

ONTOGENESIS OF FLAMES

Desire burns like fire—
but fire demands fuel.

What feeds this
restless flame?

The answer is the story
of the world.

In the beginning,
there was gas.

And God, rather indifferently,
struck His flint.

A spark erupted—
hotter than the sun.

The cosmos was consumed
in flame.

When the burning ceased,
only ash remained.

From the dust, man crawled—
on ashen hands and knees.

He cried: “Deliver us from this
wretched heap of dust!

Ignite us again; let us
remain a sphere of flame.”

So God gave man
a mighty stack of wood.

“Do what you will—this
was not made in My image.”

And man discovered a spark
beneath the soot.

He stirred the flame,
set fire to the wood.

But what God gave was
all the wood there was.

So, with a wry grin, He sat
and waited for the next heap of soot—

and wondered how man
might make his next plea.

God never told man
he was made in His image.

(And there's little explanation
why the thought occurred.

Perhaps an illusion,
cast by the crackling flame.

Physicists suggest it emerged
from a random flux of quanta.)

And so we pray—that
tomorrow, God will hear us,

and once more provide
the fire of restless desire.

It is this,
or a pile of dust.