

Idiot Psalm X

Scott Cairns (b. 1954)

A psalm of Isaak, hoarsely sung.

And yet again the wicked in his arrogance,
in his acutely hemmed and tapered sense
of self has found
sufficient opportunity to hound
the lowly.

And yet again, Great Enabler, the lowly,
draped in their accustomed modesty
and threadbare suits bereft
have seized the chance to suffer quietly, stage left.

Therefore, now again, I puzzle why,
O Holy Silence, why
do You appear to bide unheeding
some great distance hence?

Why, O Blithely *Um*apparent, do you remain
serenely imperceptible, even to our thinning
crew who stand here blinking at the sky?

I have no stomach for the newspapers, no heart
for the brilliant, flat-screen lit catalog
of woes, though every item flickers,
one admits, wondrously produced
and duly sponsored.

See here. The wicked boasts about his late
successes, the grasping man complains
that he is cheated of his share, while all
the while the self-concerned continue
banking largely on Your accustomed reticence,
and must needs let out their trousers still
several measures more, having wagered well.

Pinched beneath their spinning machinations
and all their neat machines,
we grind our teeth,
yea, even as we sleep.