

The Hug

By all the gods ever named,
ever called upon,
you are beautiful,
lying suspended,
like a fairy child,
dreaming.

Your father,
vigilant watcher,
has dozed every night
at your bedside
in a harsh chair,
waking to slight sounds.

Tonight,
it is you who waken
from a sleep as deep
as an abyss,
your eyes wide
and fearless,
intent on my face.

You are there,
present
and intact,
I can tell.

You have returned
from a far land,
not knowing
the journey you have made.

I explain carefully,
therapeutic,
calm,
intent on your comfort.

Your arms reach up to me,
and the first words
out of your mouth are:
“can I give you a hug?”

I bend down to receive this gift,
my heart opens
like a blossom in the snow,
and I notice,
perhaps for the first time:
By all the gods ever named,
it is beautiful.

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