Martin Robertson

Two Songs of a Mercenary

from Archilochus

1

The spear is my rough wine, as it is my bread, and even when I'm drinking my spear is ready.

2

My shield (not its fault) is making some tribesman's day, picked from the bush in which I threw it away. I didn't want to, but I saved my skin. Good-bye that shield. I shall get one no worse quite easily.

This poem is reprinted from Now and Then, the website devoted to the poetry of Martin Robertson, at http://rtnl.org.uk/now_and_then/