

## Why You Should Get a Library Card

By Laura Sobbott Ross, 2018 Lake County Poet Laureate  
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It's your ticket and, hey, it's free.

Step in to step out— it's your mind  
on wings: landscape, seascape, escape; Cape of  
Good Hope is on the southern tip of one of seven  
continents. Kuchunguza means *explore* in Swahili.  
Latitudes and longitudes, a geographic grid, a sphere.  
— Icarus spinning in his feathers and melted pitch—

It's all here. Mythology, geometry, constellations—  
integers sliding along an axis. Redefine *x* and *y*. Why?

*Because* is a shoreline of glowing lanterns set loose  
across a silvered, mercury sky. Where do the commas go—  
tiny, ink meteors. Each asterisk, a star. Punctuation.

Fractions— a half-life breaking down into a half-life.  
Science. Shake the sand from the fossils. It's a porous place.  
Your mind, I mean. How to say *inspired* in 87 languages.

It's all here. How to tie a sailor's knot. Origami an orchid.

Your ancestry – a timeline of clothespinned histories.  
Key & compass. Pass through Versailles and Machu Pichu.  
Madly fresco the walls of your imagination with words:  
ambersweet, obelisk, bombax, spoonbill, Susquehanna.

Listen with your eyes wide. Imagine a thousand books  
opening like buoyant umbrellas in your mind. Grab a hook  
and go. You're adrift. Glittered in words. Close enough  
to rest your elbows on the café table in Barcelona, to sip  
the dragon fruit elixir, to touch the cold, silent stone of the moon.

Get your free ticket— wand & labyrinth. Use it to maze  
through a movie, a magazine, the magical realism in a novel  
of fiction. Interpret your dreams. Conquer them. Conjure more.