

Bell

by [Jeanne Murray Walker](#) in the [March 22, 2005](#) issue

Good Friday, 2004

Since time flies one way like an arrow,
the sugar can't be stirred out of your oatmeal
and no matter how long the murderer sobs
on the median strip—sorry!—he can't reverse
his swerve, cannot rescind his drink

before the crash. Like him, was Jesus heartsick
to find history's not a zipper running both ways?
He who loved eternity—its roominess,
its reversibility—as he grew up, did he
have to learn he never could unsay a thing

he'd said? And yet today, like all Good Fridays,
He hangs on the cross again. On altars
he hangs. On necklaces. His death is like an x
that rides the wheels of time to come again
in ritual, that miniature eternity, that spring

re-sprung. Dear God, there in your big eternity,
remember that your hands and feet can never
be unscarred again. Hear these words spoken
by a body that suffers, by a tongue
that will stiffen soon and be gone.

Have mercy on us who love time.
May this prayer be a tire
that rolls over every inch of the way
to find You. May it be a bell
which can never be unrung.