

## The Plates by Edgar Allan Bergman

Hear the pounding of the plates—  
    Massive plates  
What a crust of constant change their throbbing thrum relates  
How they thunder, thunder, thunder  
In the deep recess of soil  
While hot magmas rush asunder  
And the heavens glare in wonder  
As all slowly comes to boil  
Keeping time, time, time  
In a geologic rhyme  
To the tectonabulation that so loudly emanates  
From the plates, plates, plates, plates  
Plates, plates, plates—  
From the thunder and the wonder of the plates.

Hear the great tectonic plates  
    Moving plates!  
What a vast cacophony their clashing stimulates  
Through the day and through the night  
How they shift with main and might  
And the molten mantle burns  
Plates collide  
What a thrum of twist and turn  
Homes and hearts begin to shake, stomachs churn  
In wild ride  
Oh, from grinding plates it grates  
What a rush of energy its labor liberates!  
How it breaks  
How it cakes  
As the ore-filled oven bakes  
Of the power that it makes  
To the turning and the churning  
Of the plates, plates, plates, plates  
Plates, plates, plates  
The burning and the churning of the plates.

See the ridged volcanic plates  
    Magma gates  
What a story of eruption, now, their turbulency states!  
In the startled eye of sight  
How we roar out our delight  
Too incredible to speak  
We can only shriek, shriek, shriek  
With deep fright  
In a clamorous explosion made of molten rock on fire  
In a mad expostulation of a fierce frantic fire  
Leaping higher, higher, higher  
With a desperate desire  
Till unfurrowed faults do sever  
Now—now to flow forever  
By the side of the cratered moon.  
O the plates, plates, plates  
What a tale their twist relates  
    Of great mass!  
How they clang and clash and roar!  
What a lava they outpour

From the cauldron of the palpitating gas!  
Yet the people fully know  
By the banging,  
And the clanging  
How the dangers ebb and flow  
Yet the sound distinct berates  
In the jangling  
And the wrangling  
How the danger always waits  
By the drifting and the shifting in the angle of the plates—  
Of the plates—  
Of the plates, plates, plates, plates,  
Plates, plates, plates  
In the clamor and the clangor of the plates!  
Hear the rolling of the plates—  
Rugged Plates!  
What a world of awesome might their majesty inflates!  
In the violence of the night  
How we quiver with affright  
At the geologic menace of their tone!  
For every sound that floats  
From the quartz within their throats  
Is a groan.  
And the people—ah, the people—  
They that dwell up in the steeple,  
All Alone  
And who, toiling, toiling, toiling  
In excited multi-tone  
Feel a glory in so rolling  
On the human heart a stone  
They are neither sea nor shore  
They are neither crust nor core  
They are Coals  
Mother Earth's hot brimming bowls  
And she rolls, rolls, rolls  
Rolls  
An anthem from the plates!  
And her heaving breast inflates  
With the pounding of the plates  
And she dances and creates  
Keeping time, time, time  
In a geologic rhyme  
To the pounding of the plates  
Of the plates  
Keeping time time time  
In a geologic rhyme  
To the sliding of the plates  
Of the plates, plates, plates—  
To the gliding of the plates  
Keeping time, time, time  
As she swells, swells, swells,  
In a true tectonic rhyme  
To the churning of the plates  
Of the plates, plates, plates  
To the turning of the plates  
Of the plates, plates, plates, plates—  
Plates, plates, plates—  
To the shaking and the quaking of the plates.

