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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

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.