

Big Bang, with Sternutation and Seer Stones

Tyler Chadwick

i.

In the beginning, Mother worked ylem
into a loose sphere. A swirl of stray particles,

stirred by the breeze blown through her
studio window, circled her workbench,

tickled her nose. She rubbed it, sneezed.
Light filled the globe she held in her palm,

seared it to a sea of glass and fire. She
polished it marble-smooth with her apron

then, calling Father to come see, balanced it
on the brim of the universe, stepped back,

watched it sputter, spin, orbit
into the cosmos' overturned hat.

ii.

Faces pressed tight in the hat's mouth,
Mother, Father watched the orb whirl, churn,

effloresce, breathe. Their eyes burning with
focus, they traced its off-kilter pirouette

through the darkness, translating
its circuit around their peeping

into prophecy. Its respirations stirred
their fervor, flooded their knowing

with the promise and uncertainty of life
sprawling across the sphere. Consciousness
flickered in the chaos. Mother exhaled,
whispered the spark to smolder, flare, blaze.

iii.

God-bodies stirred in the burning. Piqued,
Mother, Father leaned in, inhaled,
ash whirling helical in their huffing,
the whorl baring the paired *adamah*: dyad
tangled fetal in red soil. Mother, Father
praised the unfolding, prodded the bodies
to sigh, to rise, to shake soot from
saurian skin, to amble forth—fever-hot
and hungry—and plunder the Gods' orchard.

iv.

Baskets ripe with their picking, their take,
the *adamah*—weary from reaching—
looked God-ward, stretched, sat against
a tree. The orchard's dappled canopy,
whispering like scales confessing
the Gods' oracles, gossiped
with the harvest. Eavesdropping,
the *adamah*—insatiate—palmed a drupe,
took a bite, breathed its sweetness while
mulling its flesh, its inebriating grace.

v.

Fingering the drupe-stone, tracing
the ancient and always unfolding breviary

etched in the seed-face, the *adamah*
breathed in (two, three, four),

breathed out (two, three, four, five),
blew open the cosmos. Emergence and

movement murmured in the reverie:
Mother, Father chatting in the next room,

trilling laughter and “Let there be . . .”
their gerunds palimpsest and penumbrae,

life written on and written over,
the groove of ritual and remembering,

epiphanies and recurring dreams.
Their conversation seared the drupe-stone

seared the open palm of the *adamah*’s
peeping. The seed cracked wide, sighed

flaming tongues of quanta through
the holy book of appetite and consciousness.

TYLER CHADWICK, an award-winning writer, editor, and teacher, received his PhD in English and the Teaching of English from Idaho State University. He teaches writing at Utah Valley University and has three books to his name: two anthologies, *Fire in the Pasture: Twenty-First Century Mormon Poets* (Peculiar Pages, 2011) and *Dove Song: Heavenly Mother in Mormon Poetry* (Peculiar Pages, 2018), and a collection of poetry and essays, *Field Notes on Language and Kinship* (Mormon Artists Group, 2013). His first full-length poetry collection will release via BCC Press in 2022. He lives in Ogden, Utah, with his wife, Jess, and their four daughters.