Singing the B Minor Mass

Ingrid Wendt

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank

Part of the Creative Writing Commons

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation
Available at: https://scholarworks.umt.edu/cutbank/vol1/iss29/38

This Poetry is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in CutBank by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.
Singing the B Minor Mass

Next to the last performance and Nancy, crying, can’t help it: how can anything ever be this big again. Trish too, who until this morning has never forgotten to fix breakfast, her husband saying this singing must fill her right up.

Stranger than fiction, my mother would say. Last week a soprano whose name I still don’t know looked right through me at Sears Auto Parts store and tonight you’d think we were old friends, kept from each other by seating arrangements no one thought about changing any more than notes in a score: faces closed tight as zero, such concentration, no one knew anyone’s name, where in the world we’d later show up: Observer Graphics, rummage sales, the meter maid wagon, outside of your own kid’s school a father whose kid goes there too.

Last night Nathan surprised me, went on about Noah, newborn, named because in one look he saw a son strong enough to live up to a name and Noah is a name to live up to: opening strangers up to each other—on sidewalks, in stores—stopping because of a baby who knows nothing except love, love, a word so total to question it is absurd. Turning our heads, this music tonight against all we ever have learned of decorum (Sanctus! Gloria!), Bach’s postulation of such absolute form tonight again releasing us, binding us, this magnificent counterpoint of control.

Ingrid Wendt