

"But what is a shape? Only a cup for the blazing soul that  
God provides us all." --The Fire Balloons, Ray Bradbury

## MESSIAH

It has to happen. Yes, I've thought it out.  
Already happened more than once no doubt.  
He voiced his thesis. As he rose to leave  
the unconvinced one's hand was on his sleeve.

But, Reverend Grey, how can you be so sure?  
Such outer space theosophy's impure.  
The Bible doesn't mention other planets,  
there's work enough to do on our own granites.

Yes, Father Black, with that I do agree.  
More reason He must go Himself, you see.  
But as for mention: "Other sheep have I--  
not of this fold." We've chosen to apply  
it to the Gentiles. Yet it could refer  
to beings men have never dreamed. And were  
they given souls, would they not need Him, too?  
It's not incredible to feel it's true.

And do they look like us? asked Father Black,  
or like the signs of some weird zodiac?  
Or maybe they resemble cartoon creatures  
with alien parts and wild unheard-of features.  
And will there be another virgin birth,  
another resurrection as on earth?

They'll have what's needed for their own redemption.  
Their sins must be paid for without exemption.  
But as for how they look, mused Reverend Grey,  
like us, they're also made from sacred clay  
and in His image too. "His image" means  
what pleases Him. In substance or in form.  
It doesn't mean what we declare the norm.  
Or even that we look like Him. We're God's  
design conception-- whether peas or pods.

That night the priest slept fitfully. At dawn  
he woke, then closed his eyes. Withdrawn  
this side of dreams, he saw new scenes unfold  
as once again the old words were re-told:

While herders watched their flocks and wished for light  
From their twin suns to change thick gray to green,  
To put the viscous rime to shallow flight,  
A practiced angel came and blessed the scene.  
His message quickly calmed familiar fear:  
I bring you wondrous news from Paradise!  
Transmit the holy words for all to hear.  
Your Savior's born in Chalgors cave of ice  
Beyond the fiery gonfalons of Chark.  
You'll know Him thus-- a baby in blue fur  
Asleep in borrowed nests of frostbirds. Hark!  
Celestial choruses draw near to stir  
Your souls with love on this young asteroid.  
The angel vanished like echoing chimes  
To travel through the next galactic void  
To where more planets whirl, and wait their times.