

## [Athena Kildegaard: Two Poems](#) [1]

June 6, 2016 [Writing and Faith](#) [2]

[Math Poetry](#) [3]

### Prayer for Conviviality

Bless us o  
fork hedge conifer wristwatch  
and the daylight the iceberg the filament

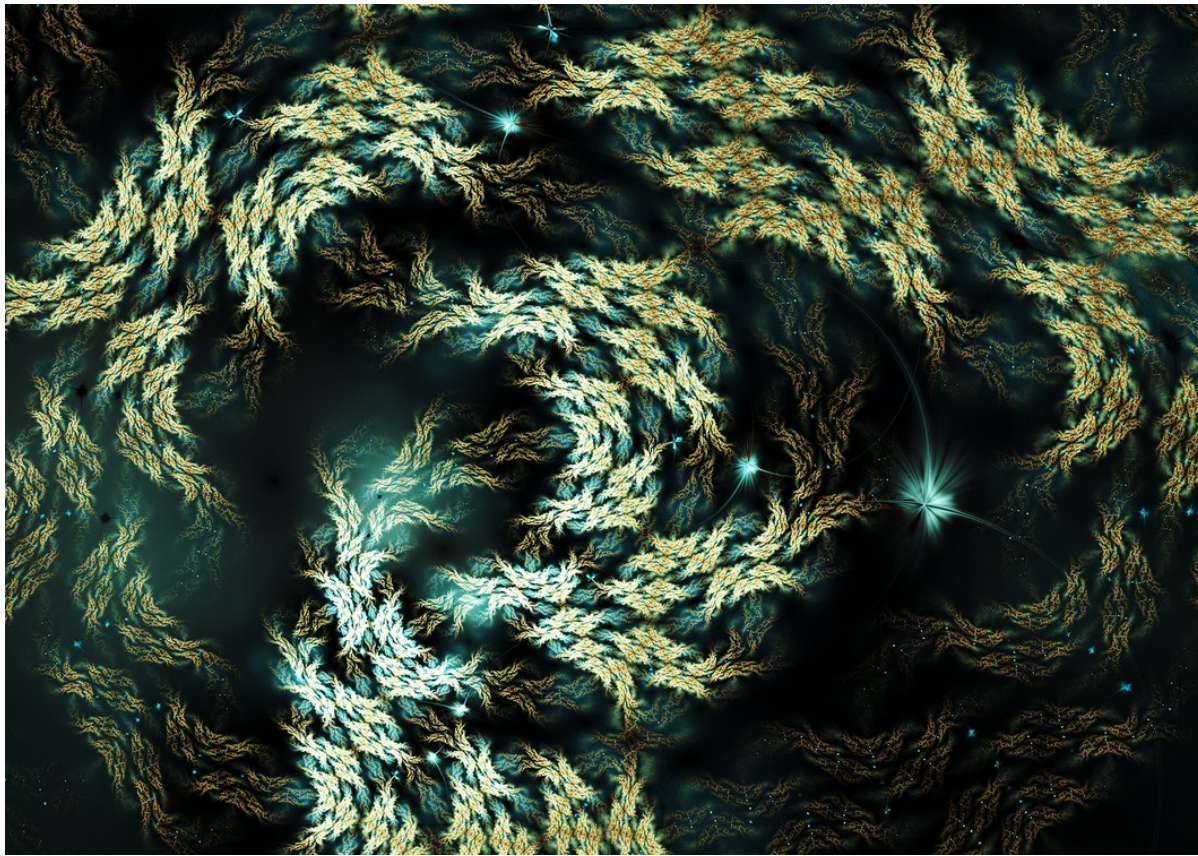
and these thy drawers eaves bulbs cabbages

which we are about to receive  
from thy hand  
wing lap wave cell pulse  
from thy furrow crotch breast pouch

through the thrust of time  
the damp of dawn  
the spill of wind  
the trust of sheaf and burr and shell

our hand need nurse eye  
our thirst sorrow praise doubt  
our rein saw lens brush bow whisk blade  
our faith and hunger

amen.



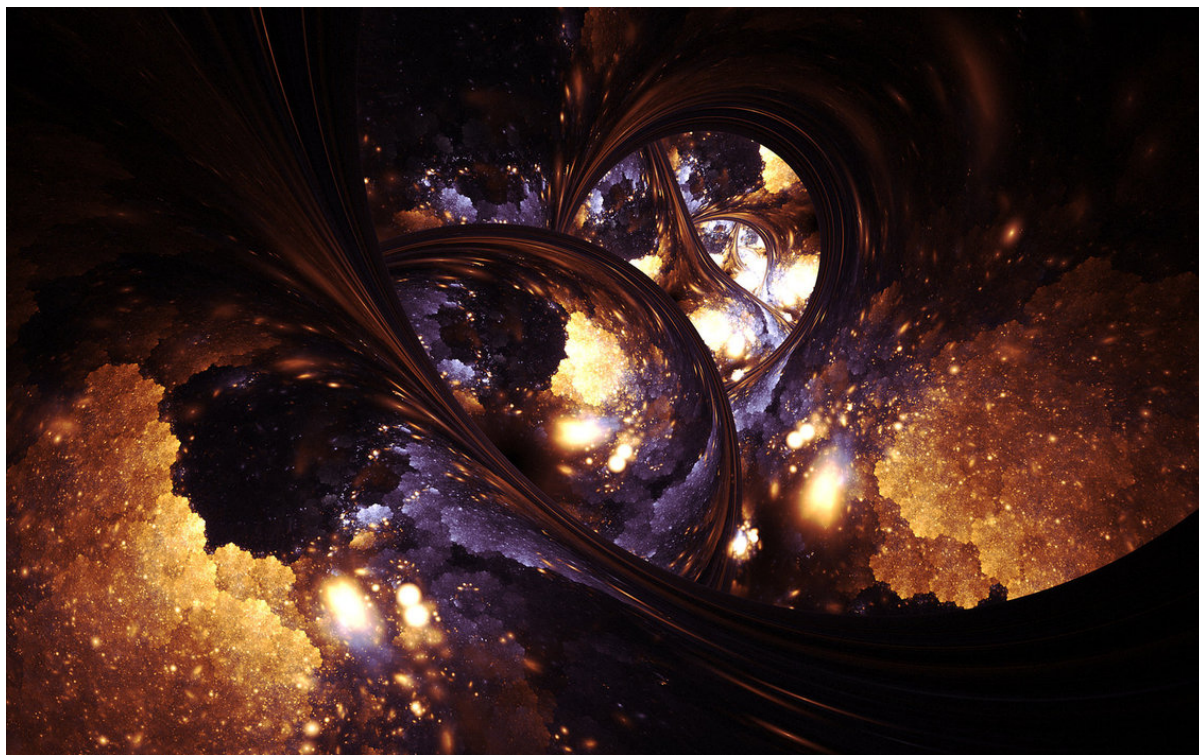
## The Lost Forty

The team of surveyors sent up  
by logging interests from the capital  
quit early, cleared a spot of pinecones and pebbles,  
set aside the kindling, and righted tents.  
The usual man built a fire  
and after beans and dried apple, another man,  
probably a homesick father, brought out  
a bottle of bourbon he'd hauled for weeks.  
The team toasted the birthday of the youngest,  
the first to get a blister, the one who complained  
of dew on his flannels, the one who knew  
the correct way with the heliotrope.  
He blushed at the third toast and the fourth,  
woke up in the night and zigzagged  
through the woods to puke. On his return  
he stirred the embers, added wood, and dropped,  
by accident, yesterday's calculations in the fire.  
He'd used them, stupidly, to fan the flames.  
So come morning they started awry and left  
forty acres and a span of creek unmapped.

I've made most of this up, the apples,  
the stupidity, the bourbon bought in St. Paul.  
Perhaps not the stupidity, though I like the dew-damp  
boy who bumbles in the night. It was October



and the Pleiades leapt above as if to mark  
the necessity for error.



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Athena Kildegaard lives and teaches in Morris, Minnesota. She's the author of four books of poetry. Her poems have appeared or are forthcoming in *Alaska Quarterly Review*, *Barn Owl Review*, *Grist*, *Zone 3*, *Tinderbox Poetry Journal*, *The Literary Bohemian*, *Tar River Poetry*, and elsewhere.

Athena is a contributing poetry editor at *Talking Writing*.

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- [2] <https://talkingwriting.com/tw-issue-themes/writing-and-faith>
- [3] <https://talkingwriting.com/talkingwriting-categories/spotlight-math-poetry>
- [4] <http://piethein21.deviantart.com/art/Forests-and-socks-582962774>
- [5] <http://piethein21.deviantart.com/art/flower-fractified-325105328>