

2004

Offerings: Mary; Joseph; Jesus; God

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Recommended Citation

Bridgford, Kim. "Offerings: Mary; Joseph; Jesus; God." *The Iowa Review* 34.3 (2004): 100-101. Web.
Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0021-065X.S899>

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KIM BRIDGFORD

Offerings

MARY

What does God-sex feel like? Is it the thrill
Of looking at the sun, or the slow tremor
That shakes the body like a miracle?
Is it the arrow piercing through the armor?

Or is it nothing but the feeling that
Something new is just about to happen:
A flower unfurling, the shaping of a thought,
The idea of an apple made to ripen?

The impossible for you was like a cup
You drank from, and you, in turn, believed
That when you suffered you were lifted up
And when you trusted you were also loved.
Like any mother, you were filled with hope,
The world now just the husk where he arrived.

JOSEPH

You loved her, and it didn't matter what
The others said. You knew what she'd been through,
And if the story strained, you said, "Tell it
Again." And she did until she saw the world in you.
That kind of love is called a miracle.
At night you curled into each other's hips,
But sometimes you would think how she would call
The sunrise God, the dazzle made of shapes
That otherwise would merely hold a space.
So what. You'd be the shadow to that sun;
You'd be the father to her quickened child.
If on the changing sky, she saw His face,
You thought that she'd forget. "Our child is the one."
"Our," she said. "Our." And you were reconciled.

JESUS

It's the only family that I ever knew,
And I loved them. Yet poets always know
They're born to live another kind of life:
The hyperbolic dailiness of grief.
I looked: I saw the homeless and the sick.
I listened to the ordinary music
Of prayer, of wind like breath along the sand,
And in them felt both oracle and end.

And when He spoke to me, I called him Father.
He was my Muse, this iridescent Other,
His knowledge rubbed like oil against my skin.
He opened up my spirit, like the weather,
And when I spoke, we made the poems together.
He said I'd live forever, till I'd listen.

GOD

I am so perfect, sitting in the skies.
To prove that I would gladly sacrifice
Through blood, who am immortal and alive,
I'll offer up my son. That way I'll grieve
The way that humans understand: to lose
What matters most, the thing they'd never choose.
I'll choose it; I am perfect, being God.
My son is the embodiment of good.
I will not hold him yet. He'll have a woman
On the earth to raise him into what is human,
And later he will meet me on a cloud
And tell me what it was to be allowed
To walk upon the earth, with bitterness,
And know the thorns that I could only guess.