Astrodon johnstoni,
the Maryland State Dinosaur

We never looked into your eyes,  
No fingers touched your skin,  
All that we know is tooth and bone,  
The remnants from within.

Your world was of the forest realm,  
Where tall sequoias grew,  
And groves of ferns drew nourishment,  
From rain and morning dew.

We were not witness to your life,  
Nor saw your final breath,  
The clues we have that tell your tale,  
Have come long after death.

Small herds composed of young and old,  
Once roamed among the trees,  
In hopes of finding refuge from  
Predation and disease.

One hundred million years of time  
Lay trapped within the clay,  
Ancient secrets not yet revealed,  
Until one fateful day.

With rows of teeth used much like rakes,  
Fresh leaves were stripped from plants,  
Your tree-like legs would shake the earth,  
And signal your advance.

For then by chance two teeth were found,  
Within an iron mine,  
Evidence of a long, lost world,  
Before its great decline.

Animals built in symmetry,  
With neck as long as tail,  
Yet size could not prevent your fate,  
Extinction would prevail.

The teeth when cut revealed a star,  
A sight not seen before,  
Astrodon would become your name,  
The star-toothed dinosaur.

So much remains a mystery  
From time so long ago,  
Our mind blends fact with fantasy,  
And much we’ll never know.

As years passed by and bones were found,  
Your form took shape and size,  
Sauropods stretching sixty feet,  
The sight would have filled our eyes.

Dinosaurs of enormous bulk,  
Ten tons or more by weight,  
Large creatures once unknown, but now  
A symbol of our state.

Rick Smith