

Rodrigo Enfant before, during and again later. In the chafe of being between the fall of shadow and dazzle of awakening. She would rise in writing to reach the quill, drag the typeset in that peculiar motion of his, hammer the keyboard like an inky fist of print bleeding to come out into being.

## Satan's Price

By James Walton

In the shammy counting house of parole  
Lucifer smiles wringing the honeycomb,  
Drains the souls in dripping nonchalance  
Of promises forsaken in the greed of want.  
The horde of sins scurries as ants hungry  
From his drenching scrutiny of shelves,  
Litmus fingers cloy the stuffing pushing  
Back any drifting excess of discontent;  
Marked down in the pallets murmurs  
Are second thoughts without redemption.

Singing the aniseed swamp smell out of the room, where the other children struck at fleeing wastrel crimes, all dressed to chase down fleeting tunnels of adventurous mischance, the voice quelled the air. Until the change to bellow grew into a solo chant where the suspended silent aftermath spoke of itself.

## Picasso Kisses Dali

By James Walton

The first unbound moment of it  
In the candour of angels.  
Untouched by knowledge  
Nothing to be right or wrong.  
A feather, dances over unhindered plain  
Eases out a long exhilarated sigh  
Recedes a whole pier to bend a pose.  
In captured silent joy of breathing  
A Silhouetted fluttering dove  
Stirs from the outlined chest,  
Pomegranate world has all the seeds  
Gathered to the tie knot.

In the glistening aperture of making, the rustle of silk petticoat or shake of a box of matches, stirred the pots of colour, splashing a drag of existence to portrait on the canvas, turning to graffiti the sea wall; where the tide stayed out long enough for the image to set on the curl of sand drying below.

## Leaf Fall

By James Walton

Philander of delta in grudging green  
Turn of season shedding evaporative drought.  
To spite of kingdom so small the mites  
Carry the empire's longing opened veins,  
Weather the levee surge in underground cities;  
Majesty's feint the reform to harvest,  
The last vestige of paternalistic rage  
Surrenders in descent of flutter whirl change,  
Renewing the place of zephyr trailing  
Upward buds small scythes of jaunt  
Slice at the airy hope of fall.

Sleepy candle flutter eyes, falling hand bears the lamp, flaming to poke the switch to light.  
Tousle of hair nets a dream, angry priest shaves away, bleeding in heretic convocation;  
guillotine swish or axe fall, the horse stands dreaming as the car door slams catching the ends  
of prying fingers.

## How much do I love Thee

By James Walton

How much do I love thee?  
Of all the worlds matter make nought:  
Scrape up the limitless sands of Arabee  
Cry nil and cancel ancient debates fought,  
Loose the arrow that brings doom to the phoenix -  
Find the perfect seventeenth syllable  
Confound and master the alchemist's tricks,  
Write down the unsaid of the embalmer's table.  
Love stills the breath of the living  
In a landscape paused between the tick and tock,  
Of the measure of time most unforgiving,  
And though my tortured head be down before the axeman on the block:  
Have no doubt in my most fervent answer dear  
I confess it all to you alone and have no slightest fear.

By the glimpse of stockings a silk ladder leans in against the longing climb, the kitchen garden flirts paved edges lost in the perfumed seethe of aromatic tumble, dragon fly darts the lunge of sticky spidery remembrance, hides in the cleft of damp brick; two figures emerge embraced in haphazard alchemy. The bell ringer carves the day, not caring where the moment falls to shake the vibrato pickup sticks of shades, out of deadpan grasp and let go, in his hunch no careless wonder bothers with the past. Whirly gig spirals rebound the walls, their echoes in tendril soft as udder string milk as coigns in the viewing harp touch.

## Mission

By James Walton

Entering the city before cock crow  
By the silver birch canal  
Awestruck by the sculpted buildings  
Furtively we look for watchtowers  
Listening to the strange northern dialect  
Cheery voices mingle with cooking smells  
Without speaking we share a glance  
Our Lord loves the hunt so much  
He writes and paints of rapturous kills  
We hope he is not too fond  
Of where he has sent us.

Adjusting hat in a private slant, disclosure wants no passerby; friend or enemy recant all secrets  
told or lost to the hungry fountain, the fonts of others pretend the truth of caste, but there in  
view the sideways glance is tarry enough; witnessed shimmer binds the spot of spark not  
recognition bright.

## Revolution

By James Walton

Across the defile they come  
smudged by travail,  
trudging the slope, eyes look past us  
to the place we all know -  
new bodies to load the long rifle  
discarded shells of infants  
we sleep with the dead here  
knowing what is buried.

Moon sunk failed scone, doughy fingers stick in the plait of lives; each hand pull down on the other, twist a rout to cleanse a Pilate. Drown a clown to feign a stunt, surety grows in the nurtured nose bleed to blush cheeks washing through the laughing chorus, fixing a smile cures the breathing.

## Avalon

By James Walton

A feminine shroud of caress  
Surrounds in daisy link the fallen.  
The lap-tap-tap-lap of embarkation  
Ripples at the edge line of journey,  
A hand of day pulls aside  
The secret curtain breeze;  
Reveal of tattoo sky in point of return  
Warms the block stone landing,  
Lanyards shunt to ease the bow and stern  
Shadow entourage lifts in cherished sift  
The ransom cargo of idea.

Gravity of penultimate night, resting gentle palm over heart, push slowly to beat out of this quilt of sighs arising in soft down, feathering masquerade of snow, coral sugar beach crunching under outstretched hand, weightless free of kerb and verge starry shake whizzes through the furious lie; you were always so warm afterall.

**James Walton bio:** James Walton lives in the Strzelecki Mountains in South Gippsland, Australia. He resigned from an elected public sector union position to concentrate on writing. In the past eighteen months he has been published in The Age and Sydney Morning Herald newspapers, Eureka Street, BLUEPEPPER, The Wonder Book of Poetry, Australian Poetry Journal, Great Ocean Quarterly, Bukowski on Wry, Australian Love poems, Hubgarden Poetry, A Sudden Presence, Poetry d'Amour, and the Australian Poetry Collaboration. He was shortlisted for the ACU National Literature Prize 2013, and Specially Commended in The Welsh Poetry Competition 2014.