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## poem

## Wilhelmina and Manfreda at the Balcony (XIII century)

Dino Campana

Here we are alone before the nocturnal mystery. The moon  
 May shine over mankind's sad loves,  
 She's veiled with mist and tears like Venus rising  
 From the sea on the first morning of the world  
 The world still smoking in primal chaos as she laughs  
 With so much tender sorrow  
 Since then much time has flown, and still that sorrow  
 Is weighing on the tender breast of Venus  
 Yet it is infinitely sweet to feel the tiredness  
 Of our hearts exhausted but still burning  
 Through immemorial time  
 Towards the soul of the world that none can slake.

This poem is from Dino Campana's (1885–1932) *Selected Works*, translated by Cristina Viti and published by Survivors' Poetry in 2006. Dino Campana was admitted to San Salvi, an asylum in Florence at the age of 32 years and transferred to Castel Pulci, a place designated for those regarded as incurable in April 1918 where he remained until his death. Another of his poems, *Easy Listening*, was published in the *Journal* in August 2012.

Chosen by Femi Oyeboode.

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