

RINGS OF BLUE

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JAMES WALLER

A sample of five poems from the collection

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Offering

This journey is an untamed
Growth of blue neon rings
Touching the limbs of nowhere
Listen child of the dark
To this music hidden in my hands:
Every tower is a grace of astonished birds
Which resound in Attar's living kingdom
Gold has arisen from the desert's pan
As a shock of morning water
On a face glaring in the sun
A face touched by the heat
And cooled by the hands
Of a nameless brother
Who holds out a cup of painted silver
This gift is taken
From a table in the darkness
Drink its spaceless draught
And be refreshed in the night
Where burning hands
Cannot reach you.

Rings Of Blue

Rings of blue
Are gathering
Around the tower
In a hush of stone
Silent birds parade the grounds
In search of wisdom's element
A voice inflects
An eye gazes back
And insomnia wanders through the gates
The gates which are locked
Which have always been locked
For the soundless dogs
Which play in the dark
With the animal curiosity
Of Freedom
A nightmare of wonder
Is rolling through the world
Tired and profound
Fresh and lost
A table of silver
Stands in the clearing
Carved by Ricky Swallow

To hold the wine of O'Brien
In respite of endless journeys
Through rings of blue
Deep in humanity's ether

Surrender

The fire in the house
Is dwindling
Blackened coals are sleeping
And the walls shiver
With new sounds
Arriving
In a parade of slow and beautiful lights
The candles of Georges de La Tour
The glow of gold in the dim
Where Balthus' cat has played
Surrender has found
The ball of wool
Which fell from a lonely tower
And cascaded like a meteor
In the brilliance of an eye

Child

A child is carrying
The broken wing
Of our young century
Grafted to his oil stained shoulder
Somewhere where we can't see
In the dust of a bleached
And tattered memory
Knowing only hunger
And the thirst of the earth
For his limbs
Limbs which hide the earth
Limbs which grow in heaving fissures
Un named and potent
As stories from a black tree
Hidden in the desert

Icon

A stair of fire
Blooms from the icon
Under the tips of a hand
Shaded by the cool light
Of centuries
Awakened
In the pulse of furious prayers
Countless witnesses hooded in the dark
Who breathed cold air
In the songs of Salve Reginas
Dust walked
And suffered
Through a river of bodies
Like the mother of India, the Ganges
And the icon sailed through propulsion
Of it's inner heat
Like Mozart's violin
Which danced through wars
To find the hands
Of a surprised musician
Whose soul had been sleeping
In the skin of a dark drum

Which now pounds

Which now breathes

In the cool heat of the icon