

Martin Robertson

Patience

Only through patience peace. Not always then,
but if by practice you have improved patience
patience may comfort you in the lack of peace,
itself may prove a substitute for peace,
a substitute for passion, for all perfection
dreamed and unwon: the only ivory tower
to build for middle age.

Being no fortress, neither is it a prison.
Patience is not concerned with self alone
nor only others, cares for self existing
as one with others, cares for others also.
In tedious winter as in teasing summer
patience alone can be my ivory tower.
I enter middle age.