

Gloria, a transition

by [Muriel Nelson](#) in the [December 16, 2020](#) issue

After Maurice Duruflé's *Messe 'Cum jubilo'*

There's a moment in the *Gloria*  
when the Father simply leans down,  
down to the shepherds, fruit pickers, gleaners,  
down to the pregnant, the children, the sick, the injured, the lame,  
down to believers, agnostics, artists, scientists, poets—all  
abiding in the field in pens like a huge factory-farm flock

with the son now in its center  
where the father leans down,  
A to B,  
and like the worst pain  
the mighty organ halts all motion.

Then the loudest stop (loudest pain)  
drops out. *There*.  
Another power drops. *There*.  
Another and another. *There, there*.  
Till only rest on earth, a song still to be heard,  
and a sleeping baby's breath remain.