
THE GAP

He ran out to the street, stopped a young man, asked the time
and begged for a kiss

Shocked, flattered, the young man gave him his watch and a cuff link
He wasn't satisfied, so he headed toward the paved avenue
There, in the midst of the crowd, he stood immobile,
closed his eyes and swung round on his heels

He spotted a pair of girls, they were lovely and their voices
sang of merriment. He told them: "My memory fails me, I think I am
lovelorn would you be so kind as to . . ." One of the girls slipped a finger
inside her blouse and produced a lipstick. With it she wrote the words
'for sale' on his cheek and drew a couple of entangled hearts over his sleeve

He left them with a sigh, bumped into an elderly lady he knew
- oh that heady fragrance! - he was about to faint when she moved away
'A dream', he reckoned

He then sighted a child walking with her grandfather. This time it was they
who came to him. "Are you lost?" inquired the child.
With a tranquil assurance the grandfather said: "You're fighting against
Time, aren't you?"

He wanted to cry but he couldn't so he accepted the child's invitation
for a stroll in the park. Now she took his hand, now he put his arm
around the old man's shoulder.

He began to speak in whispers as if to himself. "Love is the future,
Love is the past, it escaped with my childhood, yet I ought to have
a whole life before me. God, or whomever I belong to, bring back
those early years, let me get a glimpse, just a glimpse!"

He turned this way then that way, the child and her grandfather
had disappeared.

His fingers were crimson, the color of blood long dried up.
He felt at once so young and so very wise.
He'd robbed two souls of their Present.

Albert Russo
