**When Your Therapist Lives Near Huntington Beach**

**and You’re Too Mentally Ill to Understand Scientific Terminology**

Marissa Glover

She says to think of the sudden sadness

as a wave—unpredictable, unstoppable,

but temporary. *This, too, shall pass,*

she quotes, flipping the spiral medical

chart page by page, suddenly half

Persian poet, half doctor, pointing

to diagrams of the triune brain

and talking about waves.

The diagnosis makes more sense

coming from a therapist/meteorologist/

seismologist. It’s not frontal lobes,

limbic, reptilian—it’s now capillary,

chop, grinder. *Think of “tough” days*

*as “trough” days,* she says. It’s important

to ride the wave. Don’t let yourself go

under. Ride the wave. Say it:

*Ride the wave. Ride the wave*.

I say I want to know where the waves

come from, but that is not the right question

to ask, she says. I tell her if I know how

something starts, I can figure out how

to make it stop. It doesn’t work like that.

Ask, instead, where the waves will go.

They will go wherever they want to go.

They will take me with them.

This much is obvious. She nods.

Tells me I must learn to wait

for the train to pass. For the wild

crest to break or the baby swell

to dissipate. *Remember, the wave*

*will eventually wear itself out*

*and end where all water ends.*

On the shore? I ask, wanting

to believe I am right about the shore

and she is right about waves.

*Yes. And you will be there too.*

*Choking on salt and surf and sand—*

But I will be alive. *You will be alive.*

I close my eyes and try to picture it.