

YOUNG SMITH

from *Radiation in the Visible Spectrum*

$$h = 6.6262 \times 10^{-27} \text{ erg s}$$

— Max Planck

v.

The light is an artichoke
built of glass,
whose bladed leaves,

at first, seem clear
and clean; yet as we
peel the bracts

that cup its heart,
each layer sheds
a smoky gleam,

revealing, to the patient
hand, scales of
unimagined shades—

hazel, auburn, almond,
bronze—until,
deep in its first

glossy flesh,
the light undresses
its darkness.

VIII.

These are the allies
of the light:

anemones
marmosets
gods carved from stone
dragonflies
hoarfrost
the bells of trombones
checkerboards
jellyfish
the craters of Neptune
howitzers
monstrances
patent leather shoes

These are the enemies
of the light:

foghorns
photographs
radial symmetry
prisms
parentheses
the false glow of dreams
yashmaks
stopwatches
heliostats
firefighters
parasols
requiescats

XIX.

Here is the first continuity
of light:

a boy
on a hilltop
throwing rocks
at the sun.

And here is the final continuity
of light:

a boy
on a hilltop
throwing his name
at the sun.