

## The Prison Artist

1.

The prison artist works away  
in her cell on her latest creation,  
intensity identical to any artist  
wherever she may be working:  
home, studio, even out  
    in the open air.

For to the artist it matters not, we know,  
where she may find herself in space  
so long as the mind is free to wander  
among the shapes and the colors.

(Her brush shifts a line here  
a bit to the left, the tint  
of the area that it borders  
just a hair more  
toward the violet end  
of the spectrum.)

Wherever she finds herself in space:  
out in the open air, in a studio, or at home—  
but especially when home is  
the inside of a prison cell—  
every artist, working on her latest  
is, you see, painting the gateway  
    to freedom.

2.

The prison artist  
coats a square of glazed bricks  
in the wall of her cell with black paint,  
hangs a sign:  
“I have painted the gateway to Hell,”  
it reads  
    “Do not open.”

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