FIVE POEMS (TRANSLATED FROM HEBREW)

Hanna Palmon

Winter near Ceasaria

On the clouds-wrapped coastal highway,
Inside a bus' clumsy womb,
Big children are lulling themselves to sleep,
First rain is cheerfully wetting
The Mediterranean's wavy diaper
With its hasty drip.

The children are plunging forward into a deep blue seat, Caressing each other; my experienced kids...

And now my neighbor is gathering imagined dinars
In the newspaper's market –
Millions of wet dinars we greet,
Laughing,

Later on each other we're leaning.

Heavy and sweet,

I'm resting my head upon a soldier's back –

His hair is desperately in love,

Beyond his olive-colored fate,

And my passion's comb is sliding through it...

Suddenly, everything that's endlessly beloved, And tightly filled with pain – Is softly born into the rain.

Consoled

For Mom – whose wall of memories collapsed so long ago

First poetry book since you've left: Gabriel Preil; Quiet and raw are his impressions now,
The mists still dream of getting traveled through,
Although a silent path has already been carved –
For Preil's desire, when it bursts,
To swallow distance, river, air,
Dark waves of surging silk, elusive touch.

And in my mind I long to schedule lucid rendezvous For both of you (Who are so light when walls of memories collapse), Since now you're just destined to love.

And years of painful clarity are finally consoled.

For Dad

Why did he give up the sweetness of the wavelets, Lulling his awaking body in the river Bug, One sunny, reckless, faithful Saturday? His shameful, shining eyes were covered by his hat, And what about the Belzer rabbi? He was wildly laughing, With such a helpless burst of happiness.

Why did he give up the wooden fleshy bench Which is still standing, hazy, in the horrible Melamed's room? (Too scared to grow new cherries on its hidden branches, And yet immersed in dreams of chariots and fire).

Why did he give up those walks into the Polish woods, By those two yearning feet, Which were so tightly locked inside his shoes?

And why did he give up the humid smell of yeast, That had inspired such chaotic longing (Ruined by any kind of sublimation) To such a soft pale light And to her smooth dark skin?

Why did he give up?

There's a light inside you Which I must not disappoint now, Yet it's not your light, not even mine. I know about you such a plenty of so little...

But simply, slowly, A blurry flash of light arrived, And yearned to be cuddled by the palm of your hand – The empty, contemplating palm of your hand,

And that's how all the truth
That had been piling up behind us –
In fact, behind all things –
Grew taller suddenly,
And was inhaled, amazed,
And blocked, at last,
By your embracing gaze

Before

This thinnest smell of rain
Sets free the wintry hungry time
That stretches out
To touch its circumference,
And in the clay dome – muddy, burnt –
Is grasping finally its own unknown outline.

A motionless fume –
Erupting, spreading,
Blossoming from everything
That is a matter to itself –
Is padding riddle-loaded contact angles,
Angles which are trapped between the creature-bound
And all its stumbling soaring yearning to come close

Before the winter comes.