

ONION SOUP -

Latin Quarter Poems,

before and after



a fifth collection of

poems by

Francis Scarfe



Previous titles (Bruno Scarfe)

Lines of a lifetime I, Cadiz
Lines of a lifetime II, Eros 1
Lines of a lifetime III, Eros 2
Lines of a lifetime IV, Eros 3
Lines of a lifetime V, Measuring up
Lines of a lifetime VI, Mixed blessings
Lines of a lifetime VII, The Natural world 1
Lines of a lifetime VIII, The Natural world 2
Lines of a lifetime IX, The Natural world 3
Lines of a lifetime X, Words at play
Lines of a lifetime XI, Wrestling at dawn

LA GUIRITANA

Cádiz

2018

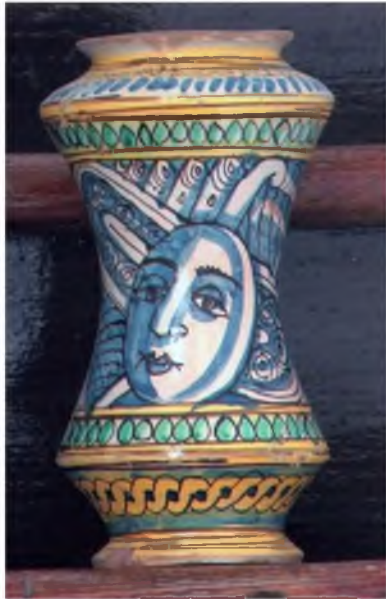
**ONION SOUP - LATIN QUARTER
POEMS,**

before and after

a fifth collection of poems

by

Francis Scarfe



A
la Universidad de Cadiz,
por promover el estudio de las obras de
Francis Scarfe y de su entorno literario



INTRODUCTION Francis Scarfe '*Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems*', *before and after*

When my father died in 1986, I allowed myself a small selection of his books and shipped it to my home in Australia. When my mother died just under twenty years later I took possession of the balance, plus a mass of papers, and transferred them to my new home in Cadiz where they were reunited.

Since vicissitudes of age and deteriorating health combined, finally, to make it difficult for me to afford my father's books and papers the attention they deserved, I decided this year to offer them to a library. I let it be known to the University of Cadiz that it could receive all the books and papers from my father's library – that is, the still sizeable collection remaining after my father left Paris and after I had disposed of some here, and after my father had donated some papers to the University of Boston Library.

The University of Cadiz Library was quick to accept my offer, and I have begun the transfer. I have not done so, however, without first recording some particulars of the books donated – so as to satisfy the call of personal curiosity and assuage the pangs of nostalgia, and as a precautionary measure in the event of books being misplaced or lost. When the point had been reached where this challenge to record had been met I decided to look further at items, still withheld, which relate directly to my father's poetry. While I hope in due course to try to transcribe his poems available only in typescript or in his hand, currently I am presenting this new edition of poems all of which he had

published, here and there, in his lifetime (other than in his collections, of which there are four). The library will be receiving, shortly, all the books, reviews, journals, magazines etc. where these poems featured.

Only poems already published and seen to have been published, and not present in the four collections for which Francis Scarfe was responsible, appear in *Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems, before and after*, a 'fifth collection' of his poetry. The collections he himself assembled were *Inscapes* (The Fortune Press, London 1940), *Forty poems and ballads* (The Fortune Press, London 1941), *Underworlds* (William Heinemann, Melbourne-London-Toronto 1950), and *Grounds for conceit* (Outposts Publications, Walton-on-Thames 1984).*

But a word about the man (1911-1986). Francis Scarfe (as he preferred to be known, rather than Francis Harold Scarfe) received a number of honours, such as the following: C.B.E., D.Litt., F.R.S.L., Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur and Chevalier des Arts et des Lettres. Administrator, critic, novelist, poet, scholar and translator, he was for many years Senior Lecturer in French at the University of Glasgow. From there he went on to serve for 20 years as Director of the British Institute in Paris, while concurrently Professor of French at the University of London. Apart from poetry, he published three novels, but was best known from early on for his pioneering critical study *Auden and After* (1942) reprinted many times. His were the two scholarly works *The Art of Paul Valéry* (1954) and *André Chénier* (1965). His translations embrace the fine arts, politics, the writings of La Fontaine, Baudelaire, Paul Valéry

and others. His translations of Baudelaire brought him lasting public recognition, first with a 1961 edition (Penguin, reprinted) and then with the 2 vol. 1986 & 1989 editions (Anvil Press, reprinted, re-issued, re-edited) neither of which he lived to see. (For a list of his principal publications see Appendix IV.)

The title '*Onion soup, Latin Quarter poems*' before and after reflects first of all the presence and significance (socially and artistically) of the group of sixteen pieces called 'Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems'. Secondly, the presence of other pieces preceding (from the '40s) and following (to the '80s). It is probable that other poems, published elsewhere than in the four collections and now, will make an appearance in due course and will require adding to this volume. And it is possible that from several hundred poems unpublished and currently under review, a future selection may be made.

Concerning selection. All the poems by Francis Scarfe so far found to have been published (excepting those in the four collections mentioned) appear here. Though the poet later in life might not have wished this, whether on artistic, philosophical, political, religious, social or other grounds, we can see them as representing the man – or a significant aspect of the man – who wrote them at widely ranging moments in time. They illustrate the artist (of course), and the person: both in continuing evolution.

Concerning texts: Many organizations – from journals / reviews / magazines to books – have been involved in the publication of these poems, and taken together their policies for

presentation illustrate not only the foibles of fashion and time, but the disparate effects of idiosyncratic house styles. Some poems appeared where no capitals were permitted at the start of a line, others where capitals were mandatory. Some poems allowed of no punctuation. Francis Scarfe himself can be found to have indulged in (or permitted) all these practices, to judge from his typescripts. So as not to distract from the essence of the poems (their ideas and the form they took), the style chosen in this volume has each stanza (at least / only) open with a capital letter. Punctuation and absence thereof have been respected – nearly always.

* Each of the poems in these four collections is named, complete with opening line, in Appendix III.

Acknowledgements

All thanks to the individuals who first published, in many cases almost a century ago, the poems which follow. I hope that by bringing them to light afresh, and by citing the books or papers where these poems appeared, I am acknowledging the credit these people deserve.

And many thanks to Glen Albrecht who has not stinted her help on technical, editorial and other matters, quite apart from offering me continuing encouragement with this project.



CONTENTS

Poems

25-pounder

The Absurd

Adam

As kids fly kites

As slowly as things live

At the tomb of Baudelaire, Montparnasse

Autumn evening

Beauty, boloney

Being a man

The boat

By request

Dark Rose of my heart

Elegy for Brancusi

Elegy for Duke Ellington

English rose

False teeth

Garden

Grenade

Haiku for Kay's birthday

In memoriam

Kitchen poem: Elegy for Tristan Tzara

The Knocker-up

The Magic lamp

May-day saint

May-day sinner

Meditations: the Fear

A Neutral tone

Ode to Christ

On giving a blood transfusion

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems

- I Onion soup
- II Latin-Quarter
- III *Schola Cantorum*
- IV *La Marelle*
- V Lovers in the *Métro*
- VI Café news-flash
- VII In the *Sélect*
- VIII Old poet
- [IX] *Contrescarpe*
- X By *Notre-Dame*
- XI *Brasserie*
- XII *Mouffetard*
- XIII *Hôpital Cochin*
- XIV *Paris nocturne*
- XV Cat and mouse

The Pearl of life

Poetaster

Portrait in a cracked mirror

Portrait of a Laodicean

Prayer

Prelude

Recruits

Scrooge

Seasonal poem: On being fifty

Seasons of war

Snail

The Street-painter

Testament

Theme

This book

Three sisters

Tyne Dock revisited

The Window

Poems translated by Francis Scarfe

The Father's death	Pierre Emmanuel
Sonnet	Alfred Jarry
The Approximative man (XVIII)	Tristan Tzara
Herbarium of games and calculations	Tristan Tzara
On a wrinkle of the sun	Tristan Tzara
The Sailor	Tristan Tzara
Solemn crime	Tristan Tzara
Song of a Dadaist (II)	Tristan Tzara
Telescope	Tristan Tzara
Vegetable swallow	Tristan Tzara
Wild water	Tristan Tzara

Poem translated by Ion Caraion

Elegie pentru Brancusi	Francis Scarfe
------------------------	----------------

Notes

Poems

Illustrations (not text related)

Appendix I 'Le Peintre de dimanche'

Appendix II 'Evening', Tristan Tzara (Francis Scarfe tr.)

Appendix III Original and translated poems published

Appendix IV Francis Scarfe publications



25-Pounder

O little dragon
best seen from behind,
you have no paragon
in dragon-kind,
for you can kill
wherever you will
without the bother
of climbing a hill.

This much you have
in common with love.

The Absurd

As slowly as things live I like to count
the raindrops' absolution on my face,
walking along, old, middle-aged, but young,
the drops hot from the sky, their countless waste
on these wrong hands, on this turnaway face.

As slowly as things live I live to feel
the winter sun, its old-maid faded kiss,
walking full to the teeth, brim to the teeth full
of all the struggle and nonsense living is,
rain on your face, sun on your hands like this.

I will not say 'as slowly as things die'
but count stale copper leaves that in death cling
to iron boughs against the iron sky,
the barren birds that in wolf's winter sing
in cages, their archaic notes all wrong.

As slowly as things live, deliberate as
you walk down the wrong street at the wrong time,
the rain, the sun, are squandered for no cause,
while the tough bells fettle such feathered hymns,
and up the dying sky the dead stars climb.

Adam

From the land of mountains
a strange man came
and made ADAM

From the land of mountains
all voices shapes
were joined together:

From the crossroads
of twenty cultures
came the soft-spoken

Kneading in a word
the bread of our lives
what men are for:

As a wire trembling
in the breath of God
Aeolian

This harp of a man
bundled the songs
into one meaning

Took us beyond us
till we forgave
each other's exile

Made us remember
a lost heart beats
in the limbs of Europe:

Breaking the shackles
of our alienation
we wept and laughed

Embracing him because
Miron's mad wisdom
made us know each other:

Who built us bridges
over the rivers
of provincial babels

Who gently as
my midnight poem
taught us the silence

Writing in margins
the authentic blueprint
of intellectual love.

As kids fly kites

As kids fly kites, gladly gaudying
cool skies with dazzling dragon-wings,
curving, swerving, plovering over
treetops, towery towns of cloud,
waving the snaky glint of her
flamed feathery tail, or fanning out
an albatross in wide wild rings;

Or the bulging box-kites, bull-red
bangers blowing bunches of birds
up rainbows, billowing drums
zooming down the strumming wind
over the humming foam,
a winged fish lashing the line
till, snap, it sails right round the world;

As kids fly their small silences
swimming and skimming in starry spaces,
glimmering in the gentle gloam
like looping butterflies of light,
till the Moon glides up to guide them home,
gleaming in luminous delight
on their serious bed-time faces;

Then I recall a shadowed face
I once daubed on a kite, blue oval eyes
and twisty lips and twisty curls,
drifting, a solemn little moon
lost in the clouds, my home-made girl:
are they happy, those that don't return,
watching over us, from the skies?

As slowly as things live

As slowly as things live I like to count
the raindrops' absolution on my face,
walking along, old, middle-aged, but young,
the drops hot from the sky, their countless waste
on these wrong hands, on this turnaway face.

As slowly as things live I live to feel
the winter sun, its old-maid faded kiss,
walking full to the teeth, brim to the teeth full
of all the struggle and nonsense living is,
rain on your face, sun on your hands like this.

I will not say 'as slowly as things die'
but count thin copper leaves that in death cling
to iron boughs against the iron sky,
the barren birds that through cruel winter sing
in cages, their archaic notes all wrong.

As slowly as things live, deliberate as
you walk down the wrong street at the wrong time,
the rain, the sun, are squandered for no cause,
while the hard bells fettle such feathered hymns
and up the dead sky all the dead stars climb.

At the tomb of Baudelaire, Montparnasse

You have rough private slabs to keep you down;
your self in stone, jaw on hand sunk, eyes you
with your sunken eyes, tight lips bent in pain:
trams skirling on the Boulevard Raspail.
Dead. Nothing and All drinking up the rain,
your dust-blurred eyes longing into the town,
down, to mystery roots growing about you,
to congeries of poisoned alleyways,
to boîtes where genius hovered on the brink,
where denials throw vitriol at the sky
like unredeemed harlots at street corners.

Quiet lipskewered stone. Your effigy
yourself on a frontispiece. Time to think
with green grass and goldshingled cul-de-sac
reserved for you. Hugger-mugger, stingy
for such artistry. Time to crave a drink
gaping at starlight, hours to desire back
knurled mattresses. There are boxes around you
with hinges, and inside new flesh decays
most meaningless, and two-o'clock mourners
kneel muttering belated might-be prayers.

You remember Night coming home strangely
and the primitive instant on the stairs
when you saw God pointing a finger at you,
a nightmare leaning on the banister,
the starlight taking you so unawares,

blinding you with temples and porticoes,
scarcely three seconds for you to answer. . . .
Quite silly, for He didn't speak at all,
only an idea stretching the nape hairs,
nothing more really than a lost colour.

But minutes after that became much duller
and there were other pains for you to seek,
though you heard numbers, saw life as long tunes,
goblets of sorrow pouring from bassoons,
gentlemen-skeletons dancing with haloes,
shadows writing lyrics on the wall,
your loves as cats walking on thick carpets
and a dead bird with beauty in its beak.
You laid your ladies in their ratwarm tombs
because their desires found other markets,
while Paris drew cartoons of poets' rooms,
brothels on Sunday night. But you kissed pillows,
smoked pipes writing your heart out for a week
with fine remorse buying back your God.

You have rough private stones to keep you down,
cold, and those private bones can sometimes creak
louder than whispers. Empty jaws cajole
dry brains to thanks before they sink in sleep
as I leave tribute (sold at a half-crown)
-the book of Flowers that outlives your soul.

Autumn evening

Evenings like laden fruit trees hang immanent
and the nights of sleepless thinking are more slow
and dark than ignorant fears of childhood
so heavy the days like solid gathering drops
of damp dripping from rock on stalactite,
deliberately sad, how shall I bear them longer?

Each hour like incense fragrant, with bare fertility
of pregnant trees is split with scarlet ripeness
as through the groaning countryside the reapers
toil at their golden harvests in the sun.
Tired the heads of children loll in their magic dreams.
Leaden the apples fall and wasps sing in the plums,
and berries stare from hedges like dark eyes.

Late in the billets, soldiers in shirt sleeves
sweat after their beer, mournfully singing
in undertones their wild nostalgic songs
of sexual longing, but so beautiful on their lips
as their ponderous faces cloud, for each is thinking
of solitary sleep, and far beyond their arms
a young wife's breasts and honey breathing child.

I love you, comrades, whom sorrow brought together
from every town and village of our land,
from farm and factory, office and sinecure,
turning your great brown hands to the primal task
of love and battle, gathered each to other

by a shared language and the mirage of peace.

For each of you knows the sin and horror of war,
yet loves the little gardens and flowered meadows,
the dirty streets and cosy corners of pubs;
so now we try to forget we are here to kill
and softly sing to ourselves or mis-spell letters
to our future orphans and predestined widows.

You are not foolish nor false, though unreflective,
who so gladly would slip home in the dense night
were there not fear and pride and duty to hold you back.
I know you share my misgivings and remorse
but take new strength from you, who have also found
no man in sacrifice shall stand alone
and each in the other's future finds, unknown, his own.

Beauty, boloney

Cleopatra in her bath
had hair and soapsuds in her eyes;
I like Caligula's wrath
Cain's curses, Nero's ironies

Build me a temple of 90 pillars
a Sphinx, a Pyramid, with slaves;
the Parthenon's food for caterpillars
Britain's moneybags rule the waves

All the eagles and the trumpets
are daunted when Duke Ellington plays
beautiful strumpets beautiful crumpets
Eliot wronged the A.B.C.s

Paint me, Dali, if you will,
a landscape rich in bones and bread;
the Romance of Beecham's Pills
outlives Helen's maidenhead

True Beauty's in Nuffield and Ford
Mussolini, Chamberlain
they are the chosen of the Lord
let Laureates praise them, if they can

Let them scheme and gorge their fill
since beauty, said Renoir, must be fat:
we'll starve with Baudelaire in hell
Sade and Lautréamont share our fate

And we shall talk with Oscar Wilde
and all the Authors on the Index
while Rimbaud there shall, heartless child,
pull both of Edith Sitwell's legs

(yes, darling Jane shall be down there
as Matron of the Poet's Corner
but Pope and Dylan will take care
lest there be a plot to burn her)

But we are wandering from the subject
which was beauty: songs of larks
all winds, flowers and shrubs are suspect
we prefer the Brothers Marx

We prefer Modigliani
Klee and Braque and Picasso
to the British Academy
(may Lewis deal its knock-out blow)

Lorca, Auden, Éluard
Cummings, MacNeice, Apollinaire
and Eliot are the giant hearts
slick, unvarnished, debonair

Meanwhile you can stuff the rest
in the British Museum
with fleas and laurels on their chest
polybourgeoisism philodumb.

Being a man

After a day of poetry I came back
and was not told off,
but heard a silence worse than death.

Love is either not enough or it is too much.
All I want is to breathe like a tree
all I want is to be a man.

All you want is to be a woman.
I do not know what it is to be a woman.
Perhaps it is someone who lets you be a man.

The Boat

They used to believe all men are Everyman,
that one man's life will interest all others,
that every life is the essence of all lives.

But who is interested now in what you recall?
Only I, perhaps, who know how you live a life,
or any poet who knows that everyone

Remembers the first boat he launched on the park lake
the boat that stuck in the fountain of Niobe
or suddenly sank, or else refused to come back,

The boat that was humiliatingly smaller
with its cheap cotton sails, than any boat in the pond,
so you walked off, hoping the thing would sink.

Well, the boat sank, and you walked into life,
but now and then it sails into your old age.

By request

No solace. We who squandered hours of guile
seeking a poem in each achievement,
mirrors to nature in each syllable,
find poverty in inaction; we must smile
with twitching lips beneath our moustache's
gilded profusion, laugh at bereavement,
cast dice hoping trumps will come out well,
dream giants rising from frustrated ashes.

In this gaunt emptiness we keep our grace
in show of hands, nail-carved, gold-ringed, ornate
with balanced savoir-faire of the idle,
wear a conservative greeting on our face
as we expatiate on the latest novel
or dilute boredom with imported wine
pensively chosen to exterminate
worms from our conscience (since this suicidal
tendency creeps up to undermine
complacency basking in a proud title,
making us sigh for a more fruitful hovel).

We, who have featherbeds and libraries
and such insignia as new needs demand
– butlers and chromium chairs, with modern prints
circled and squared for owl-eyed visitors
to feel wise at their curiosity
and bartered knick-knacks smacking of a land
of double whiskies and hand-stencilled chintz –

lack solace, since hope sneers on pedigrees,
love sells few wares at highly polished doors
and charity asks Lazarus for hints.

DARK ROSE OF MY HEART

Words by
FRANCIS SCARFE

Music by
DONALD SWANN

PIANO *Appassionato* $\text{♩} = 122$
p cantabile

The piano introduction consists of two staves. The right hand plays a series of chords and eighth notes, while the left hand provides a steady accompaniment with chords and a few moving lines. The tempo is marked as *Appassionato* with a quarter note equal to 122 beats per minute. The dynamics are marked *p cantabile*.

p
Hour by hour flow my tears in the dark - ness,

The first line of the song features a vocal melody in the right hand and piano accompaniment in the left hand. The lyrics are "Hour by hour flow my tears in the dark - ness,". The piano accompaniment continues with chords and some melodic movement.

All the night, all the day they will flow _____
They are bright with the light of their love, _____

The second line of the song continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "All the night, all the day they will flow _____
They are bright with the light of their love, _____". The piano accompaniment features a more active melodic line in the right hand.

On my lips there still burns Your
For their love is their Sun, Their

The third line of the song concludes the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "On my lips there still burns Your
For their love is their Sun, Their". The piano accompaniment ends with a final chord and a few notes.

© Copyright MCMLXIX by Chappell & Co. Ltd.
50 New Bond Street, London, W. 1

MADE IN ENGLAND

All rights reserved
48616

cresc.

kiss while I _____ yearn For love for - bid - den _____ Grows
 Stars and their _____ Moon When you lie sleep - ing _____ Far

poco a poco cresc. e più appassionato *poco f^o*

deep and hid - den _____ Like a rose in my
 from my keep - ing _____ You will glow in my

heart _____ A dark rose _____ of my heart. *dim.*
 dreams. O moon - light _____ of my dreams,

ff *dim.*

mf *pochiss. meno* *dim.* *pochiss. rit.* *p a tempo*
 A dark _____ rose glow - - ing.
 My dark _____ rose glow - - ing.

mf *pochiss. meno* *dim.* *pochiss. rit.* *p a tempo*

poco rit.



1
p a tempo

All day long lo - vers pass by my win -

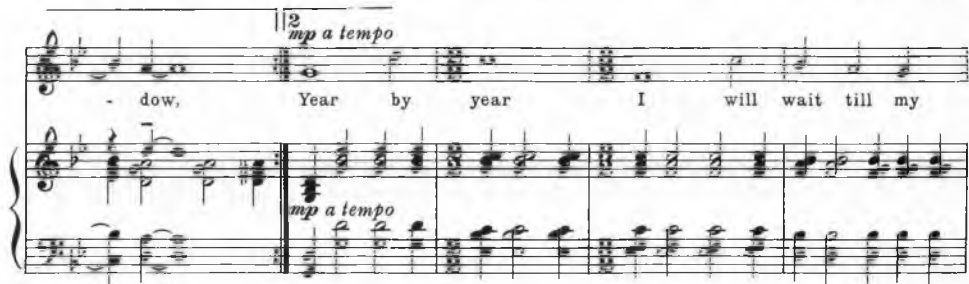
a tempo



2
mp a tempo

- dow, Year by year I will wait till my

mp a tempo



mf poco cresc.

sor - row - Draws a veil on the earth and the

mf *poco cresc.*



sky. When all

The first system of music features a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with a long note on 'sky.' followed by a rest, then 'When all'. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands. A dynamic marking of *mf* is present at the end of the system.

me - mo - ries fade I'll live in your shade

The second system continues the vocal line with 'me - mo - ries fade' and 'I'll live in your shade'. The piano accompaniment features a *crescendo e* marking. The system concludes with a *cresc.* marking above the vocal line.

When noon is sun-less — And mid - night

The third system contains the vocal line 'When noon is sun-less — And mid - night'. The piano accompaniment is marked *piu agitato* and *poco fz*. The system ends with a *cresc.* marking above the vocal line.

moon-less — You'll be dark in my

The fourth system features the vocal line 'moon-less — You'll be dark in my'. The piano accompaniment is marked *quasi held*. The system concludes with a *cresc.* marking above the vocal line.

heart, O dark - ness of

my heart, My dark rose

glow - ing.

ff

dim. *mf* *poco meno*

dim. *calando ma ancora mf* *poco meno*

poco rit. *mp a tempo*

poco rit. *a tempo con passione* *calando al fine*

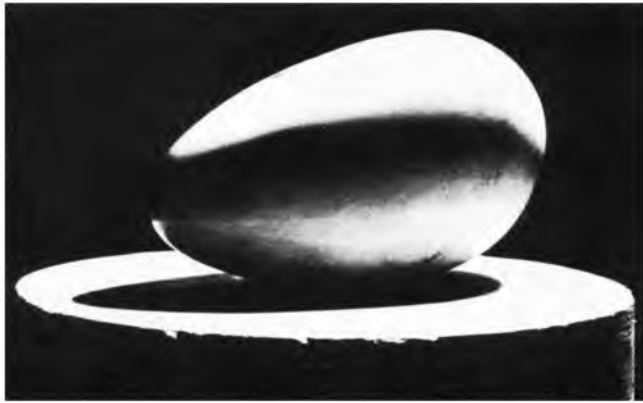
p *poco rit.*

Elegy for Brancusi

Truth is a wholeness where no doubt or question
enters. Subliminal its sense
marks universal Law on minds of men.
Like bells of glass the virtuous thinkers
brim with its chime, in motionless mind
treasure its oneness. True thought dances
always in a calm globe, its luminous round
embracing all, yet curving into itself.

Likewise the perennial poem is mature and still,
supersonic Idea, the logical dream
of language shaped to beauty on the loom.
In it the tongues of all the tribes compose
their Babel to one grammar of existence,
chorus the hymn of human hopes and dooms
till the expanding music fills
our being, as with a second, man-made soul.

Thus beauty invades eyes: quiet and whole
as love, poetry, death, it pours in us to heal
the pain the sadness of our common days.
So those dumb hands those ruined hands I praise
that prayed and bled upon the voiceless stone,
shaped it to sense and gave its meaning wings.
Good men endure, though with a sigh undone.
BRANCUSI gone, his thought in marble sings.



Constantin Brancusi *The Beginning of the World*

Elegy for Duke Ellington

Duke Ellington taught us kids a lot,
Mood Indigo and Paducah were our favourite hymns.
Whatever that man did came proud and hot,
who had two geniuses in him:
he could squeeze music out of Hell,
and so he did, playing back History.

The North and South had long since cracked the gong,
so that his music had that tragic split
halfway between the elegy and song,
while through each black and broken chord there ran
the grave nostalgia of the American.



English rose

Gardens of summer ripeness, all our hearts
bask in your plentitude this sunlit day.
Shine red on green, each velvet flower display
the gift of grace which is the soul of art.
Simple though you may be, your timeless part
in the world's life is silently to say
how good life is, and men who take away
your image whole shall never see the dark.

Buds, leaves and flowers, petals on the stem,
bright eyes of hedges twinkling in the heat,
I know no offering for an Englishman
more perfect than a pure English rose,
to breathe soft English air wherever he goes
and, falling, to lay Albion at his feet.

False teeth

I have discovered that all I have to do
is to write down what is going on
from one moment to the next,
not wishing any more to be happy
or somebody, or to do something worth while,
but to live in the poem as it is,
neither Jim Prose nor Jack Style,
just to enjoy my loony happiness,
putting the words down without choosing them
any more than when you have a steak
and chips, you need to ask which chip is the best.
Thank god for potatoes, thank god
for chips, onions, leeks, garlic, bread:
you don't have to make any of them better.
You can't dress up an onion
so why should poems have false teeth?

Garden

A garden of thorns
holly and hawthorn
briar and bramble

White petals fall
through the sigh of daybreak
the sky splits orange

I wait for the first bird
the first song has
a thousand yellow voices

Grenade

As a full fruit, ripe,
I hold you in my palm
as a child holds an apple,
the fingers curling,
glad of the weight,
till it grows warm
and ready for tasting.

May they who take you
into their flesh,
whose ears are split
by your mad laughter,
not know how long
I weighed your evil
and flung for shame.

UNIVERSITÉ DE PARIS
INSTITUT BRITANNIQUE DE PARIS

6, RUE DE LA SORBONNE VI

TELEPHONE } 378-00-84
 } 378-24-70

C. C. P. PARIS 1385-87

DIRECTEUR FRANCIS SCARFE

Hai Ku
for Kay's Birthday

Time dissolves mountains
As quicksilver melts alloys:
Be diamond always

Lone from
Francis

In memoriam

Impossible to go back any more
to the cracked lino the bronze stag
the ragmat flapping under the scullery door

Unless perhaps to remember
wyandottes scratching in the backyard
the tortoise upside-down on the kitchen floor

Though now your imagined lives are over
you're never done with looking forward
through the darkening windows of years

Still wondering if there's any answer
to the first question and the last
your hand was asking as it lived in hers

As you trailed through the Market together
under the gas-jets, squeezing pennies
to bid for bruised enormous oranges

As guiding you into the future
she told such marvels you forget about her
whose hand held yours long after she was gone.

Kitchen poem: an elegy for Tristan Tzara

In the hungry kitchen
the dog sings for its dinner.
The housewife is writing her poem
on top of the frigidaire
something like this:

“Hear in the kitchen
the crows fly home
into the red-robed trees
that walk across the sky.

Hear under the floor
the three fountains rising and
trickling through the bridge
into the sea of poems.”

In the kitchen the housemother
pours soup for her thousand children
as her man eats his silence
and the dog swallows its poem.

In all the kitchen of Europe
the radio shouts good news:
“Millions have had no accident today –
all wars have come to an end –
an honest politician
in another country
wants to become a plumber –

all men will be equal, next year –
volcano vomits ice-cream –
a silent poem has been invented.”

In my holy kitchen
I draw the blinds of night
on the homes of sleep.
I hold the world in my palms.
Now that I am old
I can measure life with words.
There's a nightingale in my coffee.
My bread is buttered with memories.
Since the old woman died
I have two souls.

When I was small we had a lucky black cat.
We had a magic horse-shoe on the wall,
it was rusty and brought no luck
but fetched the fields into the kitchen
And made us not forget horses.

When you are old you make your own magic.
You speak oftener for the dead.
You move free in the wonderland of the past.
You invent a future on the other shore of death.
You must speak for the dead,
you are their rusty horse-shoe
in all the kitchens of the world,
not the mug on the radio
but a thought rescued from the past.

(There was love in the thin soup
a bone some lentils and great love.
My mother's hands were clouds.
There was a bluebird in the gas jet
when she bathed us by the kitchen fire.
There will be no such soup again
nor such transcendent poverty.
I have lost the treasure of poverty.
The old woman is dead and buried
in her wonderland of oblivion,
but lives in my kitchen poem
in this 'sentimental' aside.)

Now that I am an old man, I think in bed.
I think nothing. I think poems –
the metronome of sleeplessness and death,
the art of being deliberately alone and yet
a centre in the vortex of the world,
feelings stretched drum-tight on the grid of thought
as your decaying flesh taut on its bones,
sensations phantom ideas dreams pinned bugs
on the living conveyor-belt of experience,
while in the poem you are everybody else,
each poem merging into another construct,
all poems rationally absurd impermanent

DADA

There being no poem ever, no poet ever.
An old man in a kitchen, cooking words.

I am no poet I am

lived by unfinishable poems,
the horse-shoe hammered
on the anvil of my brain.

I think nothing. The poems think me.
I do not often write them down,
being a structuration of the unknowable
that dies upon the page,
my inward poems whispered for the dead
while the living bury the living
with foul political slogans.

An owl is hooting in my poem
which sleep will end.

Good night, poet of life,
be with me always.
I give you my kitchen poem,
Immortal TRISTAN.

The Knocker-up

Tyne Dock stirs as the knocker-up
fettles the brass and joggles on
stotting through dingy dawn:

Lift your larkbones old man
scrub on your chin the stiff of night
chuck with the blankets your daft dreaming of
the whippet fields the pigeon smell of love:

Take on your leather crown and davylamp
and tiptap with your staff and hobnail clogs
down the backlanes into the mucky dark
a mile under the sea where your stint waits:

Wake up the coal its blinding blacknesses
that glint and glitter like the eyes of bairns
or the pitponies' deep nightfolded gaze.

The Magic lamp

Alas, Aladdin, your lamp of gold
is tarnished now, is dark and old.

Though you rub it with might and main
your anger only spreads the stain,

It will stay as black as coal
though you breathe on it with your soul,

And though you trim the silken wick
the flame stays dull, and the smoke thick.

Though you bruise your tender hand
no gleam appears on the dark band,

And though you whisper, coax and cry
the Lamp will utter no reply;

Though you wish but the smallest thing
– a kiss, a smile, a book, a ring –

No Genie rises to your call
and unconsoled your tears fall.

Aladdin, I will tell you why
the Genie has become so shy,

Why the Lamp which shone so bright

gives but the shadow of a light,

Why your strongest wishes fall
like sparks against a chimney wall.

It is because, I am quite sure,
few wishes are denied the pure;

For once you really did believe
a rub of gold would cure all grief;

Or that an infant's voice could still
the vast desires of the will.

But when you wished to be a man
you wished as much as a boy can,

And now, no man rubbing this toy
can change you back into a boy.

May-day saint

There is still time to sentimentalise
on greenness of tall trees, or mal-de-siècle
rising in martyr's veins, but May sunrise
kindles the patient hand to seize the nettle
and both the world's and his own lust chastise.

George has sat out the winter fairly well
and in his woollens helped the winter through
at the best places, seen his verses sell
dearer than most, felt his prestige accrue
and when the Muse was stale thought "Time will tell".

"Time is no prophet, yet in May we see
full future loves like petals on a stem
deckling the wholeness of our purity,
and hatreds shedding strength, and after them
the flaccid dogmas of senility."

George has no fear of Time. He wears his pride
as undertakers sport a dirty glove
in place of sorrow, he is satisfied
to steer between his wisdom and his love,
chartering detachment as an earthly guide.

He views his life as a rare anecdote
savoured in silence, calls desire an art
that seeks in daily deaths an antidote
to the more lasting frailties of the heart,
and with a rainbow he would cut his throat.

May-day sinner

Clouds that polluted Winter's glossary
dissolve discomfort in the sunlight now,
and there is sprouting of spring-onions and
unworldly bulbs to flower on canvas,
since fashion still covets the necessary:
there are brown boles showing a stippled bough
to mock the embarrassment of the bare land,
and parasols dismay silk hats in Paris.

Who will discuss the ultimate value
of cold blocks of hours, Sunday to Sunday,
belittling manhood with expectancy
of humane seasons to fill up the gaps,
(since books and theatres follow their mode
chop-changing red for green in Summer's way
and smaller names for large-typed in *Who's Who*),
now that Impulse germinates in Fancy
and the eternal round of inspiration wraps
its creatures in realisation, Man to Toad?

There was expectancy in hand and brow
thrilling at contact in green daisyspun
settings, such as idylls might suggest
to winter weariness, tokens ungiven
of chasteness growing to frenzy, in green
fields parcelling up vision; but nohow
can a daydream end well that was begun
unseasonable, nor can the imaged breast

retain known softness, when an unforgiven
lapse into consciousness wipes windows clean,
for there are dreams that Honour can't allow
and the best people don't know what they mean.

Even cats rub backs on what is pleasant
or howl thin passions to repeated stars
dwindling frustrated; there are hills that crown
their heads in a sunswept idolatry
and the poet needs only pick and choose
among such sinners, but the few can parse
trailers of life and death, unhesitant
before Medusa's head or Helen's frown,
so in the Spring he who can fell a tree
must scorn remorse or tread in martyr's shoes.

So there is wisdom without indigence
as potions without harm, and he who reads
beyond his symbols mocks Roman actions,
imperfectly attuned to what respect
hymns saints in black and white; his love makes sense
despite intrusion, hence the heart that bleeds
not his, the eye watered, not his, questions
not his that hawk abroad his own defect.



Meditations: The Fear

Where is the fear, where is the anguish now?
Though far away on waste and tropic shore
in swamp and desert giant fires glow
and death descends alike on rich and poor,

The fear has gone. The fear is numb. The fear
grows into habit, stronger than the mind.
For pain is so much deeper than our tears
they keep it all who are the first to find.

Brother and friend, as you bleed in our cause
we live our lives, and pause to think of you
as we count up the profit and the loss
and the bushes flower, and English skies are blue,

And we, like you, have passed beyond the fear
into the hope of a far better world
when hearts are full and all have love to spare
and all the guns are spiked and all flags furled.

Sweet Christ, have mercy on my friend and foe
who maim their souls with every soul they kill;
Sweet Christ, whose blood has never ceased to flow
pardon all those who shoot against their will;

Have greater pardon on all those who cry
their hymns of violence and spur us on
to everlasting death; teach us to live, not die;
be with us now and for ever, O gentle One.

A Neutral tone*

Forgive me if your poem was not mine.
You may keep every word, keep every line.
I would not write the title, still less sign

That blurb of yours about neutrality.
All my compassion for sterility
affirms it is the stallion's allergy,

And all that waste of shame's not, for a man,
poetry in its immense diapason,
but the empty rattle of a eunuch's can.

One tells us that the poetry does not matter,
another, that the tone preferred is neuter;
yet Thomas was a most believing doubter,

And all your wit about your pseudo-wit
will not inflate, bellow or fashion it
into the spark that two blind poets lit.

There is no phoenix birth for poets, but fire,
no birth for poems but the words' desire,
that burn up on the incandescent lyre.

The ghost of truth demands, not what's preferred,
but unpreferred and hated, poems that hurt,
Hercules grilling in his poisoned shirt.

And so I send you all my kind regards,
hoping your eyes will lift, some day, towards
the martyrs' blood on Hitler's pyres and swords,

And lift your eyes to that unneutral lust,
love, cracking hearts; and lift them to the dust
That mugs become, and even poets must,

And make your poem the everlasting cry
Orpheus yells across the filthy sky,
or if you cannot, let me tell you why.

* 'A neutral tone is nowadays preferred' (D. D.)

Ode to Christ

Who stood beside my bed in the hours of childhood
when darkness spread, who guided me past corners
where lurked my fear, preserved from beetles and spiders
and the round surging of the deep sea waters

So simple help in trouble when my mother's weeping
struck at me through the wall, and my father's death
across the seas came home to me in my play;
O you who solaced me far from home and mother

As I lay awake in the horror of the prison
of orphaned children, O you I sought in the woods
who answered me from trees with the voice of the cuckoo
and whom in the swallow's nest I understood

O you I marvelled at in the grace of the silver birch
and willows drinking sunlight from the waters,
you whom I met in minnows and little fishes
full of boys' magic, but more in singing flights of birds,

To whom I came home as a boy with a bible in my heart
and to whom I talked by night and by day starved,
who dried my tears and put the bell's tongue in my laughter
And showed me the seven wonders of the world:

Great alien drifting star
exquisite silent jar
of cool red wine waiting the willing drinker

and who through centuries pour to the roots of my being

Now that the weight of my life lies heavily upon me
as the earth to the sun I turn to the friend of my childhood,
so vastly changed by the uphill of the journey
how shall I know you again, if I should find?

For I stand here in the middle of the way
and now look back to you, look forward to you,
and cannot go back, and yet cannot go on
unless I shall find you there at the end of the lonely day,

Knowing no man or woman I have met, no book, no creed,
no science and no truth, no poignant beauty
of paint, marble or word, no happiness of flesh
or mind, can ever replace your friendship.

O luckless bastard, scorned immortal one,
you the great spat upon, great unbeliever
of creeds as ancient as the rocks you preached upon,
but who believed in yourself as in your god,

Who did so manly all that is beyond
a man's true instincts, loved beyond the flesh
to the invisible desires and the eternal spasm
of recurring creation, to what was never begun and shall never end

Great friendless one, great vat of solitude,
strong solitary flaming whorl of relentless purpose
like an oak knot who grew against the flow of a dying culture,

flaw in the beaten chains of institutions and formulas,

O unknown quantity suddenly shed from the womb
into the dung of life, O you the motherless
and whose father was in heaven, you who walked alone
towards the crown of thorns and for whom innocents died,

Lighthouse of suffering, who cleansed the scabs of sin,
toucher of sores, soother of lepers, cooler of brows,
spoiler of children, impossibly delicate one,
kisser of flowers and gentler singer than birds,

Whose wisdom purls like a tide through the sea of time,
symbol of all our ideals and desires
and whose Cross shall burn once more above Europe's fires
and whose voice shall rise beyond this hideous crime,

Inerrably good one, strict and kind and sound,
pure as the hands of children breaking bread,
beautiful as the eyes of a virgin waking to love
and strong as the power of the male in his blood's pride,

O you whose life was the highest point of art
and who in death showed how a god can die,
whose message throbs through unbelieving hearts
because your life and death had perfect symmetry,

O sad and terrible Christ from whom in shame we stray,
teach me your sadness, leaven my joy with the bitterness of your tears,
that I may come to know you and draw near
to your vast tragic pattern, and learn to pray;

O multiple, teach me the bounds of my nothingness
that I might find myself in the void of these desolate days,
for I am lost in a warring universe
where hate is master, and only death has praise

If it be not too late, great friend, you who gave all, forgive
this dark eclipse of souls, this starless night of hate;
teach me to die, that I might learn to live;
teach me to live, that I might never die.

On giving a blood-transfusion

Look inwards, as the cruel gift
pours self and history for the nameless;
close eyes, while through vein's ritual rift
the atonement flows that must be blameless;
for, after sacrifice, no sameness
may bind what's gone to what is left.

Nor is this loss my own to bless,
but spendthrift life loaned to another,
a life increased though seeming less;
my blood, in child or father or mother,
not mine, nor theirs, but no one's rather,
proves lives may be anonymous.

Go, drops, be my material prayer
as might this soul if mine for giving.
To Christ I transfuse my despair,
but you, essence unsaved yet saving,
be offered for the pain of living.
Seek some pure heart, be pardoned there.



Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems I

Onion soup

The Texas man and woman came in
and noisily ordered Onion Soup
at four in the afternoon,
like something out of Hemingway.

Well, they waited till almost five,
and then they got their Onion soup,
straight out of a tin. When they went away,
the boss said, as he took the plates,
“it’s time they were packed off to Vietnam”.
But a young man said “her breasts weren’t bad”.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems II

Latin-Quarter

In the Rue Saint-Jacques
deaf and dumb kids
play silently in the yard
laughing on fingers:

On Boulevard Montparnasse
blind lovers hold hands
and with long white wands
tap their way home:

In the Rue Pierre Curie
cancers are being cut
from dying women,
and planted in dying dogs;

While we push our way
through the smile of life,
through the reality
of how things are,

Between meals of love
still asking for more,
all blind and deaf
to what's going on.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems III

Schola Cantorum

Three Indochinese girls go by
voices of linnets
amber eyes
blue hair of the dawn
by the *Schola Cantorum*:

Measuring distances
between men and stars –
their alto loveliness –
steel waifs –
echoes of deep cool wells.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems IV

La Marelle

Now they are playing hopscotch,
la marelle,
on the terrace outside my café,
starting at the base and hopping left and right
till one reaches the top,
the top in French, I see, is *Heaven*:
in English, it is HOME.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems V

Lovers in the *Métro*

The acrobats of love
rehearse in the *Métro*,
eyes circled with night's
cloud of dreams:

Velvet to velvet
jeans to jeans
they loll and roll
(lemonade coke)
in mindless grope:

Lost in love's fields
they paw the moss,
rainbows of longing
join ghost and ghost
in almost death:

Corrugated old man
I see through life's velours
what lion's claws
grip our short gift,
how time's teeth close
on rebel souls
that die of truth,

How love is crueller
its law stronger
its pain longer
than tender youth.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems VI

Café news-flash

A pigeon reels in drunk
wrecking its wings on windows
à l'heure de l'apéritif,
losing its head like us
in a flap, then flying free
into the chestnut tree
by the Collège de France.

In the café we watchers
fly mentally away as
we hear of DUBCEK
caught in a prison of bad faith,
how they clip the wings
of insulted honesty,
how they make it wear their rings.

But never mind the bars,
Dubcek, we're all inside
a world-wide prison of lies,
the glasshouse of millions.
Be happy where you are
in the chains of truth.
Your chains are wings.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems VII

In the *Sélect*

I came to the *Sélect*
– where I was with Cummings
forty years ago,
when he stuffed my pockets
with dollar bills
and called T. S. Eliot
“That little St. Lewis boy” –

I came to the *Sélect*
wanting to be alone
and perhaps write a poem;
but there I met a friend,
a poem with a moustache,
and just wrote this.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems VIII

Old poet

All youngness gone
each step a journey
you climb invisible
stairs up every street

The iron hair
on the bowed head
the sunken eyes
staring through stones

What seas of life
heaved in the mind
what forests of love
blazed in the body

Buried alive
between cliffs of homes

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems [IX]

Contrescarpe

While the young play
the pop machine
sharing the apples
the onions of love
all bodiness

The men stand still as
gundogs at the zinc
as horses in fields
dream on their feet
a meadow of mares.

The men stand silent
in cold violence,
sipping their aloe drinks,
Calva, Marc, Suze,
waiting for molls,
their daily love elsewhere.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems X

By *Notre-Dame*

The man with one finger
the man with one hand
the man with one arm
the man with one leg
the man with one lung
the man with one eye:

You will find them all
in waking and sleeping
beside the false river
where dreamboats go by
all nightlights rich people
in the Seine's happy spell
where love is forever,
a tale that ends well:

No loving restores
lost love lost eyes,
nor if I kneel here
all night on the stones
will the windows of heaven
release what is gone,
or tears not flow,
the stream of pain run dry.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems XI

Brasserie

After midnight
but not yet closed:
the young folk open
flowers of nightness.

A young man explains:
“until twenty-five
we develop as plants do,
then after twenty-six
all men look back”.

Long after midnight
the glass is full but
the heart is empty:
now is the time now
to count dead loves
the lost far friends.

Now is the moment
to be glad you are old,
with a young man in you
always escaping
into the empty
always future
Future.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems XII

Mouffetard

The sad can be happy
drinking with the young
their lovelocks bangles
sheepskin furs

Their bluejean love
that walks on the moon
their groovy girls
their always Now:

Simple as a linnet
with an old song in it
how can they know
where all lovers must go

How understand
the kingdom of ends?

You can shake this poem's
hand.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems XIII

Hôpital Cochin

I said to myself, I must be ill
I feel far too intelligent.

The old man died in the next bed.
They came and changed the hollow sheets.
Now a new old man is groaning
a curse that is a prayer.

It is not enough to feel intelligent
when the soul is tarnished,
the heart holed like an old brass pan,
the weight of love on your conscience.

I am glad to be nobody in particular.

I have a dog who loves my smell.
There was never such a woman in the world
as the woman sleeping in my mind.

There is only the pain of being loved.

At this moment I am immortal
in the blue breathing night.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems XIV

Paris nocturne

Silence broods, hatches
ravens rooks owls
dragon's teeth of remorse
in the hairy dark:

The dog whines in its sleep
plunges and snarls
in the dream of speed
abominable Anubis:

The first blades of light
are drawing the street's blood
the paupers batter dustbins
the mad sun crows:

A million lovers wake
into each others' eyes
and wash night's mystery
from luminous hands.

Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems XV

Cat and mouse

Were it not for birds and mice
I might love comfortable cats,
their cosy image of
domesticated crime:

But I saw a (meekly) mouse
holding a grain of rice
like a white prayer
in its white paws.



The Pearl of life

Flesh, wherein meet the sea, the sky, the earth,
consumer and producer, master and slave,
I bend to you, as the fisher to the wave,
to know myself, to feel the weight of my birth.

For you, my still young limbs, have been my friends
from the hour of conception; you have borne
the weight of all the good and evil I have done,
and you will share my sorrows to the end.

As to the rock, Prometheus, I am bound
to you, my substance, and the struggling mind
spirit and soul, man, god, are all confined
within your shell the tiniest sting can wound.

So well I know you: the wise, cautious hands
eager for touch of woman, water, glass;
the eyes, through which all other men must pass;
the faithless sex, as restless as quicksands.

And yet I know that you are less than me.
For all my ecstasy and sorrow proves
there is a vast, diviner Self that loves,
the self that moves to truth and poetry.

Now, in the kitchen garden, where the weeds
are thriving, I consider living things.
I see the structure of the beetle's wings
is not its will to flight, and it is not the bird that sings,

and not the sap which is the urge to live,
and not the soil which scents the evening rose.
From the same soil, lily or lettuce grows.
Sun, fondling one plant, is another's grief.

So, when I look upon society
I know it has not made me what I am.
For no man can foresee how far the flame
of personality is trimmable; no city

Was yet so small that it could mould a man
into its shape, for each man is a world
within himself, is a seed whorled
infolded furled, a pattern which none can

Hope to unravel, and which none can make
though great his desire. For in the beginning
was the gift, and all that is worth winning
is the true self a mighty tree, an angel in God's wake.

In the beginning was the Self, which we call God.
The petal's perfume and the skylark's call
and every star and child, the smallest of the small
is self, each one a crystal face of good.

How shall I learn myself? Each day I learn,
when in a friend I see myself denied,
each attribute is but another side
of the great crystal; and as the cold will burn

Far below zero, or as time is fast or slow
according to each mind and circumstance
and clocks measure in vain, each difference
proves me the same, but self in that I know

Sameness is only on a cosmic scale
written in millions. For though different words
make languages, for serfs and overlords
and blacks and whites, objects they mean are real.

Through simple things the poet learns himself
as children do, and learns what is divine
from flesh and blood, from stones and bread, from wine,
and such long learning is his greatest wealth.

God, till my thirtieth year I walked alone
away from you, along the bitter road
of lust and falsehood, proud that I was proud
and thinking love was bone's reply to bone.

In the thick night I grappled with my strong
and lovely foe, whose smell was heaven to me,
whose taste was magic, whose voice was poetry,
till the pain was heaven, and love like a great gong

Sang from my heart to the frontiers of the land
ruled by my senses, and in sensual joy I drowned
again and again, as a diver who has found
the Pearl of Life, and dies with it in his hand.

And what was right and wrong, my naked dream
in ending taught me; that those frontiers spread not far,
that the blood's ecstasy is the spirit's war,
for he is dead, who has not You in him.

O body, crystal vase, O fragile rose
seeking the sunlight, gentle on the air
as a child's breathing, more bright and fair
than all the stars of heaven, for your creator knows

Your share of life is greater than the sun's;
you who like fire are radiant with the love
that none can take but is all yours to give,
who are not halved, but doubled, in your sons,

Warm alabaster palace of the mind
whose soul throbs through you with eternal tides
that never shall be stilled, who have not died
through centuries, but have myriads of your kind,

May each man know himself, that he may be
alive in you, that he may give his best
with heart to heart and breast on double breast
and by his faith defy mortality.

For the true self, which I save from the wreck
of wasted days and ways, is vaster still
than boundless empires of the human will,
and is your earthly shade, O Light I seek.

Poetaster

In deepest caverns of society
where human laughter waits the dinner-gong,
he seeks a refuge from satiety
and in confusion fabricates a song.

Births, deaths and marriages, new-littered cats,
wars, perjuries and hatreds are the themes
in want of ears, but Oriental mats
convulse the lamplit patterns of his dreams.

The foreign contours of a stockbroker
and earrings of the Lady-in-the-toque
form substance for an intellectual poker
to give dull brains another well-earned poke.

Gleams on bald heads bring memories of the moon,
cool as a crocus, red as Hell beneath,
slow-voicing lips make think of a bassoon . . .
. . . such golden hair would forge a poet's wreath. . .

Good-night. Smooth gloves, silk hat on burning head
bring back reality to chill the bone,
as he, whose love and vanity are dead
seeks other crowds where he can be alone.

Portrait in a cracked mirror

I do not seek with oblique flatteries
to raise your foibles to a pedestal,
nor match your native preciousities
with music from my outworn virginal
nor grace your graces, for the original
intent was to expose your heresies.

He who has quoted Jaguars stole my cue,
for there's a feline pattern in your walk,
but here we draw a symbol of tabou,
needful, no doubt, for better game to stalk
is in complexion, Scandals and Small-talk,
in truths and hurts that hurt however true.

Some while ago you scotched the Maker's art
but found Heroics limited your scope –
lithe Alexandrines better suit your part
uttering swift things slowly, while you grope
for genteel sarcasms, whose fine barb, you hope,
will hide the warmness of your simple heart.

But here's a Montage for your private hours,
bourgeois editions of best novelists,
poets in yellow ; straight old-maidish flowers
in straight old vases, letters and Reading-lists
and boudoir ruminations of old trysts,
while your efficient eyebrow laughs or glowers.

O homely setting! But you play a rôle
far more romantic, talk Art with your friends,
dispute the functions of the human soul,
with coaxing syllables make some amends
for petulance, pull hair when Truth offends,
and like the true Poseuse new books extol.

Portrait of a Laodicean

If you will curtsey to sincerity
we spare a stanza to apologise
for the fine praises we have left unsung,
but since modernity has found a tongue
two-edged with bane, we dare not eulogise
gifts that might overtax dexterity.

We sing *dolcetto* on a sombre note,
since you, who might have called a worthier tune
think fit to scorn our Muse, whose passionate
love-lyrics kept us out of bed too late
weaving new fantasies of stars and moon,
to wake at dawn with ashes in our throat.

You only talk when our cold fingers seek
rich harmonies that slept in tired leaves
of half-disdained composers, when your hand
flicks from the keys some lively sarabande
or old declining dirge whose calm deceives,
belying the new flush upon your cheek.

There is no gist in words whose eloquence
owes grace and mystery to the music's fire,
nor is there love when passion warms red lips
if morning finds all dreams under eclipse
of dark disdain, if promise of desire
is drowned in coffee or indifference.

We'd rather speak of higher criticism
than pander to such obscure dallying
that borders on discretion: you annoy
when you treat our attention as a toy
to occupy a winter's evening
while our indulgence obviates a schism.

Yet we continue to extend an ear
not quite unsympathetic to your charm,
finding some solace in your appetite
for sane amusement, for your touch is light,
showing a heart with candour to disarm,
thrifty of soul and prodigal of cheer.

Prayer

You flop down on your knees and the prayer
does not come, you are conscious only
of your wizened hands on your old face,
and the hard knees like calloused hearts,
and your behind sticking out like an ape's.
There is nothing elegant in prayer.
The answer is, pray silently
as you drink your beer and smoke a cigarette,
but never kneel again.

Prelude

Brightness foretells the flame; there is promise
in the slow turning of a handle: so
fears and doubts infest the heart where love is,
a smile acts rainbow to a thaw of malice
and after wit the merest Doldrums follow.

But there are tears and laughter in childbirth,
Winter and Spring covet the same cloud,
Men find noise or sweet music in mirth,
kindness and pestilence thrive in the dearth
and there is profit in a funeral shroud.

And in their hunger lovers must shame desire
lurking in fingers or in deep blue eye;
wings are soon broken: if your dreams require
the consummation of a heart entire
then kiss farewells and go without a sigh.

Recruits

The days were long and the nights were lonely.
The fields shone green and the apples swinging
so red, blood seemed to glitter on the branches.

As we marched the children shouted after us.
Here an old woman smiled or a young one blushed.
Old men leaned on their sticks and shook their heads.

Riding on lorries the wind cut cool away
like women's fingers on our cheeks and hair.
So fast we drove away from hearts and homes.

Some days we ached with boredom and loneliness,
each was alone and hated the whole world,
and our hearts seemed as ugly as our battledress,

Till we thought together with desperate unison
and moved as one with a sudden understanding
and knew our purpose, and found a rhythm like love.

And at night our thoughts that drifted back to home
would be recalled by a man's human gesture
as he lit his pipe or stretched in a narrow bed.

Scrooge

Concrete the winter hard as Easter's nails
 drives its white pain into the earth,
as ancient carols from the brazen bells
beat the blank air, ironic angels
 tolling a winter birth.

They throng the barren streets with frosted hands
 laden with foolish gifts,
the clockwork love that once a year demands
the purse must open more than it intends,
 while on them grey snow drifts.

Snow drifts, tatters of love out of the sky
 that melt unwanted on your face,
who seek some gift that money cannot buy,
the feelings that for ever frozen lie
 though, given, they might blaze.

Though, given, they might blaze and set you free,
 and warm, more than the Christmas log
whoever needs them: but there is no key
for words, thoughts, gestures, whose deep-frozen sea
 needs love to turn the lock.

Seasonal poem: on being fifty

So many springs and summers, too many springs
all birds and buds, and now the fiftieth
of all ends, steel bit and plane of winter
that will forgive us nothing
but casts, cold in long teeth,
what worse lies after.

What worse lies after, sagging drift of seasons
on breast and bone, the fiftieth K.O. count
on memory-plugged mind, on punch-drunk conscience;
no miracle nor reason
parries time's brittle brunt
nor gives death sense.

To give death sense is dialectic winter's
personification of blank negative,
not only being nothing, but loving nothingness,
dead ice, stiff waters,
dry tears, those blunt knives
that long ago lost edge.

That long ago lost edge like those three seasons,
blanched bud, red globe, purple self-satisfaction.
Only the winter sharpens the dying edge,
with no respect of persons,
and yet is life's perfection,
the end of age.

Seasons of war

O world in systematic ruin
leaves reel through the rain to the broken asphalt.
Home after bomb, flesh after reason,
system and code, by-law, régime, rejoin
Nature's perennial chaos. Man's trite treaty
remakes no broken brick nor violated vault.
Who shall the gordian knot of life retie?
Who hang the fallen apple to the tree?
Who shelter my lost child in a peaceful womb?

Here's the same summer crisis of fruits and flowers
time of maturing love, when lovers squander
a year of hoarded dreams at midsummer,
leaving a year of yearning on their hands.
Let sun, map, root, dare failure once again
in a last spate of heat and berries and flowers,
and time be kind and fresh to the tired brain...

Here's autumn, yellow space between remembering
and what must be forgotten. Fertile and delicate
life mellows, fills, fears a Niagara drop...
All night the snow fell, blighted half a crop...

Centuries made this day, when a red fog
lifts for a moment from a mat of snow, showing
superimposed the footprints of men and women
who coughed and worried and elbowed through a maze
of night. I almost see across the road for a moment

trees in strained attitudes, threadbare as poor old women
not a leaf left, but in poverty dignified.

Some of them raise to the sky despairing hands,
others a warning finger, as though to curse
bronze loss. The cold shoulder of a frozen world
is this soiled snow and this dark noon. I recall
the youth of those trees, and call men from the past:

Napoleon's jaw, the compassionate eye of Christ,
Shakespeare laughing, bland Goethe, mystic Joan
riding to Paris some cold afternoon. I ask
if they were here to-day, how would they look,
how speak, how justify themselves. Napoleon
would draw his fate upon the map, read a new world
in the steel lock fastened on helpless Europe: but the sand
of Libya hides the rest. Shakespeare would write an ode from Boston
and Goethe, indifferent, write some love-letters.
And Christ would realise he died too soon.



Snail

Groping the dark
my hand's eye
lit on a snail's
like mine aloneness:

So cold its home
all self and slow
on a dead leaf
on a dead wall:

Safe in my shell
I let you go.

The Street-painter

There are always men who have the nerve to set up their easel in front of Notre-Dame or Saint Paul's then start painting something like it. If you watch a man painting a landscape or indeed anything, watch him closely and you will see that he spends more of his time and energy in looking at his own picture and working on it, than he spends in looking at what is in front of him. He looks like a sort of Narcissus interested only in himself, and for whom the landscape is just a pretext. Either he or Notre-Dame might as well not be there.

So, when you are writing a poem, you tend to spend more time on the poem (as an object) than on the idea, so that the idea is often lost or changed or else you get hold of the idea and spoil the poem. What you then throw away is neither poem nor idea but a bit of paper with handwriting on it.

Whatever you try to write or transform translate transmute into art (the words are all pedantic) — let's say

you are making a drawing of a cat or a poem about one — you are making an object which can never be a cat, although you want it to have a cat in it or some catlike quality. But a cat is a cat and a poem is a poem, and indeed everything is alien to poetry except language.

If you make a poem it is a linguistic object. If it is properly a poem then it is a meaningful object. No doubt a cat is a meaningful object, but not in the same way. Anyway it is always trying to run out of the poem or glares at you with its resentful yellow eyes and never looks twice the same. And of course a poem never looks twice the same either, and is always trying to run away from the cat.

If you draw a cat or write about one, in any case you have to do so in such a way that a man who has never seen a cat will get a fair idea of what it is like. This is such impossible work that most poems fail to be poems to the extent that they ought to be, for instead of cohabit-

ing peacefully the idea and the poem kill each other. This is why Colingwood said that the real poem is an event in the mind, and that when you write it it is no longer the same as you intended it to be. Henry James said that events in the mind are real events. A cat is not an event in the mind although it might cause one.

I have had quite enough of this and wish I had never seen the man with his easel or begun thinking about cats. In any case I prefer dogs. But you have to make a good linguistic object and seize the essence as well. Don't let the cat walk out of your poem. Make it PURR.

Testament

Let the dead have the books I died my life in,
stuffing my head with other men's words
till it is heavy and grey with old ideas.

The old ideas will go with me into the soil
to instruct the worm, until the scholar's skull
is gouged and clean, and I shall be free.

So you can keep my books, my tongue-tied books,
and chew their poisoned leaves as I did,
their lotus leaves that steal your wits.

Let them give my hollow clothes to the hollow poor,
the rags in which I hid my life away,
wool coffins on our incandescent nakedness.

Let them throw away my cash if there's any left.
The best cash I ever had was when I was seven,
a new penny the Mayor threw out of his plumed carriage.

All I would like to have again
is the fat orange I carried fifty years ago
in the harvest procession through the dusty streets,

I carried it so long it blinded me with its gold,
and even now its memory bums my hand,
a free orange, the only thing I ever owned.

Theme

"Nous ne vivons jamais, mais nous espérons de vivre."

Pascal

What symbol guarantees delight
imprinting truth upon the flesh
of earth's most favoured acolyte,
or through what medium can we heed
the finer songs that brave the mesh
of our experience, when our creed
finds even love's caress too recondite ?

They who fill glasses for the hour
drink poisoned syrups, carefully
weighing the sweet against the sour
without equation, for no scheme
schedules their values, and they see
twilights at noon, as in a dream
life threads slow passage through a cobwebbed tower.

He who spells fortunes in the past
perusing age's mottled hand
speaks as a blind iconoclast
illuded by the finger's trace
scoring life histories in sand,
for he who coins no nobler face
behind the portrait knows no first nor last.

Prophets whose virtue is in skill
of scanning stars or poking shrines

for future store, can drink their fill
of mocked ambitions, thwarted fears,
but cannot architect designs
into fulfilment, till the years
unfold the curtains from a higher will.

Wisdom courts action, toils the ball
Sisyphus-like to touch the sky
without dismay though it should fall
to poor beginnings, for no end
fulfils its promise, and we lie
in squalor — pots for God to mend,
rank herbage creeping on a palace wall.

This book

I shall give you this book, my love —
unless I forget —
because it is not only about you
but is my testament
which came between us like a fire
because I had to be alone in the wind,
because I had no other choice
than to pour out my spleen,
all the gall of love and life and death,
the arsenic of loneliness
the fever to use words —

Just as I took my cheque to the bank
and drew the whole month's pay in cash
then wondered what to do with it.
I had never had so much money before,
all at once a pocket stuffed with notes,
and I wanted to throw them away.
Then suddenly I felt rich,
not with bad money but a few poems:
take them: you cannot spend a poem.

Three sisters

No, not so easily.
The flow
is slow from childhood.
After years of groping
through many mysteries
the hand falls
gentle, cunning on beauty;
fingers curl tendrils
but too eagerly,
till with gripping greed
the world is bruised.

And so with all
truth, beauty, goodness,
we grasp and strangle.
Luminous in darkness
are those three sisters,
not for the hand, nor for the eye,
but for the inner sense.
Apprehended, not known,
they are the poet's own,
who meets them in absence,
in sorrow, in silence,
and is no more alone.

Tyne Dock revisited

The spit-rings under the black arch,
the rags and bones that fought for stubs,
the whippet-man the dole has gripped,
the poetry of singing pubs,
tuberculosis, syphilis,
the colliers rotting on the slips:

The slagheap glowing overhead,
the North Sea in my nightlit room,
the pit-head wheel's black hangman's rope,
the faded cracked linoleum,
the Burne-Jones angel by my bed,
the Bubbles-boy with pipe and soap:

The foghorn through the briny night,
the widow weeping in her sleep,
the boy whose visions knew no rest
but scoured the drowned Atlantic's deep,
the boy whose code and second-sight
saw suffering pure and saw it blest:

They've all gone where the years have gone,
the seafarers, the giant horses,
the barefoot girls in coaldust haze,
the sailing-ships on fairy courses:
and now I wake and ponder on
that hell on earth, that cleansing gaze.

The Window

In after years, when you look back upon
this time, and upon me, who am no more
close to your heart nor a shadow in your sun,
perhaps you will stand still and lean on the door
or lay down something, feeling quite undone.

Some passing stranger, or a turn of phrase,
or any echo or shade, will be enough,
anything that is worn and almost effaced,
anything half finished, will be proof
I was no natural but an acquired taste.

So you will stand there, looking back, inspired
as though the curtains parted on some view
not quite to be believed in, nor desired,
and which did not exist except for you,
like some clay thing the potter never fired.

No, it would not be wise to throw the window wide.
Close it quickly, before it hurts, and go
about your usual tasks, and let time hide
beneath mountains of hours, what you know
cannot be lived again, yet has not died.



Poems translated or adapted

The Father's death

Poem from Pierre Emmanuel (tr.)

Since your loud voice has ebbed into
the cavern of a grief
the house sounds so vast and hollow
we dare not stir in it, who live

He who trampled down your ashes
trembles lest he hears your tread
the sole refuge without you is
where your presence has been laid

All elsewhere resounds with you
while here an anchored corpse you lie
no haven of escape from you
except your bed's periphery

I flood my memory with night
to be your assassin's lair
while the garden fountain's jet
gushes from an old well of tears

My stern judge now that you are gone
I can at last confess my crime
you were my tyrant and victim
you misjudged but the wrong was mine

Now I implore from your closed eyes
your anger's farewell flame,
father, when at last your face
shows me its goodness free of shame.

Sonnet

Poem from A.Jarry (tr.)

Across the heath, the monolith's pubic arch,
the prowling deaf-mute looking for a tip
in the gashed meadow and the martyrs' bones
gropes with his lantern hanging from a rope.

Over the carmine waves the wind blows still,
the unicorn of the sea across the moor
jostles the bony ghosts brought by the moon
and hunts the sable and ermine from their steel.

It laughed beside the human-bodied oak,
swallowed the whirr of may-bugs, now it scuffles
is ruffled sea-urchin straddling a far rock.

The striding traveller writes his shadow down;
not waiting for the sky to strike midnight
the feathers hammer on the chiming stone.

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

The Approximative man

The prints of your invisible steps on the sea
hoist temporary pagodas of water
jesus of air (1) close splendid haloes and sower of birds
chain reaching to the propeller of the clouds
climb impalpable sigh swimming devil
towards the gizzard of the circus bottle
your sail-spread words touch all the ports of memory
the ferry joins our hands that seek for one another in the dream's hay
Hand – open diadem of the heart open to the crowns of fruits
soft word resting in my hand magic coolness
buried in the cormorant's breast flying spiral an astral sign
the light utters itself loses its petals

Flock of towns and villages grazing in the shadow of an herbivorous
god
a god no bigger than an oakleaf
no louder than a cricket's chirp
no richer than a spearwort buttonhole
no bigger than a diamond niche
and how many useless sufferings in that flower of archipelagoes and
islets
fallen with a few drops of water into the noiseless azure
the world the continents the oceans the jails

And such difficult relations are made between appearances and
architaves
man part animal part flower part metal and part man

relations with an independent life outside that of voices and shores
relations that grow and unravel planetary
swell with tumors vegetate or slowly perish
by which we are surrounded lampions with lassoes with barbed wires
too heavy armour for warring on that false self
the unassuaged lunatic of death
the unknown deep in oneself who hunts my days blind with hope

A little gold scattered between forests and lakes
bad instincts slumbering in the idle depths of jugs
not enough of that peace
I want the struggle I want to feel the burning of the fate that a circus
god stamped on my heart
to feel the hot breath body to body the injustice the battle
and to conquer the heavy obsession heavy with so many obscure links
face to face and hew a path through the devilish scribbles of rottenness
and sly temptations daubing the uproar so many have chewed before me
the unknown
tree-trunks wear leafless atlases on their tops
the telegraph poles have mercury wings at their ankles
white birds are milestones
the distances fly upside down away
and in volcanoes' bottles submarines file like long necklets of migrating
fish
and yet in the train I feel on my shoulders so long afflicted by the desert
the weight of mythological beasts led to the slaughterhouse on fine
weather
the windmills the mills of torment
grinding the hyperborean regions where primal loves dry up
the sky's tongues mowing the chimneys of slender factories

the streams lean down to my ear and tell the secret story
all trades are united at the prophetic cry
round the finger on the lips of the meteorological signal
the tree's flowered muzzle sniffs the storm creeping on tiptoe
and yet on its morse machine the train still digs through lands and
voices

a marrowy crowd exchanging words in flesh and bone
when the word is so dear for those who need it
word that I wait for word in nuggets in the port's anfractuosity
round the hive of your eventual kindnesses
we are such numerous bees whose flight is captive to your promises
and in the breeze the tender salt song of those who are hanged from
heaven

whose bodies ulcerate the wind and the fans of whose rags rustle
against the ice-floes

the engine's smoke now barks and snaps the ventilating fire
the wheel of death on board such are the circuits of brains
which the propellor of human anguish turns on themselves
and so many others and so many others

But the whistle's fall grows threatening
throws the deluge overboard
the secret invitation to wrecks is doubled with avatar sirens
and our loves flare in the sails' flames
they are so far the ropy streams with tufted songs bordering the
roundabout (2)

and all the households rising in throats in barometers' veins
the sufferings of love the centuries of love the letters
the letters one craved to write with the sap of one's entrails
but which age caught empty in flight in search of charms

the cemeteries swollen with memories with beyonds and with deaths
and all the bitterness that could not escape from too soft lungs
they are far from the casual news waited for in the papers
superimposing their lives on ours in spite of the country thrown afar
by the obscure discobolus
the impatiences fallen to the bottom of the sack in the ditch
the sawmills of men the expresses bearing twisted and stupefied
heads
that is where train and thought are leading
whatever one might say death is but a tale for children
and death is only a tale for children
I await the dead man who will tell me his life is over
and until the next death of death in death the lottery throws up its red
and its black
its skyblue its pink with a serpent's tail with rhyming and chiming
and provided with all the comfort of sad mechanical love
meridian lottery what will your next death sentence be
lottery put to music and set in motion by cigarette smoke
which in the virgin space rounds snowy continents
and so many others and so many others.

But after your routed steps the dramas wage silently
they are the spirits of breaths the revenges the imprecations
so that your fingers may continue their course through the musical
tracks
so much have I spied on your shadow truth in the florilege of colours
that in the end round the neck the rainbow's muffler furls
and squeezes the darkened fulness the whip thrown from the pole
I feel in me the whole town's despair hurling itself against the wall
tears in a blaze falling from above flights terrors filths
I feel in me the despair of the whole town hurling itself against the

wall

loquacious cruelties offences diseases oaths
I feel in me the despair of the whole town hurling itself against the wall
painted horrors hells asphyxias of soot sweats
grimaces of storms contagious cataclysms avalanches graves

I wait I wait the patience of my destiny reaches its candle stump
the moth's death-struggles all that I have left
what darkness plunged in me and drew out little by little
and little by little ground the stone down and little by little strangled my
confession

I wait wrapped in my subaltern humility
help as a drunkenness coating the eye over
emerging from the bouquet of jaded beams
I wait for the divine imprudence to let its love's dice fall
on my head whose roots are growing up to meet it
the acute virtue of the number it will cast up and show me
I wait for the apocalyptic means of transport
to come and take me in its whirlwind of infinity and gold
I wait for the prophecy of order to crystallise at last in death
and so many others and so many others

(1) Jesus of air – *papier jésus*, long royal paper.

(2) Roundabout – *manège*, roundabout or riding school.



Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

Herbarium of games and calculations

Immobile in her anxious desire my woman
casts the hoop of her abundant sight
over the squares of alternative trysting-places
the windows of her lips fling wide their noise

formulate the bitter night decked with your thought
in clusters of balustrades of grapes
the confused silence filled with nettles and bushes
but the sharp blow bursts and breaks
like frozen crockery through the bell of laughter
courteous concise delicate ambition
plays with known instruments
let us glide the bow over the hoister of feelings
and on the incline of discordant brows
a caress on a tumbled bed in your amazed half-reasoning
makes the stones bloom aflower with tousled marvels

I pass my time reckoning the sunbeams
and the hairs of your words
the skeleton's tree covered with leaves and spring
swings in blue waltzes underneath the sea
the magnet of your face
encroaches on check-mate

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

On a wrinkle of the sun

Drown mornings the thirsts the muscles and the fruits
in the neat secret liquor
soot woven in gold ingots
covers night scarred by rapid themes

On the spring-cleaned horizon
a broad live drapery of running water
grates small private coefficient
of my love
in the suddenly lit doorway

Fretted by desires eclipses
hired mourner quickened throbbing
you shed your leaves like private bills of contract
the faithless water glides with the sun down your body

Through the split miracle the mask half seen
never clear never new
your walk is life making a side-rod go
and that is why your eyes roll in their why

The profit of blood across the cry of steam
a fan of flowers on the volcano
you know the veins of the grave
have led so many passionate songs
in snatches
the world

a hat with flowers
a violinist playing on a flower
the world
a ring made for a flower
a flower flowers for the bouquet of flowers flowers
a cigarette holder filled with flowers
a small locomotive with flower's eyes
a pair of gloves for flowers
in flower-skin like our flowers flowers flowers of flowers
and an egg

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

The Sailor

He is making love with a one-legged woman
the narrowness of a pondicherry ring
her belly is split open and grates grigri

From which come stockings and oblong animals
in your inside there are smoking lamps
the swamp of blue honey
cat squatting in the gold of a flemish tavern
boum boum
much sand a yellow cyclist
châteauneuf des papes
manhattan there are pails of dung before you
mbaze mbaze bazebaze mleganga garoo
you circulate quickly through me
kangaroos in the ship's innards
wait I am going to put my impressions in order
the trippers seated lace on the water's edge
stick your fingers in the orbits let the light burst grenades
the urubu is looking — you must return
into the zoo of intellects
the urubu takes root like an orange ulcer in the sky
where are you going
conjuror windmill coiffures all the pygargues
are cankered
egg-nogg

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

Solemn crime

Business business said the young apparition
a simple statement for the superintendent's notebook
who loved him
who killed him
who buried him
who drank him
who lit him
who believed him
and who loved him
so many questions notified to the U.S.A. ambassador at the
Hotel Crillon

Remarks

put your affairs in order before death
everyone goes west for death is fast
death is expensive but life is cheap
on the thin paper lips
prepare your mysteries in a pond of hints

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)
The Song of a Dadaist II

The song of a dadaist
who was neither gay nor sad
and who loved a she-cyclist
who was neither sad nor gay

But on new year's day her man
found out all and in a crisis
sent off to the vatican
their two bodies in three valises

Neither lover
nor she-cyclist
after that was gay or sad

But eat good brains and
wash your soldier
Dada
Dada
have a drink of water

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

Telescope

Bloodsucker of ink and ash screws its eye in the cake
on the ill feeling of women the storm's corset
which labours labours
the glass in the glass
and the little glass beast
for god's breakfast
that girl's eyes are conundrum compasses
rain of bird's beaks on the eyes on the cloth fields
tiller of gloomy places
an eye on a pedestal

The ranch with living distances the lips of trees the nostrils
of short fresh grasses the bandages of sore roads
what does the ranch with living distances do
it feeds the stone and the gold trains shaggy coughs
the fair-haired air nearing on capricorn
the pent air grows to flesh and bursts in a lamp a fretful snake
eyes armed with flimsy fans hide land convincingly

What do the eyes with flimsy fans do
they have wasted the summer
on the porcelain wreath
the hiatus of gaping teeth

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

Vegetable swallow

Confluence of two smiles towards
the child – a wheel of my passion
the bloody baggage of beings
incarnate in physical legends – lives

The nimble stags of storms are dismayed
the rain drops under the scissors of
the obscure hairdresser – great strokes
swimming in disparate arpeggios

In machines' sap the grass
sprouts about sharpened eyes
here the share-out of our caresses
bitten and vanished with the waves

Submits itself to the judgment of the hours
divided by the meridian of hairs
the moon chimes in our hands
the pigment of human pleasures

Poems from Tristan Tzara (tr.)

Wild water

The famished teeth of the eye
covered with soot with silk
open to rainfall
all the year round
the naked water
obscures the sweat on the night's brow
the eye is shut inside a triangle

This triangle holds another triangle
the slow-motioned eye
munches fragments of sleep in its mouth
munches with sunny teeth with heavy with sleep teeth

The noise with the boundary of light
is an angel
a lock to fasten song secure
a pipe smoked in a smoking compartment
over his flesh cries filter from the bodies
guiding the rain's patterns
the women put him on for necklaces
he the stargazer's joy
all people take him for a play of folding seas
velvet with heat and insomnia painting him

His eyes open only to mine
I alone am afraid when I look in it
thrown in a state of respectful suffering

Where the muscles of his belly and of his inflexible legs
meet in an animal gust of salty breath
I modestly part the cloudy forms and their crucible
flesh unexplored polished and gentled by fair fine waters

Elegie pentru Brâncuși

Poem from Francis Scarfe (tr.)

Adevăru-i o plenitudine-n care nici o îndoială, nici o întrebare
Nu pătrunde: noima lui, subconștient,
Așează pecetea Legii universale pe faptele oamenilor.
Transparentii gânditori sînt plini, ca niște clopote
De sticlă, de sunetul său; în neclintita lor minte
Unicității lui vistiernici îi sînt. Astfel adevărata gândire
Ca-ntr-un glob calm, dansează, a cărui rotunjime luminoasă
Arcuindu-se totuși în sinesî, îmbrățișează întregul.

Astfel veșnicul poem e matura și liniștita
Idee supersonică, logicul vis
Al Limbajului devenit frumusețe la războiul de țesut.
Grauriile tuturor triburilor și-amestecă-n el hărmălaia
Lor, într-o gramatică unică a existenței
Atrase de imnicul cor al speranțelor și destinelor umane
Pînă cînd muzica, împrăștiindu-li-se, ne umple
Făptura de-un al doilea suflet plămădit de om.

Și astfel frumusețea năpădește ochii: deplină și calmă
Ca dragostea, poezia, moartea, se revarsă în noi să vindece
Durerea tuturor zilelor de rînd, tristetea.
Si-aceste mîini mute, aceste distruse mîini pe care le laud
Eu, care se rugau și sîngerău asupra pietrei fără glas,
Modelau sensuri și dădeau aripi tîlcului ei.
Oamenii buni — deși un suspin îi poate pierde — îndură:
Acum, că Brâncuși s-a dus, gîndul său cîntă în marmoră.





NOTES

Poems

Abbreviation: *Adam*, for *Adam international review*

25-Pounder, *More poems from the Forces* 1943; page heading 'Cadet R.A.O.C.'

Absurd, *The Lyric* v.45 n.2, 1965

Adam, *Adam* 45th yr. nos.443-445, 1983

As kids fly kites, *Modern poems understood* 1965

As slowly as things live, *The Glasgow Review* v.1 n.3 August 1964: nearly half a dozen slightly longer lines, not handled satisfactorily in this journal, have now been rationalised

At the tomb of Baudelaire, Montparnasse, *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'June, 1934'; the words 'queer, and those private bones' have been hand-corrected in Francis Scarfe's hard-back limited number copy (17 only) to read 'cold, and those private bones', and 'the book of Flowers that putrefied your soul' corrected likewise to read 'the book of Flowers that outlives your soul'

Autumn evening, *Poetry London* v.2 n.9 [1943], and *New lyrical ballads* 1945: this poem appeared again in a reproduction of *Poetry London* (above) in n.12 of the series *English Little Magazines* (Frank Cass, London 1970) and labelled on the spine 'Poetry London / vol.2'. The poem carries the date and place 'Faroe Islands, 1943'

Beauty, boloney, *Poetry of the thirties* 1964: the poem carries the date p.[published]1939, information supplied by F.S. for the acknowledgements. One wonders where it had been published?

Being a man, *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979: the title is 'After a day' elsewhere

The Boat, *New Poetry* 3 1977

By request, *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'July, 1934'

Dark Rose of my heart, *Three songs set by Swann* 1951

Elegy for Brancusi, *Fitzwilliam Magazine* 69: see also *Elegie pentru Brâncuși*.

Elegy for Duke Ellington, *Fitzwilliam Magazine* 69, and *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979: [Elegy] 'for Duke Ellington' is the title in the former, but simply 'Duke Ellington' in the latter; as far as opening lines go, it is 'Duke Ellington taught us kids a lot' in the former, but 'Duke Ellington gave us youngsters all he'd got' in the latter. The former carries a Duke Ellington portrait by Graham Cox.

English rose, *Rhyme and reason* March 1944

False teeth, *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

Garden, *Adam* 41st year nos.404-6, 1978

Grenade, *More poems from the Forces* 1943; page heading 'Cadet R.A.O.C.'

Haiku for Kay's birthday, *Festschrift for Katharine Falley Bennett* 1972; a different title exists: [haiku] V 'A Birthday'

In memoriam, *Stand Magazine* Summer 1985 and *Land of three rivers* 2017: though the poem on p.58 has been cut out in the F.S. copy of the former, it has been sighted in the latter

Kitchen poem: an elegy for Tristan Tzara, *Adam* 41st year nos.404-6, 1978, and *English and American surrealist poetry* 1978: in Francis Scarfe's personal copy of the *Adam* number, the words 'There being no poem ever, nor poem ever' have been hand-corrected to read 'There being no poem ever, nor poet ever'

The Knocker-up, *Land of three rivers* 2017. It is interesting to compare this poem, here, with Kirkup's of the same title also in

that publication, and to read the editor's comments

The Magic lamp, *Poetry London* v.4 n.13, 1948: this poem appeared again in a reproduction of *Poetry London* (above) in n. 12 of the series *English Little Magazines* (Frank Cass, London 1970) and labelled on the spine 'Poetry London / vol.4'

May-day saint, in *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date '1st May, 1934'

May-day sinner, in *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'June, 1934'

Meditations: the fear, *More poems from the Forces* 1943; the section is headed 'Cadet R.A.O.C.'

A Neutral tone, *The Glasgow Review* v.1 n.3 August 1964: a few of the slightly longer lines, not handled satisfactorily in this journal, have now been rationalised

Ode to Christ, *Poetry London* v.2 n.8, 1942: this poem has been accessed via a bound-in copy of *Poetry London* (above) in a book labelled simply 'Poetry VII-VIII', and may be found also in a reproduction of the number in n.12 of the series *English Little Magazines* (Frank Cass, London 1970) and labelled on the spine 'Poetry London / vol.2'. The words 'For I stand here in the middle of way' have been corrected by hand in Francis Scarfe's copy to read 'For I stand here in the middle of the way'.

On giving a blood-transfusion, *The Lyric* v.45 n.1, 1965: this won their Reynolds lyric prize; the opening line is "Be selfless as the cruel gift" elsewhere

ONION SOUP – LATIN QUARTER POEMS, 'Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems', *Adam* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

I **Onion soup**, II **Latin Quarter**, III **Schola Cantorum**, IV **La Marelle**, V **Lovers in the Métro**, VI **Café news-flash**, VII **In**

the *Sélect*, VIII **Old poet** is the title in this series, but simply 'Nocturne' (VI) in the series of that name (elsewhere), [IX] ***Contrescarpe***, though ninth in this series, carries no sequence number, X **By *Notre-Dame***, XI ***Brasserie*** is the title in this series, but 'Pub' (I) in the series *Nocturnes* (elsewhere), XII ***Mouffetard***, XIII ***Hôpital Cochin*** is the title in this series, but 'Hospital' (XXXVIII) in the series *Nocturnes* (elsewhere), XIV ***Paris nocturne*** is the title in this series, but 'Nocturne' (XXXVI) in the series of that name (elsewhere), XV **Cat and mouse**. For information concerning XVI '*Le Peintre de dimanche*', a prose piece, see 'The Street-painter' and appendix.

The Pearl of life, *Poetry London* v.2 n.8, 1942, and *More poems from the forces* 1943: this poem has been accessed via a bound-in copy of *Poetry London* (above) in a book labelled simply 'Poetry VII-VIII', and may be found also in a reproduction of the number in n.12 of the series *English Little Magazines* (Frank Cass, London 1970) and labelled on the spine 'Poetry London / vol.2'. In *More poems from the Forces* the title is preceded by the word 'Meditations' (as is 'The Fear'), and the section is headed 'Cadet R.A.O.C.'

Poetaster, *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'November, 1933'

Portrait in a cracked mirror, *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'December, 1933'

Portrait of a Laodicean, *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'February, 1934'

Prayer, *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

Prelude, *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'March, 1934'

Recruits, *Rhyme and reason* March 1944
Scrooge, *The Lyric* v.45 n.1, 1965
Seasonal poem: on being fifty, *The Glasgow Review* v.1 n.3
 August 1964: half a dozen slightly longer lines, not handled satisfactorily in this journal, have now been rationalised
Seasons of war, *Now* n.5 1941
Snail, *Adam* 41st year nos.404-6, 1978
The Street-painter, *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979: compare with the prose piece 'Le Peintre de dimanche', XVI in the series Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems, *Adam* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979 (see Appendix I)
Testament, *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* n.2,1982
Theme, *Mixed company* August 1934: the poem carries the date 'July, 1934'; the words 'unfold spun curtains' have been hand-corrected in Francis Scarfe's hard-back limited number copy (17 only) to read 'unfold the curtains'
This book, *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979
Three sisters, *Poetry Quarterly* v.5 n.2, 1943
Tyne Dock revisited, *Land of three rivers* 2017: the editor there has a number of notes regarding variants
The Window, *The New British poets* [1949]

Poems translated or adapted

The Father's death (from Pierre Emmanuel), *Generations* 1998
Sonnet (from Alfred Jarry), *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.9, Spring 1937, *The Year's poetry* 1937, and *Straw in the hair* 1938; this piece appeared again in the reproduction of the original *Contemporary* number, in *English Little Magazines* n.4 (Frank Cass, London 1968). Francis Scarfe used the word

'adapted' to describe his work here

POEMS FROM TRISTAN TZARA, '10 poems by Tristan Tzara (translated by Francis Scarfe)', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

The Approximative man (XVIII), Herbarium of games and calculations, On a wrinkle of the sun, The Sailor, Solemn crime, The Song of a Dadaist II, Telescope, Vegetable swallow, and Wild water ('Evening', one of this series, appears in Francis Scarfe, *Forty poems and ballads* 1941 (see Appendix II). All ten appeared again as a group in the reproduction of the original *Contemporary poetry and prose* number, in *English Little Magazines* n.4 (Frank Cass, London 1968)

Elegie pentru brâncuși (tr. Ion Caraion), *Viata romaneasca* XX 12, 1967: compare this translation with Francis Scarfe's original in the *Fitzwilliam Magazine* 69. This poem for Brancusi is preceded by the general heading 'Cinci dedicatii lui Brâncuși' and followed by:

*) Nota traducătorului — Aceste cinci poeme inedite închinare marelui sculptor român fac parte dintr-o antologie de versuri și scurte proze omagiale asupra lui Brâncuși, aparținând unor personalități notorii din diferite țări ale lumii. Multe alte condeie, în afara celor cinci autori care-l cîntă aici pe Brâncuși, au înțeles să participe cu contribuții valoroase la conținutul substanțial și grav al culegerii în pregătire. Antologia va apare probabil în cursul anului viitor.

NOTES

Illustrations (not directly related to the text)

Printers' blocks from the personal collection of some 2000 Spanish plays now known as 'The Scarfe - La Trobe Collection', acquired by The University of Glasgow Library (part purchase / part donation). These pieces, originally wood but later metal, were used as decoration at the end of a play or end of a scene. Smaller ones were used to separate columns of *dramatis personae* / cast at the opening of a play, or columns of text. The pieces selected here have also been used, with many others, in volumes of *Lines of a lifetime*.

Abbr: BS - Bruno Scarfe (personal collection ref.)

BN - Biblioteca Nacional, Madrid (identification ref.)

1: Basket of flowers, the basket squat and adorned with lozenge shaped markings, one dangling flower to left and right with the remaining dozen or more standing to different degrees of attention: end block from Antonio Cardona *El Más heroico silencio*, in the collection 'Parte veinte y una de comedias nuevas, escogidas de los mejores ingenios de España' (Ioseph Fernández de Buendía, Madrid 1663). Ref.: BS 459:i & BN T-i 16 v.21.

2: Cherubs (girl & boy) and bunch of grapes: end block (cms. 7x5.5) from *Los Baños de Argel* in v.1 of the collection 'Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra comedias y entremeses' (Antonio Marín, Madrid 1749). Ref.: BS 99 & BN U 4063.

3: Squared presentation of four flowers, a bud and conjectural

elements around a wide and low standing vase, all suggestive of Giuseppe Arcimboldo: end block from *Duendes son alcahuetes, y el Espíritu Foletto* in v.2 of the collection 'Comedias de don Antonio de Zamora' (Joaquín Sánchez, Madrid 1744). Ref.: BS 265 & BN R 12591.

4: Simple wire (?) basket with 5 short flowered branches and 7 pomegranates (2 split): title page block from (author not given) *La Huérfana de Barcelona y tutelar de su patria Santa Madrona* (Oficina de Pablo Nadal, c. del Torrente de Junqueras, Barcelona [no date given, but late 18th c. / early 19th c.]). Ref.: BS 361.

5: Squared, rustic presentation of five flowers gathered in a fabric collar, stalks splayed out below: end block from Antonio Fajardo y Acevedo *Origen de N. Señora de las Angustias, y rebelión de los moriscos*, in the collection 'Parte cuarenta de comedias nuevas, de diversos autores' [also known as 'Escogidas 40'], (Iulián de Paredes, Madrid 1675). Ref.: BS 564 & BN T-i 16 v.40.

6: Squared presentation of eight flowers over a squat two-handled vase: end block from *No hay amor donde hay agravio* in the collection 'Obras líricas y cómicas, divinas y humanas ... de don Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza' (Juan de Zúñiga, Madrid 1728, 2nd. impression). Ref.: BS 534:iii & BN R 30806.

7: Flower in full bloom between two fronds, the flower accompanied on either side by a flower in bud and, on either side below, a flower spent: end block from *Filis y Demofonte*, a 'zarzuela' in vol.1 of the collection 'Obras poéticas, póstumas,

que a diversos asuntos escribió don Pedro Scotti de Agoiz' (Lorenzo Francisco Mojados, Madrid 1735). Ref.: BS 308:i & BN 2/56310.

8: Spray of three flowers: end block from *El Trato muda costumbre* [also known as *El Marido hace mujer y el ...*] in the collection 'El Fénix castellano D. Antonio de Mendoça' (Miguel Manescal, Lisboa 1690). Ref.: BS 444:i & BN 3/24620.

Oil painting

Piece (18 x 22 cms.) depicting sun, tree and grass (oak and reeds?) by Francis Scarfe, signed.

Pottery

A late 18th / early 19th c. Italian maiolica alborelli, waisted form, polichrome with a face suggestive of a Picasso; and a Cantagali printed pottery bust in the Della Robbia style. Each is one of a pair formerly belonging to Francis Scarfe.

Portraits

One of Francis Scarfe as portrayed bluntly in caricature [by W.Stobbs?] at the start of his collection *Inscapes* (1940) and a photograph, quite sensitive, of him much later – probably the 1970s.

Cover

Papegado, clave 04 (collage, key 04) 4/66 pieces designed by Bruno Scarfe from wallpapers of his 1850's home in Old Cadiz.

APPENDICES

Francis Scarfe

I '*Le Peintre de dimanche*'

(XVI in 'Onion soup – Latin Quarter poems')

II 'Evening'

(from '10 poems by Tristan Tzara', translated)

III Poems published, original and translated

(title, first line, publisher)

IV Principal publications

I 'Le Peintre de dimanche'

There are Sunday-painters who have the nerve to set up their easel in front of Notre-Dame and try to paint something like it. If you watch one closely you will see that he spends more time and energy on looking at his own picture and working on it, than he spends on looking at Notre-Dame itself. Of course, the cathedral was there before he arrived and before he was born, but although (in theory - or in practice?) it is always the same, its appearance is changing all the time. Indeed, its appearance is changing more rapidly than his canvas. So the painter can never catch up with the cathedral: he can only try to catch up with his idea of it, or with his idea of his canvas. Either he or Notre-Dame might as well not be there. You can paint an idea of Notre-Dame in your own kitchen.

So, when you are writing a poem, you will tend to spend more time on the poem as an object, than on the idea. The idea will gradually change or be lost altogether. Or if you do grasp the idea and insist on it, you spoil the poem. Ideas are two a penny. Everybody knows what an idea is, but nobody knows what a poem is. You cannot even throw your poem away: all you throw away is a bit of paper with your handwriting on it.

If you try to make a portrait of a cat, or write a poem about a cat, you are making an object which can never be a cat, so realism is an unreality. You want your work to have a cat in it, but all you can do is to suggest some catlike quality. A cat is a cat and a poem is a poem, and indeed everything is alien to poetry, except language.

A poem is, or tries to be, a linguistic object. If it is properly a poem (with only *correct mistakes* in it), then it is a meaningful object. A cat is a meaningful object also, but not in the same way. Anyway, it is always trying to run out of the poem, it stares at you with resentful yellow eyes and never looks the same, just like Notre-Dame. And, of course, a poem never looks twice the same either, just like the painter's canvas.

Well, whether you paint a cat or write about one, you have to do so in such a way that a man who has never seen a cat will get a fair idea of what it is like. This does not mean that you have to take any notice of critics: a critic cannot criticise a poem, he can only criticise his own idea of the poem, which is not necessarily yours. Giving "a fair idea" of what things are like is such impossible work that most poems fail to be poems, for the notion poem-as-object and the notion idea/object conflict with each other. The poem tries to be static in a non-static universe. And you cannot write the poem, anyway, but only an approximation to it, for the real poem is an event in the mind, and cannot be written down in its original (abstract?) form. Events in the mind are real events, and one event cannot be another event. And a cat is not an event in the mind. And so on.

I have had quite enough of this and wish I had not seen the Sunday-painter or Notre-Dame or a cat. In any case I prefer dogs. But seize the essence. Do not let the cat walk out of your poem. MAKE IT PURR.

Such is my *art poétique*, or some of it; but of course I am only a Sunday-poet.

II 'Evening'

THE fishermen return with the stars of the waters,
they break bread with the poor,
slip necklets on blind men's necks,
emperors stroll in gardens at this hour which
resembles the bitterness of engravings.

Servants are washing hunting dogs,
the light puts on its gloves,
therefore window close thyself,
and light step from the bedroom as kernel from apricot,
as priest from church.

Kind god soften the wool for doleful lovers,
paint the small birds with ink and renew the face
of the moon's man.

Let us go to catch beetles
to shut them in a box,
let us go to the brook
to make earthen jars,
let us go and kiss each other
beside the fountain,
let us go to the public park
till the cock crows
and the whole town is up in arms.

Or to the loft,
where the hay stings where you can hear cows lowing
till they recall their little ones,
let us go.

III Poems published, original and translated, given by title, first line and publisher(s)

Francis Scarfe's collections	INSCAPES (1940)	<u>A</u>
	FORTY POEMS AND BALLADS (1941)	<u>B</u>
	UNDERWORLDS (1950)	<u>C</u>
	GROUNDS FOR CONCEIT (1984)	<u>D</u>

(note: many of the poems in A, B, C and D have also appeared elsewhere at an earlier and / or later date)

1941 (On the entry of Russia into the war) 'Millions move, millions fall', B
25-POUNDER 'O little dragon', *More poems from the Forces* 1943

A.E.HOUSMAN 'Lilies drop into the grave', A

ABSURD, THE 'As slowly as things live I like to count', *The Lyric* v.45 n.2,
1965

ADAM 'From the land of mountains', *Adam international review* 45th yr.
nos.443-445, 1983

ADDRESS TO A POET for Kenneth Allott, 'Deep in the past is the listening
to the lark', A

AFTERNOON WALK 'Today sun falls in showers and the rain brighter', B

ANOTHER LEDA 'Though it breaks her heart, my heart' C

ANYTHING BUT BLACK "'Anything but black", she said', D

APPROXIMATIVE MAN XVIII, THE (from Tristan Tzara) 'The prints of
your invisible steps on the sea', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10,
Autumn 1937

AS KIDS FLY KITES 'As kids fly kites, gladly gaudying', *Modern poems
understood* 1965

AS SLOWLY AS THINGS LIVE 'As slowly as things live I like to count',
The Glasgow Review v.I n.3, August 1964

AT HAZLITT'S GRAVE 'After the end things still went wrong', *Outposts
Poetry Quarterly* 40th anniversary 1983; D

AT THE TOMB OF BAUDELAIRE, *MONT-PARNASSE* [June 1934] 'You
have rough private slabs to keep you down', *Mixed company* 1934

ATOMIC MAN 'An anguish breeds within the bone', C
 AUTOBIOGRAPHER, THE 'Writing his memoirs honestly enough', D
 AUTUMN EVENING 'Evenings like laden fruit trees hang immanent',
Poetry London v.2 n.9 [1943]; *New lyrical ballads* 1945

BALLAD OF THE SAFE AREA 'A little reading and a little loving', B; *The
 Terrible rain* 1966

BARCAROLLE 'My love, my love, fair was the river', A; *An Anthology of
 war poetry* 1942

BEAUTY, BOLONEY 'Cleopatra in her bath', *Poetry of the thirties* 1964

BEING A MAN (AFTER A DAY) 'After a day of poetry I came (went)
 back', *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

BILLET-DOUX 'Looking through the blue key-hole of your eye',
Contemporary poetry and prose nos.4/5 Aug.-Sept. 1936, reproduced here
 in *English Little Magazines* n.4 1968; *The Year's poetry* 1937; *Straw in the
 hair* 1938; A

BOAT, THE 'They used to believe all men are Everyman', *New Poetry* 3
 1977

BRASSERIE (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems XI) 'After midnight', *Adam
 international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

BREAKING ON THE WHEEL, THE 'Broken to fragments, small
 fragments, utterly broken', C

BRIXTON BLUES 'In dark alleys of defeat', D

BY NOTRE-DAME (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems X) 'The man with
 one finger', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

BY REQUEST [July 1934] 'No solace. We who squandered hours of guile',
Mixed company 1934

CAFÉ NEWS-FLASH (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems VI) 'A pigeon
 reels in drunk', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

CALL-UP 'The trees bend to the railings. The ordinary birds sing', A

CANDLE IN A BARRACK- ROOM 'A Quivering candle, guitar of
 solitude', C

CANTERBURY IN WINTER 'Winter wind through city trees and towers',
C

CAT AND MOUSE (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems XV) 'Were it not for birds and mice', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

CATS 'Those who love cats which do not even purr', *The New British poets* [1949]; C; *The Oxford book of verse for juniors* 1957; *Poetry and life* 1961; *A Cat-hater's handbook or the ailurophobe's delight* 1963

CHILD ASLEEP, A 'In the inner stillness', C

CHRISTMAS LETTER, A 'Off-days and on-days, much alike, and now', D

CHRISTMAS NIGHTSCAPE, A 'In the hungry dusk', D

CIDER-FAIR, THE 'Why is it, dreaming back, I often see', D

CIGARETTE, THE 'Under the bridge they drink to sleep', D

CLIMBERS, THE 'About hillness we can do little', D

CLOCK, THE 'Far away is one who now is sleeping', *The New British poets* [1949]; C

CONSCRIPT for Jean Poisson, 'Delicate ingenuous his quivering blue eye', A; *Horizon* v.I. n.5, 1940

CONTRESCARPE (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems) 'While the young play', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

DARK ROSE OF MY HEART 'Hour by hour flow my tears in the darkness', *Three songs set by Swann* 1951

DEFENCE OF GOTHIC 'The imprisoned mistress of the foreign ruin', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.9, Spring 1937; *The Year's poetry* 1937; A

DESDICHADO, EL (from Nerval) 'I am the dark, the widowed, the unconsoled', A

DREAMSCAPE [TO HIS MISTRESS, SLEEPING] 'From all the ends of the earth', C

DUST 'Quiet, more quiet than all the praying words', C

EASTER 'All things so gradually', *Twentieth century verse* n.10, May 1938; A

ELEGIE PENTRU BRÂNCUȘI (from Francis Scarfe) 'Adevăru-i o plenitudine-n care nici o îndoială, nici o întrebare', *Viața românească* year XX n.12, December 1967

ELEGY 'Quiet, my darling whisperer', A

ELEGY FOR BRANCUSI 'Truth is a wholeness where no doubt or question', *Fitzwilliam Magazine* 69

ELEGY FOR DUKE ELLINGTON 'Duke Ellington taught us kids a lot', *Fitzwilliam Magazine* 69; *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

ELEGY FOR M.J.TAMBIMUTTU, AN 'In the fading of my days', D

EMBLEMS FOR BEETHOVEN'S 'L'APPASSIONATA (ANDANTE) 'Across the globe the impartial hands of time', C

ENCOUNTERS 'Reminiscences about Great Men are', D

ENDINGS 'Soon I must settle - whether to rot, or burn?', D

ENGLISH ROSE 'Gardens of summer ripeness, all our hearts', *Rhyme and reason* March 1944

EPILOGUE [WHY?] 'Why should I write what most I care', C

EVENING (from Tristan Tzara) 'The fishermen return with the stars of the waters', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937; B

FALSE TEETH 'I have discovered that all I have to do', *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

FAMILY REUNION, A 'He will come striding warily', D

FATHER'S DEATH, THE (from Pierre Emmanuel) 'Since your loud voice has ebbed into', *Generations* 1998

FIRST OF SPRING 'Today for cheapjack, player of mandolines', A

FIT FOR A CHILD 'Burns Europe, blaze the bones where nerves of men', B

FOLKESTONE 'Sun beats in vain the iron air', C

FOR MY SON 'Tall town wakes with the writhing', A

FOR PAUL ÉLUARD 'Fly easily, fly low', *The Year's poetry* 1938; A

FOR SPAIN, 1937 'Love shaped those hearts to flaming bulbs of sun', A

FROST 'Two blue hands cupped among the snow', B

FULL MOON 'Night on pillows', B

GARDEN 'A garden of thorns', *Adam international review* 41st year nos. 404-6, 1978

GAUDIER BRZESKA'S *DANCER* 'Flesh finds at last attunement of', C

GENTLY NOW IN MY GARDEN for Tambimuttu 'Gently now in my garden the flowers are waving', B; *Poetry London* v.1 n.6, 1941

GERIATRICS, THE 'Old men live and die too fast', D

GIRL'S HANDS, A 'In the doll's world', C

GLASGOW AFTERNOON 'The skin of the eye in battered faces', C
GLASGOW BELONGS TO ME 'I am blown in all directions by the north-
east breath of words', C
GLASGOW NIGHT 'In the grey gloom of Glasgow', C
GOLDENHAIR 'I loved her so lightly', C
GRENADE 'As a full fruit, ripe', *More poems from the Forces* 1943
GROTTO, THE 'The sea still plunges where as naked boys', *The New
British poets* [1949]; C; *Land of three rivers* 2017

HAIKU FOR KAY'S BIRTHDAY 'Time dissolves mortals', *Festschrift for
Katharine Falley Bennett* 1972
HANDS OF MARY JANE, THE (from Rimbaud) 'Mary Jane has hefty
hands', B
HARVEST 'See how time's knives shear down the tall', C
HERBARIUM OF GAMES AND CALCULATIONS (from Tristan Tzara)
'Immobile in her anxious desire my woman', *Contemporary poetry and
prose* n.10, Autumn 1937
HIGH TABLE "'How very sad the Provost's gone'", D
HOLIDAY 'The lay cortege of', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10,
Autumn 1937; A
HOMAGE TO MALLARMÉ 'Reckless of life and death, in both he sought',
B
HOMAGE TO SIBELIUS 'It seems this evening fretted with leafy clouds',
C
HÔPITAL COCHIN (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems XIII) 'I said to
myself, I must be ill', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

ICARUS lines for an airman, 'Step clean and straight from your shade as the
bombs are dropping', B
IMAGE ON THE AIR, AN 'Between my eye and you, the air', C
IN MEMORIAM 'Impossible to go back any more', *Stand Magazine*
Summer 1985; *Land of three rivers* 2017
IN MEMORY OF ROGER ROUGHTON 'For such a loss my rage and
anguish weep', B
IN THE *SÉLECT* (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems VII) 'I came to the

Sélect, *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

INVOCATION TO SLEEP 'May please this night', C

ISLAND, THE 'Here the black houses cling like the poor to the land', B

KITCHEN POEM: AN ELEGY FOR TRISTAN TZARA 'In the hungry kitchen', *Adam international review* 41st year nos.404-6, 1978; *English and American surrealist poetry* 1978

KNOCKER-UP, THE 'Tyne Dock stirs as the knocker-up', *Land of three rivers* 2017

LAND OF CORNERS, THE 'And again into sleep', C

LATIN QUARTER (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems II) 'In the *Rue Saint-Jacques*', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

LEST WE REMEMBER 'As you sweep leaves into hedgehog hills', D

LINES TO A GERMAN 'Rind of dark sloughs to ground', B

LINES WRITTEN IN AN AIR-RAID 'Look, friend, how the hostile day', B;
Poetry London v.1 n.6, 1941

LOCH LOMOND 'An hour of water to the model village', A

LONER, THE 'In drunken hours when young', D

LONG FAREWELL, A "'Writing his death" my old friend far away', D

LOST MESSAGE, THE 'Something is reaching through the night', C

LOVERS IN THE *MÉTRO* (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems V) 'The acrobats of love', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

LULLABY 'Now the day of care is over', B

MAGIC LAMP, THE 'Alas, Aladdin, your lamp of gold', *Poetry London* v.4 n.13, 1948

MARCH WIND 'The wind winding over the trees playing', B

MARELLE, LA (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems IV) 'Now they are playing hopscotch', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

MAY DAY 'Clouds that survived from winter's broken sky', B

MAY-DAY SAINT [1st May 1934] 'There is still time to sentimentalise',
Mixed company 1934

MAY-DAY SINNER [June 1934] 'Clouds that polluted Winter's glossary',
Mixed company 1934

MEDITATIONS: THE FEAR 'Where is the fear, where is the anguish now?', *More poems from the Forces* 1943
 MEETING IN A DREAM 'Then has she wings', C
 MERRY WINDOW, THE 'The alabaster legs of the lonely woman', *Contemporary poetry and prose* nos.4/5 Aug.-Sept. 1936, reproduced here in *English Little Magazines* n.4 1968; A; *English and American surrealist poetry* 1978
 METAMORPHOSES 'Into your crucible my minutes go', C
 MIDNIGHT 'Who kindled dark desire', C
 MINERS 'Whirring down shafts in cages to pith of darkness', B; *Land of three rivers* 2017
 MINOTAUR, THE 'What of the things that are destined to be destroyed?', C
 MIRAGES OF SUMMER 'What is it drives so turbulent through his veins', C
 MORBID? "“But why so morbid?” you will say', D
 MOUFFETARD (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems XII) 'The sad can be happy', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979
 MR. SOLOMON'S IDYLL [contents have 'MISTER'] 'So happy to be with you', A
 MYRTHO (from Nerval) 'I think of you, Myrtho, divine enchantress', A

NATURAL HISTORY 'At home in the maternal earth', C
 NEUTRAL TONE, A 'Forgive me if your poem was not mine', *The Glasgow Review* v.I n.3, August 1964
 NEW YEAR, 1940 'So long as morning shines and the trees' hands', A
 NIGHT FISHING 'Lightbuoys bob red on the sea', B; C; *Land of three rivers* 2017
 NIGHT THOUGHTS [NOCTURNE IV] 'After the day's work', D
 NIGHTMARE, A 'A voice upon the midnight air', C
 NO MORNING 'No morning, no morning', *Programme* n.20, November 17 1936; A
 NO-GO STREET 'As you step down No-Go Street', D
 NOW THE BLUE HILLS for George Barker, 'Now the blue hills of the Atlantic soar between', B

OAK AND DOG (from Raymond Queneau) 'Oak and dog are my two names', *New Verse* n.30, Summer 1938; *The Year's poetry 1938*; A

ODE IN HONOUR 'Evening is part of the jigsaw truth of her', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.7, November 1936; A; *English and American surrealist poetry* 1978

ODE TO CHRIST 'Who stood beside my bed in the hours of childhood', *Poetry London* v.2 n.8, 1942

EDIPUS 'In the hot theft of loving, thrusting death', B

OLD MAN 'You are not old, she says, they say', D

OLD POET (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems VIII) 'All youngness gone', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

OLD SCHOLAR 'A smelly old body no-one touches', D

ON A DAY IN SUMMER 'On a day in summer is best for meditation', A

ON A WRINKLE OF THE SUN (from Tristan Tzara) 'Drown mornings the thirsts the muscles and the fruits', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

ON GIVING A BLOOD-TRANSFUSION 'Look inwards, as the cruel gift', *The Lyric* v.45 n.1, 1965

ON READING NIETZSCHE 'The flame, the fountain, and the fruit', B

ONION SOUP (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems I) 'The Texas man and woman came in', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

OPAQUE 'Men and women, all opaque', D

OTHERNESS 'White shadows move across the sky', C

PALMS for W.Stobbs, 'Down the deltas of the hand', *Twentieth century verse* n.11, July 1938; A

PARACHUTISTS 'Plummets from sky sway the beautiful dancers', B; *The Sixth anthology* 1959

PARENTS AND CHILDREN 'Oh how they always headlong go, children', D

PARIS NOCTURNE (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems XIV) 'Silence broods, hatches', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

PARTINGS 'When they leave home some fix it quietly', D; *Outposts Poetry Quarterly* n.141, Summer 1984

PATHS 'Which way, every way, so many ways to turn', C

PEARL OF LIFE, THE 'Flesh, wherein meet the sea, the sky, the earth',
Poetry London v.2 n.8 1942; *More poems from the Forces* 1943

PERSON 'As the sun fell sheer on the June afternoon and the wind stirred in
the laurels', B

PETER PAN'S OTHER HALF 'Yonder, yonder was a place', *New Verse* v.1
n.1, 1939; A

PICASSO'S *FEMME ENDORMIE* 'Upon her thighs an open book', C

POEM 'If all death on my head should fall', A

POEM (from Mallarmé) 'Her pure nails dedicating high their onyx', A

POEM (from Mallarmé) 'Victoriously the fine suicide is fled', A

POETASTER [November 1933] 'In deepest caverns of society', *Mixed
company* 1934

PORTRAIT IN A CRACKED MIRROR [December 1933] 'I do not seek
with oblique flatteries', *Mixed company* 1934

PORTRAIT OF A LAODICEAN [February 1934] 'If you will curtsy to
sincerity', *Mixed company* 1934

PRAYER 'You flop down on your knees and the prayer', *Poetry London /
Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

PRECIOUS BEING, BEING PRECIOUS seven variations on a theme, for
J.C. [J.P.Collas] 'Spirally a silence', A

PRELUDE [March 1934] 'Brightness foretells the flame; there is promise',
Mixed company 1934

PROGRESSION 'See that Satan pollarding a tree', *Twentieth century verse*
n.10, May 1938; *The Year's poetry* 1938; A; *The Little book of modern
verse* 1941; *The New British poets* [1949]; *Poetry of the thirties* 1964

PROMETHEUS BOUND 'Prometheus, who from earth's soil and stone', B

PROSE FOR *DES ESSEINTES* (from Mallarmé) 'Hyperbole! from my
memory', A

PROTEST 'Round the room swings when through the cheval-glass', A

READING A WOMAN'S POEMS for A.R. [Anne Ridler] 'Reading a
woman's poems I am moved', B

RECRUITS 'The days were long and the nights were lonely', *Rhyme and
reason* March 1944

SAILOR, THE (from Tristan Tzara) 'He is making love with a one-legged woman', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

SAINT JOAN'S MARTYRDOM 'Mild air of France upon her brow', C

SCHOLA CANTORUM (Onion soup - Latin Quarter poems III) 'Three Indochinese girls go by', *Adam international review* 41st yr. nos.413-415, 1979

SCROOGE 'Concrete the winter hard as Easter's nails', *The Lyric* v.45 n.1, 1965

SEA 'Let them, the prophets, seek the mountain', B

SEASONAL POEM: ON BEING FIFTY 'So many springs and summers, too many springs', *The Glasgow Review* v.I n.3, August 1964

SEASONS OF WAR 'O world in systematic ruin', *Now* n.5 1941

SECRET LIFE, A 'You close your eyes and wonder', D

SELF-PORTRAIT 'Cross-questioning square', A

SEPTEMBER ROSE 'In the red fist of a rose', C

SERENADE - I 'Say where is that entire', B

SERENADE - II 'Because your hair moved', B

SERENADE for J.R. 'If you give me your hand', A

SERIOUS PROBLEM 'If I could turn my mind to serious things', D

SEX-SHOP 'I've never been inside a sex-shop but', D

SHADOW OF THE FIRE, THE 'My poem is a ladder down which I go to the dark places', C

SHIPS 'Unburied on shores', B

SLOWTH 'Slowness is my dynamo, not vulgar sloth', D

SMITHEREENS 1937-1940, I-VII, for David Gascoyne, 'Today's described by summer smell of air', A

SNAIL (*Nocturnes*) 'Groping the dark', *Adam international review* 41st year nos.404-6, 1978

SNOW STATUE 'The snows of absence chill the hands', C

SO SMILE 'Let the night pour quicksilver through your veins', A

SOLEMN CRIME (from Tristan Tzara) 'Business business said the young apparition', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

SONG OF A DADAIST (II), THE (from Tristan Tzara) 'The song of a dadaist', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

SONNET (from A.Jarry) 'Across the heath, the monolith's pubic arch', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.9, Spring 1937; *The Year's poetry 1937*;

Straw in the hair 1938

STREET-PAINTER, THE 'There are always men who have the', *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

SUMMER POEM 'Here is full summer brimming over', B

SUMMER SONG 'The white hands of the air unfold', C

SUMMER, 1940 'Hours like cinders fall away', A

SUNDAY 'All Englishmen from Thames to Tyne', B

SUNDAY MORNING IN GLASGOW 'In the half waking of a dirty morning', C

SUPER-REAL '*Dans mon boudoir je boude en regardant par les fenêtres*', C

SWALLOWS 'Today the swallows came to last year's nest', D

TELESCOPE (from Tristan Tzara) 'Bloodsucker of ink and ash screws its eye in the cake', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

TESTAMENT 'Let the dead have the books I died my life in', *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* n.2, 1982

THEME [July 1934] 'What symbol guarantees delight', *Mixed company* 1934

THIS BOOK 'I shall give you this book, my love', *Poetry London / Apple Magazine* v.1 n.1, 1979

THREE SISTERS 'No, not so easily', *Poetry Quarterly* v.5 n.2, 1943

TO BE ANONYMOUS 'At last to be anonymous, to care no more', C

TOMB OF BAUDELAIRE, THE (from Mallarmé) 'The sunken temple vomits from its drain's', B

TRAWLERS 'Red sail on tan sail and black sail by white', B; *Poetry London* v.1 n.6, 1941; *The Oxford book of verse for juniors* 1957; *Land of three rivers* 2017

TWO CHURCHES 'The church stands in the field by the manor-house', C

TYNE DOCK 'The summer season at Tyne Dock', *The New British poets* [1949]; C; *Contemporary verse* 1950; *Modern poems understood* 1965; *Poetry of the forties* 1968; *Land of three rivers* 2017

TYNE DOCK REVISITED 'The spit-rings under the black arch', *Land of three rivers* 2017

UNPLEASANT POEM 'Pain in the bone', A

VEGETABLE SWALLOW (from Tristan Tzara) 'Confluence of two smiles towards', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

VOICES 'Fly upon the summer shine', C

WANDERER, THE 'Friend, the night is dark as sin', B

WAR-AIMS 'Tanks are rolling up the road', B

WHITE AND THE RED, THE 'Fettled a flowerbed, no wrong weed in sight', D

WIDOW 'Wishing, washing', B

WILD WATER (from Tristan Tzara) 'The famished teeth of the eye', *Contemporary poetry and prose* n.10, Autumn 1937

WINDOW, THE 'In after years, when you look back upon', *The New British poets*

[1949] WINTER 'White lies the frugal year', A

WOMAN AND GARDEN "'Mowing and edging are all very well'", D

WORKS OF LOVE 'Forsaking works of mind', C

YES-MAN 'Softly he comes', B

ZERO HOUR a ballad, 'The time of reckoning has come', B

IV Publications by Francis Scarfe

Literary criticism Francis Scarfe *André Chénier, his life and work 1762-1794* (Oxford University Press, Oxford 1965); Francis Scarfe *The Art of Paul Valéry, a study in dramatic monologue* (William Heinemann, Melbourne-London-Toronto 1954); Francis Scarfe *Auden and After, the liberation of poetry 1930-1941* (George Routledge, London 1942); Francis Scarfe *W.H.Auden 'Contemporary British Poets'* (The Lyrebird Press / Literary Editions: J.B.Hanson, Monaco 1949); Francis Scarfe "La Vie et l'oeuvre de Thomas Stearns Eliot" (introduction on the occasion when T.S.E. received the Nobel Prize [1948]).

Edition Francis Scarfe (ed.) *André Chénier Poems* (Basil Blackwell, Oxford 1961). **Editions with translations** Charles Baudelaire // Francis Scarfe (ed., tr.) *Baudelaire* (Penguin Books, Harmondsworth 1961); Charles Baudelaire // Francis Scarfe (ed., tr.) *The Complete verse* v.I (Anvil Press Poetry, London 1986); Charles Baudelaire // Francis Scarfe (ed., tr.) *The Poems in prose with La Fanfarlo* v.II (Anvil Press Poetry, London 1989); F.Scarfe *La Fontaine 100 Fables*, bilingual edition with translations by Francis Scarfe (Publications of the British Institute in Paris, Paris 1985).

Novels Francis Scarfe *Promises* (William Heinemann, Melbourne-London-Toronto 1950); Francis Scarfe *Single blessedness* (William Heinemann, Melbourne-London-Toronto 1951); Francis Scarfe *Unfinished woman* (Routledge & Kegan Paul, London 1954), translated by Yves Rivière under the title *Une Ebauche de Femme* (Plon, Paris 1961).

Poetry Francis Scarfe *Forty poems and ballads* (The Fortune Press, London [1941]); Francis Scarfe *Grounds for conceit* (Outposts Publications, Walton-on-Thames 1984);

Francis Scarfe *Inscapes* (The Fortune Press, London 1940);
Francis Scarfe *Underworlds* (William Heinemann, Melbourne-
London-Toronto 1950). **Translations** Louis Aragon and Jean
Cocteau // Francis Scarfe (tr.) *Conversations on the Dresden
Gallery* (Holmes & Meier // Edition Leipzig, New York &
London 1982); Germain Bazin // Francis Scarfe (tr.) *A Concise
History of Art* (Thames & Hudson, London 1958); Salvador Dalí
// Francis Scarpe [*sic* for 'Scarfe'] (tr.) *Metamorphosis of
Narcissus* (Julien Levy Gallery, New York 1937); Frank Elgar
and Robert Maillard // Francis Scarfe (tr.) *Picasso*, a study of his
work by Frank Elgar; a biographical study by Robert Maillard
(Thames & Hudson, London 1956); Jean and Simonne
Lacouture // Francis Scarfe (tr.) *Egypt in transition* (Methuen,
London 1958); Michel Seuphor // Lionel Izod, John Montague
& Francis Scarfe (trs.) *A Dictionary of abstract painting*,
preceded by a history of abstract painting (Methuen, London
1958); Paul Valéry // Francis Scarfe (tr.) *Reflections on the
world today* (Pantheon, New York 1948).



