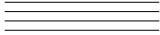


R E Q U I E M F O R T H E S T A R S



S U S A N B A R B A

after Mallarmé

Black hole, where the stars go when they die,
no region of my brain illuminates
your name. Black hole, the circuitry
goes dark, fumbling for metaphors to grasp
how gravity absorbs a galaxy.
Except the white page and its hieroglyphic
scars, the stars of black ink drunken by
the sheet, white sheet magnetic in its pull,
absorbing finished thoughts that end in words.
O words, without you what would be the last?
And what would last? A void, an endless night
whose mother is that galaxy of time;
the milky way, our astral address,
ephemeral as the imprint of a kiss.