

# Paul Éluard



*Éluard: Poems*

## Twenty-Four Poems

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## **Absence**

I speak to you over cities  
I speak to you over plains

My mouth is against your ear

The two sides of the walls face  
my voice which acknowledges you.

I speak to you of eternity.

O cities memories of cities  
cities draped with our desires  
cities early and late  
cities strong cities intimate  
stripped of all their makers  
their thinkers their phantoms

Landscape ruled by emerald  
live living ever-living  
the wheat of the sky on our earth  
nourishes my voice I dream and cry  
I laugh and dream between the flames  
between the clusters of sunlight

And over my body your body extends  
the layer of its clear mirror.

## Easy

Easy and beautiful under  
your eyelids  
As the meeting of pleasure  
Dance and the rest

I spoke the fever

The best reason for fire  
That you might be pale and luminous  
A thousand fruitful poses  
A thousand ravaged embraces  
Repeated move to erase themselves  
You grow dark you unveil yourself  
A mask you  
control it

It deeply resembles you  
And you seem nothing but lovelier naked  
Naked in shadow and dazzlingly naked  
Like a sky shivering with flashes of lightning  
You reveal yourself to you  
To reveal yourself to others

## **Talking of Power and Love**

Between all my torments between death and self  
Between my despair and the reason for living  
There is injustice and this evil of men  
That I cannot accept there is my anger

There are the blood-coloured fighters of Spain  
There are the sky-coloured fighters of Greece  
The bread the blood the sky and the right to hope  
For all the innocents who hate evil

The light is always close to dying  
Life always ready to become earth  
But spring is reborn that is never done with  
A bud lifts from dark and the warmth settles

And the warmth will have the right of the selfish  
Their atrophied senses will not resist  
I hear the fire talk lightly of coolness  
I hear a man speak what he has not known

You who were my flesh's sensitive conscience  
You I love forever you who made me  
You will not tolerate oppression or injury  
You'll sing in dream of earthly happiness  
You'll dream of freedom and I'll continue you

## **The Beloved**

She is standing on my eyelids  
And her hair is wound in mine,  
She has the form of my hands,  
She has the colour of my eyes,  
She is swallowed by my shadow  
Like a stone against the sky.

Her eyes are always open  
And will not let me sleep.  
Her dreams in broad daylight  
Make the suns evaporate  
Make me laugh, cry and laugh,  
Speak with nothing to say.

## **Max Ernst**

In one corner agile incest  
Turns round the virginity of a little dress  
In one corner sky released  
leaves balls of white on the spines of storm.

In one corner bright with all the eyes  
One awaits the fish of anguish.  
In one corner the car of summer's greenery  
gloriously motionless forever.

In the glow of youth  
lamps lit too late.  
The first one shows her breasts that kill the  
insects that are red.



## **Series**

For the splendour of the day of happinesses in the  
air

To live the taste of colours easily

To enjoy loves so as to laugh

To open eyes at the final moment

She has every willingness.

## **Obsession**

After years of wisdom  
During which the world was transparent as a  
needle  
Was it cooing about something else?  
After having vied with returned favours  
squandered treasure  
More than a red lip with a red tip  
And more than a white leg with a white foot  
Where then do we think we are?

## **Nearer To Us**

Run and run towards deliverance  
And find and gather everything  
Deliverance and riches  
Run so quickly the thread breaks  
With the sound a great bird makes  
A flag always soared beyond

## **Open Door**

Life is truly kind  
Come to me, if I go to you it's a game,  
The angels of bouquets grant the flowers a  
change of hue.

## **The Immediate Life**

What's become of you why this white hair and  
pink

Why this forehead these eyes rent apart heart-  
rending

The great misunderstanding of the marriage of  
radium

Solitude chases me with its rancour.

## **Lovely And Lifelike**

A face at the end of the day  
A cradle in day's dead leaves  
A bouquet of naked rain  
Every ray of sun hidden  
Every fount of founts in the depths of the water  
Every mirror of mirrors broken  
A face in the scales of silence  
A pebble among other pebbles  
For the leaves last glimmers of day  
A face like all the forgotten faces.

## **The Season of Loves**

By the road of ways  
In the three-part shadow of troubled sleep  
I come to you the double the multiple  
as like you as the era of deltas.

Your head is as tiny as mine  
The nearby sea reigns with spring  
Over the summers of your fragile form  
And here one burns bundles of ermine.

In the wandering transparency  
of your noble face  
these floating animals are wonderful  
I envy their candour their inexperience  
Your inexperience on the bed of waters  
Finds the road of love without bowing

By the road of ways  
and without the talisman that reveals  
your laughter at the crowd of women  
and your tears no one wants.

## **As Far As My Eye Can See In My Body's Senses**

All the trees all their branches all of their leaves  
The grass at the foot of the rocks and the houses  
en masse

Far off the sea that your eye bathes

These images of day after day

The vices the virtues so imperfect

The transparency of men passing among them by  
chance

And passing women breathed by your elegant  
obstinacies

Your obsessions in a heart of lead on virgin lips

The vices the virtues so imperfect

The likeness of looks of permission with eyes  
you conquer

The confusion of bodies wearinesses ardours

The imitation of words attitudes ideas

The vices the virtues so imperfect

Love is man incomplete



## **Barely Disfigured**

Adieu Tristesse

Bonjour Tristesse

Farewell Sadness

Hello Sadness

You are inscribed in the lines on the ceiling

You are inscribed in the eyes that I love

You are not poverty absolutely

Since the poorest of lips denounce you

Ah with a smile

Bonjour Tristesse

Love of kind bodies

Power of love

From which kindness rises

Like a bodiless monster

Unattached head

Sadness beautiful face.

## **In A New Night**

Woman I've lived with  
Woman I live with  
Woman I'll live with  
Always the same  
You need a red cloak  
Red gloves a red mask  
And dark stockings  
The reasons the proofs  
Of seeing you quite naked  
Nudity pure O ready finery

Breasts O my heart

## **Fertile Eyes**

Fertile Eyes  
No one can know me more  
More than you know me

Your eyes in which we sleep  
The two of them  
Have cast a spell on my male orbs  
Greater than worldly nights

Your eyes where I voyage  
Have given the road-signs  
Directions detached from the earth

In your eyes those that show us  
Our infinite solitude  
Is no more than they think exists

No one can know me more  
More than you know me.

## **I Said It To You**

I said it to you for the clouds  
I said it to you for the tree of the sea  
For each wave for the birds in the leaves  
For the pebbles of sound  
For familiar hands  
For the eye that becomes landscape or face  
And sleep returns it the heaven of its colour  
For all that night drank  
For the network of roads  
For the open window for a bare forehead  
I said it to you for your thoughts for your words  
Every caress every trust survives.

## **It's The Sweet Law Of Men**

It's the sweet law of men  
They make wine from grapes  
They make fire from coal  
They make men from kisses

It's the true law of men  
Kept intact despite  
the misery and war  
despite danger of death

It's the warm law of men  
To change water to light  
Dream to reality  
Enemies to friends

A law old and new  
That perfects itself  
From the child's heart's depths  
To reason's heights.

## **The Curve Of Your Eyes**

The curve of your eyes embraces my heart  
A ring of sweetness and dance  
halo of time, sure nocturnal cradle,  
And if I no longer know all I have lived through  
It's that your eyes have not always been mine.

Leaves of day and moss of dew,  
Reeds of breeze, smiles perfumed,  
Wings covering the world of light,  
Boats charged with sky and sea,  
Hunters of sound and sources of colour

Perfume enclosed by a covey of dawns  
that beds forever on the straw of stars,  
As the day depends on innocence  
The whole world depends on your pure eyes  
And all my blood flows under their sight.

## **Liberty**

On my notebooks from school  
On my desk and the trees  
On the sand on the snow  
I write your name

On every page read  
On all the white sheets  
Stone blood paper or ash  
I write your name

On the golden images  
On the soldier's weapons  
On the crowns of kings  
I write your name

On the jungle the desert  
The nests and the bushes  
On the echo of childhood  
I write your name

On the wonder of nights  
On the white bread of days  
On the seasons engaged  
I write your name

On all my blue rags  
On the pond mildewed sun  
On the lake living moon  
I write your name

On the fields the horizon  
The wings of the birds  
On the windmill of shadows  
I write your name

On each breath of the dawn  
On the ships on the sea  
On the mountain demented  
I write your name

On the foam of the clouds  
On the sweat of the storm  
On dark insipid rain  
I write your name

On the glittering forms  
On the bells of colour  
On physical truth  
I write your name

On the wakened paths  
On the opened ways  
On the scattered places  
I write your name



On the lamp that gives light  
On the lamp that is drowned  
On my house reunited  
I write your name

On the bisected fruit  
Of my mirror and room  
On my bed's empty shell  
I write your name

On my dog greedy tender  
On his listening ears  
On his awkward paws  
I write your name

On the sill of my door  
On familiar things  
On the fire's sacred stream  
I write your name

On all flesh that's in tune  
On the brows of my friends  
On each hand that extends  
I write your name

On the glass of surprises  
On lips that attend  
High over the silence  
I write your name

On my ravaged refuges

On my fallen lighthouses  
On the walls of my boredom  
I write your name

On passionless absence  
On naked solitude  
On the marches of death  
I write your name

On health that's regained  
On danger that's past  
On hope without memories  
I write your name

By the power of the word  
I regain my life  
I was born to know you  
And to name you

LIBERTY

## **Ring Of Peace**

I have passed the doors of coldness  
The doors of my bitterness  
To come and kiss your lips

City reduced to a room  
Where the absurd tide of evil  
leaves a reassuring foam

Ring of peace I have only you  
You teach me again what it is  
To be human when I renounce

Knowing whether I have fellow creatures

## **Ecstasy**

I am in front of this feminine land  
Like a child in front of the fire  
Smiling vaguely with tears in my eyes  
In front of this land where all moves in me  
Where mirrors mist where mirrors clear  
Reflecting two nude bodies season on season

I've so many reasons to lose myself  
On this road-less earth under horizon-less skies  
Good reasons I ignored yesterday  
And I'll never ever forget  
Good keys of gazes keys their own daughters  
in front of this land where nature is mine

In front of the fire the first fire  
Good mistress reason  
Identified star  
On earth under sky in and out of my heart  
Second bud first green leaf  
That the sea covers with sails  
And the sun finally coming to us

I am in front of this feminine land  
Like a branch in the fire.

## **Our Life**

We'll not reach the goal one by one but in pairs  
We know in pairs we will know all about us  
We'll love everything our children will smile  
At the dark history or mourn alone

## **Uninterrupted Poetry**

From the sea to the source  
From mountain to plain  
Runs the phantom of life  
The foul shadow of death  
But between us  
A dawn of ardent flesh is born  
And exact good  
that sets the earth in order  
We advance with calm step  
And nature salutes us  
The day embodies our colours  
Fire our eyes the sea our union  
And all living resemble us  
All the living we love  
Imaginary the others  
Wrong and defined by their birth  
But we must struggle against them  
They live by dagger blows  
They speak like a broken chair  
Their lips tremble with joy  
At the echo of leaden bells  
At the muteness of dark gold  
A lone heart not a heart  
A lone heart all the hearts  
And the bodies every star  
In a sky filled with stars  
In a career in movement  
Of light and of glances  
Our weight shines on the earth

Glaze of desire  
To sing of human shores  
For you the living I love  
And for all those that we love  
That have no desire but to love  
I'll end truly by barring the road  
Afloat with enforced dreams  
I'll end truly by finding myself  
We'll take possession of earth



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