

TODD COPELAND

## **MOAB**

“All arches are but temporary features  
and all will eventually succumb  
to the forces of gravity and erosion,”

a sign near the Devil’s Garden read.  
People of many nations crossed  
the reddish-orange Utah landscape

toward Delicate Arch. A month since  
calling it quits, finally, he had met middle age  
beneath a catastrophe of desert light.

Why try to spell it all out?  
His thoughts wouldn’t line up right.  
Down on Center Street, below

the canyon’s sheer sandstone walls,  
he took in the pale blue sky and recited  
“The Planet on the Table.” That night,

in the cooling breeze, he stepped out  
into the glissando of alien tongues and,  
as resolutely as Ruth, entered foreign land.