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TANK

After Pierre Jean Jouve

my martian machine
– double-jawed tower –
with your fiery skull
where lives man's calculus

from your sides, middle and back crackle shrapnel,
shells, life-devouring bullets,

you march over earth,
upon the living, dying and dead,
compress the trench beneath your jounce
as you'd close two sides of a wound,

blind beast
rampant in the battle's blast,
beyond even the vanguard;

– inside,
the heroes,
padded up to the nines,
hurling at the walls, smashing their courses;
firing and killing on all sides,
burnt by the torrid heat of engines,
deafened by the din of exploding iron:
living their last day

here is the child of their divine-brain
here the clarity of their bright world

7. Emilienne

Can't sing a note, not even the *Marseillaise* – oh, I'll give it a go when occasion demands – but I did have the X-Factor they were looking for. Once the press got hold of it I was an overnight sensation: the 'Heroine of Loos', a new Joan of Arc. Golden *salons*, cocked hats, bemedalled generals and the public square, as their ballyhoo broke over me. At seventeen I was that month's face-of-the-war, mounting the 'Staircase of Heroes' to the *Panthéon*, blazing my comet of a season. Sold an exclusive to *Le Petit Parisien* and got locked in some chateau to homespin thoughts for the nation. My reason for telling you? I'm not even writing this.