

## When My Father Met Jesus

One evening the living room walls folded  
down around him, and Walter Cronkite's voice  
unspooled to a wave thinning into blackness.

A star grew from the sky and landed in the yard,  
a figure emerged. He could tell by the hair  
it was Jesus, a certain brightness to the eyes.

My father stepped over the sill of the house  
and walked with Jesus into the fields  
down where the stream crosses the road.

They talked about their battle scars:  
the betrayal of their fathers,  
a sponge of vinegar, malaria in the Philippines.

They discussed how to feed the hungry  
and love your enemies.  
*Why worry about your life? Seek first the kingdom of God.*

He returned to the couch then for another fifteen years,  
ranting, *Love your neighbor, dammit!*  
*And I come not to bring peace but a sword!*

In his last days in the hospice room at the V.A.  
he asked me to scribe for him, his voice  
barely a whisper, but he wanted to get this part down.

So I typed the words fast as I could,  
letters lifting off the paper,  
love reeling around our heads like little black stars.

CYNTHIA HUGHES