

Mastery

KEN VICTOR

And the experience of the failed
work is a prod to practice: think of

the arpeggio unraveling in mid-flight
or the clay collapsing on the wheel

when water isn't right. And what is
one's craft half-perfected if not

watering's sorrow: how the bud
of the amateur never quite opens,

the discipline of the dilettante
evaporates, even the passion-filled

may not last their apprenticing
if the demands of the finished work

dry their resolve. Craft's possibility
is waiting to be cared into its form

despite how what first emerges can
mock your most resolute intention,

your work beaten again with the ache
of *almost*, the slap of starting over.

Begin again at the beginning, baby-step
virtuoso. Surely, you think, *this time...*

like the pianist mastering Liszt, each
note a world, linked world to world,

a universe, a galaxy and a single-
minded mortal watering creation.