

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

Italian evening; ending of a holiday

After Leopardi

by Steve Brown

Night: warm, transparent, motionless.
The moon – its cold, stone face – waits
above the rooftops; mountains lean near
across their distance. In your room
you sleep so easily, not troubled
by the night-lights, flickering in windows, scattered
here and there. You have no notion
of how an old wound opened, nor
how the moonlight pools new blood.
Parked cars hunch their shoulders, rest
in the end of holiday. Do you dream
of how you laughed today, the smiles
you collected? I reckon I'll never figure
in your private theatre, and I ask
myself – well, then, what's left for me?
And in this moment, a man's voice,
staggered in all the catchings of his drink
and end of holiday, sings an old, broken song
- and everything the world has taken,
lost, is given back within that moment,
as if cracked yearning was enough
to write the ticket, register the cost
of all that's slipped, is slipping even now,
into that warm darkness.