

Nowhere once reached

It slips into the head uninvited,
in those befuddling moments
before the alarm
when one may be awake or may be dreaming,
one never knows for sure. Or maybe
on a stretch of interstate
with behemoths
and tiny four-wheeled mice
slithering past
one's speed-limit crawl toward
somewhere
that may emerge
as nowhere once reached.

A riddle that demands formulas more complex
than any algorithm yet constructed,
a riddle that drives a man insane,
a woman to desperation
or degradation
or by chance to blissful realization
even if only for a week
or month or year
or lifetime hypothetical.

A sweet and poisonous cloud of vapor
that drops
and rises
from invisibility
to envelop the body and
penetrate the brain to scramble the neurons
and vault the synapses with supercharged
neurotransmitters run amok.

The unimaginable vastness
of space, empty space yet filled
with nothingness crammed together,
nothingness ever expanding while folding
back on itself until,
until the mind goes tilt
like the pinball machine of yesterday.
can scarce compare
to the mystery that bewilders a mind
by its utter inability to cope
with the most ancient
imponderable of them all, ancient yet
burningly present yesterday and tomorrow
and today, today, today, today.

What is love,

and why its compulsion
toward behavior so sublime
or so deranged?