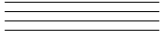


P A N I S A N G E L I C U S



C L I V E J A M E S

Tipped off by you, I watched the YouTube clip
Of Pavarotti and his father singing
That transcendental César Franck duet
In the gallery of Modena cathedral.
Slowly the lens pans up, and there they are.

Now they are in my dreams, perhaps because
The guiding father is a theme for me
That aches a long way down. More likely, though,
This haunting happens for the simple reason
They sound so very beautiful together

We might be listening to a strand of life
Slowly assembling and made audible
In all its linkages and balancings,
As if the way an angel sings had been
Caught in a mirror and returned through time.

When Pava sang Rossini's *Stabat Mater*
He sang alone, but singing with his father
He found an extra beauty. Listen to them:
The Pearlfishers serenade the waves,

Or Gobbi and Jon Vickers in *Don Carlo*
The lonely year that I was first in London
Go head to head at Covent Garden
In that sensational first act duet.

A lifetime has gone by since we first listened
To music and, wrapped in it, found each other.
Forgive me for not seeing straight away
It was the blessing by which we two pagans
Late in our lives might eat the bread of angels.