

LA GARRIGUE

“Where is this *garage?*” he asks from the wheel
As he heads his taxi swiftly to town.
“In Market Street” “And the number or name?”
“La Garrigue – *restaurant* of renown.”

They give you place in their world of live art
French scenes in white walls, Scots trees on the floor
Turned to apt tables and singular seats;
Fragrance, warmth, wrap from kitchen to door.

Over the threshold from blustery humdrum
Lovers, friends, families, family escapers
Make their own space, glow brighter sharing,
Colleagues, deal brokers, old contemplators..

Charmed to upgrade the minor decisions
Of filling the belly and slaking some thirst
Straitjacket eases, launched on a journey
Head, heart, hands, fire together; strains burst.

La coquille St Jacques, puree pistaches aux pommes
Each next magic taste makes appetite grow;
Lapin farci et ses petits legumes
Mouthfuls of heaven in spring flowered meadow.

Its wide peaceful window surveys the world
Sees two seats of government guarding the gap
Where flow tides of tourists, ebb venture Scots.
What drains away as they each turn the tap?

High and low on the rocks, will they persist
Pulling in, pushing up pounds per square metre
- Or create the next scene of rich drama
In Calton's grand evolutionary theatre?

Wearied with life, personal, politic,
La Garrigue's the place to stop, and review:
Civil arts garnered, fused, deftly focused,
Energy, vision, humour renew.