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Religious or Spiritual

Stellar

One beautiful night,
when the stars were in such
dazzling multitudes
that they threatened to make
night day,
there was one
new star that came
to hover over
the homeliest spot in existence—
and that star,
both because it was so new
and because the homely place had
no luster of its own,
gave birth to a brilliance
that put all the rest of the
crowded heavens to shame
and lent
surpassing glory to that
small homely place
called Earth, so that
the mark of its passing
would remain forevermore

Earthen Vessel

Who am I?
Breath captured
in an earthen vessel
Spirit wedded
to primeval soil
Imperfect Mirror of
essential Being
Wrapped in the terrestrial
winding-sheet
of Human clay

St. Catherine, have Pity on Us!

The martyr died, quietly died,
And from her wounds flowed milk—
Milk as pale and sweet
As the light of moon and stars,
As pure as snow not yet touched
By so much as the sweep
Of a passing sparrow's wing—
Milk rich enough to infuse
The newborn infant with long life and save
The infirm and fragile from an early death.
This, after all, was her gift to give:
Light and purity and richer, deeper life—
Yet who are we to ask it of her?

After All is Said and Done

What will I do when at the end of time
The story folds back on itself and calls
On me to follow down those darkened halls
Of memory to revisit sublime
Past lives in fact and fiction 'til I've turned
Empty as much as is the hourglass
And all the strange bygones that had to pass
Before this book called History was burned?
What will this end extend to me, my kin,
my life and loves and all the world abroad?
Whether it's silence of the touch of God,
Salvation of a sort will bathe my skin,
And on that gleaming day I'll wake anew
Because I loved, and I was loved by, you.

Grace

Grace is a wonderfully wide woman,
Big and bountiful and
Incautiously inclusive.
She picks you up in her beautiful bronze arms
And squeezes until all the ugly
Falls plumb off you.
You'll notice she smells of everything
Homemade you ever almost died from wanting
To eat too much of.
She croons to you (her voice
Is like homemade fudge, too)
And you will swear, it
Sounds like angels at a church picnic

The way she says your name.
'My child, my child,' she sings.
Her brown, loving eyes,
Rich as melted mahogany,
Must not work too well anyway,
Since she always tells you
What a precious prize you are,
What a tremendous talent,
What a cartload of charisma.
Her kiss, it's shamelessly smoochy
And makes you blush like all-get-out
'Cause no one could miss catching you
At a smack like that,
But you're secretly proud of the fact.
When she squashes you up against that warm
Mattress of a bosom
And blesses you with that
All's-forgiven-type of kiss,
You will just roll over and hoot with happiness,
Even though we all know
You don't deserve it.