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Although Raymond Queneau employs a variety of canonical metres in his poetry, he appears to avoid the decasyllable almost completely. On the rare occasions when he does use it, he systematically opts for a 5-5 metre instead of the canonical 4-6, thus forgetting both the decasyllable itself and its traditional metre. The 5-5 metre bears neither the epic nor the lyric registers of the 4-6, being linked more to folk song, with connotations of a lower register. In this article I make use of an extensive database developed specifically to analyse Raymond Queneau's versification, in order to assess the form and the meaning of Queneau's decasyllable. I link the use of this metre to the themes of memory and the past. Queneau, whilst forgetting a canonical metre - the 4-6 -, remembers a rare one - the 5-5 - and uses this vulgar verse to address a serious, metaphysical reflection on the passing of time. This mismatching of subject and tone is typical of Queneau's writing practices.

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