

FAMILIAR
by Elise Anderson

Because we have to give something or else
can't believe giving exists, like a river wills its way
around rock, all water comes whether called or not.
In cloud form, the ipse-dixit booms of thunder
sound almost human. Water drops when it wants.

I want to wield mackerel schools. I like imagining
other ways to put this. When I think about water
I become amorphous—just considering—suddenly
unable to dictate to someone else what "moving
forward" is. What haunts me about water isn't fish,
and it isn't quite a system: It's the giving-in, allow-anything-
to-enter and enter-anything way of water I can't handle.
Yet this is how I and everyone like me live: sinecures
in an elaborate limbo, playing in the wet dirt. Familiar.