

Universal Geometry

Take a walk
through stars and your mind,
stretching fingers wide
as your arms reach towards
distant pricks of light
against an infinite black

Gravity and reality limit you –
so take flight from harsh certainty
and blow past physics
with its silly string boundaries

Let the Milky Way
be the torch to light your path
and stroll through its solar systems

Be careful to skirt the edge
of black holes, irresistible wells –
unless you want to take a dive,
dive into an abyss
and see through to the other side

No one can hear you scream
in a vacuum
but you can listen
with every atom of your body
every molecule of your soul
to the music of the spheres
and rejoice in the symphony

Play your fingers along
the orbits and push
planets along like beads
on a child's toy
or an abacus counting to infinity

Come back to Earth
and return to your body
refreshed, a new perspective,
with the knowledge
that problems are
dust motes in a ray of light
and that universal geometry
is a beautiful thing

Ember to Ash

Rivers of waxy skin
form rippled puddles below -
action set in stillness,
cascading paused.

Fire is a hungry passion:
igniting
dancing
revealing
flickering
guttering
dying
smothered.

Even smoke soon disperses:
ember to ash,
cylindrical perfection gives birth
to a disfigured ruin,
light devoured by darkness,
energy expended, exhausted
in a futile fight against
the inevitable victorious entropy.

Is it any wonder
that moths and humans,
ephemeral both,
are attracted
to the same flame?
Fleeting life yields
to implacable time.

Virgin

Untouched wilderness in winter
Snow, fresh fallen,
without a single track
to mar its perfection

Hail Mary, full of grace
whose high school sex ed
abstinence only,
still didn't work

Highest quality
only olives, no solvents
Extra, purest
and least acidic

It'll hurt the first time
and there will be blood
but don't worry -
we've all been there

Sixth sign, ruled by Mercury
Leo to my west
Libra to my east
Find Spica, find me

Ash

Gatlinburg, TN 2016

A gray caterpillar inches
along, its head consuming

mouth of fire burning
paper and leaves

dragging down to
a mouth in a beard

whose face is aimed
at a mountain range

A similar worm
of greater proportions

burns its way along
the teeth, the spine

of a granite ridge
dotted with cabins

and old growth forests
now furious candles

The taste of
hopes and dreams

in your mouth
after they shatter,

of burnt out house
with blackened bones

painted skin peeled back,
your feet making clouds on the floor

Ode to a Pebble

after Pablo Neruda

Remnant
of mountains past
Broken bits of
majesty
reduced to scree
to gravel
underfoot

Reminder of mortality
to the highest peaks –
You can and will
be brought low,
crushed, crumbled
A slave riding
behind a Roman general
whispering humility

As many shapes
and forms
as there are
individual stones
littering the earth
no two
quite the same

Tumbled, polished
by wear
wind
water
the constant grinding
movement of earth
against earth

Or fragmented,
sharp edges
jagged like teeth
on a saw,
diamond pointed
cutting, slicing, separating

The minute texture
a landscape
within itself

reflecting the nature
of a stony soul

Colors beyond
enumeration
A million minerals
shot through
a stone of mere
millimeters

Quartz in varied aspects
rose, distinct and separate
from pink,
smoky, blue, green
even colorless
Venturing past to
exotic amethyst
and agate

Reflecting light on
tumbled smooth faces
or angular facets
to bring out
every color within