



After

After the brave explorer
after the monsters were slain
after the noble trailsman
after the settler.

After the colonist
the sentry
the terraformers
creating imitation earths
far from the real thing.

After the politicians
and the social contract
the city planners
and the nouveau architects.

After the academic
the scientist.

After the thinking machine
to solve the problems of
imposing Terran thought
on foreign organics.

After all that
there is only you and me
shadows of those past excitements
negotiating an imported culture
circling a gas giant and
at odds with a red sun.

Look behind me and tell me
if my shadow is red.

What else is there to do?

—Herb Kauderer