

**SCOTT BEAL**  
**The Academy**

Aristotle said trash falls because the earth is made of trash.  
Babylonians counted stars in a base-sixty system, but  
cipherless, so you never know if a single  
digit means sixty or thirty-six hundred.  
Epicurus found being composed of random atoms means  
fondle folks at will and swallow your fill.  
God does not play dice, by golly, said Einstein,  
horrified by quarkmuddle but fine with bending spacetime.  
In the *Timaeus*, Plato claimed our maker is perfect but matter  
just sucks, so we scrape at our scabs and yowl for towels.  
Kepler nested his laws of planetary motion in a hallucinatory  
lexicon of perfect solids and the literal Music of the Spheres  
mathematically rendered into clefs and quarter notes.  
No neurochemist alive can patch the holes in Pauline's brain  
or explain the polished clarity of her memories of the Depression,  
picking tomatoes in a white sundress, or the dumbstruck  
questions she asks her son, parting her purse to find a phone charger.  
Roger Bacon in the thirteenth century insisted our natures  
spread from our centers like warmth from a torch,  
tremoring through furniture and friends.  
Until 2004, no person had seen a live giant squid.  
Vision, said Ptolemy, is caused by rays  
which radiate out from our pupils. When Wilhelm Röntgen  
x-rayed his wife's hand, she knew she'd seen straight into death.  
You can imagine how the Babylonians would have felt,  
zero being invented before their eyes.