

“Why Is Blue?” “Who Is a Stone?”

My father used to answer these questions
as he played piano, when he worked in his garden,
while he sizzled in butter the wild white mushrooms
he picked in our rambling woods at dawn.
Born sixty years before I breathed,
he was my wizard, my hero, my king
in every fairy tale that drew
silver and gold and crimson pictures
for my days alone upon our hill.
“Sky wanted to make us happy”
and “Your mother has a sad hard soul,”
wisdoms I kept like my precious marbles
to take out, roll around, and ponder
as if I could hold his voice to the light
and understand its shining core.
I guess that’s why I started writing
poems and poems when his heart gave up,
as though by choosing just the right words
I could solve the riddle “When is a door?”

after Adam Gidwitz