

Jongleurs

I twig a calf in France's saffron sky,
Who overleapt a heightening moon.

'This is old song' gongs an old magnifico
By a cool plane tree. He exacts an air

He's cooked for years in smoky bronchioles,
Where a henge of stock-stone people lay,

And say so little of how they got there.
One coughs up tuppence for the fiddler's palm,

He snaps a catgut string in shock and flees
To a bridge, armpits metres from the stream.

I saw him toss a sort-of silver piece,
And caught the river tinkling in receipt,

Before an otter—do you see it too?—
Slinks *sotto voce* away, a warped echo

In tail-interrupted blue, at work so
Awkwardly on the back of a spoon.