

## Rabbi David Ehrenkranz – 3 Poems

### August day

While driving on the dirt roads  
In the Catskill mountains  
Listening to a montage of  
Langston Hughes poetry  
Put to jazz  
On the radio,  
Seeing the occasional sign  
That reads  
“Seeking God?”  
I feel that I will never die.

An odd thought  
Considering my aging girth,  
My thinning hair and  
My dead father.  
I am unaware of the hills  
And winding roads as I listen  
To a rendition of a ‘dream deferred.’  
The farms and ice cream stands  
Bring me back to a time where my brother  
And I ran into the woods with the hope  
Of never returning.

Sometimes I think  
My ageless ghost is  
Hiding behind one of  
Those Birch trees watching  
Me pass by,  
Humming to Louis Armstrong,  
Smiling with amusement that  
Only a ghost can have.

## **Insomnia**

It's 5am and the ghosts  
In my head are making  
Their usual rounds  
Reminding me of where I came  
From and who I could have become.

There I am  
Stuttering my way  
Through my civil war project  
Surrounded by that 70's  
Olive green wall,  
Sweat being held  
In check  
Because it was not allowed  
In our home.

I am a breathing  
Time machine  
Thinking of all tomorrows  
That may not yet come.  
And all I can think about  
Is that in another life  
I would be worth  
More alive than dead

And that when  
I'm gone  
There will be  
No ghost to rise to speak  
For me.

## **Avuncular life**

My uncle tells me  
That he divides  
His time  
Between doctors and delis.

Both leave him feeling sick  
But he tolerates them  
And keeps prodding away on  
The city streets at night  
Never arriving on time to any place.

He tells me  
That growing old is  
Not so bad  
If you learn to hide from time.

I ask him  
How long he  
Thinks he has  
Left in this world.

He tells me  
That he plans  
On living forever  
As long as time doesn't see him.

I can hide  
From time.  
I know places that  
He doesn't know.

And if I hide  
Long enough  
He won't  
Find me.

**Rabbi David Ehrenkranz** has been a teacher, for the last 20 years, on the faculties of the Maimonides School of Brookline, MA and Prozdor of Newton, MA. He was previously published in *Current Magazine* (Maimonides School) and the book *Explaining Life: The Wisdom of Modern Jewish Poetry, 1960-2010*. He currently lives with his wife Ilyse and their 5 children in Sharon, MA.