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*Louisa Howerow*

## And the Prophet Elijah

When Elijah crouched on the mountain,  
put his face between his knees,  
heard the roar of the rain  
before the sky grew black with clouds,  
my father was kneeling in our backyard,  
refusing to pray. Pant legs rolled up, feet bare,  
he pulled out quackgrass and foxtails,  
readied the ground for seed, enough we hoped  
to put up pickles, potatoes, cabbage for winter.  
Every morning he'd shift the soaker hoses  
ever so slightly, except I didn't see  
how shifting anything made much difference.  
Once told him as much:  
No Lord's hand touching his shoulder,  
wasn't going to be no Elijah either,  
running down the mountain, sopping wet.  
He raised a hand and I was sure  
he'd hit me then, but he swore  
at Bible silliness and walked away,  
his long narrow feet like those  
of some flightless bird laying claim to its garden.