

**Bourne**  
**toWrite...**  
creative writing  
workshops

## Engineering in Outer Space

by Steve Brown

I.

And Love: the sudden space you're shot to:  
the weightless, homeless quality of things;  
delight and sadness of a fresh angel's wings.  
Life is elsewhere, and you have wished it so.

Heels above head, and tumbled to new birth;  
to set a new world spinning, you are spun;  
beneath your feet, then crown – the old life now out-run;  
above your head, the glass-balled canopy of Earth.

That Earth you're tied to with small tetherings;  
you watch it while you shine above. Still, in the mind,  
love at its sharpest, finest, has the life of flares.

You are aware of the pull and weight of things,  
though now they float so freely from your hand.  
You reach and watch, feet hooked to ungrasped stars.

## II.

That weightlessness: how things can drift away  
before you notice: tools, food, blood. And all that  
accruing damage: the pitting strikes, small hits  
of micro-meteorites; some bolts torn awry

by torsion. To glide so far above  
requires the daily effort, risks, of airless  
working. Horizonless cannot be careless;  
you find that daily grind is the coin of love.

Orbits always decay: your trajectory  
is tugged nose-down. Each day's work is strained  
to keep improbabilities aloft. Drained,  
at each 'day's' end, you review an endless story.

Vision is paid in rivets; the price of seeing  
comes in endless maintenance, these costs of being.