

Falzarego Pass

By Mike Blood

The summit breeze was churlish.

Distracted flakes of snow ignored us

on more important business.

Quiet unanimity annulled

The comfortable lunch –

Snuggled into rocks,

Thwarting the wind,

Lapping the views –

Anticipated in the sunny valley.

A fast descent, then, focussed on feet,

To the chuckling hiss of feckless scree.

So, round behind the avalanche breaks

The little plateau.

Cave-mouths not quite closed with concrete;

Skeletal stakes (timber, here!);

And coils, bereft and rusting coils

And coils of brown barbed-wire.

Unsettling, upsetting,

Like that hearse on our wedding day.

Down more thoughtfully to the cable-car.

Winter warfare, 1916.

A lens to wrench your Alpine view.