

The Clod and the Pebble

by Bill Yarrow

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(After William Blake)

“Lightning has more longevity than I,”
said the clod. “That,” said the pebble
“is what comes of not being hard.”
“Hardness is just not in my nature.”
“Then accept your fate: you will be crushed
into mud, while I will retain my form.” “Yes,
you will retain your form and that ensures
your fate: to be shot from a slingshot
at sparrows, to skim forever the surface
of a pond, to be a bitter irritant in a shoe.
But I, I, am part of a larger whole. I will build
a house, I will dam a stream, I can be a salve.”

The stiff ego of the pebble—indistinguishable
from the soft haughtiness of the brutish clod.

