An Abacus and a Sum of Pride

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Children, your pride is wider than the town
Of Velarde where the river goes from our valley
Over stones. Who are you to be so proud?

Here is an abacus of lava beads for the sum
Of your talents; your fingers fumble, though
Your minds flow through the gorge to grow boundless—

Who are you? One sews like a countess, with needles
Of insight pricking the amber silk of the river;
One can spy strawberries marking the far snow line.

But you will be greatly humble or ground down
In the slow cold course of the water; your faces,
And the gold-speckled faces of stones waver

Under the sum of my dream. Who are you to be so sure,
While I who count the seed bed and guide your brown hands,
Am snagged in the glide of your minds out over stones?

Remember, when you touch the dark warm gout of error
And know in your pride who you are, remember me
Whose heart fumbles the cold black lava beads:

Bind in gold channels of your boundless flowing out,
Children, with your deep innocence, my spurting pride.