

Skipping (after [Kurt Steiner](#))

Coming out here for no reason at all
Coming out here to look at the water
Coming out here to heave a smooth, flat rock
across the surface not just any rock but one
from the bucket I keep in the Ranger the bucket
of good ass rocks sometimes I come down here
to look for good ass rocks the best ones weigh
between four and seven ounces you can go heavier
but I like to keep them under a half pound they feel
the best in my hands don't put much strain
on my creaky elbow I learned my lesson after
a few years of lobbing nine- ten-ouncers just trying
to see if the heavies would go farther but they just
wore me out faster

Coming out here to skip a smooth, flat rock
is the most important thing I've ever done my legacy
eighty-eight skips out into the placid waters
of the Allegheny Reservoir the cascading ripples
a moiré labyrinth spreading out to the shore a series
of galaxies colliding and fading into the background
radiation from whence they came these are the things
I think about when I come out here there's so much to be done
of course but I don't come out here to get things done
that's not what coming down to the water is all about

There's this beautiful thing that happens when the rock leaves
my fingers that moment of release where anything could go wrong
but I'll know it's gone right the skips already on the books the moment
that rock flies out over the water they keep telling me to film everything
I do never know when a record might get broken they say
and I do love to break those records mine Big Dave's anybody's
but I'll save that energy for the championships I'm coming out here
to think about a million things the weight of an entire universe
in my wind up and in that quarter second between the rock leaving
my fingers and hitting the water I don't think about anything at all
every bit of universe poured out into the lake by seven ounces of slate
this is what it's all about me alone with everything and a rock and a lake
and an unending stream of ripples ebbing up and down the shoreline this is
the only thing I really need to do the groceries can wait the leak
above the toilet can wait those aren't the reasons we're here
we're the reasons they're here these rocks can't skip themselves you know
I know you know sometimes though I wish you would have stayed
to throw a few with me you know I never cared if you were any good