

Martin Robertson

Nijinsky

1

The cordon drawn
about the isolated brain grows tight.
Roads closed, wires cut,
he sees no more the known nor knows the seen.
Follows the fall:
strong in the streets the legions of the fiend
the fruits that wait their greed and passion cull,
once wrecked the mind
make with the soul and with the sinews free,
and all help, all hope far
blindfold and mock the visionary heart,
fetter the lifting feet.

2

And on his right hand hung the face of Diaghilev,
and on his left hand hung the face of God,
and played at war between them with the soul of Nijinsky
in fifty-two pieces like a pack of cards;
and the faces whirled in intersecting circles
with the spades and diamonds and clubs and hearts
night-black and bloody, spinning, and in the centre
hung God Nijinsky, and Diaghilev not.