

Two Poems of Gabriele D'Annunzio

Translated from the Italian by
[Michael Shindler](#) (April 2019)



Gabriele D'Annunzio

Gabriele D'Annunzio could be described as an Italian nationalist, politician, and an eccentric literary artist. He was an officer and pilot of the First World War and later influenced Italian politics and literary culture to such a degree that Mussolini is said to have considered him a rival. Although his ideas were formative in the rise of Fascism, D'Annunzio's popularity remains strong with multiple museums and public structures in Italy dedicated to his life and works.

In Van Pregghi

In vain you beg, in vain you ache,
in vain you've opened your wrecked heart wide.
Perhaps in heaven the rainclouds quake
because we both have cried?

This pain of ours is without a wing.
The fainthearted cry can never fly.
Weep and pray! What god is coming
by the path of the stars up high?

Abandon yourself to the dust
and upon it fall in surrender.
Our great mother is ever so just

to every sinner who kisses her.

Within a Hell of godless emptiness
submit yourself ever more to sleep's spell.
All is a dream, all is nothingness:
the flower of the world is the asphodel.

In van preghi, in vano aneli,
in van mostri il cuore infranto.
Sono forse umidi i cieli
perché noi abbiamo pianto?

Il dolor nostro è senz'ala.
Non ha volo il grido imbelle.
Piangi e prega! Qual dio cala
pel cammino delle stelle?

Abbandónati alla polve
e su lei prono ti giaci.
La supina madre assolve
d'ogni colpa chi la baci.

In un Ade senza dio
dormi quanto puoi profondo.
Tutto è sogno, tutto è oblio:
l'asfodelo è il fior del Mondo.

Lalba separa dalla luce l'ombra

The dawn divides all light from shadow,
and all my sensuousness from desiring.
O sweet stars, now's come the hour of dying.
A higher love from heaven lets you go.

Burning eyes, O you-fated to fade away.
Sad stars, snuff yourselves while you've pure light!
Die, I must. I've no wish to see the day,
for I do so love my dream and the night.

Hold me, O Night, with motherly affection,
While the wan earth wakes with a misty yawn.
By my blood will be born the dawn

and from my fleeting dream—the undying sun!

L'alba sepàra dalla luce l'ombra,
e la mia voluttà dal mio desire.
O dolce stelle, è l'ora di morire.
Un più divino amor dal ciel vi sgombra.

Pupille ardenti, O voi senza ritorno.
Stelle tristi, spegnetevi incorrotte!
Morir debbo. Veder non voglio il giorno,
per amor del mio sogno e della notte.

Chiudimi, O Notte, nel tuo sen materno,
mentre la terra pallida s'irrorà.
Ma che dal sangue mio nasca l'aurora
e dal sogno mio breve il sole eterno!

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