

I SAY PEACE

By LOUIS ARAGON

I say pale and sudden peace
Like a happiness long dreamed Like
a happiness that one hardly
believes To have found
I say peace like a woman
I opened the door and suddenly
Her two arms around my soul
And my neck
I say peace that window
That beat the air one fine morning
And the world seemed to be
Only the smell of thyme
I say peace for the light
In your footsteps in this season
As a customary thing
At home
For birds and branches
Green and black above the waters And fry that engage
In the
reeds
I say peace for the stars
For all hours of the day
To the tiles of the roofs and for you the
Shadow and love
I say peace to childhood
games We run we jump we shout we laugh
We lose the thread of what we think
In the prairie
I say peace but it's strange
This feeling of fear that I have
Because it is my very heart that changes
Light Light
I say peace worth it Precarious fragile and voiceless
But it
is the bee that works
Without being seen
Nothing but a breath among the leaves
A simple hesitation
A ray that crosses the threshold
Passions
She wobbles she is insecure
Like a convalescent
foot Still listening to her wound
Her recent blood
The war has loosened its reins
The war has lost the game
There remains a dull sound that drags
Poorly cushioned

These are the tanks to the barracks
That still make a little noise
We will dance in the alfalfa
Until the night
You will see tomorrow you will see
Schoolchildren in the courtyards
And this beautiful weather to no longer believe
The weather
We will build for youth
Happy
houses and days And loves will want their many sons to be
born
We will rebuild by the world
The wonders
burned Life will have the round
size Without begging
At last do you want me to
list The Versailles we will make
The airs populated by the chimeras
From our forehead
And the huge laboratory
Where miracles are human
And the dove of history
In our hands
I know I know Everything is to be done
In this century where death camped
And go see in the stratosphere
If it is peace
Extinct here there smouldering
The fire runs we see how
Someone always gives to the she-wolf
A dwelling
Someone always somewhere dreams
On the table to be the fist
And under the cloak of truce
He takes stock
I know I know what can be said
And the danger of being asleep
The man at the zenith and the nadir
To the enemy
I know but it's peace anyway
The retreat of the monster before
What I stand for What I love
Still alive
It is the peace of which the peoples know
Obscurely all more or less
Against the master and for the slave
That it is witness
It is the peace of peoples where deaf The deep water of freedoms
It is to the silence of drums

The May planted
It is the peace color of evidence
Where the murder bears its name
To whom the veil of the widow
Said No
It is peace that forces crime
to kneel in confession
And screams with victims
Ceasefire

Published in August 1954
(the Geneva Accords on Indochina
had just been signed in Geneva);
available today in
Aragon – Complete Poetic Works II
page 75
Bibliothèque de la Pléiade

Je dis la paix pâle et soudaine
Comme un bonheur longtemps rêvé
Comme un bonheur qu'on croit à peine
Avoir trouvé

Je dis la paix comme une femme
J'ouvrais la porte et tout à coup
Ses deux bras autour de mon âme
Et de mon cou

Je dis la paix cette fenêtre
Qui battit l'air un beau matin
Et le monde ne semblait être
Qu'odeur du thym

Je dis la paix pour la lumière

A tes pas dans cette saison
Comme une chose coutumière
A la maison

Pour les oiseaux et les branchages
Verts et noirs au-dessus des eaux
Et les alevins qui s'engagent
Dans les roseaux

Je dis la paix pour les étoiles
Pour toutes les heures du jour
Aux tuiles des toits et pour toi l'
Ombre et l'amour

Je dis la paix aux jeux d'enfance
On court on saute on crie on rit
On perd le fil de ce qu'on pense
Dans la prairie

Je dis la paix mais c'est étrange
Ce sentiment de peur que j'ai
Car c'est mon cœur même qui change
Léger léger

Je dis la paix vaille que vaille

Précaire fragile et sans voix

Mais c'est l'abeille qui travaille

Sans qu'on la voie

Rien qu'un souffle parmi les feuilles

Une simple hésitation

Un rayon qui passe le seuil

Des passions

Elle vacille elle est peu sûre

Gomme un pied de convalescent

Encore écoutant sa blessure

Son sang récent