

## Bella terra, bella gent

Josep Carner

**To a fountain, at night**

Whimpering fountain, why disturb  
infinity's gentleness,  
over what, in the end, may prove  
only a small distress?

Are you regretting the time you'd heard  
nothing of all the earth,  
inside the crevice you then abandoned,  
the blind place of your birth?

Are you frightened by the icy air  
dishevelling your spell? Do stars  
reflected in your little lake  
leave deep scars?

Who can tell whether, envious  
under strangers' mockery,  
like my life you go on complaining,  
anxious and miserly?

If only one could be a distant star,  
a mountain-range, a tree  
full of enchanted wings,  
a never-conquered sea!

Fountain, my languishing sister,  
can you tell me, can you recall  
whether you weep because you exist, or  
because you barely exist at all?

Translated by Pearse Hutchinson