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Water, Pray | Tin House

2-3 minutes



That summer after you died and the rains came,
I thought of Niobe and prayed let them come.

Green fields turned into cyan-colored lakes,
the last traces of you submerged in mud.

And even as the banks of the Mississippi burst open,
and another Great Flood lay siege,

as casualties swelled and levies broke,
I could not stop praying, Mercy come

top me, sink me, sweep me under. Pray,
bring me your endless cataracts. I want to know

the stifling dark, the blue bottom of this river too.
Drop me like a stone until I forget

these lungs thirsting for air. Forgive me
this grieving body, the weight I no longer possess.

Anne Marie Champagne is a writer, educator, and artist living in Saint Paul, Minnesota. She is the managing editor of the American Journal of Cultural Sociology and a doctoral candidate in sociology at Yale University. Her poetry has appeared or is forthcoming in The Southern Review and The Journal.