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New under the Sun: Awaiting a Birth

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New under the Sun

Awaiting a Birth

One could say in this night sky
can be seen the birth of stars, but
who can tell in the stellar dust
what's coming to light
or leaving?

The shape of that dim nebula
is like pale shadows we celebrate
in my daughter's womb: discernible
fingers and hand, the faint umbilical reach
toward connection.

I have thought these things during routine
tasks—shaking a tablecloth in the night yard,
washing dishes, sweeping.

In the dailiness of the living, the mind leaps,
say, at the glint of a glass,
the sudsy water, or dust motes
that join something past to this moment—
like the blind stitch that holds the hem.

Our grown daughter's voice reaches me
from across a room, and I feel salt
behind the eyes. Out of tones
of a family gathering: a sudden perception
of what a memory weighs.

How I've kept a face not seen for months
safe from time and strain, eyes clear
and intense. How my son's jump from a tree
years ago with an open umbrella—
of which I've just learned—occurs not then
but now: I see his staunch curiosity poised
on the branch, simultaneous with my smile
at one more experiment survived beyond my knowing.

The sunmelt of days sears
to these moments . . .
but what rises in the heart is light.