

## Evensong in Grahamstown Cathedral

I saw across the rows of pews last night  
a woman's face as lined and beautiful  
as yours will be when we're as grey and old.

I turned to look at yours. Below the eyes  
I saw the first faint signs of time's caress  
and felt a tender ache I'd never known.

Was this love maturing? Or ruing time?  
Could I who loved appearances too much  
now grow to love the whole being of you?

In red and white, the choir lined the steps.  
Whiskered or bald, fresh or lined and worn  
their faces placed us in a Breughel crowd.

In slow, solemn plainchant they sang a psalm.  
Line by line, the music became their breath,  
their breath a music older than their bones.

I turned to you, but you were lost in time.  
Strange new feelings struggled open in me.  
Burstings. Meltings. A letting go. A peace.

Let me hear more of such music, I prayed,  
for I would love you as we age and find  
your face the more beautiful for being old.