

***THE MUSIC FELL***

**By Nathan Hassall**

How the sound has forsaken these walls,  
Keys pulled from rotten pianos,  
Naked violins exposed,  
Their strings plucked then sliced.  
Now silence shakes these barren corridors,  
Wind sneaks across the walls  
Giving life to the feathery shadows of  
A sun-lit vulture

My labyrinth is hideous in nature,  
A thread of birdsong weaves across its stairways,  
And, akin to gallows  
Carries the weight of ineffable darkness in flight.  
Its pitiful wings thrash,  
Echo through the intricate enclosure  
As rapid repetition  
Twists  
The nature of space,  
Races as energy,  
Frantically reverberates  
Off the walls,  
Keys open my mind.

Softly - old memories are devoured by this vulture  
Who pulls apart melodies in white sun.

***THE ROT INSIDE US***

on this night,  
I daydream of orbit,  
sail  
a shipwreck  
through the oceans  
of space.

sea coats my wooden skin,  
the tide conceals it on this shore.  
the sand,  
like foam,  
holds my form in its pale amber sheet,  
eyes reflect a starlit sky  
on a beach doused  
in the scent of salt.

under the skyline  
Harriers  
descend from the atmosphere  
curl their power-hungry talons  
over branches of bone,  
snap them in their grasp.

debris shines in moonlight,  
the sea retracts behind the horizon  
under a veil of dingy clouds.

I beg the moon to pour her light,  
to guide fellow ships to better shores  
away from the island  
where disquiet minds  
fix  
to marble.

I wait for dawn,  
where breaths of smoke  
choke the sunrise.

the Harriers flap patterns;  
blow silhouettes  
of graves  
into sand and ash.

***THIS IS WHERE THE DEAD CONGREGATE***

carriages flow in single file  
anxiously close to one another  
exchange body-heat  
like lovers

you struggle through slipstreams  
followed by  
a dule of deaf doves  
who flap their dread-filled wings  
and flock to sullen eyes.

the train trickles  
across rickety landscapes  
on the countryside tracks  
drop the damned off at iron gates

encompassed by sounds of dying  
beyond the white flash  
memorials wrap around tired turbines,  
where you spin, an unceasing  
spill of carriages.

the dove's throats  
grind out a tuneless aubade,  
bringing to life a melodic dirge.

diggers chug to graves,  
the driver's eyes glaze through the smoke.

under violet curtains  
tracks of tears and gasps  
are a cacophony of distancing echoes.  
you tumble down the marsh of organised death.

***SEPULCHRAL NIGHTS***

clouds are dead.  
rain animates  
under street lamps,  
casts mirrors  
across the  
uneven path.

I take  
my shadow  
by the scruff,  
pocket it,  
go home  
and trap it  
in my sheets.

I roll it  
into a cotton prison  
and wring my other self  
onto the carpet

and laugh  
at the rising

Sun

whose rays

toss, turn;  
crack cloud graves.

***TWILIGHT***

is rows and rows  
of thickening vapour,

a slate of sky  
cloaked  
by grey suicides  
streaming from heaven's  
vacant streets

anathema falls  
upon sodden bodies,  
knees sink  
into dank holy grounds

palms  
turn skyward,  
hands  
cupped like urns  
filled  
by the cinerous downpour  
of Twilight

**Bio**

**Nathan Hassall** received a BA Hons in History at the University of Kent in 2014, with a Year Abroad studying at the University of Massachusetts. He is the author of three poetry collections, *Nascent Illusion* (2009), *A Conscious Void* (2011), and *Of Gods and Gallows* (2015) and has had his poetry published in *The Yellow Chair Review*. He is also an Editor for *The Luxembourg Review*. Hassall will be studying an MA in Creative Writing at The University of Kent in 2016.

EPISTEME