

## Orders of Magnitude

Mario Petrucci<sup>1</sup>

One hundred thousand trillion joules  
to turn an ice cap into mush

One hundred thousand billion joules  
to erase a major Eastern city

A hundred thousand million joules  
to run a car to death

One hundred million of the same  
for Fire Brigades to reach the kitten

Ten million just to keep  
December from cold feet

A hundred thousand joules for a mug  
of tea – A hundred joules

for a second's worth of War and Peace  
Ten to raise a hand – to lift

an average apple to the lips  
A single joule to shout the command

Half a joule to pull the trigger  
Just one tenth to push the button

Almost zero to have the thought.

From: *Flowers of Sulphur* (Enitharmon, 2007)

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<sup>1</sup> Author's permission to reprint in *Ecozon@* Vol 3, No 1