

the event of melody played rapidly
in counterpoint by masters
of guitar, oboe and horn.

This comes closer: glass chimes
and one cymbal with soft brush
create the night sky quietly
restless with stars, just as
the still surface of a pond
restless in slow rain creates
glass chimes and one cymbal
with soft brush.

To simplify—you and I side
by side in bed on the blue-
checked quilt mean: place fingers
on these strings, hold bow
at this angle, draw easily.

THE STARS BENEATH MY FEET

Not the burrowing star-nosed
mole nor the earth roots of the star-
thistle nor the yellow star flowers
of stargrass, not the fallen webs
and empty egg sacs of star-bellied
spiders, not blood stars nor winged
sea stars tight on their tidal rock
bottoms, and I don't mean either
the lighted star-tips of the lantern
fish and angler fish drifting
miles deep at the ocean's end
of their forever good night.

I mean those actual stars filling
the skies directly below me with ignited

hubs and knotted assemblies combusting
into the waves of their own momentum,
the same stars in kind as the ones
above—gaseous blue clusters of clouds
expelling hot super stellars, fusing
galaxy upon galaxy of old histories
and reverberations. Those stars.

Were the earth made of glass,
any of us could look down now and see
them speeding away deeper into their vast
eras of math and glory existing immediately
beneath us where we stand suspended.

Even while marsh rains slowly
fill the hoof prints of passing
deer, even while flocks of lark
and longspur fly across the evening
with accordion motions of fracture
and union, even while you, fragranced
with sleep, draw me close or send me out,
stars and myriads of stars possess
their places, surrounding us as if
their facts bore us upward from below,
sheltered us in matrices of invisible
canopies above, as if they graced us
with a balance manifest in their far
numbers extending away equally
on our left and on our right.
They are the designated ancestors
of our eyes created in the lasting
moments of their own dead light.
They keep us on all sides bound safe
within their spheres and apart
from that great dire and naught
existing beyond the known and measurable
edges of their established dominions.