



There is a surrealist light: at the time of day when towns burst into flame it is the light that falls on the salmon pink display of silk stockings; it is the light that blazes in the Benedictine shops and its pale sister in the pearl of mineral water depots; it is the light that mutely illuminates the blue travel agent's with trips to the battle fields, Place Vendôme; it is the light that stays late at Barclays on the Avenue de l'Opéra, when ties are transformed into fantoms; it is the beam of flashlights on the murdered and on love. There is a surrealist light in the eyes of every woman.

A great chunk of realism has just been demolished on the Boulevard de la Madeleine and through the gap you can glimpse a landscape which extends to the works at the Moulin-Rouge, cité Véron, to the demolitions of the Parisian fortifications, to the sculpture park in the

Tuileries, to the Gobelins blazing the word “PARDON” in neon through the night, to the vaults of the metro where golden Poulain chocolate horses cavalcade, to diamond mines where smugglers run the risk of avaricious laparotomies, to the sulphur springs where little dogs die.

Georges Limbour, hating the almighty sun, more readily tolerates the dawn of the hereafter. He couldn't be prised from the top of the staircase whence the crowd hurled him in the nights of Mainz because of his loathing for crosses and flags and all the gaudy triumphalism of war. André Masson presides over the release of doves at every crossroad: the beautiful knives he will have seen everywhere are ready to be seized at last. If the houses in Paris are mountains it's because they're reflected in Max Morise's monocle: and didn't he defile the great crucifix in the station at Argent (Cher)?

I have seen Paul Eluard trampled by policemen and drivers on a piano and in shattered lightbulbs, there were 30 of them against this starburst. A little later I saw him in the foothills of Champagne in a land of ophite stones. Then he entered the darkness of earth where moral eclipses are chandeliers at a ball unbounded by the ocean,

then he came back, he is looking at you. Delteil? That's the young man Francis Jammes pleaded with in the name of his white hair, that young carnivore who passes his days in the Meudon woods with bloodstained images.

Man Ray, who has tamed the biggest eyes in the world, dreams in his own way with knife rests and salt cellars: he gives the light meaning and that's why it knows how to talk. Suzanne are you blonde or brunette? She changes with the wind and you can believe her when she says: water is man's equal.

Who is that prisoner caught in a giant trap? The gestures that Antonin Artaud makes at a distance echo strangely in my heart. Mathias Lubeck, you don't mean it, you're not really going to re-enlist in the colonial service? He says his greatest shame is not being tattooed. Jacques Baron, on his boat, has just met some beautiful pale women: dear friend, do you remember that evening when I left you near Barbès and there were so many prowlers, you weren't thinking about tropical seas then, you were heading on impulse towards summer.

André Breton, there's a man I can say nothing about: if I close my eyes I see him again at Moret, beside the river

Loing, in all the dust-haze of the tow-path. Philippe Soupault for many years was recognised by his curly hair alone, he used to talk to chair upholsterers and laugh unnervingly near noon.

Denise, Denise: does the café of colours in that little road where we always stop still sing so Marvellously every time you pass, are people still killing themselves in the canal and in rue Longue and everywhere you take your clear shadow and your shining eyes?

Jacques-André Boiffard gently refuses to trim his black sideburns. He wears a velvet cap. Everyone please note: he's looking for a job, but doesn't want work. Magic holds no secrets for Roger Vitrac who is setting up a Theatre of Arson where people die as in a forest. He's also organising a revival of the Cult of Absinthe, whose scorched spoons have all been turned over. Jean Carrive, the youngest known surrealist, is notable most of all for his magnificent sense of rebellion: he is rising on the future with a stockpile of blasphemies. Pierre Picon is expanding his empire into Spain. Francis Gérard, less prudent than everyone else, has just thrown himself into the waters of existence: would you know of a woman for

him - extremely beautiful and able to make of this twenty-year-old a fallen man forever?

Simone is from the land of humming-birds, those tiny flashes of music, she looks like the time of lime trees. Beaten up by spectators at the 'Petit Casino', and various cafés in the capital, Robert Desnos has often tried out death as a word: Words, he says, are you myths which match the myrtles of Death?

Earthquakes are where Max Ernst, painter of cataclysms as others of battles, feels most at ease and contented. He finds it strange that the earth isn't constantly quaking.

René Crevel has never noticed that this planet is solidly fixed with help from meridians and latitudes: he is more of a sleepwalker than anyone. Great rages and fierce resolve make Pierre Naville a strange being: I can easily see him destined for some kind of assassination attempt on life itself; I wish I could read palms and find out if he's going to be really unlucky.

Marcel Noll, my dear old Noll: you will not attempt to desert us but whose slave are you, if not of the phantoms at the bottom of your eyes? You see, people are but dust.

Imagine, Charles Baron has left the hotel where you used to drop in on each other. He tells me news of his brother. He still receives the favours of that admirable woman to whom I present my compliments once more.

But the one who can do everything, the one who quite simply ranks among heroes, the man who has never resisted existence, the one who is found at the 'Soleil Levant', the one who defies common sense with every breath he takes, is Benjamin Péret, of the beautiful ties, the kind of great poet they just don't make any more, Benjamin Péret who has a whale on a leash, or maybe a little sparrow.

What a shame Georges Malkine is in Nice today. Since he left I have no idea what is elegant and much of the mystery of this badly-lit town has left for the Côte d'Azur. Maxime Alexandre? He thinks I've forgotten him. One does not forget despair.

The most recent news I've had from Renée Gauthier is not good. This prevents me from speaking about that young woman, torn as she is between some kind of passion and an innocence that nothing could make her lose.

My dear Savinio, leave Rome and come here, pushing that cart with its piles of Niobide corpses. All the people I've listed expect you.

Great things are bound to happen. We've suspended a woman from the ceiling of an empty room and worried men come there every day, bearers of weighty secrets. That's how we got to know Georges Bessière, like a punch in the face.

We're working on a task that's enigmatic even for us, in front of a volume of Fantômas fixed to the wall by forks. Visitors, born in faraway climes or at our own door, are helping us design an extraordinary machine which is for killing what exists so that what does not exist may be complete.

At 15, rue de Grenelle we've opened romantic lodgings for unclassifiable ideas and revolutions in progress. Whatever hope remains in this universe of hopelessness will cast its last delirious glances at our ridiculous street stall: 'It's all about coming up with a new declaration of human rights.'