

What exactly? will the poem tell me?

smiles... like or

a list to define a surprise of stars

The stars surprise the sky.

operates like "like" to introduce comparisons

The stars startle the sky over the city.

answer to (?) raised in transition

In Spite of Everything, the Stars

by Edward Hirsch

Like a stunned piano, like a bucket of fresh milk flung into the air or a dozen fists of confetti thrown hard at a bride stepping down from the altar, the stars surprise the sky.

Think of dazed stones floating overhead, or an ocean of starfish hung up to dry. Yes, like a conductor's expectant arm about to lift toward the chorus, or a juggler's plates defying gravity, or a hundred fastballs fired at once and freezing in midair the stars startle the sky over the city.

And that's why drunks leaning up against abandoned buildings, women hurrying home on deserted side streets, policemen turning blind corners, and even thieves stepping from alleys all stare up at once. Why else do sleepwalkers move toward the windows, or old men drag flimsy lawn chairs onto fire escapes or hardened criminals press sad foreheads to steel bars?

Because the night is alive with lamps! That's why in dark houses all over the city dreams stir in the pillows, a million plumes of breath rise into the sky.

List = short phrase 4 words longer 10 words longest (or) 16 words ... builds ~ readers feel the list lengthening

a second list to define stars with startle in the place of surprise

works like a thesaurus to standing with multiple senses images from synonyms

transition + white space

list - order parallel phrasing

all at once (stare up)

another transition WHY ELSE (?)