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Apophatic

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Apophatic

The mind is murky, mottled
from too many days of rain.
I miss the thrush's fluting
and realize it's not the earth
that's dying but my attachment
to it. The first writing
was on the body, then the skin
of trees—pokeberry crushed
and driven to ink. The fox's
track is delicate, and where the river
rose and spilled, it left an unreadable
script. What does it mean to take
something you've not been given?
In the dream evening primrose
blooms the first yellow of a broken
vessel, juniper like the olive
skin of those animals we christen.
The rattle of the catalpa-pod opens
into sleep while in the orchard
I gaze up at red planets adrift in space.
Does the doe dream of this place?
And the dog whose hind legs twitch
in slumber as he gives chase?
The field beyond the orchard
lies fallow, and orange and black
beetles devour milkweed,
laying eggs that will hatch
on the undersides of leaves
long after their deaths.

Todd Davis

TODD DAVIS teaches creative writing and environmental studies at Penn State University's Altoona College. He is the author of five books of poems, including *In the Kingdom of the Ditch* (Michigan State, 2013).

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