

1999

Filling of Lake Cumberland, 1951

Allison Armbrister
Denison University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile>



Part of the [Creative Writing Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Armbrister, Allison (1999) "Filling of Lake Cumberland, 1951," *Exile*: Vol. 46 : No. 1 , Article 6.
Available at: <https://digitalcommons.denison.edu/exile/vol46/iss1/6>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at Denison Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Exile by an authorized editor of Denison Digital Commons.

Filling of Lake Cumberland, 1951

Dad, with his brown elbows folded on his knees and his eyes on the water, calls it names. *That bastard's taken many lives* he says and I sit on the steps

right of him, chewing Teaberry gum like God gave me it just for myself. There's bad stories from all over town—the lady out in Connelly Holler

that didn't know, woke up to the crest at her door, her horse drowned in the bottom-land. Aunt Sam says a lot about that, says the state knows some, it don't know all.

But there'll be stripers in it, and nice long bridges once the metal workers stop slipping through the slats to cover the rocks. That poor lady in Connelly

hadn't been told. I scratch a chigger and feel dark closing around us like leaf fog the first morning of fall, hot enough air to make you pour right out

of your clothes. Dad's still watching water filling up the rusted dusk, talking like it's got a right to. They whispered that she ran a clear mile, it chasing

her the whole way, tack straps floating off her dead horse and her nightdress all wet. Someone from Jamestown Church of Christ gave her a place to dry things out. She's not

a big talker, they say, seems bone-scared and only says that she's bound to fetch her dog, that he's down in that holler with his jaws slack and his fur waving.

—Allison Armbrister '01