

**Classic Poetry Series**

# **Julian Tuwim**

**- poems -**

**Publication Date:**

2004

**Publisher:**

PoemHunter.Com - The World's Poetry Archive

## **Polish Flowers**

Hi There! I see you're enjoying the site, and just wanted to extend an invitation to register for our free site. The members of oldpoetry strive to make this a fun place to learn and share - hope you join us! - Kevin

Julian Tuwim

## **The Common Man**

When plastered billboards scream with slogans  
'fight for your country, go to battle'  
When media's print assaults your senses,  
'Support our leaders' shrieks and rattles...  
And fools who don't know any better  
Believe the old, eternal lie  
That we must march and shoot and kill  
Murder, and burn, and bomb, and grill...

When press begins the battle-cry  
That nation needs to unify  
And for your country you must die...  
Dear brainwashed friend, my neighbor dear  
Brother from this, or other nation  
Know that the cries of anger, fear,  
Are nothing but manipulation  
by fat-cats, kings who covet riches,  
And feed off your sweat and blood - the leeches!  
When call to arms engulfs the land  
It means that somewhere oil was found,  
Shooting 'blackgold' from underground!  
It means they found a sneaky way  
To make more money, grab more gold  
But this is not what you are told!

Don't spill your blood for bucks or oil  
Break, burn your rifle, shout: 'NO DEAL!'  
Let the rich scoundrels, kings, and bankers  
Send their own children to get killed!  
May your loud voice be amplified  
By roar of other common men  
The battle-weary of all nations:  
**WE WON'T BE CONNED TO WAR AGAIN!**

Julian Tuwim

## **The Dancing Socrates**

I roast in the sun, old wretch...  
I lie, and yawn, I stretch.  
Old am I, but full of pep:  
When I take a slug from the cup  
I sing.  
My ancient bones bask in the sun's glow,  
And my curly, wise, grey head.  
In that wise head, like woods in spring  
Hums and hums a wiser wine.  
Eternal thoughts flow and flow,  
Like time.

Julian Tuwim

## The Locomotive

A big locomotive has pulled into town,  
Heavy, humungus, with sweat rolling down,  
A plump jumbo olive.  
Huffing and puffing and panting and smelly,  
Fire belches forth from her fat cast iron belly.

Poof, how she's burning,  
Oof, how she's boiling,  
Puff, how she's churning,  
Huff, how she's toiling.  
She's fully exhausted and all out of breath,  
Yet the coalman continues to stoke her to death.

Numerous wagons she tugs down the track:  
Iron and steel monsters hitched up to her back,  
All filled with people and other things too:  
The first carries cattle, then horses not few;  
The third car with corpulent people is filled,  
Eating fat frankfurters all freshly grilled.  
The fourth car is packed to the hilt with bananas,  
The fifth has a cargo of six grand pi-an-as.  
The sixth wagon carries a cannon of steel,  
With heavy iron girders beneath every wheel.  
The seventh has tables, oak cupboards with plates,  
While an elephant, bear, two giraffes fill the eighth.  
The ninth contains nothing but well-fattened swine,  
In the tenth: bags and boxes, now isn't that fine?

There must be at least forty cars in a row,  
And what they all carry -- I simply don't know:

But if one thousand athletes, with muscles of steel,  
Each ate one thousand cutlets in one giant meal,  
And each one exerted as much as he could,  
They'd never quite manage to lift such a load.

First a toot!  
Then a hoot!  
Steam is churning,  
Wheels are turning!

More slowly - than turtles - with freight - on their - backs,  
The drowsy - steam engine - sets off - down the tracks.  
She chugs and she tugs at her wagons with strain,  
As wheel after wheel slowly turns on the train.  
She doubles her effort and quickens her pace,  
And rambles and scrambles to keep up the race.  
Oh whither, oh whither? go forward at will,  
And chug along over the bridge, up the hill,  
Through mountains and tunnels and meadows and woods,  
Now hurry, now hurry, deliver your goods.  
Keep up your tempo, now push along, push along,

Chug along, tug along, tug along, chug along  
Lightly and sprightly she carries her freight  
Like a ping-pong ball bouncing without any weight,  
Not heavy equipment exhausted to death,  
But a little tin toy, just a light puff of breath.  
Oh whither, oh whither, you'll tell me, I trust,  
What is it, what is it that gives you your thrust?  
What gives you momentum to roll down the track?  
It's hot steam that gives me my clickety-clack.  
Hot steam from the boiler through tubes to the pistons,  
The pistons then push at the wheels from short distance,  
They drive and they push, and the train starts a-swooshin'  
'Cuz steam on the pistons keeps pushin' and pushin';  
The wheels start a rattlin', clatterin', chatterin'  
Chug along, tug along, chug along, tug along! . . . .

Julian Tuwim