

Darkness

by Iain James Robb

DARKNESS

I.

Aurora's ship has moored itself: her sister's skies have fallen
down,

The spaces where the secret creatures huddle in black kingdoms
Drowse; the depths of solstice wears the always distant crown
Of astral fires, making glimmers on the innocent dominions

Of a forest wreathed in solitudes as tender as a wounding rose.
In places where a boy who bears my face will walk the lights
Carouse, to show blank violation of a doe who, in her torn clothes,
Has passed last respirations, at the bloodhunt of perspirant
nights.

The sweat among the hiding ones is suckled by unshown furs,
In haunts and burrows too near to be seen, amid the slipshod
sedge:

The threadbare cloak of undergrowth wears coronets of furze,
That heal in places, misplaced, grazing at the water's edge.

Attached to torn leaves are orphaned husks where silence floats,
The cast-off shells of butterflies that bear reminder of the flown:
These fractured cups of brittle twig go off in pools of flower-floats,
Memoriam to flightish things that rise from view and die
unknown.

II.

Now what was groomed by first dawn's haze has grown its halo
From the liquid pools of filtered light, abandoned at the death
Of the l st h ur's height, the close wood walls its hollow,
Sealed in by dark nearness of the sky's departing breath.

Now twilight has departed care and rests in its own violet seams,
An orchid sits upon the midnight air,  nd whispers  n its hymn,
As she lifts up to be ravished by the pearly rays of moonbeams,
That fall on her shawl like infant milk to touch her starlit quim.

Cool light inside its soft abode upon her neck of emerald
Plays cupid to her velvet furls, lit up in its transparent spars:
And, bathed below the pale allure of Luna in her huntress world,
She slides herself to sleep beneath the semen of the stars.

As nightfall wreathes descending dreams she turns aside and
shivers:

The blank face of a china doll, that faces rain in earthbound
herds,

From where it wilts upon its bed of mud come months and
withers,

To where the backdrift of the river stalls in clusters of dead birds.

III.

Against the lone ascending moon it's only the tides that surface,
As the heirs to its transparent court, with only its face as maid.
Is it the last wet twigs of April brake repulse me with their
weakness,

Or the senseless growth of age-long oaks that makes me feel
afraid?

Black ooze of brook, I cannot linger, not here where my hand
descends,
Where no impression on the surface casts reflection on my gaze,
Or seeks to imprint anything: just silent frames, that face their
ends,
Lost whippoorwills that swoon away, where stagnant currents laze

In broken dross and feathers; where I've stayed, I have forgotten:
Here beneath the spider-limbs of sterile trees where darkness
weeps,
Come cloths of frost reflecting where the resting ether finds its
den,
Come nights the day makes derelict, of bright and stillborn deeps.

Against it all the orchids watch, with stalks that taste the starless
sleet,
That wait to waste away when days sail over with the morning's
rot,
That find their most becomely face inside their final windingsheet,
To make hoar-frozen plants for wind's songs gone: they have
forgot.

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