluminum keel like
a dog worrying a well-gnawed bone.

Sluggish, its thoughts are clogged
with silt, a sludge of liquified land slid
down from the dugs. Crossing the river's
recall is the putter of an outboard motor,
a presence persistent and annoying
as a cloud of midges. They are on the tip

of its tongue: *muddy leaves, dead
twigs*. The river turns them over in its mind.