

# D E C L A R A T I O N   O F   I N T E N T



C L I V E   J A M E S

My poems are the balladry of cavaliers  
Composed in the lost cause that was the King's,  
And if from time to time their ink seems blurred with tears  
It is because the way of things  
Has gone against the haughty confidence  
That once allied sweet music to sound sense,  
So now their rhymes and rhythms count as frills and rings.

My poems are the closing words of heretics  
Burnt to a cinder and their dust dispersed.  
A fierce belief that melts to stain the courtyard bricks  
Proves its sincerity at first,  
But fades in sunlight as the winning side  
Writes history and denies even the pride  
Of those who lost, the cruelty that hurts them worst.

My poems written now that I must take my leave  
Give thanks good fortune saw me kindly borne  
To this departure point, and therefore when they grieve  
It is for anyone they mourn  
But me. I still recall, when I'm alone,  
Children of my age marked with stars and thrown  
Into the night and fog, leaves by the tempest torn.

My poems take defeat for granted, but they say,  
Gallant or gaunt: if we can choose to die  
We have been blessed to live. It never came my way,  
The random flail of chance, and why  
My life must end is known to me. In view  
Of these facts, I take care that what I do  
Pays back the luck with which I lived to see time fly.

My poems sing of life. Though death is also there  
In how they crystallize an emphasis  
Like a tango maestro pausing, they do not despair:  
They just acknowledge the abyss  
Awaiting us. It brings finality  
To what we were. It will do that for me  
Soon now. My poems prove that I accepted this.