

Poems of Pascal D'Angelo*

MIDDAY**

The road is like a little child running ahead of
me and then hiding behind a curve –
Perhaps to surprise me when I reach there.
The sun has built a nest of light under the eaves of
noon;
A lark drops down from the cloudless sky
Like a singing arrow, wet with blue, sped from the
bow of space.
But my eyes pierce the soft azure, far, far beyond,
To where roam eternal lovers
Along the broad blue ways
Of silence.

* Editor's Note: Many of these poems were reprinted in newspapers across the country and in Canada, frequently shortened and with altered lineation. Each poem lists the publication(s) where it was featured. Poems from *Son of Italy* refer to the pagination of the Guernica Editions 2003 publication.

** *Son of Italy*, 22 and *The Literary Review* 1922

MID-DREAM*

In spite of the whirrs made up by the
fractional universes
My room is the cobalt dome of silence.
If silence were a stream my room
would be a flower blooming on it,
For nothing is heard there save the
purring of a gas light,
Licking its fiery lips.

Outside the night is nailed on the
cross of darkness:
The stars, distant, tremulous, are like
infant fires sucking splendor
from the bare breasts of heaven.
In a startled helplessness I stare
about!
Am I a blossoming rose whose life is
fed on the hope of priding some
young beast?
Do I dream like the rose
Of those maiden lips that blend with
moonlight,
Like a sweet red wound cut by a sud-
den kiss?

* *The Brooklyn Eagle* 1932

In my heart are echoes of young sighs,
But from young lips no words are
 falling, to settle in the silvery
 liquid of silence.

The azure flower of my room is
 a tremor,
But all the mischievous words have
 run away from my lips, rosily,
And the silent maiden lips of dreams
 are silent.

MONTE MAJELLA*

The mountain in a prayer of questioning heights
gazes upward at the dumb heavens,
And its inner anger is forever bursting forth
In twisting torrents.
Like little drops of dew trickling along the crevices
Of this giant questioner
I and my goats were returning toward the town
below.
But my thoughts were of a little glen where wild
roses grow
And cool springs bubble up into blue pools.
And the mountain was insisting for an answer from
the still heaven.

* *Son of Italy*, 22 and *The Literary Review* 1922

THE CITY*

We who were born through the love of God must
die through the hatred of Man.
We who grapple with the destruction of ignorance
and the creation of unwitting love –
We struggle, blinded by dismal night in a weird
shadowy city.
Yet the city itself is lifting street-lamps, like a
million cups filled with light,
To quench from the upraised eyes their thirst of
gloom;
And from the hecatombs of aching souls
The factory smoke is unfolding in protesting curves
Like phantoms of black unappeased desires,
yearning and struggling and pointing upward;
While through its dark streets pass people, tired,
useless,
Trampling the vague black illusions
That pave their paths like broad leaves of water-
lilies
On twilight streams;
And there are smiles at times on their lips.
Only the great soul, denuded to the blasts of reality,
Shivers and groans.
And like two wild ideas lost in a forest of thoughts,
Blind hatred and blinder love run amuck through
the city.

* *Son of Italy*, 149, *The Brooklyn Eagle* 1923, and *The Nation* 1925

THE RAILROAD*

In the dark verdure of summer
The railroad tracks are like the chords of a lyre
gleaming across the dreamy valley,
And the road crosses them like a flash of lightning.
But the souls of many who speed like music on the
 melodious heart-strings of the valley
Are dim with storms;
And the soul of a farm lad who plods, whistling, on
 the lightning road
Is a bright blue sky.

* *Son of Italy*, 146-147, *The Nation* 1922, and *The Boston Globe* 1922

THE TOILERS*

Brown faces of immatured senility
Twisted into an ecstasy of unshaped satiation.
Eyes that are huge, tumultuous flares of light
Peering athwart the forced austerity of tiredness.
Your hugely-muscled, stalwart arms
That lift the mammoth weight of majestic industry,
Branch up from your broad Herculean shoulders
In a magnificence of thronged power.
Reeling on the verge of eagerness
You shift about –
Throughout the night you are hurled
In a confused heave of struggling illusions,
Under the machinal flights of those moistened walls,
Under those black, moistened walls of disregarded
futility.
Facing this Giant monument of bitterness –
Your thoughts!
Amid the incessant whirrs of the maniac motors,
Are smashed into fragments of an irresolved dream,
And you are swept on! On!
By the involuntary rapids of meniality
In the frenzied whirls of humiliation!
On! On!

* *Il Carroccio* 1922 and *The Literary Digest* 1922

TO A DEAD FRIEND*

Death has pressed his lips upon your
brow,
My Friend, and you are gone
And did he speak, and did you bow,
Or walk, as bidden, on?

Upon the broad, dim stairs that lead
to light,
Out of the abyss of life,
Did he stand, pointing upward, robed
in white,
Far from these scenes of strife?

Ah, death has touched you with his
fingertips,
And you are gone, My Friend,
And he will pause some day to seal my
lips
Of care, some day, My Friend.

* *Il Carroccio* 1923 and *The Brooklyn Eagle* 1932

TO A DEAD POET*

The Sun stands aloft like a giant sign of
splendor
Sealing the secrets of Eternity.
Before its baffling brilliance,
Your eyes were like strange heavens
peopled with souls of smiles;
And now – and now they have flown with
their burden of loveliness
Beyond the giant seal of light.
What were you but a dream – a gentle
dream
In the thoughts of your sleeping fate?
The Brute has awakened and you have
vanished
Into the pathways of dreams
Beyond the light.
And now you must disobey forever
The sweet trumpet calls of Spring.

* *Shadows* 1922 and *The Brooklyn Eagle* 1932

TO A WARRIOR*

You saw the slow finger of Time writing your name in
gold within the heart of the hours.
Great poets were priests to minister
The giant burning taper of your fame,
With perfumed wax of their ecstatic melodies –
From the great yellow flame, the sparks of light
Shone like a thousand suns encircling the universe of your
glory.
And to-day, I also sing to you,
Great murderer!

* *The Liberator* 1922

TO SOME MODERN POETS*

Your names are like decapitated giants bleeding black
oblivion;

You are the frail voices.

The indomitable rhythm of beauty writhes under the
claws of your pens;

Your eyes are twin candles burning flames of yearn-
ing desire toward the high, sacred altar of poesy.

All that you sought to attain has eluded you;

You have tried, and your day is passing.

Yet grieve not;

Much that charms is small and fleeting

To the greatness of eternity.

The earth is a tiny shadow tottering on the edge of
death;

The moon is a throb of splendor in the heart of night;

And the stars are ephemera in the long gaze of God.

So grieve not

That your poems are the cool, fresh grass of a short
summer;

The flowers are few.

* *The Century* 1922

WHISPERS*

When the azure hives of silence are
filled with soft whispers –
Whispers of lovers that pass into faint
twilights,
Whispers from the hazy distances,
And the last drowsy whisperings of
day –

And when night half opens her deep,
sorrowing eyes –
Eyes that gaze but see not, save beyond –
beyond –
And the wind comes like an artist
Sculpturing the monolith of silence
into a statue of whirring gloom,
And the black hives of stillness now
quiver with crimson murmurings –
Then my subdued heart swoons
With the silence of a flower that abandons
itself in the embrace of spring.

For – Ah! What use is the jangle of words,
or of thoughts, even,
When God is whispering?

* *The Literary Review* 1922