

I lie slowly in the darkness of the night
my grandson breathes deeply on me.
he had been awakened and was frightened or just
disoriented now I took him to cuddle with and calm him
his head rests lightly on my chest and I am in heaven.
there is no greater pleasure and no greater sadness.

My thoughts go back to July 4th 1985
when Sam and I were on a sailboat "piece of heaven" I
think I named it Chesapeake Bay, out for a couple of days
over July 4th holiday
starry night but not really calm
too nauseating to sleep below deck
so I lay on deck
and my older son Eli
lay on top of me as I warmed him with a blanket.

Then too I thought this was heaven
truly... under the starry skies I was brought back to my
early days when I'd walk out to watch the heavens by the
brook behind our home in Finchley as a teenager thinking
of eternity and man's short destiny.

So much has happened since then
and as a father
another generation
no longer father and son
he has gone his own way
forging his own dreams.
and now as a grandfather I hold this boy
feeling only blessed and privileged to be present to this
holy moment of awareness.

I bless all you fathers and grandfathers to experience just
this
just this moment in time
when you glimpse eternity
when you get an inkling of what history is really made of
the stuff of myth
fathers and sons
fathers and grandsons
and I adjure you to hold that very moment as I do
cherish it as it will fuel you throughout all that is coming
the degeneration and infirmity
the disease and old age

I bless my father and grandfather
as I think of Dada and the Julius I never knew
whose ashes are strewn in the ground in a polluted
continent and after whom I am named
I bless the ancestors who lie in cold earth in foreign lands
and cemeteries whose souls I pray for.

I think of Dada's green cardigan and the smell that was his
alone
and no more,
His hug when opening the door on Mallard Way in
Kingsbury each Sunday afternoon.
Little did I know how much I needed that hug, that is now
embedded in memory and keeps me going at times.
His hug as a grandfather, his name as Dada
I now seek to perpetuate with this hug
this child
this inquiring soul
with long blond locks
This Divine Child.