

a piece of bread  
for a starving  
brown belly  
    ma non troppo,  
this grass  
beneath the blue,  
this very all  
    of much  
so much for all  
    ma non troppo,  
this life  
this small life  
this little lie  
    ma non troppo.

## BILL FEWER

### THE SHEIKH BLUES

the slender Arabian fingers  
shake a cigarette into an ashtray.  
Marilyn Monroe stares  
like a fun pier waif from the wall.  
Valentino scratches his head, confused.  
his paunch rumbles, and the traffic agrees.  
today is the day his contract expires;  
the dream tent falling down,  
camels kicking sand.  
  
the bedroom mirror  
smears his handsome profile  
a glowing taint of eczema.  
his fingers stumble into the telephone.  
the small bruised book

howls with skeleton numbers,  
names sketching night-bodies,  
forgotten hours echoing  
voices he confuses with arms.  
moans and promises in the secret nights.  
brief perfume of lips that held him.

he blinds his obsolete eyes  
and drifts from bed,  
the world a wrong number,  
a voice who fails to recognise his name.  
his notorious tent bulges  
as the desert wind flaps through it,  
the sand whirls around him  
as the credits roll.

the cudding camels blink at him,  
blank, abused, sperm-weary.

## **BILL FEWER**

### THE ROMANTIC

in the ruins of the noble house  
the alcoholic ghost shambles

the portraits groan with brandy  
the larder empty of beer

he trudges through the halls  
with an elegant, thespian step

like that of a man  
treading on air