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## Prayer Parable

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## Prayer Parable

The ridge's pitch seeks  
to drive us to our knees,  
and far to the east, above  
treeline, lightning  
rafters the sky, rumbling  
at the edges of our labored  
breathing. A dark cloud shuttles  
overhead, wetting already wet  
skin. Engulfed by the scent  
of spruce and balsam, a gray  
jay clicks and chatters,  
a better guide than the slick  
cairn of rocks against  
this ever-blowing wind.  
As we rise we hunt the hole  
in this tableau of mist  
and drizzle where a single  
shaft of blue might fall  
through the heavy  
firmament of our oxygen-  
starved brains.

*Todd Davis*

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TODD DAVIS, a frequent contributor to *Appalachia* during the past decade, is the author of five books of poetry, most recently *Winterkill* (2016) and *In the Kingdom of the Ditch* (2013), both published by Michigan State University Press. His sixth poetry collection, *Native Species*, will be published in January 2019. He teaches environmental studies at Pennsylvania State University's Altoona College.