



Complexity

By Katy Z. Allen

Wayland, Massachusetts

sitting by a stream
enveloped in subtle autumn beauty
feeling solid ground beneath
breathing invisible life-giving air
awareness awakens

verdant summertime leaves
conceal yellows and oranges
reds
maroons
and complexity beyond measure

introduced species small and large
exotic flora and fauna
suppress more delicate autochthones
of many hues
small and large
and complexity beyond measure

death, demolition and destruction
hide and inflame
grief and fear
despair
desolation
and complexity beyond measure

rising seas and rampaging wildfires
screaming winds and persistent drought
overshadow and obliterate connection
to earthy soil and solid rock
iron core of earth
and complexity beyond measure

sitting by a stream
watching beloved children at play

quietly
unexpectedly
touching grief
beyond words
 beyond comprehension
 beyond endurance

that simmers steadily

in the silent static
and active living
earth

in expansive and tortured
human realms

and in the deepest
most hidden
most vulnerable
recesses of the soul

complexity beyond measure

SUNRISE, IN A RABBIT HOLE available on [Amazon](#).

Robert Witmer
Tokyo, Japan

I expected something more grandiose than this rusty little gate with a broken latch. Maybe not *grandiose*, given the early emphasis on humility, but anyway something more befitting the occasion, more ... *revelatory*. But here I am in the altogether, naked as the day I was born, though quite a bit more ... developed I should guess, wondering whether to wait for someone to let me in or a great voice calling from on high or maybe just the soft bleating of a lamb, or perhaps I am supposed to continue up the narrow lane to the Big House and announce myself to the man in charge, declaring that I am ready to serve my life sentence. Not *life* exactly, and rather more than a sentence. More like a tome, an opus magnum, something like one of those Victorian novels with their elaborate constructions of minutia and the omniscient narrator who knows everything about everybody, where a poor guy from the sticks gets a job in a factory and, in the end, just has to accept things as they are. I decide to wait, and time passes. And passes. And passes. And, eventually, passes me by.

McMammoth

By Richard King Perkins II

Huntley, Illinois, USA

This is a clone
in the shape of a woolly mammoth.
For her, Siberia isn't a punishment
but a falsely promised land of permafrost.
Her tusks forage and dig
on the taiga
with measured sadness
as the great slope of her back
offers a momentary ramp,
a tool for climbing humans
to ascend and ride atop her head.
And once you control the head,
you own the rest.
And like our ancestors,
someone will decide
after the elephant ride
that she looks absolutely delicious.