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THE DUALITY OF DUST

Although its name means *tiny*, dust flashes
in the veins of comets like celestial corpuscles,
builds rings around Saturn, makes up the flesh
of stars sucked into their negative darkness,
and again when they burst back into flame.
You wonder how many times, how many times
a thing can be born, as it fashions star after star,
each one bright and sizzling, *trailing clouds of glory*
in its wake. A *genuine birth*, as Wordsworth said
of poetry, *a bursting forth of genius from the dust*.
You wonder what it understands about your tiny
planet that seems so large to you, you believe
that it is large. You wonder why you understand
so little about everything.

Like us, dust is worn from traveling.
As it swirls across the Atlantic from the Sahara,
instead of brightening, it darkens the sky.
Some call the winds that carry it, *Haboob*,
Khamsin, *Simón*, *Sirocco*. But when you name
a thing like that, you risk giving it a soul.
Gandhi said that the seeker after truth
must be humbler than the dust, but you
are dogged by an ego so fierce, it sucks you
into its own black hole. And you have become
so full of desire, so full of desire, it tears
at your flesh. When you reach for your beloved,
it's as if she is of the firmament, passing, like a breeze,
between your outstretched arms.