

MOUNTAIN STICK

*For pitee runneth soone gentil herte
Chaucer*

As fit for swinging and full of good oak
as the day it was cut down for a walk;
and taken for granted on any hike
Till out climbing up a bouldershot brook
one fall, up mountain; and stopping to shake
the stiffness out of my walk, and just make
some tea in the shade by the brook, I woke
to a moon; and like the world's oldest book
I read my father's spiral in the stick's
bronze skin, with flowers here and there cut out,
a line no shoulderload, sweaty hands, nicks
or scratches from years of walking would flout:
a lifeline – one world, one heart, one motion –
swinging through darkness with sun and moon.

*From Mountain Tea
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