

Mercy

After Dance of Myal by Maurice Broaddus for Pap

on a December morning in 1999, after a moontide, he walks along the water's edge to the spot where he use to catch fish & relax. he remembers the creaky floorboards, the kitchen tiles, & the smell of curry in his home

& how he has a week to pack, after the landlord finally got him out. he remembers loss. call it ghost. call it an empty shell of a house. call it bones. call it grief as heavy as the wet clothes his mama use to wash in the river.

call it dead fish entangled in the bushes that lay along the White River's embankment with gapping mouths & gray glossy eyes. did someone take their home from them, too? & leave their soft bones as evidence?

as warning? call them duppies. call the river
a grave site where his dreams lay with 4 million fish bobbing along a 50
mile stretch of White
River from Indianapolis to Anderson. newspapers

will call it Indiana's worst environmental disaster. he will call it the day he lost his home & all it's glory, with a loud pounding heartbeat watching his hopes sink & wade to the bottom of the river with hopes to make room for new stories.