

William Kloefkorn

Bryce Canyon

On our steep descent
we stop frequently
to exchange one form of giddiness

for another,
until arriving finally at the base
we stand for a long time

silent as hoodoos, hoodoos
breathing heavily and grinning,
hoodoos amazed not so much

at the pink impossible configurations
as at our own brief audacity:
we have jumped

from the body of one conclusion
to another and have lived
to tell it. Never mind

that the ascent lies ahead: *carpe diem*
is that darkest wine we drink
when the skin rests

empty. Later, perusing the photographs,
we will agree that
chiefly through omission

does the camera lie. When I
trip the shutter
I exclude the ninety and

nine. So lose a sheep in this
corkscrew universe, and
there is not one shepherd anywhere

sufficiently divine to find it. Is
this why, approaching
that place at the top

where we started down, we feel
less elected than lucky

to be holding hands?