Poems

Antonia Pozzi

Translated by Peter Robinson
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Poems

Se le mie parole potessero essere offerte a qualcuno questa pagina porterebbe il tuo nome.

If my words could be offered to someone this page would bear your name.
FROM

PAROLE / WORDS
Offerta a una tomba

ad A.M.C.

Dall’alto mi hai mostrato, un po’ fuori della frana ruinosa di case, un additare nero di cipressi saettati attraverso l’azzurro a custodire i marmi bianchi del cimitero. Ho pensato ad una tomba che non ho mai veduta e mi è sembrato di deporvi in quell’istante, con trepido cuore a fior di mani, un vivo fascio di garofani rossi.

17 aprile 1929
Offering to a Tomb

to A.M.C.*

From high above you showed me,
not far beyond the houses’ ruinous slide,
a black pointing of cypresses
darting through the azure
as custodian
to the cemetery’s white marble.
I thought of a tomb
I’ve never seen
and to me it seemed
there I placed at that moment,
with tremulous heart on my sleeve,
a living clutch
of red carnations.

17th April 1929
Un’altra sosta
a L.B.

Appoggiami la testa sulla spalla:
ch’io ti carezzi con un gesto lento,
come se la mia mano accompagnasse
una lunga, invisibile gugliata.
Non sul tuo capo solo: su ogni fronte
che dolga di tormento e di stanchezza
scendono queste mie carezze cieche,
come foglie ingiallite d’autunno
in una pozza che riflette il cielo.

*Milano, 23 aprile 1929*
Another Respite

to L.B.*

Rest your head on my shoulder:
so I caress you with a slow gesture,
as if my hand accompanied
a long, invisible needleful of thread.
Not on your face only: on any forehead
aching with torment and tiredness
fall these blind caresses of mine,
like the yellowed leaves of autumn
in a puddle reflecting the sky.

Milan, 23rd April 1929
Amore di lontananza

Ricordo che, quand’ero nella casa della mia mamma, in mezzo alla pianura, avevo una finestra che guardava sui prati; in fondo, l’argine boscoso nascondeva il Ticino e, ancor più in fondo, c’era una striscia scura di colline. Io allora non avevo visto il mare che una sol volta, ma ne conservavo un’aspra nostalgia da innamorata. Verso sera fissavo l’orizzonte; socchiudevo un po’ gli occhi; accarezzavo i contorni e i colori tra le ciglia: e la striscia dei colli si spianava, tremula, azzurra: a me pareva il mare e mi piaceva più del mare vero.

Milano, 24 aprile 1929
Love of Distance*

I remember, when in my mother’s house, in the middle of the plain, I had a window that looked onto the meadows; far off, the wooded bank hid the Ticino and, further on, there was a dark line of hills. Back then I’d only seen the sea one time, but preserved of it a sharp nostalgia as when in love. Towards evening I stared at the skyline; I narrowed my eyes a little; caressed outlines and colours between my lids; and the line of hills flattened out, trembling, azure: and seemed the sea to me and pleased me more than the real sea.

_Milan, 24th April 1929_
Distacco

*a T.F.*

Tu, partita.
Senza desiderare la parola
che avevo in cuore e che non seppi dire.
Nel vano della porta, il nostro bacio
(lieve, ché ti eri appena incipriata)
quasi spaccato in due da un gran barbaglio
di luce, che veniva dalle scale.
Io rimasta
lungamente al mio tavolo, dinnanzi
a un vecchio ritrattino della mamma,
specchiando fissamente dentro il vetro
i miei occhi febrili, inariditi.

*Milano, 9 maggio 1929*
Separation

to T.F.*

You, departed.
Without wishing the word
I had in my heart and could not say.
In the space of the door, our kiss
(light, for you’d just powdered your face)
near split in two by a great glare
of light, which came from the stairs.
Me, remained
a long time at my table, before
an old miniature of my mother,
fixedly regarding in the glass
my feverish, dried eyes.

Milan, 9th May 1929
Sventatezza

Ricordo un pomeriggio di settembre, sul Montello. Io, ancora una bambina, col trecciolino smilzo ed un prurito di pazze corse su per le ginocchia. Mio padre, rannicchiato dentro un andito scavato in un rialzo del terreno, mi additava attraverso una fessura il Piave e le colline; mi parlava della guerra, di sé, dei suoi soldati. Nell’ombra, l’erba gelida e affilata mi sfiorava i polpacci: sotto terra, le radici succhiavan forse ancora qualche goccia di sangue. Ma io ardevo dal desiderio di scattare fuori, nell’invidente sole, per raccogliere un pugnetto di more da una siepe.

Milano, 22 maggio 1929
Heedlessness

I remember a September afternoon on the Montello.* Me, a child still, with a little thin plait and an itch for crazy races up through my knees. My father, crouched within a passage dug into some rising terrain, indicated for me through a cleft, the Piave and hills; he spoke to me of the war, of himself, his soldiers. In the shadow, the sharp and frozen grass was grazing my calves: underground, the roots were perhaps still sucking up some drops of blood. But me I burned with the desire to leap outside, into the invading sun, to gather a fistful of blackberries from a hedge.

Milano, 22nd May 1929
Giacere

Ora l’annientamento blando
di nuotare riversa,
col sole in viso
– il cervello penetrato di rosso
trasverso le palpebre chiuse –.
Stasera, sopra il letto, nella stessa postura,
il candore trasognato
di bere,
con le pupille larghe,
l’anima bianca della notte.

Santa Margherita, 19 giugno 1929
Lying Down

Now the bland annihilation
of swimming backstroke,
with sun on my face
– the brain pierced by red
through eyelids closed –.
Tonight, on my bed, in the same posture,
the dreamy candour
of drinking,
with dilated pupils,
the white soul of the night.

Santa Margherita, 19th June 1929
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