

Three Poems by David Scott

Chorister

It shouldn't do these days, but it does:
doing the beautiful thing with sparse reward
except to make music to the Lord
this winter's afternoon.
Laundry makes a white show of it
as the sound arrows its way into a dark corner
where they keep the mops and buckets.
We wait the rebound of the chant
to meet the next lines backing up like waves.
A downy chin suspended on a ruff covers
a deal of stuff like home-sickness. Do they know
how good they are, how rare?
And only a handful of us there.

In Praise of the Convent Cart

There is something about its thin, frail wheels;
it's backstreet bonfire night engineering,
and the donkey-derby faithfulness of its appeal
that makes it, of its type, an almost perfect thing.

Known in the Convent as 'Le Cadillac', it brings
food in towelled pots, and couldn't be simpler
It has irony and beauty, and its steering
is the gift of the wind in a full-sail wimple.

Crucifixion, 1926

from an engraving by David Jones

What a long time it has been since the stable.
The good ship sailed without a mariner.
Cain takes a sword to his brother Abel.
The sun goes down and cross grows higher.

Between he and she, and that and this,
no end of writhing under the ground.
Ass-head and dragon lick the spilled chalice
as the cross grows higher and the sun sinks down.

Saint John on tip-toe elevates the flowers.
All three women come up from the town.
Who could have imagined such three long hours
as the cross grows higher and the sun sinks down?

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