

**Classic Poetry Series**

**A.S.J. Tessimond**

**- poems -**

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## **Any Man Speaks**

I, after difficult entry through my mother's blood  
And stumbling childhood (hitting my head against the world);  
I, intricate, easily unshipped, untracked, unaligned;  
Cut off in my communications; stammering; speaking  
A dialect shared by you, but not you and you;  
I, strangely undeft, bereft; I searching always  
For my lost rib (clothed in laughter yet understanding)  
To come round the corner of Wardour Street into the Square  
Or to signal across the Park and share my bed;  
I, focus in night for star-sent beams of light,  
I, fulcrum of levers whose end I cannot see ...  
Have this one deftness - that I admit undeftness:  
Know that the stars are far, the levers long:  
Can understand my unstrength.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Attack On The Ad-Man

This trumpeter of nothingness, employed  
To keep our reason dull and null and void.  
This man of wind and froth and flux will sell  
The wares of any who reward him well.  
Praising whatever he is paid to praise,  
He hunts for ever-newer, smarter ways  
To make the gilt seen gold; the shoddy, silk;  
To cheat us legally; to bluff and bilk  
By methods which no jury can prevent  
Because the law's not broken, only bent.

This mind for hire, this mental prostitute  
Can tell the half-lie hardest to refute;  
Knows how to hide an inconvenient fact  
And when to leave a doubtful claim unbacked;  
Manipulates the truth but not too much,  
And if his patter needs the Human Touch,  
Skillfully artless, artlessly naive,  
Wears his convenient heart upon his sleeve.

He uses words that once were strong and fine,  
Primal as sun and moon and bread and wine,  
True, honourable, honoured, clear and keen,  
And leaves them shabby, worn, diminished, mean.  
He takes ideas and trains them to engage  
In the long little wars big combines wage...  
He keeps his logic loose, his feelings flimsy;  
Turns eloquence to cant and wit to whimsy;  
Trims language till it fits his clients, pattern  
And style's a glossy tart or limping slattern.

He studies our defences, finds the cracks  
And where the wall is weak or worn, attacks.  
He finds the fear that's deep, the wound that's tender,  
And mastered, outmanouevered, we surrender.  
We who have tried to choose accept his choice  
And tired succumb to his untiring voice.  
The dripping tap makes even granite soften  
We trust the brand-name we have heard so often  
And join the queue of sheep that flock to buy;  
We fools who know our folly, you and I.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Bells, Pool And Sleep**

Bells overbrim with sound  
And spread from cupolas  
Out through the shaking air  
Endless unbreaking circles  
Cool and clear as water.

A stone dropped in the water  
Opens the lips of the pool  
And starts the unovertaking  
Rings, till the pool is full  
Of waves as the air of bells.

The deep-sea bell of sleep  
Under the pool of the mind  
Flowers in concentric circles  
Of annihilation till  
Both sight and sound die out,  
Both pool and bells are quelled.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Betrayal**

If a man says half himself in the light, adroit  
Way a tune shakes into equilibrium,  
Or approximates to a note that never comes:

Says half himself in the way two pencil-lines  
Flow to each other and softly separate,  
In the resolute way plane lifts and leaps from plane:

Who knows what intimacies our eyes may shout,  
What evident secrets daily foreheads flaunt,  
What panes of glass conceal our beating hearts?

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Birch Tree**

The birch tree in winter  
Leaning over the secret pool  
Is Narcissus in love  
With the slight white branches,  
The slim trunk,  
In the dark glass;  
But,  
Spring coming on,  
Is afraid,  
And scarfs the white limbs  
In green.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Black On Black**

Serrations of chimneys  
Stone-black perforate  
Velvet-black dark.  
A tree coils in core of darkness.  
My swinging  
Hands  
Incise the night.  
A man slips into a doorway,  
Black hole in blackness, and drowns there.  
A second man passing traces  
The diagram of his steps  
On invisible pavement. Rain  
Draws black parallel threads  
Through the hollow of air.

Submitted by Steohen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Cats

Cats no less liquid than their shadows  
Offer no angles to the wind.  
They slip, diminished, neat through loopholes  
Less than themselves; will not be pinned

To rules or routes for journeys; counter  
Attack with non-resistance; twist  
Enticing through the curving fingers  
And leave an angered empty fist.

They wait obsequious as darkness  
Quick to retire, quick to return;  
Admit no aim or ethics; flatter  
With reservations; will not learn

To answer to their names; are seldom  
Truly owned till shot or skinned.  
Cats no less liquid than their shadows  
Offer no angles to the wind.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Cats 1**

To walk as you walk, green eye, smiler, not  
Even ostentatiously alone but simply  
Alone ... arching the back in courteous discourtesy,  
Gathering the body as a dancer before an unworthy  
Audience, treading earth scantily - a task to be done  
And done with, girt (curt introvert) for private  
Precise avoidance of the undesired,  
Pride-attired, generalissimo  
Knife-eyed, bisector of moonshine with indigo  
Shadow, scorner of earth-floor, flaunter of  
Steel-hard sickle curve against the sky ... !

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Chaplin

The sun, a heavy spider, spins in the thirsty sky.  
The wind hides under cactus leaves, in doorway corners. Only the wry

Small shadow accompanies Hamlet-Petrouchka's march - the slight  
Wry sniggering shadow in front of the morning, turning at noon, behind towards night.

The plumed cavalcade has passed to tomorrow, is lost again;  
But the wisecrack-mask, the quick-flick-fanfare of the cane remain.

Diminuendo of footsteps even is done:  
Only remain, Don Quixote, hat, cane, smile and sun.

Goliaths fall to our sling, but craftier fates than these  
Lie ambushed - malice of open manholes, strings in the dark and falling trees.

God kicks our backsides, scatters peel on the smoothest stair;  
And towering centaurs steal the tulip lips, the aureoled hair,

While we, craned from the gallery, throw our cardboard flowers  
And our feet jerk to tunes not played for ours.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Cinema Screen**

Light's patterns freeze:  
Frost on our faces.  
Light's pollen sifts  
Through the lids of our eyes ...

Light sinks and rusts  
In water; is broken  
By glass ... rests  
On deserted dust.

Light lies like torn  
Paper in corners:  
A rock-pool's pledge  
Of the sea's return.

Light, wrenched at the edges  
By wind, looks down  
At itself in wrinkled  
Mirrors from bridges.

Light thinly unweaves  
Itself through darkness  
Like foam's unknotting  
Strings in waves ...

Now light is again  
Accumulated  
Swords against us ...  
Now it is gone.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Cocoon For A Skeleton**

Clothes: to compose  
The furtive, lone  
Pillar of bone  
To some repose.

To let hands shirk  
Utterance behind  
A pocket's blind  
Deceptive smirk.

To mask, belie  
The undue haste  
Of breast for breast  
Or thigh for thigh.

To screen, conserve  
The pose, when death  
Half strips the sheath  
And leaves the nerve.

To edit, glose  
Lyric desire  
And slake its fire  
In polished prose.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Day Dream**

One day people will touch and talk perhaps  
easily,  
And loving be natural as breathing and warm as  
sunlight,  
And people will untie themselves, as string is unknotted,  
Unfold and yawn and stretch and spread their fingers,  
Unfurl, uncurl like seaweed returned to the sea,  
And work will be simple and swift  
as a seagull flying,  
And play will be casual and quiet  
as a seagull settling,  
And the clocks will stop, and no one will wonder  
or care or notice,  
And people will smile without reason,  
Even in winter, even in the rain.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Discovery

When you are slightly drunk  
Things are so close, so friendly.  
The road asks to be walked upon,  
The road rewards you for walking  
With firm upward contact answering your downward contact  
Like the pressure of a hand in yours.  
You think - this studious balancing  
Of right leg while left leg advances, of left while right,  
How splendid  
Like somebody-or-other-on-a-peak-in-Darien!  
How cleverly that seat shapes the body of the girl who sits there.  
How well, how skilfully that man there walks towards you,  
Arms hanging, swinging, waiting.  
You move the muscles of your cheeks,  
How cunningly a smile responds.  
And now you are actually speaking  
Round sounding words  
Magnificent  
As that lady's hat!

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Don Juan**

Under the lips and limbs, the embraces, faces,  
Under the sharp circumference, the brightness,  
Under the fence of shadows,  
Is something I am seeking;  
Under the faces a face,  
Under the new an old or a not-yet-come-to;  
Under the voices a peace.

Am I a darkness all your flames must light?  
A mirror all your eyes must look into -  
That dares not yet reflect the neutral sky,  
The empty eye of the sky?

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Earthfast**

Architects plant their imagination, weld their poems on rock,  
Clamp them to the skidding rim of the world and anchor them down to its core;  
Leave more than the painter's or poet's snail-bright trail on a friable leaf;  
Can build their chrysalis round them - stand in their sculpture's belly.

They see through stone, they cage and partition air, they cross-rig space  
With footholds, planks for a dance; yet their maze, their flying trapeze  
Is pinned to the centre. They write their euclidean music standing  
With a hand on a cornice of cloud, themselves set fast, earth-square.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Empty Room**

The clock disserts on punctuation, syntax.  
The clock's voice, thin and dry, asserts, repeats.  
The clock insists: a lecturer demonstrating,  
Loudly, with finger raised, when the class has gone.

But time flows through the room, light flows through the room  
Like someone picking flowers, like someone whistling  
Without a tune, like talk in front of a fire,  
Like a woman knitting or a child snipping at paper.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Epilogue

"Why can't you say what you mean straight out in prose?"  
Well, say it yourself: then say "It's that, but more,  
Or less perhaps, or not that way, or not  
That after all." The meaning of a song  
Might be an undertone; this tree might mean  
That leaf as much as trunk, branch, other leaves.  
And does one know till one begins? And let's  
Look over hedges far as eyesight lets us,  
Since road's not, surely, road, but road and hedge  
And feet and sky and smell of hawthorn, horse-dung.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Epitaph For Our Children**

Blame us for these who were cradled and rocked in our chaos;  
Watching our sidelong watching, fearing our fear;  
Playing their blind-man's-bluff in our gutted mansions,  
Their follow-my-leader on a stair that ended in air.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Epitaph On A Disturber Of His Times**

We expected the violin's finger on the upturned nerve;  
Its importunate cry, too laxly curved:  
And you drew us an oboe-outline, clean and acute;  
Unadorned statement, accurately carved.

We expected the screen, the background for reverie  
Which cloudforms usefully weave:  
And you built the immaculate, adamant, blue-green steel  
Arch of a balanced wave.

We expected a pool with flowers to diffuse and break  
The child-round face of the mirrored moon:  
And you blazed a rock-path, begun near the sun, to be finished  
By the trained and intrepid feet of men.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Flight Of Stairs**

Stairs fly as straight as hawks;  
Or else in spirals, curve out of curve, pausing  
At a ledge to poise their wings before relaunching.  
Stairs sway at the height of their flight  
Like a melody in Tristan;  
Or swoop to the ground with glad spread of their feathers  
Before they close them.

They curiously investigate  
The shells of buildings,  
A hollow core,  
Shell in a shell.

Useless to produce their path to infinity  
Or turn it to a moral symbol,  
For their flight is ambiguous, upwards or downwards as you please;  
Their fountain is frozen,  
Their concertina is silent.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Houses

People who are afraid of themselves  
Multiply themselves into families  
And so divide themselves  
And so become less afraid.

People who might have to go out  
Into clanging strangers' laughter,  
Crowd under roofs, make compacts  
To no more than smile at each other.

People who might meet their own faces  
Or surprise their own voices in doorways  
Build themselves rooms without mirrors  
And live between walls without echoes.

People who might meet other faces  
And unknown voices round corners  
Build themselves rooms all mirrors  
And live between walls all echoes.

People who are afraid to go naked  
Clothe themselves in families, houses,  
But are still afraid of death  
Because death one day will undress them.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **June Sick Room**

The birds' shrill fluting  
Beats on the pink blind,  
Pierces the pink blind  
At whose edge fumble the sun's  
Fingers till one obtrudes  
And stirs the thick motes.  
The room is a close box of pink warmth.  
The minutes click.  
A man picks across the street  
With a metal-pointed stick.  
Three clocks drop each twelve pennies  
On the drom of noon.  
The birds end.  
A child's cry pricks the hush.  
The wind plucks at a leaf.  
The birds rebegin.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Last Word To Childhood**

Ice-cold fear has slowly decreased  
As my bones have grown, my height increased.  
Though I shiver in snow of dreams, I shall never  
Freeze again in a noonday terror.

I shall never break, my sinews crumble  
As God-the-headmaster's fingers fumble  
At the other side of unopening doors  
Which I watch for a hundred thousand years.

I shall never feel my thin blood leak  
While darkness stretches a paw to strike  
Or Nothing beats an approaching drum  
Behind my back in a silent room.

I shall never, alone, meet the end of my world  
At the bend of a path, the turn of a wall:  
Never, or once more only, and  
That will be once and an end of end.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Meeting

Dogs take new friends abruptly and by smell,  
Cats' meetings are neat, tactual, caressive.  
Monkeys exchange their fleas before they speak.  
Snakes, no doubt, coil by coil reach mutual knowledge.

We then, at first encounter, should be silent;  
Not court the cortex but the epidermis;  
Not work from inside out but outside in;  
Discover each other's flesh, its scent and texture;  
Familiarize the sinews and the nerve-ends,  
The hands, the hair - before the inept lips open.

Instead of which we are resonant, explicit.  
Our words like windows intercept our meaning.  
Our four eyes fence and flinch and awkwardly  
Wince into shadow, slide oblique to ambush.  
Hands stir, retract. The pulse is insulated.  
Blood is turned inwards, lonely; skin unhappy ...  
While always under all, but interrupted,  
Antennae stretch ... waver ... and almost ... touch.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Music**

This shape without space,  
This pattern without stuff,  
This stream without dimension  
Surrounds us, flows through us,  
But leaves no mark.

This message without meaning,  
These tears without eyes  
This laughter without lips  
Speaks to us but does not  
Disclose its clue.

These waves without sea  
Surge over us, smooth us.  
These hands without fingers  
Close-hold us, caress us.  
These wings without birds  
Strong-lift us, would carry us  
If only the one thread broke.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Never**

Suddenly, desperately  
I thought, "No, never  
In millions of minutes  
Can I for one second  
Calm-leaving my own self  
Like clothes on a chair-back  
And quietly opening  
The door of one house  
(No, not one of all millions)  
Of blood, flesh and brain,  
Climb the nerve-stair and look  
From the tower, from the windows  
Of eyes not my own: ...  
No, never, no, never!"

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Night Piece

Climb, claim your shelf-room, far  
Packed from inquisitive moon  
And cold contagious stars.

Lean out, but look no longer,  
No further, than to stir  
Night with extended finger.

Now fill the box with light,  
Flood full the shining block,  
Masonry against night.

Let window, curtain, blind  
Soft-sieve and sift and shred  
The impertinence of sound.

Now draw the silence up,  
A blanket round your ears;  
Lay darkness close and sure,  
Inverted cup to cup  
On your acquiescent eyes:  
Dismissing body's last outposted spies.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Not Love Perhaps**

This is not Love, perhaps,  
Love that lays down its life,  
that many waters cannot quench,  
nor the floods drown,  
But something written in lighter ink,  
said in a lower tone, something, perhaps, especially our own.

A need, at times, to be together and talk,  
And then the finding we can walk  
More firmly through dark narrow places,  
And meet more easily nightmare faces;  
A need to reach out, sometimes, hand to hand,  
And then find Earth less like an alien land;  
A need for alliance to defeat  
The whisperers at the corner of the street.

A need for inns on roads, islands in seas,  
Halts for discoveries to be shared,  
Maps checked, notes compared;  
A need, at times, of each for each,  
Direct as the need of throat and tongue for speech.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Nursery Rhyme For A Twenty-First Birthday**

You cannot see the walls that divide your hand  
From his or hers or mine when you think you touch it.

You cannot see the walls because they are glass,  
And glass is nothing until you try to pass it.

Beat on it if you like, but not too hard,  
For glass will break you even while you break it.

Shout, and the sound will be broken and driven backwards,  
For glass, though clear as water, is deaf as granite.

This fraudulent inhibition is cunning: wise men  
Content themselves with breathing patterns on it.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

**O**

Old women look intently at Nothing when the doctor  
announces a cancer, dark fruit, under the  
shrunk left breast.

Girls' hands hold Nothing when the train sucks their  
men from the platform and scoops them down the  
slipway of rail.

Nothing beats in deafened ears on the empty and  
godless altars of mountain tops.

Nothing is the final strength of the strong: the  
last poison on the crumpling lips of the weak.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **One Almost Might**

Wouldn't you say,  
Wouldn't you say: one day,  
With a little more time or a little more patience, one might  
Disentangle for separate, deliberate, slow delight  
One of the moment's hundred strands, unfray  
Beginnings from endings, this from that, survey  
Say a square inch of the ground one stands on, touch  
Part of oneself or a leaf or a sound (not clutch  
Or cuff or bruise but touch with finger-tip, ear-  
Tip, eyetip, creeping near yet not too near);  
Might take up life and lay it on one's palm  
And, encircling it in closeness, warmth and calm,  
Let it lie still, then stir smooth-softly, and  
Tendril by tendril unfold, there on one's hand ...

One might examine eternity's cross-section  
For a second, with slightly more patience, more time for reflection?

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Polyphony In A Cathedral**

Music curls  
In the stone shells  
Of the arches, and rings  
Their stone bells.

Music lips  
Each cold groove  
Of parabolas' laced  
Warp and woof,  
And lingers round nodes  
Of the ribbed roof

Chords open  
Their flowers among  
The stone flowers; blossom;  
Stalkless hang.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Quickstep

Acknowledge the drum's whisper.  
Yield to its velvet  
Nudge. Cut a slow air-  
Curve. Then dip (hip to hip):  
Sway, swing, pedantically  
Poise. Now recover,  
Converting the coda  
To prelude of sway-swing-  
Recover.

Acknowledge  
The drum-crack's alacrity -  
Acrid exactitude -  
Catch it, then slacken,  
Then catch as cat catches  
Rat. Trace your graph:  
Loop, ellipse. Skirt an air-wall  
To bend it and break it -  
Thus - so -  
As the drum speaks!

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Sea

1

(Windless Summer)

Between the glass panes of the sea are pressed  
Patterns of fronds, and the bronze tracks of fishes.

2

(Winter)

Foam-ropes lasso the seal-black shiny rocks,  
Noosing, slipping and noosing again for ever.

3

(Windy Summer)

Over-sea going, under returning, meet  
And make a wheel, a shell, to hold the sun.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Seaport

Green sea-tarnished copper  
And sea-tarnished gold  
Of cupolas.

Sea-runnelled streets  
Channelled by salt air  
That wears the white stone.

The sunlight-filled cistern  
Of a dry-dock. Square shadows.  
Sun-slatted smoke above meticulous stooping of cranes.

Water pressed up by ships' prows  
Going, coming.

City dust turned  
Back by the sea-wind's  
Wall.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## The British

We are a people living in shells and moving  
Crablike; reticent, awkward, deeply suspicious;  
Watching the world from a corner of half-closed eyelids,  
Afraid lest someone show that he hates or loves us,  
Afraid lest someone weep in the railway train.

We are coiled and clenched like a foetus clad in armour.  
We hold our hearts for fear they fly like eagles.  
We grasp our tongues for fear they cry like trumpets.  
We listen to our own footsteps. We look both ways  
Before we cross the silent empty road.

We are a people easily made uneasy,  
Especially wary of praise, of passion, of scarlet  
Cloaks, of gesturing hands, of the smiling stranger  
In the alien hat who talks to all or the other  
In the unfamiliar coat who talks to none.

We are afraid of too-cold thought or too-hot  
Blood, of the opening of long-shut shafts or cupboards,  
Of light in caves, of X-rays, probes, unclothing  
Of emotion, intolerable revelation  
Of lust in the light, of love in the palm of the hand.

We are afraid of, one day on a sunny morning,  
Meeting ourselves or another without the usual  
Outer sheath, the comfortable conversation,  
And saying all, all, all we did not mean to,  
All, all, all we did not know we meant.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **The Children Look At The Parents**

We being so hidden from those who  
Have quietly borne and fed us,  
How can we answer civilly  
Their innocent invitations?

How can we say "we see you  
As but-for-God's-grace-ourselves, as  
Our caricatures (we yours), with  
Time's telescope between us"?

How can we say "you presumed on  
The accident of kinship,  
Assumed our friendship coatlike,  
Not as a badge one fights for"?

How say "and you remembered  
The sins of our outlived selves and  
Your own forgiveness, buried  
The hatchet to slow music;

Shared money but not your secrets;  
Will leave as your final legacy  
A box double-locked by the spider  
Packed with your unsolved problems"?

How say all this without capitals,  
Italics, anger or pathos,  
To those who have seen from the womb come  
Enemies? How not say it?

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **The Man In The Bowler Hat**

I am the unnoticed, the unnoticable man:  
The man who sat on your right in the morning train:  
The man who looked through like a windowpane:  
The man who was the colour of the carriage, the colour of the mounting  
Morning pipe smoke.

I am the man too busy with a living to live,  
Too hurried and worried to see and smell and touch:  
The man who is patient too long and obeys too much  
And wishes too softly and seldom.

I am the man they call the nation's backbone,  
Who am boneless - playable castgut, pliable clay:  
The Man they label Little lest one day  
I dare to grow.

I am the rails on which the moment passes,  
The megaphone for many words and voices:  
I am the graph diagram,  
Composite face.

I am the led, the easily-fed,  
The tool, the not-quite-fool,  
The would-be-safe-and-sound,  
The uncomplaining, bound,  
The dust fine-ground,  
Stone-for-a-statue waveworn pebble-round

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## To Be Blind

Is it sounds  
                    converging,  
Sounds  
            nearing,  
Infringement,  
                    impingement,  
Impact,  
            contact  
With surfaces of the sounds  
Or surfaces without the sounds:  
Diagrams,  
            skeletal,  
                    strange?

Is it winds  
                    curling round invisible corners?  
Polyphony of perfumes?  
Antennae discovering an axis,  
                    erecting the architecture of a world?

Is it  
            orchestration of the finger-tips,  
                                    graph of a fugue:  
Scaffold for colours:  
                    colour itself being god?

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## **Tube Station**

The tube lift mounts,  
And blossoms its load,  
sap in a stem,  
a black, untidy rose.

The fountain of the escalator  
A winnow of men,  
curls at the crest,  
breaks and scatters  
a sickle of dark spray.

Submitted by Stephen Fryer

A.S.J. Tessimond

## Unlyric Love Song

It is time to give that-of-myself which I could not at first:  
To offer you now at last my least and my worst:  
Minor, absurd preserves,  
The shell's end-curves,  
A document kept at the back of a drawer,  
A tin hidden under the floor,  
Recalcitrant prides and hesitations:  
To pile them carefully in a desparate oblation  
And say to you "quickly! turn them  
Once over and burn them".

Now I (no communist, heaven knows!  
Who have kept as my dearest right to close  
My tenth door after I've opened nine to the world,  
To unfold nine sepals holding one hard-furled)  
Shall - or shall try to - offer to you  
A communism of two ...

See, entry's yours;  
Here, the last door!

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## **Wet City Night**

Light drunkenly reels into shadow;  
Blurs, slurs uneasily;  
Slides off the eyeballs:  
The segments shatter.

Tree-branches cut arc-light in ragged  
Fluttering wet strips.  
The cup of the sky-sign is filled too full;  
It slushes wine over.

The street-lamps dance a tarentella  
And zigzag down the street:  
They lift and fly away  
In a wind of lights.

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