

Two Poems

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A Memory of Heaven

Ice is talking; water dreaming.
Overhead darkness pinched by starlight.
Below, in the mud of the world, turtle sleeps:
everything fluid, formless without the light
of a lantern. I must remember snow
is enough to see by, and ice will tell us
where we should step. At the end
of the valley limestone swallows water,
moon turns the trees blue, and red
crossbills look for seed among hemlocks.
Beneath the fields, water is talking
in its sleep; ice quiets its dreams.
What I write is always what comes after.

From Todd Davis, *The Least of These* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2010).

For Harry Humes

Coal

The bottom of the world

and the sounds that reside there.

The music beneath the sounds

beneath the world.

Because I can't tell where the world begins

and we end, I keep the house cold,

knowing to burn the lamp is to change

the insides of the mountain to ash.

We're told that to repent means

to turn around: like a bulldozer

scraping the edge, like the darkness

of slurry against a dam,

like men running in a shaft of light

as the black seam catches fire.

From Todd Davis, *In the Kingdom of the Ditch* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2013).