

Star Walk
(tanka series)

Our shoulders shaken,
we awaken from slumber—
it's midnight. Daddy
disentangles us from dreams
and wraps us in warm clothing.

The long dirt driveway
stretches out into the dark;
not-yet-spring puddles
clad in a thin skin of ice
crack and crunch beneath our feet.

The night is so still—
“Look up,” he says, and we do:
indigo marvel
spreads out its star-dusted quilt,
inky blanket with bright sparks.

We look, and we learn
the names of constellations—
Cassiopeia
Orion, Leo, Taurus—
more than I can remember.

See the Milky Way,
scattered like seeds tossed across
wide fields of sky—
galaxy a strange concept.
We lose track of time . . .

till discomfort grows—
craned necks crick, hands and feet chill.
We leave stars behind
and head carefully for home
walking in the dim pre-dawn.