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Tom Tipton

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On Bernard of Clairvaux

Tom Tipton

His head ever in Christ's lap,
He marvels at the generosity of his lover.
He, not Christ, is the beloved.
His lover, ever with soothing words,
Strokes his hair,
Speaks softly and intimately.
They are one:
Christ the bridegroom,
And Bernard's soul the bride.

Blessed love songs jiggle through the flesh
And move Bernard's mouth.
He sings Christ like a deep breath,
He wears Christ like a skin,
He sleeps Christ,
Eats Christ.
He is enveloped in a fleshy world of Christ.
Christ is the expanse of the night sky.
Christ is the arc of the horizon,
Christ is the air he breathes.
Christ is each grain of sand on every shore,
Christ is each dewdrop on every rose,
Christ is each louse on every beast.

And for all this,
Who would turn from his lover
To the less jealous company
Of his brethren?