The village of Lorium is where I dwell
Past twenty leagues from the capitol
A place in the country, far from rivals
A place indeed for a man to dwell,
A place indeed for a man to sell,
For who are his competitors here?
Fewer than in Rome so why go there?
Destined to sell the books of great men
From the story of Aeneas
To the works of Ovid
Or perhaps a more philosophical word,
And plays to laugh and shows to cry
Or the histories of far and wide.
I will go to his door, deliver the words
For the payment of coins,
Though fewer have bought
For they do see my brethren in this game
As unreliable in word and deed.
But should Marcus Aurelius or
Cornelius Fronto have need,
For they find their shelves quite free,
I will appear for the necessary fee.
Though truth be told,
Should Aurelius settle on a lesser trade,
Who am I to deny his say?
Or risk my head for the sake of pay.
The books I sell may perhaps one day,
Lie in some place for all to see,
But until that comes I will go on
To sell them all to other men
And deal with the opposition
That comes when you sell a composition
From house to house as a humble man.

References:


Light of Fire

The light of fire illuminates
Sights previously unseen, unknown
Become what they were not.
Whether the light of the sun
Or a candle on the wall
Fire’s light brings forth
The words of the page,
The words of the mind.
Knowledge is spread by the light
But also threatened by it.
For fire destroys as easily as it helps.
What Smokey did fear
Others saw as clear,
Their routes to cementing their legacy
Through the loss of their predecessors.
Whether Caesars or Qins,
From Egypt to Rome
And the far flung east
The fires of conquerors and crusaders
Destroyed the works of knowledge
So dearly held by those before,
Not all lost to time
But many wiped from its sight.
Papyrus and bamboo,
Book and scroll
Did enter loss its privileged place
To heat the homes or simply
Add to the night’s light.
Not all for a purposes but many for a cause
The cause of controlling knowledge
Through limiting its existence.
Fire and its light long a friend
To long nights of reading
But a foe to the light of knowledge
When chosen for a different impression.