

FIRMAMENT ON HIGH

Once, we loved our sister satellite.
Desert Endymions hot to shoot off
we fashioned Cadillacs of ascent
to touch her dry Sea of Serenity.

What we thought heroic, wasn't.
Our old moon, Sagan says, is "boring,"
like police photos of gelid bodies
icepicked in the heart or neck.

Mars is a nastier myth, but
more *heimisch* for some latter-day
atom-energized Voyager
to lay by, the better to fly by

and finally, beyond Pluto, settle among
Eocene forms not yet imagined,
not humdrum, resourceful as rodents,
"intelligent life" we fondly call it,

meaning, smart enough to welcome *us*
their destiny, but smarter than us too,
having no need for cinema, jails
or moving vans to find out what they are.