

Promenade

by Iain James Robb

At the week's end, memories may come to you
Of weekends same as those just gone before,
That fade away from seeing as a tide's grey flue,
That vanishes once travelled to a shifting shore:
Still, hope you'll know a girl for an hour anew,
One who fades away with yet her secret's store.
Of weekends same as those just gone before,
At the week's end, memories may come to you.

When last light's faded for the gold dusk's hue,
With a friend go off to walk the concrete shore.
Six hours till midnight, think of things you'll do
Once you've gone some place you've gone before,
And surrounding streetlights in the darker blue
Spill pale washed amber on their tarmac floor;
With a friend go off to walk the concrete shore,
When last light's faded for the gold dusk's hue.

When the late hours leave your confidence
To talk to strangers at the start of day,
As your speech will stumble, still a sense
Of those blonde girls gone out to play.
Go off on your own and lose your friend,
Before the next track on the last one end.
They bring out swift their twos and tens,
And smile until they scorn your say;
They are this bright night's denizens-
Still stay near you through early day.

Watch the cold night waking by the city lights,
By the long brown arm of the windless river;
Three hours till midnight, go and see the sights

Of the steep lane sheltered in its floodlit bower:
Will you go back alone before the moon alights,
Having pledged your lust upon a plastic flower?
By the long brown arm of the windless river,
Watch the cold night waking by the city lights.

When a long night's ended with the other nights,
Will join all the other times no words remember,
Ónce the farthest star has fallen from her heights,
As the street-lamps dwindle to a vanished ember,
You'll forget the name of her your loss requites,
For you never spoke, beyond one trackless hour
Will join all the other times no words remember,
When a long night's ended with the other nights.

For the brief space of an hour you'll know
A woman who will forget you knew her:
Down in the dregs of the rounds gone slow,
To trace "that magic first which drew her";
Know success as one more self-taught lie,
Though before it failure quite a gulf will lie;
Bored with this, toward their usual dens, go
Those forgetting you as you have felt move far
Their interest that, into its shedding time, so
Moves themselves off from your footsteps far.

When forethought of a folly is the end you use,
To try and sow excitement if the languor hardens
(With no clue of a pale and wet tomorrow's news,
The bleeding body of the evening paper soddens),
Guiding lonely friends with just a thirsty muse,
Go away with strangers to the town's dry gardens:
To try and sow excitement if the languor hardens,
When forethought of a folly is the end you use.

The silent arcs of amber cast too stark a blues,
Reflected in the gutters as the cold rain hardens:
All the women destined by themselves to choose
Another point of venture if a new mood fastens,
To choose of by the separate fancies of their use,
And don't require your escort to the usual taverns.
Reflected in the gutters as the cold rain hardens,
The silent arcs of amber cast too stark a blues.

Think to face your new morn twice as you
Wake six hours later with a sense more sore;
Think instead of things else you might do,
And dull, dead Saturdays have gone before-
Till the next one comes, too short the time,
Two hours past midnight, yet a sip of wine;
Your week's ends shift towards a bleaker blue,
Of colder days you gave away your plastic flower:
Consciousness not kindled, as you always knew,
Yet you'll repeat forever this remembered hour.

