

**Recollections of tranquillity**

If all constituted things with each aspect  
in its proper place have a beginning and must  
have an end (think of a mountain or a  
river) then why would we weep and if

I am well-behaved will my final reward  
be life everlasting . . . . Such considerations  
influence decisions, set the seemingly  
trite in an ordered, sensible procession,

make slender threads tightropes, make  
bearable gnats or termites in an old house —  
preferable to quakes which shake foundations —  
and if I count on the future as on the train

which pulls into the station all hours of night  
brushing feet, glancing towards the empty  
tunnel, heeding signals: what think ye  
whether is more, the water which is

in the four great oceans, or the tears  
which have flowed from you and have been shed  
by you, while ye strayed and wandered  
on this long pilgrimage, and sorrowed . . . .

—Ken Samberg