

# Karmic Tide

*by* J.A. Pak

Digging in another garden, jumping into another space and time, I impaled a toad on the tines of a garden fork. At first I thought the toad was a clump of clay, stuck to the thick tine, but before I could kick the clay off with my boot, it metamorphosed into limbs, and then a face, the brown clump shaping into a body before my disbelieving eyes. Strangely bloodless and so alive, the toad's eyes bulged and I felt all the boundaries of life beginning to dissolve and the blood (so hot, so hot) I now saw was the dizzying haze as life magnetized, pooling itself from all its droplets like the balling sun. It's difficult to pull back, defragment. To scrape the toad from the prongs of the garden fork and to think that death feeds life, as the toad will feed the birds and so on. Still, when the cloud of insects nip away at me, do I believe, or does it matter what belief, caught traveling inside the karmic tide?

