

THE NIMROD LITERARY AWARDS  
*The Pablo Neruda Prize for Poetry*

FINALIST  
DWAINE SPIEKER

*Electric Fence*

Tonight the constellations are all cattle  
grazing the sandhills of outer space,  
and keeping them herded together afield  
is an electric fence, a single wire  
through which ticks a current of meaning.

Of course it's a trick; of course they could trample  
the fence in an instant, the shock so small  
compared to their strength, size, and girth.  
But the stars stay away, and the fence stands  
thin but distinct. Somehow it works.