

Universe in Joliet

standing at the gas pump
in Joliet, Illinois
in a late winter slush storm
I stared at the single telephone pole
stuck into the concrete on the corner
a still-standing artifact
from an old technology
while I re-aligned my molecules
and began calculating the gas mileage
based against how far I needed to go
where I had come from, what was
left in the tank
and while my mind sluggishly turned over these
calculations, starting, losing track, starting
trying to make sense of them

I was struck by the position and odd angle
of the telephone pole on the corner
and how it seemed perfectly parallel with the hose
from the gas pump, hanging in a long black line from above
both dark, vertical lines
and then the access road from the interstate
intersected this visual blueprint perfectly to the plane
and in some insane way
the lines, and the distances between them
the gas pump hose, the telephone pole and the access road
and the dimensional planes they all existed on
at that moment
made perfect sense

and suddenly there was a beauty
in the geometry of the moment
and some golden mean or
some pure mathematics

had in an instant made itself
known to me
and there under the BP sign
all these visual connections
began to assert themselves...

the triangle formed within the
handle of the gas pump
 related perfectly
 to the right angle
 defined by the vertical line
 of the street sign's
 structural support beam
 and it's right angle arm
 described as extended
 over the intersection, functional
 holding the street lights aloft
 swinging madly
 in the winter winds
high above the solid traffic
that packed the crossing highways of cars,
with dirty windshields, drizzled rain
and made mush out of the wet snow slush
that was already everywhere
and the thin drizzle that covered
the windshields and
made the wiperblades
on the endless stream of cars
go spastic

and in all this madness,
amid all this industrial confusion
and commotion and grimey wetness,
the beauty and profound harmony
of the geometric planes
that intersected

before me and which had
only seconds before
revealed themselves to me
made themselves known to me
 was so peaceful and
 so serene
that I stood in the slush mush
of the breezeway
removed from the wind, the cold
the slush and the misery of
the modern convenience
of the crowded BP station
 by the gas pump
 next to my chevrolet
 surrounded, engulfed
 and engaged
 by the universe