

# Trapped Between the Soil and the Stars

MY FAULT AND MY FATE IS TO BE AN  
INCURABLE ROMANTIC.

Where others see a squirrel burying acorns for the winter, I see nature's epochal struggle for survival. Where others see only the frigid inconvenience of accumulated snow and ice, I see the sublime subtleties of God's crystalline palette. Where others see the loss of chlorophyll in the leaves of summer and their inevitable littering of the ground, I see signs of a fading year sprinkled liberally with the exuberant shades of God's handiwork.

So when I gaze upward toward the west, on a chilly autumn eve, and my breath is taken away by the resplendent beauty of a sunset, I see not just a pretty end to another day, but God's glory splashed across His immense, heavenly canvas.

For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse.

Romans 1:20

And there's the rub. An energetic and creative God has gone out of His way to reveal Himself in the components of His handiwork. He has surrounded all my senses with the beauty of His mind and hand. Yet often, instead of exhilaration the result is only an unrequited *longing* in my breast, and a sensation of being in the wrong place at the wrong time—a feeling of belonging not to the low or to the high, but to neither.

I cannot yet reach up into heaven. I cannot yet soar with the angels or kneel and worship alongside the Elders. I do not yet tread the soft pathways of

gold that crisscross my God's home. But neither can I be at peace in a place of soil and clay and mortal impermanence.

At times this flesh is little more than a cumbersome cloak—cloyingly uncomfortable apparel for my God-tinged spirit.

"But will God indeed dwell on the earth? Behold, heaven and the highest heaven cannot contain You, how much less this house which I have built!"  
1 Kings 8:27

Alas, that which displays the handiwork and personality of the Father must remain, until The Day, only a beckoning foretaste of what lies ahead. Just as God in my mind can only be a weak and fleeting surrogate for the more substantial glory of His literal presence, the glory of His earthly creation cannot compare to the wondrous mysteries and beauty of my eventual home.

So, as a consolation, I make the visual riches of His grace into a promissory note. He has promised me life everlasting in the now-unimaginable wonder of His presence. For the moment, because I am still small and earth-bound, I take comfort in a diluted foretaste of that wonder. All around me glows the beauty of His creation: the woods, the luxurious plains, the beasts of the field. The changes in each new season offer a hint of the changes that will take place once I pass through His gates.

The beauty of this world is a sight at once uplifting and melancholy—a pleasant experience tinged with homesickness.

But it will do for now.

