THIRTEEN CATHEDRALS

A **cathedral of feathers**

would weigh almost nothing

and be easy to move

but some people are allergic;

it might attract cats.

If choir or congregation

breathed out,

faith would blow away.

The god is not to be sneezed at.

The **cathedral of light**

is a beacon in the dark,

consumes more power

than it generates,

disturbs the sleep of all.

There are no shadows

or room for wonder.

Everything is illuminated

and bleached out.

The **cathedral of flesh**

is momentary and fluid,

collapses into disarray,

longing and memory

rekindled as desire.

The **cathedral of milk**

is pure white

but not needed by adults,

has turned sour and bitter

over time.

The **dream cathedral**

is the greatest of all

but is never finished.

Its spires touch heaven,

its stained glass windows

contain every colour,

its tower is the tallest

in the land, it's nave

and choir the emptiest.

A **paper cathedral**

can be unfolded

and folded at will.

One square sheet

and a few deft moves

see it gently lock

into place. It can be

recycled or made again.

The **mercury cathedral**

shows the temperature

in silver columns.

Quicksilver dogma

does not leave the body,

weighs both visitor

and congregation down,

a heavy metal heaven.

The **alchemic cathedral**

is always about

to become gold

if the right equation

or magic can be found.

You can waste

a lifetime here.

The **cathedral of bones**

is a grim place to be,

a sad place to worship.

There is no life

or resurrection,

just deathly silence

arguing with ghosts.

The **cathedral of sound**

is all echoes

and murmuration,

the faint memory

of song and readings,

a distant euology;

someone crying

for forgiveness.

The **cathedral of fire**

burns without smoke,

and belief and faith

are not consumed.

Their god is

a thunderstorm

passing through

a break in the forest

designed

to stop the spread.

The **cathedral of sand**

is waiting for the tide

to wash it all away.

Who made the bucket

and turned out

this crumbling mound?

Who did the spade work,

bought the ice creams?

The **cathedral of doubt**

takes uncertainty to new heights,

never offers any answers,

encourages questions

and wonder and worry,

leaves everything unsaid.

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