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Fragments of Ten Poems translated by Jascha Kessler

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FRAGMENTS OF TEN POEMS

First Lines

On the ground floor of the sinking apartment house
It can be found in none of Oxford's 13 sections
The universe expanding inch by inch
What, O fog-wreathed Ossian, have I to do here
Fight the fight, Man, wait for the answer
Comes back the croak of this nuncio extraordinary
They're corporeal, all those guests eating out of that platter
In the dungeons of the underground palace of lava
Maybe it's in the flesh that the soul lives
Still and all, one fine morning the king declares me his son

Second Lines

Sipping their wine, they don't even know it's sinking
The absolutely perfect synonym
According to the vague definition of verminkind
The Celts grow mistier in the mists
Happy are they who gave birth to their god on the green hill
Spelling out revelation
And rapping it along to the continents next door
The sinews of Atlas are trembling
Somewhere the ocean is spilled
Twin-tongued flame erupts from the peony

Last Lines, Presumably

Crammed with Riesling, dead men lie stacked in the cellar
So we're better off moving to Cambridge
What a drag, what with all these personal effects
The only thing needed on Naxos was a Shirt of Nessus
Every feeling here is shivering in its sealskin with the cold
O, what it must have been like up in that divine aspic
It's growing like some explosion in the silent flicks

Nothingness dropping away from under the sole
A face helpless in the rubble
Letter and spirit

*translated by
Jascha Kessler*