

# In Quietude

*by* Iain James Robb

*For Algernon*

Afloat, on tidal difference's separated songs  
Let nothing spare her mention, still belongs  
That sterile tone mismissioned to my ear  
What love's illusion balanced most when throngs  
Of hummingbirds advanced, methinks, to hear her;  
That was surely jest: I wished to hold her nearer;  
Now that all is played and nearer is not near,  
    She is not there.

Though she spars sunward only as magicians go  
That flatter once, then separate their show  
From waves of kelp we plough through when the drearer  
Light of day strikes strobes; if backwards, still we go.  
I think if we could careful vie to spear her  
With each Lothario's or Magellan's blow,  
Betwixt each winds in listing we won't hear her;  
    She is not, no,

Not as the marionettes or distant playthings  
Our last childhood remembered, not as rows  
Of wheat the spirit assuaged on simmered day-rings,  
Not as hers' millennial glimmerings on the rose.  
Mere plastic she, but periplast arriving  
At some river brink Narcissus hardly knows  
Throws more of spastic sense on all our striving  
    Than all she knows.

Alone, aghast, 'tis passed, still lovers keep  
The clock-downed hours where clowning clovers sleep  
Upon the diamond of the green mead's plough;

We answer thus, "Is this the same as now?"  
It was the same as yesterday, we half remember;  
We care not we are barbs below the bough.  
Through each great lukewarm Spring, grey-white December  
Her spinstering vow.

We need not strive so; go where vanes once Lydian  
Calculated minutes from the breeze's veer;  
By Tropic banks our fathers claimed meridian  
Whatever flowers sent forth, wraith fruits, she would not wear.  
White strains adorned from perfumes' drifted memory,  
And gowns the Vespers ply from snowdrops' keep  
She would not hold from any action's armoury,  
And will not keep.

Preferring temperance to this false adorning,  
To Southwards or to Northwards I will show  
The face that calculates upon its lauding  
More than she hers, since naught awaits below.  
If calculate, let others claim emissaries  
More than to my own state; I do not trow  
Whether me to her, to her own gait miscarries;  
We do not know.

