

# Brief excerpt from the Fantasy thing I'm writing.

*by* Iain James Robb

*Lucien*

Lucien Tidesquall lay almost sleeping amid the soft green grass. His eyes irradiated green midnight under vanquished brows. A plover hovered somewhere in the distance. It reminded him of a poem he had written as a teenager, a haiku that went as following:

Big windy bird, you  
Scatter and screech aloftwise;  
You big fucking moron.

He was admitting of the fact that he had to work harder on his long stresses. He was galvanically handsome in a turquoise pajama suit and was feeling relatively content. And the long sky wavered, windily, against a waverously windy gleam. *I am Lucien*, he reminded himself, as if he had been previously uncognisant of the fact.

"What whispers wind, the wind allows  
Between the harvest and the heath;  
Bequeath immaculate slumbers to us, Lord,  
We signallers of your Love who lie beneath."

He slumbered. It had been two days now since his recovery from alcohol addiction and his beating, and the light was looking good. *Faud*, he thought. *I can never forgive you for inveigling my sister. I can only tolerate, and wait.* But the sky was looking peaceful, and he was quiet now. He liked it in this garden, the feel of the lush fresh grass against his body, the smell of perennial flowers in the air that

sang an almost invisible halo around the borders of Castle Tidesquall's private park. Yet he detected these scents, because he knew them, and not because they were too redolently fresh with the overfamiliarity of his previously coming here, even as a boy, to escape the personalities of his brother and his friends. A small dog not belonging to any of the servants or the courtesans of the Castle skipped towards him across the lawn. He smiled at it, and reached out his hand as soon as it got within a reasonable distance before it demurred and backed away, and then came back a bit, and then hopped off along the green. Why not, of course? He liked dogs. Regardless of his reckless disdain of people, he had always been an animal lover. He still remembered fondly a pet Shetland sheepdog (to use a somewhat anachronistic old Terran term) that his sister and mother had given him just a few months before his thirteenth birthday. He had genuinely loved that dog; it was one of the only useful gifts his family had ever given. Long murdered now, at the hands of his brother and his fellow dunderers. Poisoned in its kennel, with a particularly violent toxin that his brother had not even had the saving of face to disguise as anything other than a toxin. Once the family mortician had ingratiated himself to his position in order to check out the supposed naturalness of the dog's demise, at insistence of young Lucien's barely pubescent sobbing, it was found to have half of its insides rotted out as if by a swathe of sulphuric acid. It was actually a mix of both sulphuric and hydrochloric acid common in the cleaning products normally kept in the basement of the Castle's servant quarters. Lucien had always wondered if his fuckwit brother had either stolen the key to the quarters or bribed the servants there who hardly guarded the only frequently locked doors.

