Badlands

Tuxedoed magpies in the juniper scented park where one crushes berries between fingertips; a beard of clouds shaved off the windy sun preludes an ignition of sage green. Vascular poison black stripes the scoria bluff arms; the rope of mud we name a river lies in a necklace of puddle charms rimmed by the fuzzy flame of summer cottonseed. Buffalo tongued land, wolf ghost, a mist of dust hoofed up by antelope flanks; we wait for the cosmic lung to expand, to exhale a gust of moon and stars.

-Neil Dyer