

What happens?

"You go six foot down,"
said the clergyman to his troubled son

but coming from a man of the cloth ...
this too bewildered the boy

*"what does Dad believe in then,
if there's no heaven or hell?"*

was the knotty gristle, without the verbiage,
the four-year old tried to digest

as confusing as: *"how many grains of dirt
are there in the whole world?"*
(because there must be a number, ok?)
or: *"what does the end of the universe look like?"*
(but there must be something
on the other side, right?)

also: *"if you die, then there's nothing ...
just a box of rotting flesh ..."*
was as terrifying as hellfire
for a young'un ...
or anyone really, even those
old enough to know best

for the passage of years only
inflamed the boy's conundrums ...
to which, as a grownup, were added:
*God, truth, religion,
sex, epistemology and women*

none of which, as it went,
solved the preacher man's son's
very first, inarticulate stab
at what he later came to see
was a matter of *ontological eschatology*

many had "returned"
from the other side,
to share what they'd seen ...
but what did this really mean,
asked the boy become man ...
"for me?"

son of his father, a priest whose faith
circumambulated speech, for
solely in deed was it expressed
as indeed, the man knew in his heart ...

were all things true

nonetheless, *"who is my Dad then?"*
asked him, the boy, the son, the man ...
forgetting, forever after
about what happens after death

asking now, instead ...

"father, who are you?"