

Canyon Kyrielle

by Rachel Austin

There's no sunset on Godly time;
Shadow and steam, sunlight and rime,
Beyond the reach of timely hands.
Bone and leather, iron and sand.

The mountain through the inland sea
Sinks and surges; fish and feather
Drift among currents, catch in trees.
Iron and sand, bone and leather.

A timeless eye sees time-worn gods
Still lurking in a wedge of stone;
Virgin forest, yet path well-trod.
Sand and iron, leather and bone.

The coyot' and the contrabass
Vibrate with the same B minor
A kyrie, Chatauqua mass.
Sand and leather, bone and iron.

Lord, have mercy. On mountain hour,
Sandstone gleams and corn lilies flower
Ripened canyon catches fire
Bone and leather, sand and iron.

Winter's breath leaves a frosty crust
On fallen leaves and fields unmanned;
A yellowed poem turns to dust.
Bone and leather, iron and sand.

But through the ash grows columbine;
A fencepost shades a patch of snow
Well into June. Sunlight and rime –
Leather and sand, iron and bone.

A borrowed glimpse from God's own eye
When flowers bloom where ashes lie?
Or mere trick of mountain weather?
Sand and iron, bone and leather.