

CATALONIA

The flag of darkness lowers at half mast
Blotting the blood-stained hieroglyphs with eyes
Strained from the smoke, the flares, the rat-tat-tat
Of guns' incessant speech. A sudden lull
Fans wind on brow, betokens from far hills
The ones who rest--oh unbelievably
A girl who rests tired head on easy arm
And sleeps encircled by her own heart-beat.

But we, grey snakes who twist and squirm our way
From hump to sodden hump, roll in a hole
Of slime, scarring our knees to keep awake--
For us horizons reel, groping for a centre,
Stars burn in whirling sockets overhead--
We wrench ourselves over the last trench, down
Down, down in scurrying scramble tossed
Towards lost lines, lost outposts, lost defence...