

MARY KARR

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## DESCENDING THEOLOGY: CHRIST HUMAN

Such a short voyage for a god,  
and you arrived in animal form so as not  
to scorch us with your glory.  
Your mask was an infant's head on a limp stalk,  
sticky eyes smeared blind,  
limbs rendered useless in swaddle.  
You came among beasts  
as one, came into our care or its lack, came crying  
as we all do, because the human frame  
is a crucifix, each skeleton borne a lifetime.  
Any wanting soul lain  
prostrate on a floor to receive the poured sunlight  
might—if still enough,  
feel your cross buried in the flesh.  
One has only to surrender,  
you preached, open both arms to the inner,  
the ever-present embrace,  
which props one up, out-reaches every grasp.  
It's in the form imbedded,  
love adamant as bone. The miracle's not just  
that you became us, but also  
those breathed-in instants allotted to us each  
(even poor Brother Judas),  
when one relinquishes self and will and want.  
Then you're laid bare in us,  
and for some briefly gentle eyeblink  
we bloom and are you.