

# A Man

*by Nina Cassian*

While fighting for his country, he lost an arm  
And was suddenly afraid:  
“From now on, I shall only be able to do things  
by halves.  
I shall reap half a harvest.  
I shall be able to play either the tune  
or the accompaniment on the piano,  
but never both parts together.  
I shall be able to bang with only one fist  
on doors, and worst of all  
I shall only be able to half hold  
my love close to me.  
There will be things I cannot do at all,  
applaud for example,  
at shows where everyone applauds.”

From that moment on, he set himself to do  
everything with twice as much enthusiasm.  
And where the arm had been torn away  
a wing grew.