

October 2023 Musing
A Farewell to Summer: A Poem in Two Parts
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A Farewell to Summer: A Poem In Two Parts

**Crunching Down a Dark Gravel Lane on a Moonless Summer Night
(part 1)**

Here's how you walk down a dark gravel lane
on a moonless summer night
without bumping into
a tree.

It's easy.

You listen to the gravel crunching beneath your feet,
and when it stops you know you're in trouble.

If there's any
light in the sky
(a glimmer will do),
you look up to where
those trees don't touch,
and step by step you climb
those crunchy stairs to the stars.

You'll be just fine, you tell yourself.
Don't worry, you tell yourself.
It's a painless journey.
No need for fear.

No need to give any thought
to other places you could be going
or where you might have gone wrong.

Just pay attention. Be present. Listen.

**Without Conscious Thought
(part 2)**

Walking down a forked gravel lane,
I took the one more traveled.

It wasn't my fault.
I was doing everything right.

I was alive to my present surroundings,
living my midsummer night's dream,
the air cool and damp, the fireflies
twinking on and off, on and off.

But listen. Here's the thing.

Fireflies don't guide you
so much as mystify
and delight you
and maybe
inspire
you.

And that's when it happened
on that moonless summer night.

Without choice of will, nor conscious thought,
my hand darted to that beast in my pocket,
its glaring screen bluminated my eyes,
my feet went yon rather than hither –
went that way instead of this –
and the ground went soft
and the crunching
stopped.

It was so quiet.

And in that encircling silence
with no whisper or trace of breeze,

I found myself transfixed,
the spinning world
at my fingertips,
and never
so lost.

Then just before
it was forever too late –
the cosmos forever dimmed –
I confined that beast to its lair.

And with fireflies flashing about me,
the Earth exposing her milky way,
I climbed that gravelly stairway
into the dark starry night.

