

Astronomy

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He told us of the thousand million stars
In each of a hundred million galaxies,
Of hydrogen exploding, and light-measured years.
Ten to the twentieth power may only tease
The mind, but stops the soul with zeroes piled up—
A hundred thousand million million suns!
How else make man alive to what it means to sup
From earth's four billion years of growing pains?
Ten million years, four gases free, and energy:
Amino acids, replicating, come alive!
The What? the How? he tried to tell; the Why?
He left to us. My daughter, still not five,
Restive in her hour of time and foot of space,
Stretched up and planted kisses on my face.

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