

# Stone: A Symposium

## *Adam*

In Eden I hardly noticed rocks—  
the parted stream,  
the occasional stumble.  
But outside I collected them,  
named them like beasts,  
trusted them like bones.  
In spring I piled them  
waist high,  
wondering at night  
what stone across the fields  
waited to be scrubbed  
and chiseled  
with my name.

## *Moses*

God said, tell this boulder  
to become a spigot.  
But I kept stone silent,  
my tongue stiff as a tablet  
from all the hardness of hearts  
and the seasons of death by stone.  
For that God took me  
as I sat on a cliff,  
remembering aprons  
full of manna,  
imagining smooth cakes  
in rivers of honey  
and running milk.

## *Satan*

Stub your tongue  
on stale clay.  
Break the crust  
and let the shards  
settle in your  
own dark well.  
You will pray for bread,  
but expect stone.

*Jared's Brother*

Clean rocks the size of figs  
heaped in my cupped hands  
became portals of light  
even the sea could not quench.  
Geology did not teach me this;  
it is only a prism,  
a rainbow of adjectives:  
igneous  
sedimentary  
metamorphic.  
But the soul of  
every rock is a lamp,  
a tongue of flame  
that speaks to the heart.  
When I found that fire  
I learned the hard truth:  
show God a rock and he  
shows you himself.

*Joseph Smith*

Because my father's meadows  
were full of them  
I had to rake all day,  
combing the soil clean,  
my hatfuls of pebbles  
spilling like seeds  
across the path.  
Small wonder  
I have seen  
so much  
in stones.

—Michael Hicks