I PLACE MY LIFE

By DOUGLAS LOCHHEAD

I place my life
upon this rock,
against this sea
to breathe, to love
this fog-spilt air.

Deep in the rock
beats the salt heart;
under granite
the grey mother
prays in her folds,
her ancient arms
under the rock
in the castle
grey and pounding.

Against this sea
the land follows
a task of time,
the beach is white,
the threshold waits,
and the castle
turns to air.

I place my life
upon this rock,
my hands hark
to mew and cry
of sea-birds' lives
at the going
down of the rock.