

Jacob Rivers

They told him that he was either going to jail or going to die from an overdose

Our mother
stands

outside his door
for hours and

stares into
the wood-grain

like a wolf
watching

Mercury
and the moon

pivot across
the Pleiades.

*

Today I made it
through the woods

to watch
a pale dog

lie asleep
at the edge

of a pond.
He wasn't aglow—

eyes matted
shut, fur tethered

with his owner's
hair.

Jacob Rivers is the author of *Eros the Length of a Sentence* (Ghost City Press 2020). His writings can be found in *The Adirondack Review*, *The Cortland Review*, *Green Mountains Review*, and elsewhere. He received an MFA from New England College. Visit jacobrivers.xyz.