Along a Colorado road—we won’t forget—
three warnings, terse: “Gusty Winds May Exist.”
—Or they may not. It’s wise to hedge your bet.
So far this afternoon, at least, we’ve missed

them.—Is their being vacuously true,
no more? Perhaps they are unreal, a dream,
kin to imaginary numbers. You
and I may likewise be some clever scheme,

invented for strange ends, and even sane
according to odd rules, yet still unsure
of full existence. Varied, the refrain
returns: “High winds are likely.” Is it pure

conjecture? Oh, my love! This is no trap
for mind, no darkling plain. Our lives revolve
around the possible; but still—mishap
or good—we’re not a phantasy. Men solve

conundrums of the greatest magnitude—
trace stars, split atoms, and explore the moon—
write poems suitable for every mood,
philosophize, make love. We’re opportune;
and as when Dr. Johnson kicked the stone,
affirming the reality of stuff,
we know that we’re not loony, nor alone.—
Such highway metaphysics are enough

for now; we’ll find a spot beneath the trees,
enjoy our picnic, rest, admire vast skies,
rejecting old suspicions of unease,
wits fresh, inviting currents of surprise.

Note: When Boswell observed that George Berkeley’s idealism could not be refuted, Samuel Johnson replied: “I refute it thus,” and kicked a stone.