

'Two Old Heads'

Ian Seed

So, nothing: this, the view shifted,
my mother swimming away,
and the gift of you bending over
in a scene I dreamt of once before,
sudden formlessness raised around you,
too high for you to climb, a voice
lost as I enter the city without you.

But why these houses, the sadness of them?
I won't tell you of the impression your shout
makes in the dark. E poi basta –
it's enough for you to have knelt down
in the place where you did, only a few moments
ago. To stay upright is tiring –
you should know a few things about that.

Meanwhile the days pass. It's snowy
and foggy. If your father is an executioner,
his face all lit up, how do you translate this
into family terms? I reach out to you
from forgotten wounds, I tell myself words
I have never understood. At times
some dead thing overcomes me. You

or who? The surprise at finding myself
uncomposed in front of an open window,
your promise to close your eyes next time.
No one can tear you away. Did you know
I would grow tired of waiting before you
grew tired of watching? I've tried to understand
what you're telling me and even to tell it

to others who have no objection
to this gift from a lost one. The things
you dream up to make yourself interesting:
'My wife, Anna, is very blond and knows how to dress.'
E poi basta – I'm locking the house and leaving.
The sky is no different from the colour of stone.
What makes me love you makes me want to run.