Night Character translated by Frank Stewart

Dino Campana

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Dino Campana

NIGHT CHARACTER

Florence below was an abyss of lights of trembling sordidness:
On wings of fire the faraway rangling
Of the tram faded: the enormous dull river
Flashed its serpent's scales.
Above the indefinite spirals the disquiet smirking faces
Of thieves, and I between two equal rows of cypresses like
sputtering torches

More bitter than cypress hedges
More bitter than trembling box-trees
As from my heart this love
As from my heart, the love a pimp breaks into song:
I love the old whores
Swollen with the fermentation of sperm
Who flop like toads on all fours on their red mattresses
And wait and pant and gasp
Flaccid as bellows.

translated by
Frank Stewart