

Upwards, Into the White Eye Rising (Parts IV - VI)

by Iain James Robb

IV.

Upwards, into the white eye rising,
There is will, to stay, yet stays no will to be.
Come, horseless rider, over bridled mountain,
 Undulate, wash over me.
And where, oh where can she, can she be hiding,
Who would raise her arms against yours granted free?
Your voice left lost across its loveless riding,
 Where lies our threnody:
Where rest our lights? I sense your shadow striding
From the veil of nights that cross your threshless floor:
Two to be surrendered, when the sky splits fallen,
To lift tongues in unison, then sing nomore.

Outwards, inwards to the soundbare barren,
Drift, and slip your mask and be, and yet not be-
Death: who shall not make the stars his carrion,
But takes the fallen of us and the free.
Yet there is no moorage for a craft to rise in,
No stoppage quadrant, no pale boundary-
Across black vaultage of the pin-eyed ocean:
 And it has no memory-
But closing doors: a map with no horizon,
For dead perennials who have broke their bourne,
To ride in lights, to need no skies to cry on,
As we, passed on to last, and not to mourn.

Nightbound, boundless, in a glassless mirror,

Our eyes cast, sounded, on the flightless floor
That carousels the clouds: where sails my saviour-
Bird's, or angel's portage at what door?
It is not the beasts that make a knight from horror:
Bled out at last, they'd make no guests with fear.
If you must save one displaced from doubt then save her:
 She is not yet measured here.
The thread is just our own to strike, we take our tiller,
And three sisters vanish when we raise our shears:
These pains were mine, you should forget them, mother:
I join the stationed cross, across all hemispheres.
And as all slides from sight, all join our hands and hover,
Though grounded, slight, and yet engaged the door-
Upon the hourless rift of cloud that has no closer:
 To mourn, or mourn nomore.

*O voice that breaks from thence into the dark:
Deflowering float, that sails the violet sea-
The universes burn, skies disembark,
That perish in their sun's last ecstasy,
Take turns to send no sigh. It need not matter-
To waste and blight the seals of majesty,
Rewarding ends to innocence, fall down and flutter:
And prise their crowns adrift of me and let me die.*

Peace is purple-black, we reach its bottom stairway-
Greater temples rent in many-templed Time,
Yet turn from me: I cannot bear your beauty.
To waste or save it was no choice of mine,
Though if you must take any one then just take me-
Since her lips, more cherried in their beds than mine
 Would blow less blue across your freightless sea,
White Death, would grow less cold against your clime.
Descend, and end, but hold one in your ocean
 That takes in train the fallen and the free-

Who'd spare her form in trust she'd fall in time to no-one,
And undulate, through me.

*O mouth that needs no second to embellish
Reverberations singing without strings:
We bleed here, and we suffer though pain perish,
Of paupers born, or cradled into kings.
If my scumbled words, no rite in Time's resources,
Be but a puppet's claim to shadow-show,
I already learned to mock these haltered courses;
I rehearsed reverse, bend down and let me go.*

*O voice, my voice, that sounds a chord diminished,
That rings diminuendo as its wraith grows less-
Your voice, your shade displaying flesh not finished,
Will you both cross with me on the rudderless?
So make a cageless race across the dark's battalions,
Outwith the drift of limits. Others fall or fly,
Or upshift their wings to make the stars their stallions,
And raise lost weights or say there is no sky.
No sound of theirs calls from the boundless, bare-
Or just a song unsounded that no whispered cry
Of ours would echo, O my faint, take care;
You may not know me when you've let me die.*

And I believe that God must be a violinist:
We are all the chords he weighs upon the strings,
The weights unchanged at birth or things unfinished,
In the spindrift orb to grow or char strange wings.
Yet there seems no carpenter, there seems no floor plan,
Our repeat a droning on with no fixed verse;
The ship shifts mooring but there is no helmsman:
Who rides the rudder of the universe?
Across the ridgeless wavelengths of an unreined ocean,
Just one of numberless, where could we hide?

With the temples wrecked and the glass towers fallen
We too stand numbered where the night-tides ride
And cross all quadrants, and we make the cageless
Birds they mend or break, by weighed decree
Not ours: but in the clockwork world just age is ageless-
For buds that rise to straggle, as their arbours be.

V.

And I never learned to be a violinist:
Come, white winged mariner, and raise your haste-
For the wound is started, and no blood replenished:
And my eyes are set to join you on the widened waste.
What voices stride infinitude through violet scree
Death's dice has thrown, what diadems no floodlight fades:
Or is it just my olden other's touch that weaves to me,
Across the thoughts of moon-wharfed walks, along the
balustrades?
Now the storm-strafes bend their bows, but don't touch her,
Though beauty buds in its own being to bend to mime-
And lose its laugh at laugh's length; white winged mariner,
The monsoon-lit night has birthed its dying time.
Find thought to end our thought, and take up power, and ply,
If just a crystal-chokered minion of a cardboard king;
Our songs are just the raft of voices that the angels bring
Or draft: our lives are sounded out inside their sigh.

VI.

Now your scent, as carried in a world of glass,
Redeems its contours in a ground of grey;
The worlds above us may not watch us pass:
You go alone, but where the mayfly may,
The bed I lay on is no cage so cold
That I hold my distance from you as I'm drowning:

Your days one day, until the sun cease crowning
What you retain there, my bur marigold,
Of all the shadows of my shadow, I.

So come, we go, to our own plots of sky;
An inch between us seems to wind out miles,
Your eyes twin blades of lapis lazuli-
I sense a man approach dressed in white smiles.
He does not turn me yet, but holds my view
To crystal-pinioned things beyond the burning
Of sunglare's echoes, or an Autumn coming-
And my scant return here as I turn to you,
Our lips strange fruits that hide behind the night.

The moon hangs heavy and has lost its sight,
It seems, but never through blind loving's wrath,
Bequeathed its vision where we walked the white
And nightbound detours down the primrose path.
A mean expenditure the days that prized
Their birds that whistled "Sing" inside a sigh:
I knew a song one time more sisterly,
Drowned deeper than the days of butterflies-
 Whose flight was ended where their wings were won

Where darker plumes wait; should you stay or run?
The stars' battalions count their cost defrayed
On eyes now tired from shutting out the sun,
That leave my own, to trace the cavalcade,
That floods its muteness where my words eschew
All movement now - but where they had their reason,
To stay placed a while here with no sweet treason:
The winds that winnow me are only you,
Their words that surface on both street and stream.

Their words that surface on both street and stream

Throw listless tongues; ours meet inside their cells,
With touch the angels burgeon into dream:
Remember stationed parkways, streets, the carousels,
The things which seam ourselves and all things seem.
If we should leave on our appointed stairways
At uncrossed points, your years extended new,
It is still my shuttered voice across the causeways
That may hold a leaflet to remember you.
The world that keeps your steps and leaves no footfall
For ears to trace, will shut away my leaf from view,
That wilts a ways before it writes its name in snowfall:
 I am through with losing you.

A word to shut my tongue? There's none I trust: much longer
Shall harvest of the silence last. Shall lanes of snow
Commemorate my head? It won't make dying stronger;
There's faces you may wear, my strange, mine floats below.
Your masks that open out in me, now drowned in towers
Of city courts walk bare of me: I spare them, flee-
The one yet left, who leaves me with no other lovers,
Yet in your thoughts unburied, buried let me be-
A bud that never learned yet, to return in others
What may walk in pain's lost *twilight*, though *it* spares its reign
The corolla that life's love shuts with the other flowers-
That spills in wind and laughs at loss and loves the rain.

