

Martin Robertson

Chrysalis

The chrysalis age of waiting is not wasted.
The prisoner has time to think, and learn
lovely precisions for all future practice
when time comes to be free.
Good, if new warmth new-quickening his straining
loosens the bindings and the close walls burst,
but if the strong straining dissolves in weakness
and the walls stay, distilled knowledge grows black,
an unbalance, an ache,
breeds nightmares and throws dark veils on the day.