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Out of the Depths

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Out of the Depths

John Van Rys

For friends at American Thanksgiving

We gathered together, a few
pinpricks in a world's dark fabric,
space and time threads locked
like fingers in prayer.

Our lives looped here
now, now knotted. Where
and when the threads unravel,
fan out before the scissor's
snip—we know not.

Saying grace, we ate our thanks
this foreign holy-day, while home
town neighbors capitalized
November with yard work,
paternosters and fatherly knives—
carving fowl and punctuating pig skin
sanctified by bleached table cloths.

Seeking grace, we fed each
other the pilgrim's meal, the traveller's
victuals. With weary feet and hearts,
doubt of the journey's end, its Omega,
we sought the guide—absent, or
waiting in darkness
at the town's gate?

No knowing, we questioned
only—our hearts' vacant speech,
whys and wherefores pleading
for mustard seeds and black soil,
not stony, grounded hearts.

Answers may be staring us in the face,
each other's glance, lips and tongues,
gestures of hands and feet—pure grace
in the meal together, feeding. To Him
give thanks.

Vacant hearts still need
brimming. Holes in a shroud
may evidence absence or light. Threads
may strain, knot, and break, but they too may
weave and warm and cover
nakedness.