

## Carl Sagan, a Poem

Vicariously,  
Like most of the world,  
I met Carl Sagan when I was in the 2nd grade.  
What wonders he showed!  
But those were only justification  
To a child already captured by the stars.  
The joy is painful!  
A friendless little girl.  
A brilliant man doing what *we* love.  
He was my hero, my model,  
In some ways even a god to me.  
My last tie to the awesome.  
When I was grown and plans had gone awry,  
He came into my life again.  
As if to remind me.  
And now he stood but five feet  
From my reluctant form,  
Too afraid to say even "hello".  
I paid for that mistake with his life.  
Yes, he's dead now,  
A cruel Christmas present to me,  
But also a reminder.  
Not to give in. Not to give up.  
Never mind the practical.  
Defy the nay-sayers.  
I love astronomy like he loved it:  
With all my soul.  
My path is not as easy as his,  
But maybe longer.  
I have hit detours,  
But I can never give up.  
To do so would be to deceive myself.  
To kill myself.  
Do not ask me again.  
May I never forget what Carl Sagan has taught me.  
Because there's no one left to teach it  
Anymore.