

## THROUGH A STAINED GLASS DARKLY

*str.*                    Give or take a maker,  
                              there must be a Creation.  
None but a universal pattern  
                              need leave nothing out,  
                              and leaving nothing out,  
                              will make the right shape happen.  
But only a god could know it all,  
get it right, and live forever.

We know in part after the curse,  
said the partial saint whose mid-life call  
came as a revelation. Or –  
we get a sporting chance to breathe  
a molecule that Jesus breathed,  
                              a chance to know it – never.  
And have I said that the universe  
and all the art of it must falter  
on that day when days there are no more?

*ant.*                    Come out and dance with me;  
                              the small can make you free.  
Like those who marvell in a garden,  
                              for one burial burn,  
                              safe in the well-wrought urn.  
The great require our pardon  
for some faults, yet their music lives,  
and so do all who join the song.

Rapt in their bond, the mother and child  
and Mary, their painter, survive their lives.  
The Black Knight warred against the dark,  
“After our death that live may we,  
Timor mortis conturbat me.”  
                              Handprints on the walls  
of caves across the world: the wild  
first women piped paint at the hand that gives,  
nor knew of the others who left that self-same mark

*ep.*                    on every unimagined continent.