DEAD PAINTING

As sure as I am rooted in glade and glen and perfumed air, and mindful of the mist in this garden of heartfelt stones, this toss of chiseled monuments to moments in the sun, I know that everything dear to me, ever thought by me, or wished or willed or wrought by me will in time pass into particles that glitter with the pigments of the cosmos. When death brushes me over, ties corner to center, texture to line, finishes its shadow stroke on the canvas of love and life that was me and mine, I will on the instant be drawn into the gallery of stars and be spread among them. No longer visible at the stone of my name, eyes to heaven will find me daubed on Venus, tinted into lightstreams that color up Andromeda, the Crab Nebula, Jupiter, and Mars — an ion cloud mixed forever in the beauty of everything.