ONE FOR BISHOP BERKELEY

Zoom

the lifeless stretch

to Orion, searching, scanning

all the way, then

back through where we are,

plunge

reeling out this or that measuring tape

into submicron oscillations

of enzymes' inanimate girders.

Separate 'scopes are conscripted,

micro and tele, for out

is far, and one must reach

the cavities

where the tiny structures hide.

So, in bits, we sketch in

this escalator of powers of ten.

Stuck in the middle, a life

of delimited sizes, child's 4

to my 16\_ 32.

And even then one sleeve always too long.

Count in the intestinal flora,

a right whale,

and still the sentient

crowds on a few steps.

Wouldn't it make more sense

to have us top the master plan?

Biggest is best, not only in squashes

at the 4-H Fair, and if all devolved

from us, fell in threads below,

ah, then we could rest, secure

in our creation, we unnervous gods,

and having built in a random number

generator, for we'd want the small

things to run occasionally counter

to our plan, we'd sit and watch,

on our eternal picnic, all

that fuss and fun below.

Or, tiny but elemental clusters

freed of doubt of our divisibility,

we would reproduce, willfully,

stack, aggregate, grow

effortlessly upward, the only way

for us. We'd make use of the chance

turns of nature for color, softnesses

and shapes. In time

green vines would come, climbing

trellises of our own making.

Nothing insecure, or uncanny,

for the atoms that we are

would be in all.

But in the middle

is where the brain

is,

constrained

by the skull,

bound

by stretched skin,

few slits

for the senses to flow through.

So this transforming prisoner

beams out, thinks:

See it big

the stars make them far.

See it small

a cell.

Querying

the proximate causes

of its confinement,

testing powers,

dreaming,

it strews the world

with all the sizes of its creation.