



Photo credit: Alessandra Capodacqua

Lawn n° 3 (puntasecca) from Prati / Pelouses, Camera Verde, 2009.

Sooner or later you'll come to the lawn. Not directly, like a person walking on it (or in it). But through some sort of mediation, which someone is responsible for. An individual met by chance, older than you, who winds up inviting you home and doesn't talk about it right away, but in the end you understand, while he's pouring some wine in your glass, that he paints lawns. And everywhere around the flat, lying on tables, bookcases, bureaus, leaning against walls and wardrobes, small canvases, at time only sheets of paper, not even in color but mere strokes of Indian ink. They're black lawns, agitated, like a storm of needles, without anything else that appears, or brightens, or interrupts the swarm of strokes. The lawn, therefore, is conceivable in its isolation, like an evident, solitary, apparently simple thing, but one that can start to elude the person who paints or draws it more than once, as if in distress, and then goes back to it, to finish the work, or at least that's what he thinks at first, but then the work doesn't get finished, it turns into a nervous mess, the lawn is always there, still unfinished, some of the lines aren't simple and elementary, they're artificial, stubborn artifices once again, signals of lawn, not good parts of lawn.

from Autoantologia, Poesie e Prose (1998-2016), Dot.Com Press, 2017

At night, it's the time of peace, when you go to bed, quit wandering round and making up excuses to turn the light back on, put your shoes on again, the long diurnal agitation really is about to end, night has crept into every room, things have been swallowed up, finally motionless, silent, there's still a little light because you have to get something in the bathroom, out of a drawer, some medicine perhaps, or a book, and just before turning off the light again, making it completely night even in your head, their images return, silhouettes fleet by, women's contours, their hair blowing in the wind, even faceless, their voices when they're upset, and call, almost crying, or only sighing, leaving long pauses between words, sadly, or don't stop laughing, as if they were just upstairs, or else had let themselves down on swings, or their breasts come back, close-up, or their knees, and in the room's artificial light, while a few lines of a novel slide by, you remember those changes of position between the sheets, often as not during the day, when legs open up, a body lying belly-down, until true peace comes and you close your eyes, even the inner images are turned off, those quick comet-faces, then you really do slip off into sleep, your head against the pillow, your body lying supine, like a cross or crossways, the light turned off, the night prevailing, with only a few suffused gleams coming from outside the French window, street lights around the sports field, lit rooms on the top floors of surrounding buildings, it's good darkness, hushed darkness, soon unconsciousness will arrive, sleep that restores, dreams slender and slight like a stream of images, and nothing else, you sink into a nothingness roomy and comfortable, it seemed there was this great silence, the calm you expected, a prolonged absence of stimuli, but little by little they drift up from the street, from other apartments, from surrounding buildings, from closed parks, from the few coffee shops still open, from the whole neighborhood come noises, scattered pricks of annoyance, sneaky and violent, suddenly from the south and from the north, the screech of tires on asphalt, they burn because of the attrition of spasmodic braking or sudden parting, dogs, who'd seemed exhausted, in their doghouses, stretched out under armchairs, go on balconies to bark, and there are already a lot of them in the street, brawling, their owners let them off the leash, the animals throw themselves on one another, from my bed I can't see anything, I haven't turned on the light, the furious dogfights I can hear from the barking, the whimpers of a wounded dog, the rasping of paws against asphalt, maybe some lynchings have entered the brawl, or wolves, or animals with stubby horns and hooves, like wild boars, and they're chasing and charging like mad, but now the people who were braking and making their tyres

screech are blowing their horns, they've even installed absurd sirens, not like police sirens, but that makes the police cars speed onto the scene, turn on their sirens, the real ones, and the false and the true sirens blend together wailing into the night, even if the police cars are hurled into different streets, but when they put on their brakes again either they rear-end a parked van or they crash hard into a fence or a streetlamp, after the din of the crash you hear the noise of doors banging, of trunks and car doors opening and closing, but in the end they're not completely closed, and then there are the screams of people being pulled out of twisted metal, but this time it's the screaming of prostitutes, new screams, or the shouts of a drunken father who's pounding his two daughters in an apartment in the building across the street, it's only the American girls shouting, excited, it's the final euphoric moment of the party, then they'll pick up a guy for sex, otherwise they'll have to run into the bathroom to throw up, and they're already retching, because one or two of them have been thrown out onto the landing, and on the seventh floor hallway they're bent over, it looks like they're coughing, closer up it's clear that someone is suffocating, but now the ones who were standing in the streets nearby, are approaching, wearing hooded sweatshirts that shade their faces, from the noise of broken glass you can tell they're holding something in their hand, long, sharp metal objects, probably spears, and they hit the advertisements on the city hall, the neon-lit ones, the kind with images that disappear and reappear at regular intervals, they're trashing everything thoroughly, and also very happily, they let out joyful shouts, laugh at the top of their lungs, jump on the pieces of broken glass on the ground, on the plastic trash, but further away in the park something strange is happening, it's a crazy man being attacked by a gang of kids, or it's the crazy who's attacking a tramp, or maybe it's the police manhandling one of the hooded guys, they're working him over on the spot, but first they handcuffed him tight, they jump on his back, they're having a good time working him over, the prostitute lost a shoe while she was running away, scared, she didn't feel the slap or maybe the punch on her chest, but the customer is back in his car, he may not follow her, he bites his lip till it almost bleeds, because the sniff he took half an hour ago is still throbbing in his head, even if it's not possible to most of this, but the drunken father has destroyed the dresser, he banged someone's head into it, his wife or one of the daughters', and now there's the great silence of blood dripping onto the floor, everyone is silent, because the flow of blood produces great calm, now that blood is coming out of heads, out of the palms of hands, you can finally imagine a brief sleep, before daybreak when the green sanitation truck passes and the ambulance leaves the neighbourhood, now that everyone has been taken care of, treated and reported, now that the trash has been collected and thrown into the good jaws that chew everything up noisily, the last noise of when the first light dawns and you pretend to open your eyes, with the rested air of someone who has slept like a log and gets out of bed refreshed and relaxed.

from *La grande anitra*, Oèdipus, 2013

In this poem

destruction arrives very slowly
but it is certain destruction
that will end all at once

destruction proceeds thoughtfully
with caution but its
action will be effective and extreme

that is why it is very strange
that they don't expect it
with all the time that destruction takes
around them

they just sit there idly
there must be at least four of them
they can hardly talk they're so quiet
around the table with their glasses
the photo albums to leaf through

not that they are sad or worn out
they're enjoying the afternoon with total
loyalty they have a lot of letters
to write and trips to organize

yet not for a second does the slightest
misgiving touch them or the idea
that though slow, destruction is falling
inexorably over a vast reach

I'd like to tell them somehow

give an unequivocal signal
of danger inside the poem
but the four of them are so absorbed

they know each other well they're related
they're closely tied they feel no urgency
to look around suspiciously
or start speaking out of breath

the way it comes

moving languidly, destruction
won't spare them for sure
on the contrary, the point of collision

if we look down from on high
is located right in the middle
of their dining room

In this poem
the person who is sitting here to write
fidgeting in a filament of space
on a small bare surface
is someone who wants to get into the poem
wants to accelerate inside that agitation
get out of the space gain altitude
or just dig a hole
an interval

he wants to become a poet
who when it rains or the wind blows

or a dog jumps on him
or someone scratches him with his nails
remains aloof along the words
hovering above it all
a large part remains below
in the trap of water and rain
under the nails under the teeth
but along the trail of words
some part of him now
is no longer touched or humiliated

In this poem

the goods in dreams look like the goods you can buy like shelf goods
so the goods in dreams look point for point color for color like the real
thing like the daytime goods of a waking conscious but the goods in dreams
are slightly more malleable first of all they don't lie down don't come to sit
like a docile animal under the hand the goods in dreams
point elsewhere they tend towards sunset take on a diffusely tenuous color
everything manages to start up again even the worst sorrows a great urge to laugh or fly
but the goods of dreams are mingled and hidden inside the real goods:
this game of appearances and disappearances that makes us tremble unfulfilled

Translation by Brenda Porster

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Andrea Inglese

Andrea Inglese (1967), born in Milan, is now living near Paris. He is a writer and translator. After teaching philosophy in an academic high school, he taught Italian language and literature at the University of Paris III. He has published a study on the theory of the novel, *L'eroe segreto. Il personaggio nella modernità dalla confessione al solipsismo* (2003) and a collection of essays, *La confusione è ancella della menzogna* for the online publisher Quintadicovertina (2012). He has written essays on literary theory and criticism, two works of prose for La Camera Verde (*Prati / Pelouses*, 2007 and *Quando Kubrick inventò la fantascienza*, 2011) and seven volumes of poetry, the latest of which, *Lettere alla Reinserzione Culturale del Disoccupato*, appeared in Italian (Italic Pequod, 2013), French (NOUS, 2013) and English (Patrician Press, 2017). In 2016, he published his first novel, *Parigi è un desiderio* (Premio Bridge 2017) for Ponte alle Grazie. *Un'autoantologia Poesie e prose 1998-2016* was published in the series "Autoriale", edited by Biagio Cepollaro (Dot.Com Press, 2017). Inglese has edited an anthology of the French poet Jean-Jacques Viton, *Il commento definitivo. Poesie 1984-2008* (Metauro, 2009). He is a founding member of the literary blog *Nazione Indiana* and is on the editorial committee of *alfabeta2*. He is curator of the project [Descrizione del mondo](#), for a collective installation of texts, sounds & images.