

A summer storm piles up on the mountains to the east
colors change
fluffy and white to gray ... then black.

To the south, twin rain storms weep upon the desert floor
a dry mile between
life on the outside, death in the middle.

Music from the CD fills the cab
lightning strikes miles away
counterpoint to the cellos
in concert with the oboes.

The sky; the distant hills
burnt out once green plants
a tapestry of dust
many hues of brown
a hundred ways of birth
unique, violent, upheaval of the Earth.

Defiance in these hills.
Baked for a billion days
frozen and cut from an ice age
they keep their feet.

Peace is here. Perhaps God.

At night I stand naked in the yard
the milky way above
100 million stars unseen in Stockton
burst to greedy life each night
a swath of light across the sky
ants below
the little red ones
one mind for many
they bite my toes but I don't care
Next door two black Scottie dogs
ignored
trapped in the yard
their owner moved away.
They bark at everything.
I feed them
but like a capricious god
I don't let them be dogs.

The clouds again assault the peak
a nearly endless sea of gray
and black
and rain.
Life.

My Desert.