

Gunnar of Lithend

Martin Robertson

Riding down to the ship of exile waiting
in the firth below
his horse threw him. He rose, looked round, and said
“Beautiful are the cornfields, white to reaping.
I will not go.”
And stayed, and in a little while was dead.

On marble and gilded bronze the sun is burning
by the laughing sea.
Among the emperor’s guard the wine goes round
with rattle of dice and song, and some are thinking
enviously
of some at home dead in the ice-hard ground.