THE SUNKEN KEEP
By the Same Author

poetry

What the Sky Arranges: Poems made from the Tsurezuregusa
  of Kenkō (Isobar Press, 2013)
A Fire in the Head (Isobar Press 2014)

CRITICISM

The Sea of Disappointment: Thomas Kinsella’s Pursuit of the Real
  (University College Dublin Press, 2008)

AS EDITOR

Thomas Kinsella, Prose Occasions 1951-2006 (Carcanet, 2009)
THE SUNKEN KEEP

A version of Giuseppe Ungaretti’s *Il Porto Sepolto*

**ANDREW FITZSIMONS**

*Drawings by Sergio Maria Calatroni*
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*A Note: Mohammed Sceab*  

**Note:** In the introduction, names of Japanese writers are given in the Japanese order, with the family name first. All translations from the Italian or French are by Andrew Fitzsimons.
THE SUNKEN KEEP

The poet emerges
comes to light with song
gives to the wind

Of this poetry
what keeps
is the nullness
of a bottomless secret.

Mariano, 29 June 1916
VIGIL

A full night
flung beside
a butchered
comrade
his lipless
mouth
facing the full moon
his clenched
hands
tearing
my silence
I have written
letters full of love

I have never been
so bound
to life

Peak 4, 23 December 1915
ORIENTAL PHASE

In the tender round of a smile
we feel twinned to the loosening
of buds of desire

We exhaust ourselves
in the sun’s harvest

We beguile ourselves within endless webs
of promises
irradiated with sun

The eyes close
to catch a sweet vanished time
swimming in a lake

We will come to walk the earth again
with this body
grown now too heavy for us

*Versa, 27 April 1916*
That country soldier
puts faith in
the St Anthony medal
he wears around his neck
and so goes lightly
but alone and naked
unillusioned
I carry my soul

Mariano, 29 June 1916
SOLDIER

What regiment names you brothers?

Brother
word trembling
in the night
like a leaf
barely born
a salute
grieving
in the festering air
imploring
whispering
of succour
to the man present at his own fragility

Mariano, 15 July 1916
SAN MARTINO DEL CARSO

Of these houses
nothing remains
only
ruined wall
exposed to the air

Of all those
who were in touch with me
nothing remains
not even much
in cemeteries

But in the heart
no-one lacks a cross

Raised
as sentinels
to what?

Wounded heart
they are dead

For I see my heart
as a racked country
these times

Valloncello dell’Albero Isolato, 27 August 1916
ITALY

I am a poet
a unanimous cry
I am a grume of dreams

I am a fruit
of innumerable grafted hues
ripened in a hothouse

But your people are borne
upon the same land
that bears me
Italy

And in this
your soldier’s uniform
I repose
as if it were the cradle
of my father

Locvizza, 1 October 1916