



Your Call Keeps Us Awake: Selected Poems

Rocco Scotellaro

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Rocco Scotellaro (1923-53), the radical and unsentimental poet of Italian peasant life, grew up in the impoverished and mountainous Italian mezzogiorno. Active in the post-war struggle for land reform, his election as first socialist mayor of Tricarico brought him into conflict with local landowners. Imprisoned on false charges, he was eventually released but tragically died of a heart attack soon after. The following year, in 1954, Carlo Levi edited a posthumous selection of his friend's poetry, *E Fatto Giorno*, which was subsequently awarded the prestigious Viareggio and the Pellegrino prizes amongst others. In 1986 Mondadori published a complete collection of Scotellaro's poetry, from which this selection has been drawn and translated into English for the first time. Scotellaro's work explores the ambiguous and painful tensions between family and individual, the country and the city, solitude and friendship; the contradictions of the old world, with the grandeur of its history and the backwardness of its superstitions, and the new world with its progress and its alienation. *Your Call Keeps Us Awake* provides a long overdue introduction to one of the pioneers of 1940s Italian neo-realism, a great poet and humanist of the twentieth century.

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