



WHY

Why fondle a rock?
It shares the rugged body
where we were born.

Our passionate shift and shove
mirror a moment
erupting in fire

slowed to eons' crystalline trickle
thickening, building,
collapsing, melting.

Great ages echo and shiver,
playing themselves out
within our puny bones.

METAMORPHIC

The Earth is never still.
Even as it crumbles
it is building,
great plates pushing
sediments up from the oceans
or sliding them under the continents.

There massive heat and stress
flatten minerals into bands
or leaf them into layers
or squeeze their particles so tight
atomic patterns rearrange
and recrystallize
limestone roughness into marble,
sandstone into quartzite,
shale to slate.

Deepest and hottest,
diamonds are hardened.
Higher, beryls and topaz cool.
Like sulphur,
without any air some form
as minerals and bacteria mingle
or, with oxygen, are reborn
like a brassy chalcopyrite
deepened to azurite blue.

Even the oldest,
like a foliated gneiss,
after remelting into magma,
hiss back up volcanic vents
and overflow as mountains
—repeating Earth's cycle.

AQUAMARINE

To mollify sea deities,
ancient lapidaries prescribed
blue amulets carved from aquamarine
whose inner lapping soothed
and as seasoned sailors believed
wore away the dark coast of worry.

Others cast their woes inside the gem,
then soaked it in a little bowl
beneath the waning moon.
Perhaps within a day or two
where crystals cooled and brittle
a six-rayed star would fan and twinkle
love light toward a long marriage,
restore youth, hope, and friends,
or calm a throbbing tooth.

Today Brazilian pegmatites
host the clearest and the bluest,
named (her birthstone) Santa Marias.
A famous one, unearthed in 1910,
was heftier than a bongo drum:
110.5 kilograms
—an amulet with cleansing tears enough
for a thousand sailors
not to drown.

MAGNETOMETRIST

He listens.
The rocks hum
how minerals are drawn to each other
and particles of gold are found
as if they yearned nearby
for sulphides' love.

He listens,
and they share
their quivering magnetism:
attractions
and repulsions
moving the underworld

Looking Through Stone by Susan Ioannou
ISBN 978-1-896350-22-6, 107 pp, \$17.00

Your Scrivener Press, May 2007
Telephone / Fax: 705-522-5126

info@yourscribenerpress.com
<http://www.yourscribenerpress.com/>