

Minal Hajratwala

The Shallows

What surprises me
is the varied depths of pain

Sometimes you float

Sometimes you sink
and think
you'll drown

Like my friend who went fly-
fishing, waders hip-high,
cast the line, then fell

thrashing downstream
rubber pants full,
still holding the rod

till he shouted to someone
calm on the bank,
What do I do?

Said the angler, not lifting
voice or eyebrows,

Stand up.