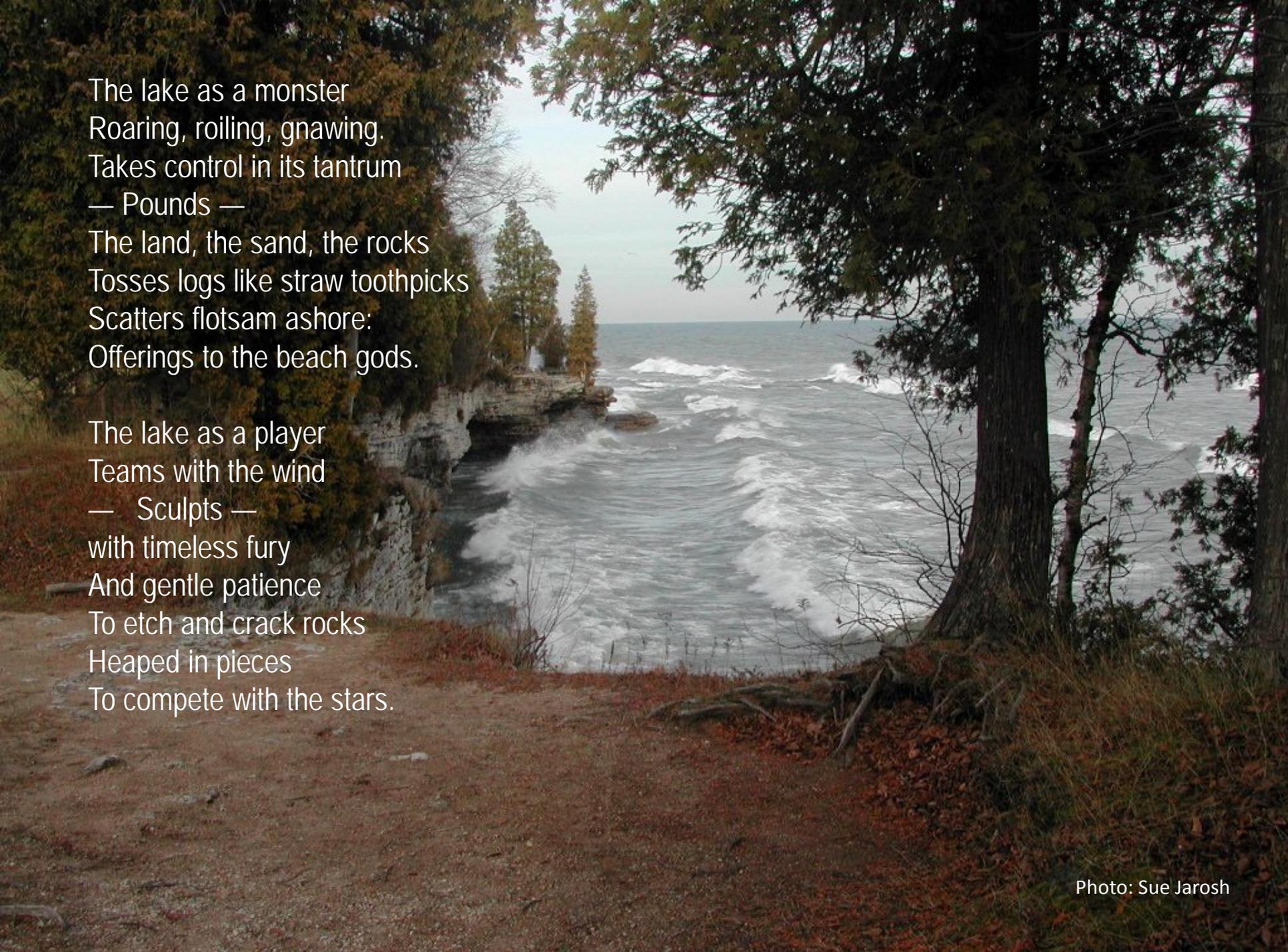


Moods of Michigan

By Carol Ryback

The lake as an artist
Needs no hands
— Or thoughts —
To create on a canvas of sand.

Michigan
Turns shards into jewels
Pushes and tumbles pebbles and rocks
Cuts angles into multicolored layers
— Hidden —
Until granules drop and dissolve into grotesque faces
As sunlight splits and dances through retreating waves
While tongues of foam eagerly shape
Their own transience.

A photograph of a rocky coastline with waves crashing against the shore, framed by trees in the foreground. The scene is captured from an elevated position, looking down at the water. The foreground is a dirt path covered in fallen leaves. The middle ground shows a rocky cliffside with waves crashing against it, creating white foam. The background is a vast expanse of water meeting a cloudy sky. The overall mood is dramatic and powerful.

The lake as a monster
Roaring, roiling, gnawing.
Takes control in its tantrum
— Pounds —
The land, the sand, the rocks
Tosses logs like straw toothpicks
Scatters flotsam ashore:
Offerings to the beach gods.

The lake as a player
Teams with the wind
— Sculpts —
with timeless fury
And gentle patience
To etch and crack rocks
Heaped in pieces
To compete with the stars.

The lake as its own wild being
— Sings —
as it rushes about
The surface holds fast its power
Released in measured wave trains tracking
Each beach challenging the lake with brazen
courage
Hissing at its foe
As receding waves fade colors.

Yet the lake holds the promise
Of its own dynamic fate
At once simple, profound.

