

1 SAY WHAT?

Children chugging chicken broth
And bears imbibing beers
Roosters ringing telephones
And tigers tugging tears
Rat snakes riding roadrunners
And beetles breaking bones
For all the sense it makes to me
When toads turn into stones

-- Steven Withrow

2 SKIPPING STONES

Skippety
Skippety
Skippety
Plop.

I'm skipping stones.
I cannot stop.
It started with
just one or two.
I picked them up.
I threw
They flew
into air
into sky
into lake
I made them fly.

Now every stone
my ears can see
is calling –

Please pick me.
Pick me.
Pick me.
Pick me.

-- Amy Ludwig VanDerwater

3 LIFE IS JUST A SONG

BROWN SUGAR on my oatmeal, coffee in my cup
Doing whatever it takes just to START ME UP.

ANGIE, AIN'T TOO PROUD TO BEG,
For the scraps that fall beneath my leg.

The carpool means I'm WAITING ON A FRIEND,
Let this day start, so it can hurry up and end!

Argue with the teenager who wants to PAINT IT BLACK,
"IT'S ONLY ROCK AND ROLL!" she says,
"Not like your music from way back!"

WILD HORSES can't keep me away,
From running home to you.

I CAN'T GET NO SATISFACTION elsewhere,
All day, I just MISS YOU.

Fix what's broken, Take out the trash,
You're the one I love, you're my JUMPIN JACK FLASH!

The Room is booked at MEMORY MOTEL,
Your HONKY TONK WOMAN is ready to tell,

That life is not just a song, and tonight we will go,
To your favorite rock concert, THE ROLLING STONES show!

-- Genia Gerlach

4 AUSTRALIA'S VISITOR

Funny bouncing creatures
With joeys peeking out.
A silly little thing
Half duck, half beaver.
Multi-colored birds
Diving at our heads.
God has been here—
And I laugh at His sense of humor!

Mini-fans, flowers, trees
Sway gently under water,
Reaching for light above

While rainbow fishes
Dart gracefully in and out
Making the beauty whole.
God has been here—
And I marvel at His artistry.

Shades of orange and red
Bounce off mammoth stone
Set in vast emptiness,
The evening sun moves
With soft bristle brush
To stripe the horizon below.
God has been here—
And I ponder His design.

Great, commanding, regal
Uluru seems to breathe,
Calling to ancient people
For fifty million years,
“Come with sacred stories
And connect with your dreamtime.”
God has been here
And I feel his presence.

Silver points in a black sky,
So bright the eyes must blink
To comprehend what they see.
A milky white path
Spreads across the expanse,
Hints of what can't be seen.
I can no longer doubt,
For God has been here.

-- Gay Fawcett

5 THE KING'S SCULPTOR

Chiseled from granite,
stoic and hardened,
a prisoner of sorts
soon to be pardoned.
Freed from the stone
by the sweat of one's brow,
magnificent marble,
lifeless till now.

He crept forth towards life-
not quite, but almost.
The artist is pleased
and proposes a toast.
“Not now!” cried the king
“It’s wrong” he bemoaned,
“For this you shall hang
but first, you’ll be stoned!
And then to be sure
you’ve learned the lesson,
I sentence you
to a guillotine session.”

-- Ken Slesarik

6 STONE WISE

Stone soup is
filled with
apricot stones,
and cherry stones,
that will turn
a person
stone green.
Upon one gravestone
is written:
Here lies
Miles Stonewall,
he stayed away
from stormy
hailstones
and slippery
stepping stones.

But never learned
to make soup...
with chicken bones.

-- Mary Nida Smith

7 TALKING HEADS

Television anchors come and go
With network and cable news, too
Stations’ ratings soar high, dip low.

Now everywhere you look
Talking heads report the news
You, the viewer, they want to hook.

There's news far and wide. You'll see...
War, crimes, politics, weather
Even entertainment is key.

There's Diana and Barbara
Meredith and Matt
Anderson and Glenn.

Larry and Katie
Wolf and Lester
Andrea and Greta

All on competing stations
Fighting over coveted viewers
Location, location, location.

But one of my favorite talking heads
Was on network TV's 20/20
Stone's his name. Thanks for watching. Go to bed.

-- Beth Carter

8 WHAT'S IN A STONE?

A pebble, a rock or a cave,
or maybe a calcified bone,
a marble, some granite or brick—
they all could be samples of stone.

But thinking a little bit more,
I see some things harder than stone.
Some people are hard to persuade
to ways and ideas not their own.

When those folks receive a new thought,
they might speak with stony-faced glare—
or maybe not answer at all,
stone cold as if they didn't care.

Yet "stone" describes virtuous things,
like rock-steady friendships we've grown.

Of course there's the most true of all:
Ten Laws carved by our God in stone.

-- Reta Stewart Allen

9 THE GALL OF SOME PEOPLE

Before she went to surgery,
I stood beside her bed.
"Granny, please oh please!" I begged,
"Remember what you said!"
Daddy sadly shook his head,
"Son, don't be absurd,"
But I saw Granny wink at me,
And Granny keeps her word.

I like my skulls and turtle shells,
I like my spider jar,
I like my pickled octopus,
I like my baby gar,
I like my walls of wings and hides,
I like my bugs and bones,
I like my snakes and scorpions, but
I LOVE my granny's stones!

-- David L. Harrison:

10 WEATHERING THE STORM

A freight train twister
Tore straight for the farmhouse.
Bess laid her body's bulk
Over her young grandson,
Clenched her eyes,
And murmured prayers
To stay calm, prayers
For safety, prayers
For spouse and son in the cornfields.

The house shook.
Boards wrenched and warped,
Creaked and groaned.
Windowpanes popped,
Glass shatters spewed,
Dishes tumbled, papers flew—
Then silence.

Bess hoisted herself,
Lifted the boy, looked,
And wept with relief.
The stone foundation stood.

-- Jane Heitman Healy

11 PETROGLYPHS IN DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT

They crawl
up the walls
of the canyon
overlooking vast
stretches of time.
The men who
chipped them
here have
been gone
for a thousand
years, but their
models, descendants
of long-ago lizards
and distant relatives
of more distant
dinosaurs
still scamper
among the stones.
Echoes.

-- bluerabbit

12 MEDUSA'S GARDEN

snakes arise
mesmerize
hypnotize
best be wise
avoid those eyes
futile tries
haunting cries
life now dies
stone spies

(or)

snakey hair
deadly glare
life dies
stone spies

-- Jackie Huppenthal

13 ONE NIGHT STAND

Her voice is soft,
a hushed rush of
sibilant sounds.

“I love you,” she whispers.

He cringes,
twinges of guilt slaying him
as he slinks through the dark,
stark naked,
faking urgency as he
feels for his clothes.

“Gotta go.
I’m due in Mycenae.”

Hurt grows.
She knows he won’t return.
Just like all the others -
Brothers in lust.

Well, hell hath no fury . . .

She lets him go,
slow like a sloth to the door.
Then she calls
in sexy sibilant sounds.

“Perssesus.”

Reflex rounds him,
astounds him as he sees
too late,
the snakes slithering
round her head.

He freezes,
a statue of stone.
And she,
once more alone,
wanders her garden of men,
wishing it were not so.

-- Barbara J. Turner

14 KEY STONE

We lived our lives
In ancient times
Then vanished, passed away,
Leaving treasured words behind -
Words carved in rock – the shapes, the lines
The echoes of our lives.
For stone survives if souls cannot
In cultures as they end
Yet meaning written down we found
That, too, may fade away.
This was our fate as we called out
One thousand years and more
Our symbols, seen, no one could read
Time stood a great locked door.
Until the day a stone they saw
In the foundation of a wall
Unearthed we both were brought to light
Discovered and set free
As those alive grasped what we said
We spoke through words
No longer dead -
Rosetta was the key.

-- Liz Korba

15 ROADSIDE CONSTRUCTION

White boulders lie strewn
like piles of discarded bones
dug up by steel-jawed predators
from bedrock graves.

Remorseless amid their day's carnage,
machines sleep in the dusk,
sated dinosaurs at rest.

-- David L. Harrison

16 COLLECTION

1. Cairn

Charles Stoneham
Liked his scotch.
Was he a scoundrel?

Mary Stoneham
A gleam of wit in her blue eyes
“Don’t get old.” She told me.

2. Rock

Dylan Stoneham Winters
Adding people
Shelter.

Charles Brian Stoneham Smiga
This morning I said, “How did I get so lucky to have you?”
He answered, “I guess you just loved and loved until I was here.”

2. Stones

She said, “Turn each word over and over in your hand,
Until the line is smooth.”
I did it. I do it.

Lists of words
Piles of stones
Pebbles and bones

3. Crystal

He said, “I want you to take me in there one day.
Where all those blocks are,
Because I think I saw a little house.”

I finally told him, “That’s where people’s bodies are buried,
We leave our bodies behind.”
Rock, scissors, paper.

-- Mimi Cross

17 HEART OF STONE

From the outside I display a tone
Don't look at me! Don't touch me!
It seems my heart is made of stone.
Don't love me! Leave me be!

This facade I present to all
Knowing the rejecting is a lie.
How odd to erect this wall,
As I inwardly convey a positive reply.

My mind pushes others away.
My heart screams stay, stay, stay.
Frantically seeking an effective way
Of learning to live and play.

My reaction, as others draw near
Shout, go away, leave me alone.
They belie my greatest fear-
That my heart really is made of stone.

Please see through my action
Forge forward, break down the wall.
Ignore my attempts at retraction
My fears, fade as it falls.

I reach for a firm grip
On a world riddled with strife
Gone is my longing to avoid and skip.
I am committed to living my life.

I am filled with a living desire,
A yearning to not be alone,
To create joy from the mindless mire.
My heart is not made of stone.

-- Kathy Stump

18 CHILDREN KNOW STONES

Ask any child about stones.
Their eyes light up like gemstones.
"Stones come in all shapes and sizes you see.

Ordinary, unusual and magnificent.
It depends on who's looking you see.
Some like plain smooth stones, others jagged and sharp like arrowheads.
You pile them up to sort on your bed.
So many colors to choose.
Careful none to lose.
Gold, Sapphire, Emeralds Ruby, Diamonds, and Jade come from stones.
Geods come from ugly plain stones.
They appear on cracking open the stones.
What a sight you would have missed if you had left them alone.
You carry them with you when visiting friends.
Compare, trade and talk and bring them home again.
Keep them always is the plan.
Sometimes they get lost with the moves.
Then you have more to choose."

-- Janet Kay Gallagher