



Helen Bar-Lev - Three Poems

Quickly unto the spirits

I am disappearing
into the ether
of history
unto the spirits
calling me
a drop
in the reservoir
of eternity
disintegrating
as rapidly
as a meteorite
implodes
into its essence
as fast
as a star tumbles
inside
a black sky

disappearing

The Black Spider

From inside the seashell
promised to a child
emerged a spider
and I in the shower,
Madame Justice,
weighed the options,

to kill or to spare

I remembered the cat
killed by a spider, I thought
of the black widow warnings
and this one was black
and here I was alone
under the sprinkler
pitying a spider
who might not show me
the same consideration

The bottle of shampoo
my weapon, I thought
of the child who wanted the shell,
asked forgiveness from the spider,
from God, and,
as I plunged the bottle down,
it reared up on its back legs,
as if to protect itself

Oh, I did not want to see that
better to think these creatures
have no awareness of their
existence, best not to think,
best not to look when squashing them

But I did

Dusk on the Eve of the Equinox

This year the birds have surprised us
with their early arrival
the storks in August instead of September,
the pelicans in September, not November,
the swifts swooped and dipped in exuberance
just as the squills shot out of the ground
pointing skywards, look...
roadrunners scuttled to and fro
clouds bellowed and blackened
three days ago the first rains refreshed the land,
and continue still

Where the houses end

and the road into the forest begins
a puddle has formed, widening each day
to the proportions of a pond;
only a small strip of pavement permits passage
for those who possess neither wing nor fin

Now, equinox evening,
the rain has washed away summer's dust
from purple grape and orange clementine,
children play in rain-soaked grass
squills sway in wet unison
and the sun sends sparkles
through the newly-formed pond
while the wind wishes it to ripple

Nights lengthen
jackets and blankets
emerge from closets

And autumn happens

Helen Bar-Lev was born New York 1942, B.A. Anthropology; in Israel for 40 years, nearly 90 exhibitions of her landscapes of the Land of Israel, 32 of which were one-person shows. Poems and artwork in numerous online and print anthologies. *Cyclamens and Swords and other poems about the land of Israel*, and *The Muse in the Suitcase*, both with Johnmichael Simon, illustrated by Helen. *In Moonlight the Sky Will Slide* with Katherine L. Gordon. Helen is Senior Editor of Cyclamens and Swords Publishing, www.cyclamensandswords.com Former editor-in-chief of Voices Israel Annual Anthology. Global correspondent and contributing editor for *Sketchbook, A Journal for Eastern and Western Short Forms*.