

Martin Robertson

Royal Family

Mary and Elizabeth
each in her palace-cell alone
notching up which heads shall fall
if she can once ascend the throne.

Peaky brother at your books,
cough yourself to paradise.
Father, spin your choking web
—you will rot there with the flies.

Insult-tinselling flattery,
cat-and-mouse of proffered hope,
pretend kindness. . . Grind the axe,
heap the faggots. Notch it up.