

## *MOTHER OF ALL*

I lie here in forbidden shade,  
Longing to taste the fruit.  
If only my prize would fall my way,  
Thus ending my painful pursuit.

Fermented curiosity has led me to this forsaken grotto.  
I am desirous an answer will reveal its face.  
It is not 'til I fail at suppressing my lust that I'll know  
The prohibited treasure's taste.

Slowly. Gently. A fruit drifts to the ground.  
It has fallen just beyond my reach.  
Outstretched. Straining. I fall short.  
What lesson is He trying to teach?

Without cognition, my body rises.  
I cross the space between.  
I look down. I stoop down. I pick up  
The forbidden fruit that dominates my dream.

Hesitant lips close around the fruit;  
Oh, the soft, yielding skin!  
Determined teeth break through;  
Oh, the wet, sticky juices!  
Overwhelmed am I by this sensation!  
My eyes opened anew!

When I open my eyes, the shade is gone.  
Light has enveloped me.  
I have gained – joy.  
Joy? Joy. Yes, Joy from the forbidden tree.

Though it be terminally toxic,  
I am granted new life.  
Though in darkness enveloped,  
Here is shed a new light.

The threat of death was made:  
A promise that I would perish.

And yet... I linger on.  
The unexpected has come to pass.  
Both fear and faith are gone.

Now there is danger.  
Now there is pain.  
Now there is pleasure.  
Nothing is the same.

I shield myself from Heaven's light.  
Night is become my day.  
In darkest times, a light is shed.  
In the void life finds a way.

My own death has not been granted.  
Still, I have brought Death to the world.  
But –  
I am Mother of all who will live,  
How am I to be Giver of Life  
And the reason that mankind will fall?

Can I be loved in spite of being hated?  
Was this the product of free will or –  
Was this all fated?

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—*Beth Campbell*