

THE LIZARD

No one has come from the fronts we knew
Shanghai and Chungking, for a long season :
silent the Madrid broadcasts. So was Vienna once
blotted out. We remember her voice fading.
No one has come. Letters unwritten. The stricken
have been smothered..after years of ditch-stumbling ?
the battling, the tunics have been gored to death
where China's dragon meets the Spanish bull ?

In the sheltered rocks of our homeland, the pacific waters,
hills shrouded with evergreen and the valleys yellow
with corn and apples ; between the walls of our houses
spashed with a vivid wallpaper
radios blare the censored version of our living:
wrestlers rage, baseball bouncers rant
the words of an recipe trickle upon the ear
while Lord Halifax speaks sprightly from London
describing how people run about gladly
attending to air-raid precautions
(worrying no doubt, like the rest of us
about constipation !)

In the sheltered rocks, stealthily, a lizard
slips hesitant into sunlight ; tunes himself
to the wind's message. We slip out in pairs, as lovers
strip ourselves, longing
to see bodies bare and flesh uncloseted
to hear real voices again, to uphold the song
of one coming from Madrid, Shanghai or Chungking
from the fronts we knew.