



Desert Sonnet

Shape-shifting land, ever new
and inexhaustible, the undefinable West
an endless invitation to go now—
leave what you know and get lost,
to wander, explore the coiled empty center
of being, come face to face with self
and understand existence, to enter
from the rim of the world, your heart a glyph
that leads you on, inscrutable, opaque as rock,
to follow the sweeping wind over the edge,
to catch and pin your fluttering thoughts in a book
of simple beauty, of stones piled on a ledge,
some tools, scraps of bones becoming dust,
your own uncertain end a mystery at last.

Rachel White
Salt Lake City
2014

Woodcut of Monument Valley
by Everett Ruess



A Sonnet for Everett Ruess

You walked into the radiance of death
through passageways of stillness, stone, and light,
gold coin of cottonwoods, the spangled shade,
cascading song of canyon wrens, the flight
of scarlet dragonflies at pools, the stain
of water on a curve of sand, the art
of roots that crack the monolith of time.

You knew the crazy lust to probe the heart
of that which has no heart that we could know,
toward the source, deep in the core, the maze,
the secret center where there are no bounds.

Hunter, brother, companion of our days:
that blessing which you hunted, hunted too,
what you were seeking, this is what found you.

Edward Abbey
Oracle, Arizona
1983

Photo of Everett Ruess (March 28, 1914 – c. November 1934) a young American artist, poet, and writer known for his solo explorations of the High Sierra, the California coast, and the deserts of the American Southwest and his ultimate disappearance while traveling through a remote area of Utah. His fate remains a mystery to this day. (Wikipedia)