

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.

