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The Night before My Baptism

Mark Bennion

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The Night before My Baptism

I pull the sheets away from the pillows,
turn down the bed lamp, the blinds,
as a thick clattering rain
pours from the mountains and leaves its throbbing

on my roof. Thunder swells in the valley,
lightning throws the black pulse from my room,
a rocket flash. I think how each drop
might scatter the loose tiles above me, rinsing

the gutters. Mulch, berries, and dead mice
rattle eaves before they fall to the ground.
The bed shakes me, the chatter turns to rumble
but I slender in, grind down, and believe.

—Mark Bennion