

JOAN MCGUIRE

Love Letter in Stone

il me reste d'être l'ombre entre les ombres
l'ombre qui viendra et reviendra
dans ta vie ensoleillée

—Robert Desnos

A sunlit park behind Notre Dame.
Through the black iron gate
a silent descent underground
into a chamber of ghosts
enclosed by poems

Two hundred thousand tiny
lights in the darkness.
"Pour que vive le souvenir
de deux cent mille français
exterminés dans les camps Nazis"

Engraved in the stone wall
a message from a poet who,
cut off from his beloved,
dreamed his shadow with her:
a shadow among shadows

Not far from Prague
in Terezin Concentration Camp
there's a small memorial, bright
with flowers. "Ici mourût
Le Poète et Résistant Français
Robert Desnos, 18 juin 1945"

a shadow among shadows
on a sun-blessed day