Ask for a universe and what do you get?

A Golden Shovel for Beatrice Tinsley

For a while scientists’ proposed loopholes
crossing the universe, wormholes a technique in
which to traverse distance to other worlds, this

unpleasant constraint which most reasoning
holds us to a single solar system or may
be, just perhaps a transit could exist

to get us to Proxima Centauri but
travelling 4.25 light years is a big if —
human tolerance of forces matter — so

most likely our AI will proceed us and they
will send back slow data just to say We are
fine and happy in the primordial

reaches of space making the invisible
visible while we observe expansion — or
it is possible we will forget them perhaps

because the heat becomes unbearable or maybe just
because too close to light we lose night’s black.

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Note: Beatrice Tinsley (1941 – 1981) was an astronomer who made fundamental contributions to our understanding of the evolution of galaxies. A Golden Shovel is a poetry form used for writing homage poems. The last words of each line in a Golden Shovel poem are, in order, words from a line or lines from the work of the person in whose honor the poem was written. This form was invented by Terrance Hayes, and was originally used in a tribute to Gwendolyn Brooks.