

SOMETIMES A SOLDIER

Sometimes a soldier,  
Letting love go  
To distant fields,  
Battling tears,  
Running, running, running.

Sometimes a soldier,  
Assignments complete,  
Recalled to base,  
Counting the days,  
Waiting, waiting, waiting.

Sometimes a soldier,  
Approaching new wars,  
Looking for action,  
Seeking attraction,  
Smiling, smiling, smiling.

Sometimes a soldier,  
Engaged at the front,  
Shooting the breast,  
Winning the best,  
Kissing, kissing, kissing.

Sometimes a soldier,  
Retreating with wounds,  
Losing a hand,  
Revising all plans,  
Hating, hating, hating.

Sometimes a soldier,  
Approaching again,  
Engaging at night,  
Infinite light,  
Loving, loving, loving.

Sometimes a soldier,  
Letting love go  
To distant fields,  
Battling tears,  
Running, running, running.

*J.P.*

THE MAIDENS OF JERUSALEM

The maidens of Jerusalem  
Are the fairest in the world  
Barefooted, lightly garbed  
With a crown full of curls  
When they walk, they dance  
When they talk, they sing  
When they smile, romance  
When they cry, all cry  
Carefree, yet concerned  
Virgins with experience  
Mothers, lovers, wives  
Children all their lives  
The maidens of Jerusalem  
Are the fairest in the world

DESPAIR, DESPAIR, NOTHING TO WRITE

Despair, despair, nothing to write  
Sitting, watching the passers-by  
Why force pen to paper  
When life is more romantic  
Than anything put to book?

The poem makes sense now;  
A short burst reflecting the mood,  
A thought not interrupting  
The melancholy café or late  
Bedroom night.

Why spend hours imagining or reporting  
When a few scattered moments  
Fill a page in my notebook of verse?

J.P.

SMOKING THE EARTH

Smoking the earth  
When the earth  
Is smoking  
The soldiers in Lebanon

Smoking the leaves  
When the trees  
Are burning  
The soldiers in Lebanon

Smoking the coals  
When the rocks  
Are burying  
The soldiers in Lebanon

Smoking the hours  
When the days  
Are wasting  
The soldiers in Lebanon

Smoking the clouds  
When the gasses  
Are choking  
The soldiers in Lebanon

Smoking, smoking, smoking,  
Smoking a prayer  
For the soldiers in Lebanon  
And for us all

J.P.

## TILT TO THE SKY

Tilt to the sky  
Oh, no, the day slipped  
Light too strong  
Yes, they say  
Bridge over air  
Here to there  
Understand?

Tilt to the ground  
Sound of tune  
Strength of dark  
No, I command  
Tunnel under sea  
There to here  
Confused?

Tilt to the tilt  
It goes on  
Oh, my, it goes on....

## OUTCAST IN A FOREIGN COUNTRY

Outcast in a foreign country  
Never breaking into the scene  
But remaining fringe and often  
Alone  
Feeding off passers-by  
Tourists, students, travelers  
And an occasional native who  
Opens the door  
Cooks a meal  
And turns on the evening news  
For a dose of reality

Always looking for work,  
Changing addresses,  
Wondering when she will tell me to stay,  
Wondering when she will tell me to stay.

J.P.