

# Reflections of Stellar Ecology

At ten thousand feet we'd watch  
the satellites trace their quiet  
geometries across a sky as black  
as a bird's eye. What was I, ten?  
eleven? Mom said some were UFOs.  
We'd see them first as they  
rose above aspens silhouetted  
darkly along the horizon on one side of  
the beaver pond and watch  
them disappear in pine shadow on  
the other. The pond was like a hole  
of universe punched through the thin  
plate of flat earth. In still waters you could  
see the milky-way burn from one  
bank to the other. A fish would set  
a ring of ripples spreading across  
the stars. Were those galaxies  
gently rocked by the trout rising  
to take a caddisfly laying eggs  
on the Pleiades?

—Steve Peck