

Wales half the globe away.  
An exchange of terrain.  
Jungle and paddy field  
For rock and scrub.  
Why is he here?  
It's not his war.  
The Welshman's wars  
Ended with Llewellyn the last.

He's lain there two days, inertia absolute,  
Loneliness, matching even his pain  
Had come quite friendly  
With the sweet smell of scorched flesh  
Already suppurating.  
Thoughts of home just fleeting  
Pricks of sadness,  
No suffocating longing,  
Or mental myth of distant Shangrila.

Shell burst fire storm.

He's met the fiery element head on,  
And his tongue although untouched  
By flame is strangely huge.  
Now and then with measured condescension  
He looks along his nose at  
Death tapping at his elbow.

Wet dreams plague him,  
Cups, glasses, tankards.  
Ponds, rivers, rain, dew even,  
And the shadow at his elbow  
Writhing in disgust, can  
Not conceal impatience,  
The tap becomes a prod.

His senses twitch, a  
New smell, rancid, pervading  
Acrid stench of marauding Homo Sapiens,  
Olfactory nightmare,  
The rifle's flared nostril  
Sniffing at his temple,  
Movement, a face obscures  
Two days of sky.  
Great effort needed to focus, on  
Slanted eyes that lock with Celtic orbs.

A meeting of ancient races,  
Incongruous courtship of mysterious  
Pasts. No fear, hatred or pity,  
And yet here, away from the  
Killing grounds, a strange affinity.

The eyes unlock, sky returns,  
Rustlings, a scrape of metal,  
Liquid bathes the swollen tongue.