

THE ISLAND FORTRESS OF ORTA

Etched bird sharp in the lakeside lucent light
The island fortress looms against the sky.
Its stones culled from an ancient temple site
Still echo with a Sybil's ritual cry
Of litanies long lost in pagan lore.
Here chanting Wyvern priests from towers cloud high
Channelled the magic from the island's core
To give the oracle power to prophesy.
Then came the time of saints. Before the cross
The pagans fled. The Wyvern castle fell,
Now fortress of a gentler faith, a loss
For some perhaps. Yet still the Wyvern's spell
Can work its potent magic and entrance
When poets gather there to make words dance.

Don Nixon