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What Water Wants

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What Water Wants

The sky clings to rain and won't let go.
After eight weeks the ground cracks,
and the stream that shows us the way
through the gap in the mountain
wilts. What little water is left
wants to comfort speckled trout,
caress caddis larvae attached to the bottomsides
of rocks. The stumps in the reservoir
peer above waterline, suspicious of the sky
they haven't seen in years.
My neighbor points at a chimney
in the middle of the lake, a steeple
a little closer to shore. He tells me
how his father milked cows, put them out
to pasture before the dam was built,
how the old water that flowed
down the mountain would've never wanted
to drown a valley.

Todd Davis

TODD DAVIS teaches creative writing and environmental studies at Pennsylvania State University's Altoona College. He has published six books of poems. See his tribute to Mary Oliver on page 24–25.