

Easter – Good Friday 2023

Isaiah 52:13- 53:12; Psalm30, Heb 4:14-16; 5:7-9, John 18:1-19:42

Go, Bitter Christ, grim Christ! haul if thou wilt
Thy bloody cross to thine own bleak Calvary!
When did I bid thee suffer for my guilt
To bind intolerable claims on me?
I loathe thy sacrifice: I am sick of thee.

They say thou reignest from the Cross. Thou dost,
And like a tyrant. Thou dost rule by tears,
Thou womanish son of woman. Cease to thrust
Thy sordid tale of sorrow in my ears,
Jamming the music of my few, short years.

Silence! I say it is a sordid tale,
And thou with glamour hast bewitched us all:
We struggle forth to gape upon a Grail,
Sink into a stinking mire, are lost and fall...
The cup is worm-wood and the drink is gall.

I am battered and broken and weary and out of heart,
I will not listen to talk of heroic things,
But be content to play some simple park,
freed from preposterous, wild imaginings...
Men were not made to walk as priests and kings.

Thou liest, Christ, thou liest; take it hence,
That mirror of strange glories; I am I;
What wouldst thou make of me? O cruel pretence,
Drive me not mad with the mockery
Of that most lovely, unattainable lie!

I hear thy trumpets in the Breaking morn,
I hear them restless in the resonant night,
Or sounding down the long winds over the corn
Before thee riding in the world's despite,
Insolent with adventure, Laughter-light.

They blow aloud between love's lies and mine,
Sing to my feasting in the minstrel's stead,
Ring from the cup where I would pour the wine,
Reuse the uneasy echoes absent my Bed...
They will blow through my grave when I am dead.

O King, O Captain, waste, wane with scourging.
Strange beyond speech and wonderful with woe,
Whither, relentless, wilt thou still be urging
Thy maimed and halt that have not strength to go?...
Peace, peace, I follow. Why must we love thee so?

(DOROTHY LEIGH SAYERS)