

WORDS BEFORE BATTLE

Since, in a Moscow hospital
You cried: "Abyssynia ! " Barbuse,
Then died -- we have remembered.

The hot molten liquid
Of words poured out in hope
And defeat -- these have burned us

And now, taking stock of ourselves
Remembering your friend in song,
Lorca, shot like a dog

Remembering thin tunics in Spain
And words riddled from the mouths
Of men, by man-made steel

Remembering the Czechs beaten
To their knees without
A fight, gagged by the wayside

Now we know our strength
has been the strength of one,
Our will as water, our words

Not bitter shafts of light
striking the people; echoes
Only, of words to be said.

Now we know setbacks, know
We have not done enough with your cry
And your words spent in action:

~~Energy's blood~~ Energy's blood has been spilled
On the floor, not ~~conserved~~ conserved
In a glass jar for winter

Struggle's eye has been blind
Relying too much on the fist
Bared to the teeth of guns

For it is not enough to be proud
and sure, shouting defiance ;
It is not enough to ignore