

Composing in Exile

Rosemarie Rowley

When the bridge has been cast adrift
By the howling storm outside,
When all the marks and traces of our rift
Mock with languor all for which you have sighed
You will be in a stranger country
No longer seeing the torrent in spate
Unable to articulate the climate of self
In this land whose tenure is late –
Of ruins crumbling, and green shoots
A new civilisation wanders
Where once doom had put down roots
Now you are sufficient to what renders –
But you cannot see what has gone before
The broken jetty of reason
Swings open like an open door
And you can cry of open season
As first love lies beyond your ken
While each kiss can resurrect
The beauty of your vanished Zen
And universal kindness, as a sect
Flourishes now, where once was dust
Ancient memories have grown blind
You can have them if you must –
But all will be recovered, all are sparing
Of difference and distance not yet signed
With this rebirth comes a new sharing,
Leaving agonies of youth behind.