

“In Praise of Mystery: A Poem for Europa” by U.S. Poet Laureate Ada Limón

Post by “Don” of June 2, 2023 at 4:08 PM

Okay, it's not Lucretius, but I thought the US Poet Laureate's poem to be inscribed on the Europa Clipper spaceship to Jupiter's moon evokes that wonder of nature that Epicurus talks about when he says "such a course is of service to all who take up natural science, I, who devote to the subject my continuous energy and reap the calm enjoyment of a life like this, have prepared for you just such an epitome and manual of the doctrines as a whole."

Enjoy this rendition from NASA from the Poet Laureate herself, Ada Limón:

<https://youtu.be/EgWbeDNPd6o>

Post by “Joshua” of June 2, 2023 at 7:39 PM

Very moving, thank you [Don](#) !

Post by “Pacatus” of June 7, 2023 at 6:45 PM

In Praise of Mystery: A Poem for Europa

Arching under the night sky inky
with black expansiveness, we point
to the planets we know, we
pin quick wishes on stars. From earth,
we read the sky as if it is an unerring book
of the universe, expert and evident.

<https://www.epicureanfriends.com/thread/3103-in-praise-of-mystery-a-poem-for-europa-by-u-s-poet-laureate-ada-lim%C3%B3n/>

Still, there are mysteries below our sky:
the whale song, the songbird singing
its call in the bough of a wind-shaken tree.
We are creatures of constant awe,
curious at beauty, at leaf and blossom,
at grief and pleasure, sun and shadow.
And it is not darkness that unites us,
not the cold distance of space, but
the offering of water, each drop of rain,
each rivulet, each pulse, each vein.
O second moon, we, too, are made
of water, of vast and beckoning seas.
We, too, are made of wonders, of great
and ordinary loves, of small invisible worlds,
of a need to call out through the dark.

– [Ada Limón](#), U.S. Poet Laureate