

# *In Any State*

by Raine Baker

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Tea makes patterns as it spirals, water into more of the same.  
Adding milk doesn't change this. It's all one base: water.

As a kid you loved the creek. You were small boots and small hands.  
You stood at the mouth to catch bugs and chase water.

Keep a rag and sponge by the stove for when you boil over.  
You've almost done your best, but you can't erase water.

Neglect and new seasons make your gutter a sleeping shock.  
Every barrel full, the only other option is to displace water.

Questions don't come with shovels. You must dig with dirty nails.  
A dirty truth: It's all on you. (There are no sticks that will trace water)

You heard the place between shipwrecked and safety is luck.  
This might be true. What kind of rehearsal does it take to race water?

There is no easy way to crawl inside your own lungs on a good day  
And instead of breath, to find in that space water.

Dive in with an expectation. Whether backstroke, butterfly or bellyflop  
You will reach your goal. In any state, you must encase water.

A bath is almost medicine now. Let the practice fall out around you.  
Lift up your leg and watch it all trickle home. Lace water.

You've seen the dry sponge snap in half. Are you going to soften? You are  
Everything to your shadow, rain. You're made to embrace water.

# *Homemade Pesto*

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Come away with me  
From your aisles of perfection  
To the carpet of silver starbursts  
Below thieving fingers of beech and oak

I'll bring my basket and rusty shears  
You'll carry a bowl of oil and cheese  
We'll follow a map of dead leaves  
Into the pale embrace of ramsons

Under the curiosity of saplings  
We'll only make imperfect cuts  
So that our footprint in this snow  
Might be mistaken for our absence

We'll cover the ground with wool  
And collect our bounty in your bowl  
Within each wild stalk severed:  
The promise of homemade pesto