

Peter Ostrowski

"Jaures"

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At only
Fifteen years
Of age
Our lives
Are finished
Before they start
All twelve months
Are like December
What life did
Our
Grandparents have
Between the absinthe
And the
Factory gates
They were worn out
And old so early
Fifteen hours
Each day
Drained
Their lives away
Their faces
Left pale
And grey as ash
Yes your lordship
Thank you
Bless you mistress
Why did
They kill Jaures?
Why did
They kill Jaures?

One cannot say
That they
Were slaves
They had
The choice
To go or stay
The choice
To live
That way or die
None of them
Could change

The world
And yet the hope
Of better times
Remained a vision
In the weary eyes
Of those few
Who refused
To lead obsequious
Obedient lives
Yes your lordship
Thank you
Bless you mistress
Why did
They kill Jaures?
Why did
They kill Jaures?

If by misfortune
They survived
That war that was
To end all wars
They remained
At war for life
Lunatic generals
Used them
Like they used
The bullets
And grenades
In the
Killing fields
Of Europe
At twenty years
They'd hardly
Yet been born
As they died
In abject fear
And still we bow
And scrape
Just as before
Still we beg
Their God
To take yet more

Demand our rights
And common wealth
Our youth
And freedom
Earth itself
Demand
The right to dream
Why did

They kill Jaures?
Why did
They kill Jaures?

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