



## **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](http://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*.