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Not Then, Nor Now, Not Yet

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Not Then, Nor Now, Nor Yet

The pond pushes a shimmery loop
of open water through broken ice and out
to midpoint where mallards, coots,
geese, swans congregate in the wind
without January's rude shouldering for room.

Rabbit and raccoon tracks melt
into one another. Old boot prints
expand Sasquatchean. Puddles finger
half-frozen on the trail. No hawks
hunt an empty sky.

I could listen for stirrings, note
new buds, berries, hints of lime green,
whiffs of southern air, but scarfed
up to my nose, I shiver and tuck
like birds to keep warm, reach
ahead to a redwing's trill,
the warbler wave, swans in nest cups,
turtles stretched out on hot logs.

Ann Taylor

ANN TAYLOR's first poetry book, *The River Within*, won first prize in the Cathlamet Poetry competition at Ravenna Press, 2011. A chapbook, *Bound Each to Each*, was published by Finishing Line Press in 2013. Her most recent collection, published by Word Tech Press in 2018, *Héloïse and Abélard: The Exquisite Truth*, is based on the famous twelfth-century story of their lives. Her collection of personal essays, *Watching Birds: Reflections on the Wing* (Ragged Mountain/McGraw Hill), appeared in 1999. She teaches at Salem State University in Salem, Massachusetts.