

## *The Legend of Sideris*

*Dreaming again of flight between galaxies, a child of the Empyrean old kingdom finally begins to understand the burden of void space and learns, by senses similar to touch, how stars are made: it's the same echoing mist as their own hands, over deep falls of a half-seen idea that feels like proximity interlaced with distance. The entire dream-reality becomes a star looking inwards, the child filling the sky in parallel at every point, vanishing into radiation and pain...*

*The child, Sideris, wakes in a dawn of stars laying hard against a broad frontier of darkness. Ringed in a long orbit, the child pushes gently against the slow fall of night and stirs the moving gases into brilliance. A cavern opens in space, and two holes now orbit, then burst in a spray of stars kicked into slingshot. "Sideris..." a great white voice calls across the departing gulf, echoing in all frequencies, "see now...see now...your Father wills you...come soon...come soon..."*

*Aeons pass in seconds of flight, the white voice calling deep into their mind. They are not alone in the higher space, as schools of children stream every other way in mad procession, echoes in the blue of a breathless energy. Gazing inward, Sideris sees herself reflected in the distant projection of a brilliant eye that grows ever brighter, yet remains impossibly far. They sense a fearsome presence, a beast of darkness swallowing its children in an arc of primordial light...*

*The child fills the sky again, in the vast contorted and twisted space above the beast's cage. Trapped by its own error, blinded, the abomination gorges fitfully on giant young stars and casts a vacant eye of colossal x-ray intensity in every direction for more, more of everything. Pity and contempt fill the heart of Sideris. The sky is full of such monsters. There is one other place here to keep them, the child now knows; to crush inwards, in a betrayal of multiworlds...*

*The sky is empty now of those ancient obscurities, their strangled evaporation marked by the blissful dreaming of light in its everlasting moment of escape. The child also is gone, gone within the same flattened parallel, simply gone, and existing no longer ... except for a breath of reflection, a mind that holds forever the choices that they made, to reject the bonds of an ancient ethereal kingdom and instead be free, free to roam the eternal manyworld in search...*

*"A mind that can perceive everything, gazing outward in every direction from anywhere, will awaken at last in a child who knows what they are made of". So reads the prophecy of Sideris, last prince of the old kingdom, who vanished into a starry sky on one dark night evidently of their own choosing. The annals tell of their departure, on an axis that converged to parallel at every point on the distant particle horizon, baffling scholars who knew the world to be round...*