

# Possible Answers to Prayer

By Scott Cairns

Your petitions—though they continue to bear  
just the one signature—have been duly recorded.  
Your anxieties—despite their constant,

relatively narrow scope and inadvertent  
entertainment value—nonetheless serve  
to bring your person vividly to mind.

Your repentance—all but obscured beneath  
a burgeoning, yellow fog of frankly more  
conspicuous resentment—is sufficient.

Your intermittent concern for the sick,  
the suffering, the needy poor is sometimes  
recognizable to me, if not to them.

Your angers, your zeal, your lipsmackingly  
righteous indignation toward the many  
whose habits and sympathies offend you—

these must burn away before you'll apprehend  
how near I am, with what fervor I adore  
precisely these, the several who rouse your passions.

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Scott Cairns was born in Tacoma, Washington. He earned a BA from Western Washington University, an MA from Hollins College, an MFA from Bowling Green State University, and a PhD from the University of Utah. Cairns has taught at numerous universities including University of North Texas, Old Dominion University, and the University of Missouri. He was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship in 2006.

