

Moon to Moon Nights

like time-lapse film,
signify now a moment,
now a lifetime. A bonedrift of stone shapes
pale and rise like years
along garden's edge. . . .

What erasures there are in memory
remain a presence—
like every pasture since
that first childhood bringing in of the cows.
A remnant fear of drought surfaces again,
decades after turns for irrigation
on your father's farm, changing canvas dams
in the shallow ditches, twice before bed,
again before dawn—that early acquaintance
with twilights, the lit variegations of water
moving in the dark.

Now the voices of children—your own—
ribbon the sheer deep of sky
no bears out tonight
what time is it Moon?

And their children answer, present tense,
your own voice fading
with stars in this moonrise light.

Like the river and all rivers
you have ever known—undercurrents pulling
out of sight—
night breezes tune in
and out with peripherals of sound,
their patterns fractal, ongoing,
and still unsayable.

—Dixie Partridge

This poem tied for first place in the 2021 Clinton F.
Larson Poetry Contest, sponsored by BYU Studies.