

Rivka Miriam

THESE MOUNTAINS:
SELECTED POEMS OF RIVKA MIRIAM

TRANSLATED BY

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The Toby Press

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עוד

דפּק אַלֵּהִים בְּחִלוּנִי
וַיִּקְרַן עוֹר פָּנַי.
עֲבָרָה רוּחוֹ אֶת סִפִּי
וַיִּפְעֲרוּ לִקְרֹאתוֹ עֵינַי.
הַשָּׂאִיר אֶצְבָּעוֹתַי טְבוּעוֹת
עַל אֵד חִלוּנִי
נִשְׂאָר רֵיחַ נְשִׁימָתוֹ
בְּתוֹךְ חֲדָרַי.
נִשְׂאָר צֵלוֹ חֲבוּא
אַחוּרַי וַיִּלּוֹן מִשִּׁי
וּמִהֲדֵד שִׁירוֹ הָעֵמֶק
מִתּוֹךְ רִצְפָּתִי.
הָיָה אֱלֹהִים בְּחֲדָרַי
וְהָיוּ לוֹ צָרִים הַקִּירוֹת
וַיִּצָּא מִחֲדָרַי וַיִּגּוֹס
לְבֵין הַשָּׂדוֹת.
רַק רֵיחוֹ עוֹד שׁוֹכֵן בִּי
אֶצְבָּעוֹ עוֹד טְבוּעָה בְּמִצְחִי
עוֹד חֶסֶר־גּוֹפּוֹ יִשְׁנוּ בְּעֵינַי
עוֹד מִהֲדֵד בִּי הַבְּכִי,
הַחִלּוּל, רִיקְנִי.

Still

God knocked on my window
and the skin of my face shone.
His spirit passed my doorstep
and my eyes opened wide towards him.
He left his imprinted fingers
on the mist of my window
the scent of his breath
remained in my room.
His hidden shadow remained
behind my silk curtain
and his deep song echoed
from within my floor.
God was in my room
and the walls were too narrow
so he left my room and fled
into the fields.
Only his scent still resides in me
his finger still imprinted on my forehead
still the absence of his body is in my eye
still echoes in me his
hollow, empty cry.

לְבָדוּ

סְתֵם הָאֵל אֶת רַחְמוֹ וַיְדַם הַסְּבִיב.
חַשׁ הַכֹּל – נִתְעוֹר – כּוֹץ רַגְלָיו וַנִּרְדָּם.
נִשְׁאָר אֵל גְּדוּל לְשֵׁלֵט בְּסִבִּיב הַיֶּשֶׁן –
בוֹדֵד וְנִשְׁגָּב וְנוֹרָא. וְהַכֹּל תָּם.
נִשְׁאָר אֵל גְּדוּל לְשֵׁלֵט בְּסִבִּיב הַיֶּשֶׁן
וְאֵין רַעַשׁ, אֵין קוֹל, אֵין דְּמָמָה.
נִרְדָּם הַכֹּל. לֹא הוֹתִיר אַחֲרָיו הַד.
לֹא תִהְיוּם, לֹא חֲלָל, לֹא שְׂמָמָה.
נִשְׁאָר רַק הָאֵל, לְבָדוּ.
לֹא עוֹר – וְעֵינָיו רוֹאוֹת לֹא כְּלוּם.
לֹא אֵלִים – וּשְׂפָתָיו לֹא נְעוֹת.
גּוֹפּוֹ חָם – וְהוּא לֹא רַחוּם
וְרַגְלָיו הַקְּלוֹת – דּוֹמָמוֹת.
וְהַכֹּל כִּהַ חֲלוּל בְּתוֹכוֹ.
נִשְׁאָר אֵל גְּדוּל לְמִשֵּׁל בְּסִבִּיב –
לְבָדוּ.

All Alone

God closed his womb and the surroundings were silent.
Then everything went blind and folded its legs and fell asleep.
The great God remained to rule the sleeping surroundings
alone and lofty and awful. And everything is done.
The great God remained to rule the sleeping surroundings
and no noise, no voice, no calm.
Everything fell asleep. Leaving no echo behind.
No depth, no space, no wilderness.
Only God remained alone.
Not blind—yet his eyes don't see.
Not mute—yet his lips don't move.
His body is warm—with no compassion
and his light legs are still.
And everything is so hollow inside him.
A great God remains to govern the surroundings
all alone.

נמצאתי

ואני, עצמי מצאתי
בבטן אשה הרה
עיני קטנות ועורות
והנני כלי אלמה.
שמעתי קולות לוחשים לי.
חשתי שעטיתי נוצה.
שעלה בי העשב
וכסתה אותי אדמה.
אני לא נולדתי.
קמתי לתחייה.

I Was Found

And I found myself
in the belly of a pregnant woman
my eyes small and blind
and I all dumb.

I heard voices whispering.

I was dressed in feathers.

The grass rose up in me
earth covered me.

I was not born.

I was restored to life.