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GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE

THE LITTLE CAR

The 31st day of August 1914
I left Deauville a little before midnight
In Rouveyre’s little car
Counting his driver there were three of us
We said good-bye to an entire epoch
Furious giants were rising over Europe
Eagles were leaving their aeries expecting the sun
Voracious fish were rising from the depths
Populations were rushing to know each other intimately
The dead were trembling with fear in their dark dwellings
The dogs were barking toward over there where the frontier is
I went bearing within me all those armies fighting
I felt them rise up in me and spread out over the countries they wound through
With the forests the happy villages of Belgium
Francorchamps with l’Eau Rouge and the mineral springs
Region the invasions always come through
Railway arteries where those who were going off to die
Saluted one last time this colorful life
Deep oceans where monsters were moving
In old shipwrecked hulks
Unimaginable heights where men fight
Higher than the eagle soars
There men fight men
And suddenly fall like shooting stars
I felt in myself new and totally capable beings
Build and organize a new universe
A merchant of amazing opulence and astounding size
Was laying out an extraordinary display
And gigantic shepherds were leading
Great silent flocks that were grazing on words
With every dog on the road barking at them
I'll never forget that night trip when none of us said a single word
O
dark
departure
when our
three head
lights were

d y i n g
O
ten
der
pre-
war
night
O
vil
lages
with
h i n g t h e r u s
BLACKSMITHS ORDERED TO GO
BETWEEN MIDNIGHT AND ONE IN THE MORNING
o
v e r
t o LISIEUX
the very
b l u
e
or to
o
v e r
s a i l l e
s the go
l d
and we stopped 3 times to change a tire that had blown out
And when having passed that afternoon
Through Fontainbleau
We arrived in Paris
Just as the mobilization posters were going up
We understood my buddy and I
That the little car had taken us into a New epoch
And although we were both grown men
We had just been born