

Time

I can see why it bothered him:
clocks everywhere in this city,
bells everywhere,
all the bells, every hour,
all over Verona,
near the river and away from it,
until he had to write
why it was wrong down,

and finally
hundreds of years
after he was gone from this part of Italy,
gone from the earth,
the church saying,
you were right,
our time was a bit off,
we'll fix it . . .

But by then he was long
gone, and who even knows
or cares about the history of time
anymore?

Who counts time in a world
that memorializes love, not the passing of it?

I look up at the stars.
I can hear it tonight, deep in Italy,
the tick, *the tick*, the ring, *the ring*.
I can see it, see the stars
as he said they would be
hundreds of years before
the calendar was changed
to reflect the ticking in his mind,
the ringing, the singing,

and oh what lives is that insistence—
it matters it matters it matters—
how we see time and God
matters and will matter, after we are gone.

I am a strange
kind of tourist, here to visit his insistence,
to walk through the beginning of his
writing of the days
and the hours
of his life, and then, what a decision—
not just his life, but the calendar
of all of our lives,
the counting of the hours
that make us and unmake us.