

**EROS**

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***FOIBLES OF THE FLESH,***

**followed by**

***HEAVINGS OF THE HEART***

**and**

***IN ABSENTIA***

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**being**

**a selection of poems from**

***Lines of a Lifetime***

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**BRUNO SCARFE**

# ***FOIBLES OF THE FLESH***

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## **EROS: *FOIBLES OF THE FLESH* – A selection**

Alchemy, I and II  
*Las bellas por conocer (a Lourdes y Silvia)*  
Boom and bust  
Choice of stroke  
Compensating  
*Cosquilla 1*  
Curtains  
Glorious 1  
Glorious 2  
Glorious 3  
Glorious 4  
Glorious 5  
Glorious 6  
Glorious 7  
Glorious 8 – *Glorieuse*  
Goodbye to dust  
Hard-pressed  
The hungry hours, and after  
In the eye of the beholder?  
Marketing (to Phoebe)  
Night vengeance  
*No tocar*  
*Otro tango*  
Pirelli paradox, I and II (to Win)  
Sea love  
Sitting pretty  
To feel his fingers  
A woman's dreams

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### **Illustrated**

*Las bellas por conocer*  
Curtains  
Glorious 3  
Glorious 8 – *Glorieuse*  
Goodbye to dust  
The hungry hours, and after  
In the eye of the beholder?  
Night vengeance  
Pirelli paradox, I and II  
Sea love

## Alchemy

### I

Your bum laid out flat,  
your bum on a seat,  
your bum on its feet,  
your bum doubled up,  
your bum on the move,  
your bum on the run –

there's alchemy there,  
ready to humble  
or ready to cheer.

A load of humbug?  
A crumb of comfort?  
What's the bottom line?

(I'll take the back seat  
now, if you ask me  
nicely.)

## Alchemy

### II

To turn base metal into gold  
(‘base metal’ – bum, no assets known,  
and ‘gold’ – the assets realised):  
position yourself knowingly,  
then watch the flux mutate and melt  
to catch the moment when it comes  
(and lose no mercury, or time);  
“Snap!” you tell the camera while  
you hold, so as to have your as-  
sets realised, and turned to gold.

## Las bellas por conocer

*A Lourdes y Silvia*

Conocer es viajar  
por el cielo y por el mar.  
Sois el sol, y sois el nácar,  
la mar de perlas, el cielo en flor.

Conoceros es viajar  
por la tierra, y al azar.  
Sois la rosa, y la meiga  
tan caprichosa, en tierra ajena.

Conocer es viajar  
por el cielo y por el mar.  
Sois valquiria, sois sirena,  
la que fascina e impone la pena.

Conoceros es viajar  
expuesto siempre al azar.



## Boom and bust

If all the world were bums,  
and boobs, or  
mud –

in no time flat I'd run  
like hell from  
that.

## Choice of stroke

“Keeping abreast of the news?”  
she murmured, bending over  
as I thumbed through my paper.

Taking stock, I stared, then said:  
“There’s too much news! to keep a-  
breast, I need a pair of yours”.

## Compensating

Don't be bamboozled  
by faces plain  
and floppy,  
sometimes their owners  
boast bums well slung  
and lively.

Don't be bamboozled  
by bums well slung  
and lively,  
sometimes their owners  
bear faces plain  
and floppy.

## Cosquilla 1

En alta mar, Ulises mandó ser atado  
para no ser seducido ni destrozado.  
¡Pues vaya pena,  
– en Quilla estoy, en la mismísima Caleta,  
y con ganas de conocer a estas sirenas,  
y no las hallo!

## Curtains

As the wind blows,  
the curtains dance –  
two muslin girls  
all legs and arms.  
They dance to the tune  
of the wind that blows.

As the wind blows,  
the pace advances  
from waltz to tango  
to Charleston and  
jig – from staid, to  
gay, to magic.

As the wind blows  
and dresses chance  
to flow or cling,  
they dare the sun  
shine through the fabric  
showing everything.

As the wind blows,  
their movements entrance:  
dresses balloon, rise  
and fall, billow  
again, and swirl  
and sink, pell-mell.

As the wind blows,  
the dresses glance  
sideways, reveal-  
ing all! (reveal-  
ing domes arched against  
the wall of the sky.)

As the wind blows  
more calmly, they sit  
on the sill, suggest-  
ing two bottoms  
voluptuously  
shaping the folds.



As the wind blows  
the curtains dance –  
sensuous, full,  
athletic, trim,  
boisterous, merry,  
or lazy and still.

I, didn't dance –  
    I could have touched,  
    I might have clasped,  
    I would have kissed,  
    I should have loved –  
I would have lost  
my footing on  
the window-sill.  
I'm too old now  
to need such things,  
but not ready,  
yet, for 'curtains'.

## Glorious 1

Such fun!  
Such glorious, glorious, glorious  
fun!  
In black or white, grey,  
terracotta,  
blue,  
subtle as syrup  
or clinging as glue,  
you'll yield  
to the feel  
and message of ...  
mud!

## Glorious 2

Banks of mud  
the river wide,

banks of mud  
beside the sea,

banks of mud  
by moonlight and by day:

silently and still,  
they eye us,  
tempt us to step closer  
and ... succumb.

## Glorious 3

A mud pack here,  
a mud pack there,  
a mud pack  
warm or cool:

they make you all  
recoil  
in disbelief!

How could such gooey  
muck  
be something that nice people can  
enjoy?



## Glorious 4

He sought her out for sixty years,  
he sought her out by night and day,  
he sought her out  
abroad.

She hugged him close,  
she played around,  
she teased him,  
stroked him,  
freed him  
from his thoughts.

## Glorious 5

Is it 'Tarzan'?  
is it 'Jane'?  
or a dull  
'thing' without a name?  
It's '*el barro*', male  
in Spain,  
female '*la boue*'  
in France:  
two views,  
and neuter for  
the 'prudent' English –  
mud.

## Glorious 6

There was a boy,  
and he was five,  
and mud  
got in his boots.

Did his mother let fly,  
all hands and tongue!

But the treatment  
backfired –  
a flame was kindled  
and the damage done.

## Glorious 7

A foot wrong in the swamp,  
and he had mud  
to his thighs.

‘Shall I wallow?’ he smiled  
... but a hunter appeared then ...  
waving a gun

(symbol of  
proper  
establishment fun).

## Glorious 8 – *Glorieuse*

Je pense à toi,  
couverte de boue,  
complice du soir,  
témoin des goûters  
défendus.

Je m'approche,  
je m'enfonce  
et tu m'embrasses  
sur les endroits  
où l'on ne s'attend  
pas.



## Goodbye to dust

An age has passed, year on year,  
since last I wrote a word that flowed  
so fiercely and so fast  
from a mind where dismal dust had laid its load.

Where dust –  
    had choked the vital tunnel  
    through which once poured  
    warm winds of fun and laughter,  
  
    dried the dancing stream of riotous passion  
    and desire,  
  
    quite crushed a living body  
    with its blood of youth,  
    of adventure, and delight.

Need I say more? That dust is gone.  
With you the tunnel sprang open with a roar.  
Now streams flow fast, and swell to raging rivers.  
A body, crushed, now glows with new-found fire,  
and new life is born.



## Hard-pressed

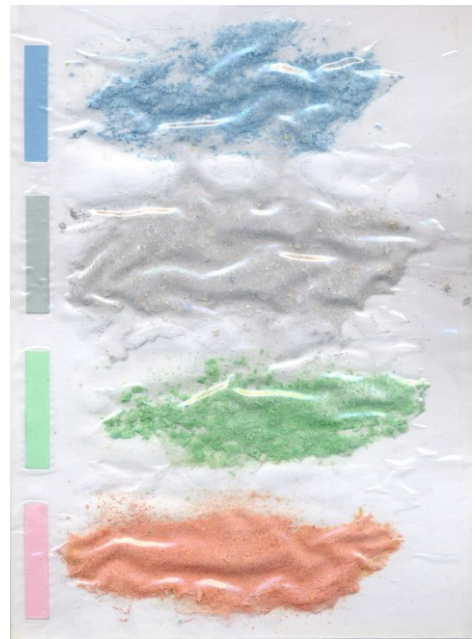
The sea-food market in the square  
is tightly packed and humming; still  
crowds pour in, panting, set to buy.

A nudge – I'm just in time to glimpse  
the bum packed tight, cheeks pertly poured  
in the pants, and set. Crowded, what!

"Not on the market!" I mutter,  
and then the lump swelling in my  
throat shows it hurts, this food for thought.

## The hungry hours, and after

Compelled  
to hold the pressure of his love  
to kisses,  
her lips have filled and swollen.  
Blood pulses through their flesh  
with a rhythm  
sympathetic  
to the throbbing of his thighs.  
A subtle parting of her lips  
displays a smile  
fixed  
in a strange suspense of wax and fire.  
As he closes on the incandescent light  
she stamps him  
with her seal, offering a foretaste  
of tomorrow.



## In the eye of the beholder?

Is the jut of her butt  
her real line, or a tease?  
Is the bounce of her boobs  
an ingenuous trick?

The ponytail  
which holds her hair  
more densely dark  
than moonless night,  
bobs sexually  
from side to side.

Her nose cajoles  
and her lips say – go!,  
while in her eyes slow fires  
smoulder.



§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§§

She realigns the jut  
of her butt ... to the seat;  
the trick of the bounce of  
her boobs? ... engineering.

## Marketing

*To Phoebe*

Side by side and  
separate, so long,  
he came to drink again  
the nectar on her tongue.  
“No! no!”, she said,  
“why don’t you try  
a nectarine, instead?”

## Night vengeance

Gliding the whirlpools of devouring sleep  
came an angel's smile,  
 and killed the fragile silence of my mind.

Crystal blue rang the echoes of her eyes,  
and from the anvils of my desire struck  
savage skies of naked sparks.  
Forest deep fled the seething river fires  
from springs of pulsing, lap-lapping lava,  
to scale her wonder's seraphic tower.

Flashing in the flames of my passion's fury  
her shadow, tantalising, shimmered  
and blazed in floods of searing splendour.  
Hammer-hard lashed the sinews of my possession,  
with demon power gushed whole bitter seas of pleasure  
from the kiss-racked reefs of my sleeping presence.

It was night love, to ashes tempting  
the maddened wings and weapons  
of my bare soul's nightmare heaven.



## No tocar

Si el hielo  
de su mirada  
quema,

por ella  
mejor estar ya  
ciego –

– o bombero  
graduado  
en deshacer  
carámbanos  
y recelos.

## Otro tango

Aquí tienes un amante quilla,  
de categoría,  
para complacer chocho y barriga.

## Pirelli paradox

*To Win*

I

Encircling my darling's Middle Kingdom,  
they run rings round the sluggish populace.  
Their revolution threatens to impose  
fasting, much to the Governor's disgust.

## Pirelli paradox

II

In the East  
Hindu wives reveal well-being  
in rolls which gleam around their loins.

In the West  
belles toil for Lent, welcome cycles  
of famine or (more kindly) 'fast'.

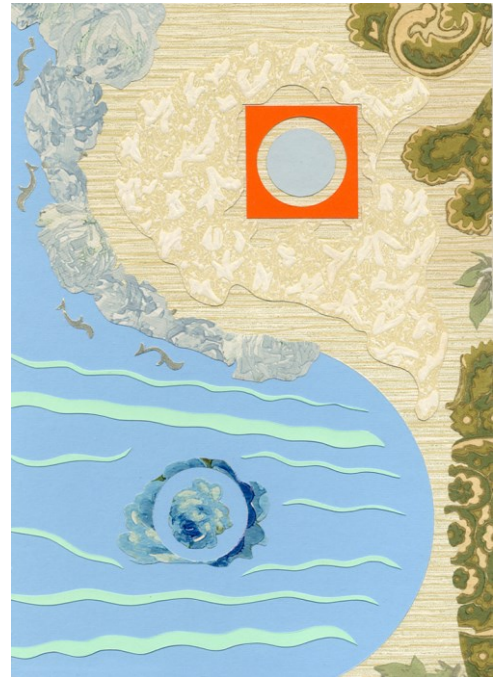


## Sea love

Wind-worn shores, open to the sky,  
your lips;  
and I,  
unfathomed, twilight sea who sighs upon them.

Sun-burnished sands,  
outposts of an unknown land;  
and I,  
the whip-waved, night-cold lover.

Your lips,  
moulded by my swift sea's surge;  
I,  
torn by your curved shores' restless smiles.



## Sitting pretty

Broad of beam and deep, she sat  
straddling the sea,  
her stern epitomising  
generosity.

Curved and full, yet taut and strong,  
she seemed the owner  
of what she was on.  
She seemed to spill, overflow,  
encompassing the  
world submerged below.

Dared I barge in on a barge  
like that? she lay at  
anchor, but I sensed a tug:  
who was I to dare  
tug back at a tug like that?

Don't ask me now about her bow –  
I never saw it.  
Aft was where I chose to stare,  
everything was there.  
Was this the ship of legend?  
Fabled ship, enough  
to launch a thousand faces.

## To feel his fingers

... Sends shivers flickering  
through her spine, sends  
stabs of pleasure through flesh,  
and bone, and mind.

Smiles ripple round her lips,  
eyes flash, electrified  
at the feel of fingers  
now tensed, now tentatively  
flexed, and now relaxed ,  
– gliding lightly  
over every dune and shore  
from cheek to toe;  
– or, each inch a mile,  
dawdling the day-long journey  
past plain, and rise, and river bed  
from wrist to finger's end;  
– or, marking time  
round the boundaries of her breast,  
afraid to wake the spirit of the crest  
and be enticed to dance there  
till they fall.

To feel his fingers  
sends shivers flickering  
through her spine, sends  
stabs of pleasure through flesh,  
and bone, and mind.

Smiles ripple round her lips,  
eyes flash, electrified .....

## A woman's dreams

Where, Phyllis, does your mind retire  
in the labyrinths of night?  
Where, Phyllis, do you fly, to reap  
the pleasures of your sleep?

Do glowing embers illuminate your dreams?  
Do flames and rushing waterfalls  
hiss and thunder, all night long,  
deep in the caverns of your womb?  
and leave you, charred and drenched,  
on smoking,  
                  shifting,  
shores ... of..... idle..... dreams?

## Notes

### THE POEMS

<b>Alchemy, I and II</b>	Cadiz	2001
The second poem began as the footnote.		
<b><i>Las bellas por conocer</i></b>	Cadiz	2007
To Lourdes and Silvia whom I had known in their roles as waitresses at the Gotinga in the plaza del Mentidero, and who were now working at the 'Caruso' on the paseo Marítimo. The first drafts were written while breakfasting at the Caruso, soon after being told that my (second) marriage was finished. I had not expected to see them here.		
<b>Boom and bust</b>	Cadiz	2001
'Supply and demand': now, that's a succinct angle from which to look at lust! It says more (and less) than the title 'Boom and bust'.		
<b>Choice of stroke</b>	Cadiz	2002
<b>Compensating</b>	Cadiz	2001
When every cloud has a silver lining, then every silver lining has a cloud.		
<b><i>Cosquilla 1</i></b>	Cadiz	2010
<b>Curtains</b>	Cadiz	2001
Set in my third-floor flat in calle Beato Diego. 'Curtains' is home cabaret. Inner Voices Limited (open seven days a week, with wind and sun permitting) can offer you a sound-track which will make you wet your pants.		
<b>Glorious 1</b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: Such fun! Such glorious, glorious, glorious fun! In black or white, grey, terracotta, blue, subtle as syrup or clinging as glue, you'll fall for the feel and message of ... mud!		
<b>Glorious 2</b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: Banks of mud the river wide, banks of mud beside the sea, banks of mud by moonlight and by day: silently and still, they eye us, tempt us to step closer and ... succumb.		
<b>Glorious 3</b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: A mud pack here, a mud pack there, a mud pack warm or cool: they make you all recoil in disbelief! How could such gooey muck		

be something that nice people can enjoy?		
<b>Glorious 4</b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: He sought her out for sixty years, he sought her out by night and day, he sought her out abroad. She hugged him close, she played around, she teased him, stroked him, freed him from his thoughts.		
<b>Glorious 5</b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: Is it 'Tarzan'? is it 'Jane'? or a dull 'thing' without a name? It's ' <i>el lodo</i> ', male in Spain, female ' <i>la boue</i> ' in France: two views, and neuter for the prudent English – mud.		
<b>Glorious 6</b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: There was a boy, and he was five, and mud got in his boots. Did his mother let fly, all hands and tongue! But the treatment backfired – a flame was kindled and the damage done.		
<b>Glorious 7</b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: A foot wrong in the swamp, and he had mud to his thighs. 'Shall I wallow?' he smiled ... but a hunter appeared then waving a gun (symbol of 'proper' establishment fun).		
<b>Glorious 8 – <i>Glorieuse</i></b>	Cadiz	2010
Originally: Je pense à toi, couverte de boue, complice du soir, témoin des goûters défendus. Je m'approche, je m'enfonce et tu m'embrasses sur les endroits où l'on ne s'attend pas.		
<b>Goodbye to dust</b>	Auckland	1967
Sequel to an attempt to assist a staff member who had a problem with a student of mine, at her request. I fell for her – an outcome she may not have had in mind. The consequences were dramatic and finally crushing. The Auckland poems relate to this event.		
<b>Hard-pressed</b>	Cadiz	2001
The fish and seafood stands of the Cadiz market, in the plaza de la Libertad, are amazing for their number and variety of produce. 'Hard-pressed' stood for title and won, against: 'A metaphysical overview of modern socio-economic factors which shape female sexual aggression (accidental, ambiguous, active), and response of the unsuspecting male (dynamic, devious or despairing)', though 'Three sorts of crush' did appeal, as also the more tantalising 'Fishy business'.		
<b>The hungry hours, and after</b>	Melbourne	1971

<b>In the eye of the beholder?</b>	Cadiz	2007
<b>Marketing</b>	Melbourne	1971
I used to shop at the famous Victoria market on Saturdays, alone, with my children Patrick, Isabel and Dominic, or with a friend.		
<b>Night vengeance</b>	Oxford	1958
<b>No tocar</b>	Cadiz	2004
<b>Otro tango</b>	Cadiz	2009
<b>Pirelli paradox, I and II</b>	Cadiz	2002
The second poem was part of the footnote. It was all intended affectionately for Win, the 'Governor'..		
The Governor, poor darling, was early on the scene, aware that fasts, though slow, are things of which she'd never hear the last.		
<b>Sea love</b>	Oxford	1958
<b>Sitting pretty</b>	Cadiz	2001
'Sitting pretty' was a delight to write, and I don't regret not meeting the owner face to face. She would have known my thoughts, a mix of carnal craving, merriment and awe, and would have been at sea without a compass, chart, or ... me.		
<b>To feel his fingers</b>	Melbourne	1971
<b>A woman's dreams</b>	Auckland	1967

## THE ILLUSTRATIONS – see 'ART WORK' for general information

### POEMS

### ILLUSTRATIONS – title, and ref.

*Las bellas por conocer*

**Curtains**

**Glorious 3**

**Glorious 8 – Glorieuse**

**Goodbye to dust**

**The hungry hours, and after**

**Night vengeance**

**Pirelli paradox, I and II**

**Sea love**

#### Papegados

*Retrato 'Silvia' / 2:06*

*Salvamanteles 4 'Vislumbres II' / 1:20*

*Salvamanteles 1 'Guadalupe y la Revoltosa' / 1:17*

*Fantasia 'Guadalupe, protagonista' / 1:08*

*'Variopintas y algo revueltas' / 0:02 (clave / key, originally 2:30)*

*'Las Delicias hechas polvo' / 0:01 (clave / key, originally 2:33)*

*Salvamanteles 9 'Guadalupe y su círculo' / 1:25*

*'Oriens I' / 3:02 ('twist', courtesy Frango)*

*'Por tierra y por mar' / 2:28*

#### Cristaletas

**In the eye of the beholder?**

*'Cristaleta 2'*