

Pi by Wislawa Szymborska

The admirable number pi:

three point one four one.

All the following digits are also just a start,

five nine two because it never ends.

It can't be grasped, six five three five , at a glance,

eight nine, by calculation,

seven nine, through imagination,

or even three two three eight in jest, or by comparison

four six to anything

two six four three in the world.

The longest snake on earth ends at thirty-odd feet.

Same goes for fairy tale snakes, though they make it a little longer.

The caravan of digits that is pi

does not stop at the edge of the page,

but runs off the table and into the air,

over the wall, a leaf, a bird's nest, the clouds, straight into the sky,

through all the bloatedness and bottomlessness.

Oh how short, all but mouse-like is the comet's tail!

How frail is a ray of starlight, bending in any old space!

Meanwhile two three fifteen three hundred nineteen

my phone number your shirt size

the year nineteen hundred and seventy-three sixth floor

number of inhabitants sixty-five cents

hip measurement two fingers a charade and a code,

in which we find how blithe the trostle sings!

and please remain calm,

and heaven and earth shall pass away,

but not pi, that won't happen,

it still has an okay five,

and quite a fine eight,

and all but final seven,

prodding and prodding a plodding eternity

to last.