

# Peter Hammill, The Lie (Bernini's Saint Theresa)

Genuflection, erection in church.  
Sacristy cloth, moth-eaten shroud.  
Secret silence, sacred secrets  
accumulate dust, aggravate the eye.

Incautious laughter after confession.  
Benediction, fictional fear.  
Hidden faces...Grace is a name,  
like Chastity, like Lucifer, like mine.

You took me through the window-stain,  
drowned in image, incense,  
choir-refrain and slow ecstasy.  
I'd embrace you if I only knew your name.

The silent corner haunts my shadow prayers.  
ice-cold statue, rapture divine,  
unconscious eyes, the open mouth,  
the wound of love,  
the Lie.

You took me, gave me reasons for  
saints and missals, vigils,  
all the more holy martyrs.  
I'd embrace you and walk through  
the one-way door.  
I'd embrace you, but it would be  
just another lie.