**Life Stew**

Eric Fisher Stone

Boil saline puddles of ash, spiced

with yellow sulfur. Mix

lightning bolts and cyanide salts

to a paste of carbon. Brew

ammonia and methane, fermented

to a mash of sour soot. Grate

meteor crumbs with volcanic grime,

a fiesta from fetid slop, sugars

smelted to the riving wisps

of a double helix. Let the stew

simmer until DNA ladders build

trilobite eyes, wild green eels, humans

painting the Sistine Chapel, witnessing

the universe that sees itself.