

Roy Chicky ARAD
Poems

The Owl /

Out of the golden sand,
it slaughters falcons,
turns cobras pale,
the rock owl.

I've seen it all,
I haven't seen anything yet--
the rock owl.

Everywhere
ads for R.C Cola.
 Around my earlobes
 Israeli rap on loudspeakers

--the rock owl.

Igniting the desert wind,
 pure on a dark sand dune,
 the owl,
and on the dune a man in colorful American trousers.
Here!
Right here!

(ten years earlier)
Skies blue as panties.
It's the middle of the desert.
On this spot the Negev Mall will be arise,
bones looted theodolite,
 whose rage is crystal and
 arrows metal,
clangs toward
the owl born of panic.

And the Beer Sheva city coalition.
The owl and I!
The owl and I!

Wielding the sword
 in his wounded arm,
 the owl
 son of Anat
 of earth, of the crescent.
 the owl.

Beer Sheva of the early Nineties,
 and the former desert,
 slowly spreading its wings,
 bronzed and mortared,
 and quietly revealing his sword.
 What sense for me now
 owl and love?

And then the mall,
 three stories, octagonal with fluted skin, and a floor of restaurants
 yellowed with dust,
 standing five and a hundred cubits
 clad in chill marble.

And the folks with their swords,
 next to picantic-china
 across from I.M.P.
 The Fox-Man store is next to a pile of orange clothing,

 and the Fox-Man salesgirl,
 a pretty gumchewer aged one score less two
 her face pitted, chewed, blue-green, gleaming with
 fire,
 her heart chewed
 with lust and passion.

(On her chest a freckled shirt that will never be stylish, whatever may come to pass)

And in the volume of the mall
 shouts the owl with zeal
 with a torch-cry

I am immortal
 I am the King Kong of the desert,
 I am the Godzilla of the Negev
 The Golem of the Negev Mall.

His grandfather?
 Baal.
 His grandmother?
 A Canadian real estate developer of Jewish origin,

massing and buying,
 racing with their dumb shopping bags
 down the neon corridors,
 in the formiKK passage.
 And the local paper's photo flashes,
 And then the guard, brave and proud
 (He already fought in Afghanistan, a Lau missile powdered his
 nose),
 he draws his gun,
 Looks at the Fox-Man Girl, the foxy human girl.
 And the owl, there's the cool and quiet flint,
 weary, his eyes are dry today,
 the beat of his wings is aureate,
 his feathers are pure Keralite,
 he smiles.
 Raise the fire and consume the mall and its daughters,
 conflagrate the merchandise of Fox-Man,
 the wild bull of Burger Ranch.

I've seen it all,
 I haven't seen anything yet--
 the rock owl.

Who will re-inter the rock owl, the fire owl?
 What transgression made I on this dread world?

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Mall nation by the owl accursed.
 A human being by the owl accursed.
 An owl by his smile accursed.

Translated from the Hebrew by Pesach Slabosky.

"The Owl" participated in Michal Helfman's work in the Venice Art Biennale 2003.

Oh, The North /

Translated from the

I envy those whose heart is broken

I envy those on strike
Failed suicide attempters
Waiting in emergency rooms
For the nurse, in a cast
Kings who have turned into gardeners
Stolen hubcaps outside butcher shops

I envy the strip of asteroids
The worm finding a crumb in the feces of a forgotten Reality TV star
The whistle of a construction worker frozen in an office building
The hidden body piercing of a female guard at the Kiryah Base
A letter fallen off of the name of a two-star hotel in a coastal town
The suited piano tuner whose wife was murdered by a lover
When I showed up he was just walking slowly out of a café in a peripheral town
I envy Ronny Segman
For knowing how to bounce coins off his bellybutton, and for his war to be nude at the beach
Once, he hid behind a trash can
And when police officers came closer, he threw the can at them and ran to freedom

I envy pretty grandmothers
Those who fight against all odds and lose
Let other people envy the winners
I envy beach chairs, in case I haven't already mentioned
I don't envy the man with the fanny pack charging money
For the use of the chairs
I don't envy the driving poet
Whoever is hosting this party—I certainly don't envy them
I don't envy the wife of a millionaire who keeps working like everyone else, saying a polite thank you
To her service providers
I don't envy the child with the handkerchief and his fabric silences
Did I mention I envy beach chairs?
They're happy happy happy, open in the sun, but
In the evening they are piled up on top of each other
For Russian couples with vodka red bulls to climb on. They were talking but now it's quiet. The girl is sixteen years old, shaved, and the guy slips his hand under her t-shirt. I envy them both.
T-shirts are a topic for a different poem.

I envy the refugee who sneaks across the border
A unionized worker retiring to be with his grandchildren
Jokesters, I envy them so,
They have to remember all the jokes and never give away the ending.

I envy the nice accountant who likes a specific size of paper
There's no reason to envy those who come first, and even less so the seconds. Those who come
last are also in dire straits. I envy those who come third.
Divorced women
Young religious people
Women who have undergone breast augmentation surgery
Shimshon from the Yemenite Vineyard who sings along to the tape
Any man wearing a nightshirt
The pretty girl is gone
I was sitting just a few tables away from her
And I am watching her walking away
I envy you the reader
The poem is almost over
If you just close your eyes, it'll disappear
And you'll see a towel on a plastic chair
In a wooden room
And the dripping faucet of a cheap vacation
Up north. Oh, the north.
Oh, the north.

The Large Lake /

Swimming alone in the large lake

Swimming on my stomach in the large lake
 Swimming on my back in the large lake
 On my side swimming in the large lake
 Why does no one join me in the large lake?
 There is no fence around the large lake
 I wade in the large lake
 I dive into the large lake
 The way to fuck the system: the large lake
 Join me in the large lake
 Why am I alone in the large lake?
 Nothing is stopping you from coming to the large lake
 For instance, you, the reader
 Do not say 'I'm only the reader'
 Pull down your pants, cast aside your brassiere
 Come right now to
 The large lake
 Swim deep into the large lake
 Swim fast into the large lake
 Swim on your belly in the large lake
 Swim on your backside in the large lake!
 Come here now.

There used to be many in the large lake
 I'm the only one who dips in the large lake
 One can drown in the large lake
 but one can also die by using too much Shake 'n Bake
 So come come come to the large lake
 We'll float float float in the large lake
 There is no water here, only sound
 We'll rub up inside the large lake
 Your flesh will bump against in the large lake
 Come here now.
 Why am I alone in the large lake
 Why am I alone in the large lake
 Because I am alone in the large lake
 Yes, I am alone in the large lake
 I am alone alone alone in the large lake
 Or sometimes with some friends
 Why don't you understand that it's the most awesome in the large lake
 The best deal in the large lake
 That it's the only place in town without fences, the large lake
 Not some fickle rapid, the large lake
 And it isn't really very large, the large lake

It can fit in the trunk of a Peugeot
 In a coin compartment made of loquat skin
 In a purple cupcake
The large lake the large lake the large lake
Tell me now in the large lake
Kiss and tell me now in the large lake
There's room for everybody in the large lake
There's room for every body in the large lake
There's room for antibodies in the large lake
The lar lar lar lar large lake
The large lakekekekek
Come to the large lake
Come to the large lake
Why do you always go into the large lake after I'm already out of the water?

(Ahziv, August 8th, 2009)

Patriot /

I respect the synoptic map
And adhere to most rules of electro-magnetics
Obey the laws of
Thermodynamics

If I spit at the sky
I'll get covered in saliva
If I pee toward the heavens
I'll be wet with wee-wee.

I bow my head to the different
Geological periods
And take my planet on a walk
Around the sun

I'm the patriot of every country
That hangs a white flag
Over the lifeguard's hut

I'm a patriot of every sovereignty
Where grandmothers
Hang laundry on the line
To be dried by the sun
While listening to the radio

Against the Strainer /

1.

This is a vehement condemnation of the strainer
A protest of its miniscule perforations
An uprising against its empty desire
I am principally opposed to the entire concept of a net
And the handle-ness of the red
Handle
And the place in which they come together
The lukewarm touch at seven p.m.
You are an upside-down mountain of nothing
The disgrace of the kitchen

2.

This is hate at first sight
Who are you? Who, who are you?
Nothing—metallic hiccuped holes
Be gone!

I love the spoon
The gossipy gumption of the straw
As it bends and flexes
Flexes and bends
The four plastic hooks erect to the winds
In the compass silverware organizer, which turns with a carp-like rattle
I love the thimble
God praise the thimble
Which protects us so well
At any given hour.

The middle class sews with careful brilliance through it
And without showing off, the thimble advances
Only to retreat and pounce on the mighty needle

3.

But

Madam strainer

Why do you strain?

What do you strain?

I hate you so

Down

Down

Down with the strainer!

4.

Madam strainer,

Let the world mix together

The rice, the water

The heart and the splendor

Let the sewer sewage.

Protect the feel good as you would your only son.

Be an entertainer,

Miss strainer,

Go out, go out, out onto the smoking lanes

Your tears will do no good,

It's a no brainer,

Strainer,

What we n—

What we n—

What we need right now are candlesticks
Your fate trickles tonight
An omen shattered with dawn
Your name wiped away of all hallways, all hearts
Crushed over countless counters
From a myriad freezing catalogue kitchens
Chambers smelling of abandoned, prophetic cabbage leaves
Your evil doing will no longer be welcome
A golden debenture sun will shine over the world
At first pale and unsteady
Then assertive and good

Translated from the Hebrew by Yardenne Greenspan

Some recommendations /

I recommend to my readers not to fall in love
 and to eat herring
 eat herring with onions
 don't fall in love
 women are trouble
 men are mud and heartache
 pickled herring
 won't do anything bad to you
 I recommend Tolstoy's biography by Henri Troyat in two volumes
 to my readers
 read the part in section two where the elderly Tolstoy gets a bike
 and get back to me
 I recommend to my readers
 to sleep in socks
 despite the recession
 because of the recession
 nothing will happen if you sleep in jeans

I recommend eating sweetsops
 Tsachi "party animal", a friend of mine, told me they're very healthy
 even though the last one I bought
 wasn't ripe
 and turned gray in the freezer.
 I guess I did something wrong
 if you are musicians or poets
 I recommend that your next work be
 emotional or danceable
 don't try to be too smart
 or too stupid
 it's better not to try too hard
 it's better not to do anything if you're musicians or poets
 you can learn to do nothing slowly. my advice for success and luck –
 invest in your toilet paper!
 that's the only superstition worth believing in
 listen good my readers! it's better not to do anything. invest your money there!
 Get some great, expensive, high quality toilet paper, even if you're poor
 triple layered, quadruple-layered and even quintuple-layered
 politicians will disappoint you and won't move a finger when you're fired
 they'll send you to your death for a photo in the free tabloid "Israel Today"
 but nice toilet paper will console you

So

I also recommend a trip to Cairo
and drinking cold Karkade juice there
in the cheapest café
I recommend to my readers
never to buy more than one book and never to agree to take more than one book
I advise all my readers not
to sleep with the same person
day after day
don't sleep day after day
with the same partner
So no one will get used to the idea

I recommend to my readers
to join at least two labor unions
I recommend to my readers
to sit near the window
and to avoid war in any way possible
nothing good will come of it
and also avoid luna-parks. the bother is a real waste.
I advise my readers
to make use of construction in the city to watch the cranes at least
ten minutes a day
to look at the holes in the ground at the building sites
to bang your head into the metal fence, even if there is a warning sign
and to look deep into the stormy shafts at the building sites
and to love anyway

Translated from the Hebrew by Lisa Katz

The Nectarine /

I love people so much
that I love even hatred itself
as though it were a nectarine.
I love life so much
love it so much
that I love even death itself
as though it were a nectarine,

but I don't like nectarines.
I don't have to be enamored of everything
I'm a simple man, with a slight limp, this past week
and a bruise on my nose due to an incident with a mailbox.
I like soft fruits: pomelos, lychees, canned pineapples.
Grandma's mulberry tree
the one Moti Kerner and I used to climb
before he served in the Army
and went to study computers

Translated from the Hebrew by Yuval Ben-Ami

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