

BELLS ALL TOO NEAR

Reiner Kunze

Translated by Lori M. Fisher

Morning after morning, their ringing ravages
my sleep, as if it were god's will to punish
one who can't sleep evenings
in his world

Sundays the great bells hurry to help the little ones

They ring the believers out of their beds
they ring the believers into their coats
they ring ring

On a Monday in the fog I'll pluck the bells
like overripe fruit
and feed them to the bell-fish

I'm not afraid for the safety of my soul

The pastor will intercede for me
in secret. He likes to sleep in