

Claudio Damiani, Poems translated by Emanuel di Pasquale

(from *New Italian Poetry, An Anthology*, Gradiva Publications – Stony Brook, New York, 2007)

Morella, your houses are black
and the roof tiles are carbons,
your roads are ashes
and the girls who brought water,
happy and grateful, to Fraterno,
whom they caressed with their eyes
and with gentle voices
and who were dear to Fraterno
and who remained in its memory.
Morella, you were lovely,
a small quite villane above Fraterno,
even if you have been often sacked
and burned down,
still each time you returned more lovely.
And even now, even without the houses
and the roads
how lovely you are with a rug of grass
and the rose bushes that bloom on your hair
and the cool shade of the beech,
and Fraterno that shines below, at your feet,
and that has never left you.

(from *La miniera*, 1997)

I am lying on the bed
and you caress me,
you wash me like a dead hero
and spread oil over me.
You weep over me,
you cannot hold the tears in your eyes,
the tears come out of your eyelashes
and a sob shaker your chest.
Why do you weep? Do not weep,
I am not dead.
I am walking on a small white road
surrounded by young trees,
I feel the leaves that brush against my temples,
I feel the breeze that caresses me.

(from *Eroi*, 2000)

Giovanni, you rightly say
it's better to be here than in heaven
when we die
because here you are with those dear to you,
you know where you are, even if you are not always happy,
at times you are sad, at times you are angry,
instead in heaven you do not know who you are with,
it's hard to understand where and how one would be
and you are a bit afraid to be so high,
and one does not understand where the feet would stand on.
And even I think: Giovanni, in heaven will I see you
or will I not see you?
But of course, of course we will see each other,
I will wait for you and you will come,
and then we will stay there, even if we don't quite know in what way,
even if we don't quite know how, it does not matter.

(from *Eroi*, 2000)