

**Martin Robertson**

**Ballad**

At work she smiled. Resting she made  
a bracelet braided from her hair  
to give her love, but he was dead  
and never came again to her.

She wept a little time alone,  
alone much longer moved and sat.  
In time there came another one  
who loved her dearly though so late.

She liked his love. She liked him well.  
After long cold she liked the warm.  
A few tears formed but scarcely fell.  
She bound the bracelet on his arm.

Plaited in smiling love to bind  
his arm in whom her soul had lived,  
she gave it now to be a sign  
that all she had and was she gave.

Alas, honest and warm and brave  
she lost them both by one mistake.  
Oneself is not one's own to give  
as though it were a braided lock.

The scissors left a little gap  
filled long ago by growth, and now  
the threads she wove in love and hope  
grow dim to her and lose their power,

but on his arm still burning bright  
as though lit by the inner flame  
which sears his spirit day and night  
they mark his bondage to a dream.