

John C. Mannone

## Reincarnation

I.

Nighttime launch,  
Luna nearly full  
and fresh snow  
sparkles diamonds  
in her light—  
myriad stars  
in the heavens  
intoning hints  
of red and blue  
beyond the halo  
of the moon.

II.

Planets hang  
in space as ornaments,  
even our own remains  
beautiful despite the war.  
We cruise past them,  
the breath of sun propelling  
our far flung solar sails  
before we fully break  
the skin of our solar wind  
and enter the cold silence  
of the interstellar void.

III.

A wormhole opens  
in a garland of light,  
funnels us through  
time—2000 years ago.

Emerging from the vortex  
in a distant galaxy, engines  
thrum as we slow to light speed  
that physics demands.

IV.

A beacon guides  
us into orbit around  
a habitable planet whose  
spectral K-class sun sings  
all the right kind of light.

We plummet  
through atmosphere,  
through purple rain  
and buffeting winds.  
We pray.

V.

The air is thick  
with hope.

VI.

The horizon blazes  
a crimson we have  
never seen before  
as we approach  
the cave where cries  
from the beacon  
echo.

The path through  
the mouth of stone  
is illumined by fire gems  
studding the wall,  
in the shape of a fir tree  
adorned with light.

At the top of the pine,  
a silvery star shines.

**John C. Mannone** has work in *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *Artemis Journal*, *Poetry South*, *Blue Fifth Review*, as well as speculative work in *Pedestal*, *Eye to the Telescope*, *Altered Reality*, *Star\*Line* and others. He's the winner of a Jean Ritchie Fellowship in Appalachian literature (2017), a Weymouth writer in residence (2016 & 2017) and the

Celebrity Judge for the National Federation of State Poetry Societies (2018). He has three poetry collections: *Apocalypse* (Alban Lake Publishing)—placed 3<sup>rd</sup> for the Elgin Book Award (2017); *Disabled Monsters* (The Linnet's Wings Press)—featured in Southern Festival of Books (2016); and *Flux Lines* (Celtic Cat Publishing)—love-related poems using science metaphors slated for 2019. He's been awarded the Horror Writers Association Scholarship (2017), two Joy Margrave Awards for Nonfiction, and nominated for several Pushcart, Rhysling, Dwarf Star and Best of the Net awards. He edits poetry for *Abyss & Apex*, *Silver Blade*, and *Liquid Imagination*.

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**Editor's Notes:** An artist's impression of a black hole, which some think is a portal to a wormhole, is overlaid with a spacecraft and a guiding star as a symbolic foreshadowing. The side-by-side columns is an intentional construct because one of the reviewers of this poem (I took it to my advanced poetry critique group in a local writers' guild) liked the subliminal effects of having the future verses in close proximity to the earlier ones.