

Climbing Columbus

James is scrambling,
a scrawny-legged spider.
Small clods of clay
crumble as he climbs.
I'm keeping up
remembering this climb
this hill and this sky
almost remembering
being seven
and climbing Columbus.

At the top our breath
is sucked and restored
by the wind.
"Awesome!" James cries
a grasshopper on the hilltop
clothes carved into the shape of a boy.
We face the sun, stretch our arms
and fly
over lesser hills and valleys
the town beneath.

From below we are small crosses on the hill
markers of faith or death.
From above we are worshippers
of light, sky, breath.
this is God I think
as the wind lifts my body
this
is a poem

"I'll always remember this day," James says,
the wind scooping his hat.
He scoots down for it
watches ants climb a hill
calls me to see the cactus flower.

We take the lee side down
past tumbled rock thrones
chew sweet grass
pursue pasture paths
leave mighty Columbus to ponder
two insects: insignificant
magnificent
omniscient

-- Katherine Matiko