

Spring (An Overture)

by Iain James Robb

Demeter's daughter comes to her when swings
From green turf, all that keener hearth, whose brown
Had been more mournful, in its nuptial's crown,
Than all the transit buds that seed each Spring:

When I, or we, say lateness brings recall,
Of season's shortness. Reason me of this-
Had we did not see those freshets of the Fall
Descend their burning birds, ere Ceres' kiss

Could bring us back this sequined shore: the same as last
The girls moved here in skirts as debonair,
As those last month in season; clouds have passed
Placentas to each noon's heights as *lunaire*-
And passed, again, once more,

All, and nothing. Always, it has been as grey,
Since last we noticed. Casually a pram
Skirts muffled chorus of the leaves whose sway
Turns from the note of that first marjoram
Another country doesn't notice. See them spray,
Those lupins grouping by the bench's dam:
To make proxy-lovers yet with mouths more fey...
(There's nothing clouds can add here, or re-balm)
Than those the suckling dusk wields to the day
Still-birthered too soon.

What do we write, again?

Let's search no answers in the setting moon
The sun is, still the same the other night,
Whose colours bleed transference from the noon;
It's cold. Kiss her, and she'll re-trance as soon.
Remind me, Stranger, what the question is, again:

It is not June...

And we drowse and drone here under wings sans flightfulness;
And we float here in the sediments of Spring.

I waited for you where there is no grange.
That house, deserted, traced from band-stand west,
No walk of haltered footsteps, down the flange,
Descending bridge-fence, there has never left:
Or gone with living puppets of strange strings
We know, but had not known then: the deluge
Of images stilled to view has left their rouge,
To share with newer children on the swings:

And I...

Recall,
Or you recall yet?
Not full Fall,
But I recall

Imaginary, some young man, with pram and boy,
If not his own, pass poppets, skirt-guised, perching on a chair...
To sow them with his amatory ploy:
The magnet call of fairness, to the fair.
And does it work? I share a different kind of bench,
With fenced-in past-wise follies, other lords
Of desperate joys, that leave out difference
In wing-weights, moved anew, by the same words,
I leave as well. I do not share them, strange,
With inward winds that sift benevolence.

And I stalk with halted footsteps down the flange
The erstwhile golfhouse wears, to shade its grey-
Across the beard of leaves that share our range
Unleft, ah, friend, what shall we do today?-

It's late; it's I who waits the mid-noon dark,
To catch you walking, townling to the trees:
As you bring out your black dog into the park-
And scoff at regular cliques of pedigrees.

I here remembered how we smoked and swam,
Beneath the cadenced pleasure, of our under-days:
Congealing cross-thoughts under oaken breeze-
And watched the Turnered ocean of that swarm
Last Spring made - on the litheness of white knees
You did not hold as Spring's magnificence.
If you see my ghost among the goading leaves,
Some Summer soon know I have promised you...
For soon my book will spread to other eaves...
That you do not think I've misremembered you.

And, perennial *primer*; sight still of the moon-ranks riven...
In the snowdrop orchards, lathered by the feet of trees:
In their clutch of fronds and fends, to other winds misgiven,
To the magic bells and ends of other silences...

Sits the *sky's heart* still: my whiter will is a misgiving;
So reason me of this, if the desire is less,
Would other cuts burn sweetly, as this last attrition-
If the triumph of the harm of hers were rated less,

And sorrowing for more. Of her, or other hers, at several,
Cast your eyes, why don't you, on that last who somewise passed-
Minutes here, or hence again. Green funereal,
In their blank disguises branchlets, that were first to last,

Scatter, and she sits still, even where that we left then...
When here the other morning, and she sometime brings
Doffed voices, of the burns, before the fence's cleft-hem-
Of shriven daises the sun ravishes, with silent strings,

Of avvilled ardours: or remembers other strands of verdure
Touched return: her eyes green sphinxes without weight of wings:
Withdrawing outward, sans of riddles such as sighs or censure,
In their scope of windowed rims, their sailing seraphims

Rain, wind or loss or love? It hardly asks for matters,
Smirking gently at the man who basks with borrowed pram-
As skates of wraiths turn all the salient skies to tatters,
That the cirrus banked, to cobalt's masking oriflamme-

Retreating now, heart of the beryl, 'mid the windward rushes
Into flush; could we yet be that angel's paramour-
If cuckoos stood in stead to mate somedáy with thrushes,
Or occasioán leave her side again to marry more...

And there were other men, and are you there for me, *Absentia*,
For myself at last, alone? Alone, at bask, could be
My gasp in trance, at capture, when you take what you will of me:
Whether last in captive triumph, or who floats, before,
You slake your will on strangely. Take the lane thou ridest,
To take of me my delling shelter, as you will with me...
Abroad the cracking paths across that show the shade thou
stridest-
Below the capsized shadow harboured of the apple-tree.
To its own mode of a being lies your path, my Shadow,
Ah, my unknown friend and genesis. I gave you more
Than they did, gone at last, to cloak the ground you borrow,
As shaded by the sapphire of the same sún-shóre.

Ah, Shadow, as you will take what you wish, of your will of me;
Harp you past, and cast your anvil, out of valences...
Striating paths, where I lie captured in your clasp, and find your
fill with me;
I do not cry hard or hard gasp, within your cadences.

Heartbeats spread along your harvests, hie your path, mark
manna

That the sun-drown scowers, ungentle friend, and termless fee.
These greens a belt of wooden runes, or an unparched
savanannah,

Tell the toll of fleets re-helmed, beyond the germ of me.
And the street you beat has gardens still entrenched in henna,
Past the marge where stars bar parkway, from their violences:
Lost low beyond the liquid weights of my *Absentia*...
That flash their diamonds in the sapphires of *your* silences.

