

Jewish Poetry Reading and Discussion
**Jennifer Barber, Deborah Leipziger, Eve Rifkah,
and Yermiyahu Ahron Taub**

Description: What is a Jewish poem? How can poetry be integrated into educational curricula and cultural programming? How can poetry enhance our understanding of Jewish history and culture? What is a Jewish poetic praxis? What is the state of Jewish poetry today? Through a reading of their own poems and an ensuing panel discussion, the poets will aim to address some of these questions. Each of the panelists has published widely on the Jewish experience (broadly defined) and is active in promoting poets and poetry in their communities. Three of the poets currently reside in the Massachusetts region.

Jennifer Barber's collections of poetry are *Works on Paper*, recipient of the 2015 Tenth Gate Prize (The Word Works, 2016); *Given Away* (Kore Press, 2012), and *Rigging the Wind*, recipient of the 2002 First Book Award (Kore Press, 2003). Her poems have appeared in *Poetry*, the *Missouri Review*, the *New Yorker*, *Agni*, *Orion*, the *Gettysburg Review*, the *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, *Poetry Daily*, *Solstice*, and elsewhere. A recipient of a Pushcart Prize and an Anna Davidson Rosenberg Award, Jennifer teaches literature and creative writing at Suffolk University in Boston and is editor-in-chief of the literary journal *Salamander*, now in its twenty-fifth year.

Deborah Leipziger is an author, poet and professor. Her chapbook, *Flower Map*, was published by Finishing Line Press (2013). In 2014, her poem "Written on Skin" was nominated for a Pushcart Prize. She is the co-founder of *Soul-Lit*, an on-line poetry magazine. Born in Brazil, Ms. Leipziger is the author of several books on human rights and sustainability. Her poems have been published in *Salamander*, *Voices Israel*, *POESY*, *Wilderness House Review*, *Ibbetson Street* and the *Muddy River Poetry Review*, among others. Deborah is the founder of the Jewish Poetry Festival at Temple Sinai in Brookline, MA, now in its ninth year.

Eve Rifkah was co-founder of Poetry Oasis, Inc. (1998-2012), a non-profit poetry association dedicated to education and promoting local poets. She was the founder, editor and chief bottle-washer of *DINER*, a literary magazine with a 7-year run. She is author of *Dear Suzanne* (WordTech Communications, 2010) and *Outcasts: the Penikese Leper Hospital, 1905-1921* (Little Pear Press, 2010), and the chapbook *Scar Tissue* (Finishing Line Press, 2017). Her chapbook, *At the Leprosarium*, was the 2003 winner of the Revelever Chapbook Contest.

Aaron Taub is the Head of the Israel and Judaica Section of the Asian and Middle Eastern Division of the Library of Congress and the President of the Capital Area Chapter of AJL (AJL/CAC). Under the name **Yermiyahu Ahron Taub**, he is the author of *Prodigal Children in the House of G-d: Stories* (2018) and six books of poetry, including *A moyz tsvishn vakldike volkn-kratsers: geklibene Yidishe lider/A Mouse Among Tottering Skyscrapers: Selected Yiddish Poems* (2017). His short stories have appeared in *Hamilton Stone Review*, *The Jewish Literary Journal*, *JewishFiction.net*, *Jewrotica*, and *Second Hand Stories Podcast*, among other publications. With Ellen Cassedy, he was the winner of the 2012 Yiddish Book Center Translation Prize for *Oedipus in Brooklyn and Other Stories* by Blume Lempel (Mandel Vilar Press and Dryad Press, 2016). Visit his website at www.yataub.net.

Poetry Reading by Jennifer Barber

Jennifer Barber read “Of Three or Four in a Room” by Yehuda Amichai from *The Selected Poetry of Yehuda Amichai*, tr. Chana Bloch and Stephen Mitchell (Berkeley, Calif: University of California Press, 1996).

She then read her own poems.

Leaving

A synod of crows, a holy afternoon
on which the beaks dispute
the meaning of
the crests of trees.

The slow eyes of the sunflowers
widen in the field.
In the ports,
the boats are being filled

with rabbis and translators,
shopkeepers and wool merchants.

Some went to Navarre,
some of us to Portugal,
some died of plague
and hunger on stalled ships...

Over and over, gone.
And not gone, like the names
of cities left behind,
Cordoba, Valladolid,

and the way my eyes
resemble certain portraits of that time—
a nobleman, a peddler,
a woman staring in a room.

“Leaving” appeared in *Rigging the Wind* (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2003).

1497

from the account by R. Abraham Saba

Now Portugal, too.

In Guimarães, the town crier said
all books and phylacteries
must be turned over
at the Lisbon synagogue
on pain of death.

We listened,
I stood trembling.

Before we reached the city, I
buried my manuscripts—
last memories of Spain—
under the roots
of an olive tree.

This morning, a man
they beat with straps
for not letting go
of a book of prayers

was kicked to the ground
and taken. Here
in the courtyard
of the great synagogue
no one knows where we are.

“1497” appeared in *Rigging the Wind* (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2003).

Gate

All talk of Granada
has to be
abandoned here,
with all talk of oranges.

What did the fathers' fathers
say before they left?

Secret honey from the hive,
the sweetness of Kabbalah
stopping their lips.

Light through the fog
is motherless and fatherless.

Blood and bread, silver and dung.
Their shadows thin
and disappear.

Under the stone balconies,
a pigeon and a dove
are the same bird.

“Gate” appeared in *Rigging the Wind* (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2003).

Travels in Place

Which is in my blood,
the snows of Lithuania
or the dark sunshine of Navarre?

Which is it, the wind
tantrumming through Galicia
or the dry heat of Jerusalem?

Or neither, neither,
maybe my blood only knows
the airless New England summer

falling to winter again—
snow and rain, and cold blue days
in stiff Puritanical clothes.

Instead of the cedars of Lebanon,
the dogwood, waiting for spring.
Oak, maple, beech.

Blue spruce and white pine.
Maybe blood is a fiction.
Maybe I only know

the snow that falls
without a beginning or end
from every window of the house.

“Travels in Place” appeared in *Rigging the Wind* (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2003).

Notes

The trolley lurches past,
tying its stops together
with a string of sparks.

The spring air is blowing
plastic sheets on the scaffolding
into ripe sails. We

sit down on the steps
of the temple with its Moorish dome,
the doors, wooden pages.

The small dark notes
of the night begin
like so many sparrows

scattering before us in
a sparrow diaspora,
choosing this time to call their own.

“Notes” appeared in *Rigging the Wind* (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2003).

In the Hebrew Primer

A man. A woman. A road.
Jerusalem.

Nouns like mountain and gate,
water and famine,
wind and wilderness
arrange themselves in two
columns on the page.

The verbs are
remember and guard;
the verbs are
give birth to and glean.

The eye picks its way
through letters like
torches and doors, like scythes.

The harvest, the dust.
The day calls, the night sings
from the threshing floor.

A woman, a man:
I was, you were, we were.

“In the Hebrew Primer” appeared in *Given Away* (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2012).

God Doesn't Speak in the Psalms

And that's what I like.

*

A flock of psalms,
a deck, a pack,

shuffling praise
and fear and need.

*

Last night in my dream,
a donkey's tongue,
ripped out
by the children of the town.

The donkey
stood in a small field.
I didn't know
if he could eat.

I left an apple
by his hoof.

*

No inkling of an afterlife,
no scale pans

for weighing souls

to see which ones

are light and heavy,
like metals,
like elemental salts.

*

Across the street,
a storm door slams,

finches in the juniper fly up,

I'm leafing
through the psalms,

 a man laments the illness
wasting him

and compares himself
to a lone bird on a roof.

With no prayer.

 Eating ashes of bread.

How then does he
turn in praise

of the sky like a tent
over the earth,

an ancient city's stones and dust...

*

August. Afternoon.

Somebody gathers figs,

somebody walks
with a seed bag slung

over his shoulder,

weeping as he sows,

an ear, a voice
coming apart between my hands.

*

God doesn't speak in the psalms—
God's spoken to.

“God Doesn't Speak in the Psalms” appeared in *Given Away* (Tucson, AZ: Kore Press, 2012).

Poetry Reading by Deborah Leipziger

Deborah Leipziger read the poem "Eli, Eli" by Hannah Sanesh
https://israelforever.org/interact/multimedia/eli_eli/

She also read her own poems:

Written on Skin

In cursive and script your kiss
Is indelibly written on skin.

Even now, the cut from your birth
Echoing the rain is written on skin.

The numbers from a time of horror
Are held written on skin.

Just as the rings record the age of the tree
My ages and years are written on skin.

The wood from the forest for the violin
Its music etched in wood, written on skin.

The umbilical cord coiled around my neck
Is still there, pulsating purple, written on skin.

The parchment of history of storied sacrifice
Is written on hides, written on skin.

In ink and dust, blood and bruise
My history is written on skin.

The newspaper stories of massacre
Collapse and famine are written on skin.

Your touch on my earlobe, fingerprints on my face
Words and deeds unbidden, written on skin.

The phrase "Written on Skin" is the title of an opera by George Benjamin.

How to make challah

Begin with the biggest bowl you have,
let it be large enough to contain your whole week.
You will need to wrestle with angels.

Begin in the place of knowing,
the place that venerates.
Summon stillness, *kavannah*.

In the smallest nesting bowl,
proof the yeast in lukewarm water.
Remember that you are proof.

Let the fragrance of yeast envelop you,
rain, wet earth, fecund.
Now, trust.

Measure 7 or 8 cups of flour,
challah is not precise.
Notice the flour cloud.

Make a well.
A deep well to contain the grief.
Pour the yeast water into the well.

Let it seep in.
Add 3 eggs and 3 tablespoons of oil.
Take off your rings.

Plunge.
Pound.
Let the dough silence your rage.

Pour yourself into the challah,
filament and fractal
fingertip and phial.

Now walk away.
Give it a few hours to grow.
Let it rise.

When you return, let the growth surprise you.
Add raisins, golden and black.
Summon helpers to braid.

Take a tiny marble of dough,
set it apart
to recall loss, sadness.

Braid as if this is your last act.
Round, double braid, single braid.
Trust completely, irrevocably, let go.

After the braids have doubled in size,
entrust them to the oven
under a coat of egg wash.

Let the aroma
permeate your village
with the smell of rest and kindness.

Bring forth the challah
with both hands
Let the heat radiate.

Just as the poet unleashes the poem,
so will you clear a path
towards home.

Not far from Joy Street

I stand at the *kaddish* rail
where once we were called to mourn
in the center, close to the ark.

At dusk the orange and pink stained
glass blur in the sunset
when Shabbat begins.

A wooden pickle barrel
covered in red velvet
served to hold the Torah.

The light pours forth from the roof,
the paint crumbling,
a respite from the button factory.

Talit

Mist rises off the snow
as it melts.
At twilight, the mist darkens to purple,
enveloping the earth.

I long to own a *talit*
with purple threads,
to wrap myself into the mist,
to enclose myself in prayer,

to wrap my three daughters
into its embrace as I
bless them
and they bless me.

Please note: Deborah also read her poem “Women’s March, 2018”. Since this poem is being considered for publication, it cannot be printed here first.

For more information about Deborah’s poetry, go to: <http://flowermap.net/>

To order her book of poetry: <https://www.finishinglinepress.com/product/flower-map-by-deborah-leipziger/>

Poetry Reading by Eve Rifkah

Eve Rifkah began her reading with the poem "Painting" by Gertrude Halstead. She then read her own poems.

Morris

February 23, 1908

My Dearest Esther,

Why is it you don't write? This disease not curse enough, you curse me with silence? Not enough I live without your dear face? And our children, good-natured Rachel, she must be great help to you and Clara, her hair still red of spun gold? Must be young men calling? Why don't you tell me? You are getting by? Hymie is helping? Such a brother, he should put a foot in front of the other and get someplace.

Esther, I can't bear this. Every day the mail boat comes from New Bedford. Mrs. Parker hands out the letters, none for me. I can't help the tears. This illness not my doing. In sickness and health we married? Only a letter all I ask, to see in words what I can't imagine. My boys, what have become of my boys? Mendel in school? Harry a job with the printing press? And Nathan, the quiet one still buried in books? He studies hard for his Bar Mitzvah?

Over and over I shut my eyes, see you and the girls screaming. Clara hiding her face in her scarf, teeth chattering, cold in July. Already you killed me? You say Kaddish? Light candles? Oh Esther, I am still here breathing dreaming your dark eyes. Please, I beg you take pen to paper send me your blessings so I may caress your words, smell the ink, touch the flap where your tongue licked the seal. This too much to ask?

Your still loving husband,

Morris

Morris Goldblatt, 41, Immigrated from Russia in 1903. Lived in Lynn with his wife and five children and worked in a leather factory. He arrived on Penikese on August 29, 1907. "He sits crying by the hour", in a report by Dr. Parker, "waiting for a letter from his family who visited and became hysterical upon leaving." He died on October 27, 1915 and is buried on the island

poem appeared in Outcasts the Penikese Island Leper Hospital 1905-1921, Little
Pear Press

Solomon

I bare my head, O Lord. Rend my clothes, cover my upper lip
I cry Unclean, Unclean

banished from wife and sons O Lord, from the children I taught
yet I am not alone. Surely, O Lord, you did not mean
leper and leper shall not dwell together?

I can no longer tie the tefillin with my own hands.
O Lord, even lepers can pray, can sing praises unto You.

the wool of my tallis I kiss, but there is no Torah here
to touch cloth to holy skin I touch my books that I may not forget.
You cast us out
but did not deny us the holy words.
If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth

in this desert, on this island, O Lord
on this desert island, I raise my voice to You.
I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.

in my defilement, heart sore, skin white
already a ghost,
Sh'ma Israel, hear me O Lord, in my ugliness,
I cry unto thee, Thou art my refuge.
I exalt Your glory.

Solomon Goodman, 64, was born in Russia, and came to US with his wife and 2 children in 1898. He lived in the North End of Boston where he taught Hebrew until diagnosed with leprosy. Goodman was sent to the Penikese Island Leper Hospital, March 27, 1909. He died on August, 16, 1916 at age 71 and is buried on the island.

poem appeared in *Outcasts: the Penikese Island Leper Hospital 1905-1921* (Little Pear Press)

A Passover parable

Now what the dad won't say
is how can a cat eat a goat.

kid figures out
the dog, the stick, the fire

but right there at the beginning
that cat ate the baby goat

don't know a cat can do that,
the kid said to the dad.

dad shrugs just a song
doesn't have to

make sense. Would help
if it did says the kid

who isn't a goat merely
a child trying to figure

it all out. Gets bout being
on the bottom kid knows

lots bout the bottom
what with crazy ma

and steel-eyed grandma
hateful. Kid knows

water can drown fire burn
don't know bout that Angel

of Death or the Holy One
Blessed may he be.

Kid knows nothin bout that
being always on the bottom

the one that gets eaten first.

October 17, 1956

Dear Suzanne,

I go with my father to shul wearing my pretty dress with a stiff petticoat that scratches my legs. We sit with Grandpa where we always sit in the first row of the balcony. The setting sun rouges the ceiling in long strokes. It is Kol Nidre, the beginning of Yom Kippur, when we are supposed to atone for our sins. I am eight years old and I am not sorry for my sin of hatefulness. I have broken one of God's commandments, but who is this God that orders me to honor a mother so mean-spirited?

Who is this God who ordered the rain to fall forty days washing over all the land? I read about Noah in my bible comic book and cried for all the drowned creatures. Suzanne, in this temple, I am content to listen to the choir sing, floating on mournful sounds, forgetting the turbulence outside these strong walls. I listen to my father and grandfather sing the prayers. The cantor cries his heart to God asking for forgiveness in a language that is only sound to me as the blowing of the shofar, words made into music.

I who cannot find the heart to forgive my mother for the pain she causes me, what can I say of forgiveness? Sitting here playing with the fringe of my father's tallis, fingering the corner tassels with the special knots. Each corner a compass point for the people swept around the world, swept away like dirt, like specks of dust in a universe of dust. I am a part of and apart from these people around me, their voices encompass me — the unbeliever. Shma, Shma — I have no one to call to.

Eve

poem from *Dear Suzanne*, 2010, Turning Point Press, 2010.

poem from *Scar Tissue*, Finishing Line Press, 2017.

Rosary

father came stiff and proper
a bitten smile tightens his lips
mother not mother hugs and smiles
straightens my dress

In the car I show father how
I can recite the rosary stringing
pretend beads through my fingers

anger strawberries father's face
no goyim words for you
no mother mary no jesus
he sputters

cringe inside my pressed dress
perfect pleats not perfect anymore

Gertrude Halstead

Painting

on the back of his old white shirt
i paint nightmares and the sun exploding
cathedral windows and the light always the light
pattern on the stones at Sainte-Chapelle

i paint black boots and the books burning
i paint you blind because you would tell them nothing
i paint you free falling from that high windowledge
before they kicked your door in

i paint trenches i paint charred
ribcage of my father's house
i paint the dead ashgray
and the light always the light

From - *space between* Allbooks Press, 2008

Poetry Reading by Yermiyahu Ahron Taub

Yermiyahu Ahron Taub read “Flatbush Incantation” by Enid Dame (appeared in Kasdorf, Julia Spicher and Tyrell, Michael, eds. *Broken Land: Poems of Brooklyn*. New York: New York University Press, 2007).

He then read his own poems.

Jewish Spring

Winter birds brush our faces in farewell.
Our step quickens as thaw gains force and marches into inevitability.
Flowers, bold in their delicacy,
viewed since time’s beginning,
are seen anew, interpreted afresh.
Everyone sees flowers in a different way, Rinah once said.
Trees spread cover thickly
between the chemical groves below and above,
insisting on their leafy say.
Hands pool the earth, laying the foundation for renewal.
Already we envision stalks bent with bounty.
We breathe these many fragrances, humbled, awed.
But like the gazelle on the savannah,
our eyes are always shielded toward the horizon.
We peruse the headlines and the top stories;
we assess the pitch of the chatter.
Who knows how long this generosity,
how deep this permissibility.
Dogwood blossoms etch our prayer in grace.

Silence = Life

After the ACT UP motto "Silence=Death"

The epithets were squashed.
The chat rooms were silent;
salons were now the order of the day.
The paraphernalia were displayed only in museum halls.
The tones on the wall placards reflected a curiosity in the historical;
all cautionary notes had been removed.
The posters and pamphlets were relegated to rare book reading rooms.
They were to be understood as emblems of a dusty weltanschauung.
Shaved heads were at last merely a fashion statement.
The anthems once beerily chanted were refashioned for the cabaret,
with sequins and panache.
Boots marching on cobblestones at midnight
inspired an unfamiliar sense of security.
The brass was removed;
the fists disassembled.
Stunned, we unbolted our shutters and warily peered out.
The winds in the town square had died down.
The garbage fluttered no more.
We were no longer despised.

"Jewish Spring" and "Silence = Life" appeared in Taub, Yermiyahu Ahron. *Uncle Feygele: Poems*. Austin, Texas: Plain View Press, 2011.

Trains Passing in the Railroad Apartment

Once my father came to visit me,
the only family member ever to have done so
in the more than twenty years since my exodus.
He slipped past my Italian landlady sitting sentry without a second look.
Perhaps his long beard and black coat in summer scorch
set something ablaze in her, having to do with robes swishing
from rooms murky with moans for repentance
down alleyways into the piazza, pigeons rising in outrage,
stirring something altogether enormous and familiar,
despite the difference in tradition. Perhaps.
She, not given to reserve, never mentioned it. I'll never know now.

As he passed through my *mezuzah*-less doorway, I wondered whether
Father's purity would cleanse, or at least elevate, the impurity here.
Or would the reverse take place?
I so wanted him to feel, if not comfortable,
then at least not implausible in this setting.
I had debated for weeks which posters to take down for his visit.
Is Vermeer's *Girl Wearing Turban* as improper as the outline
of the nude woman on the Chez Panisse 1977 Garlic Festival?
The sages, after all, forbid glancing at even
the smallest finger of a woman.
Could the maiden of modesty be exempted?

What about the prohibition on graven images? I had considered hiding
some of the books, but ultimately decided against it.
There were simply too many, nearly all appalling in some way.
Where would I put the acres of them?
Besides, who did I think I was fooling?
Certainly not Father, who reclined on the green chair,
his back turned against both young ladies in question,
his fedora and coat on the ottoman
salvaged from the Housing Works Thrift Shop.
After he declined fruit and nuts, the food offerings
I had thought to be least affected by the laws of *kasbrut*,

Father elaborated, with characteristic elegance,
on a passage in the weekly Torah portion. I wish I had taken notes.
Even then I knew this was an event worthy of documentation.
But for once the Torah seemed to have failed Father.
He soon asked to lie down.
I guided him to the windowless bedroom in my railroad apartment,
our roles momentarily reversed.
I landed in the front room, swaying by the window,
peering down on my landlady on the stoop,
my knuckles white from not-trembling,

my eyes red from not-weeping.

“Trains Passing in the Railroad Apartment” appeared in Taub, Yermiyahu Ahron. *Prayers of a Heretic: Poems/Tfiles fun an apikoyres: lider*. Austin, Texas: Plain View Press, 2013.

Movement, in Black and White

The photograph finds you so.
A tendril or two have escaped your cornflower-bordered kerchief.
You sit on the back stoop of a rowhouse; an air conditioner protrudes
from the kitchen window. A child's arm reaches forever across your lap.
There is a particular model of car in the left-hand corner that scatters
grains of bitterness onto this genealogical moment.
You are looking away into action occurring beyond the frame.

There are children whose games hover on the brink of quarrel.
There is a husband whose underwear will soon need placement on the line.
You try to remember the whereabouts of clothes pins.
There are dresses that require mending, although your own
on this day drapes elegantly over your crossed legs.
All of this is somehow apparent from the trajectory of certain lines around
your turned-away mouth, certain etchings in your turned-away brow.

And from hands, mapped by calluses and veins, that even in stillness,
seem without rest, searching for signposts, en route to the next task.
These are hands that have learned to improvise, to conjure, to repair.
They are rarely without food or utensil or article of clothing.
And so the still hands, or rather the still itself,
becomes a film viewed, a moving picture as they say,
whirring quietly in the cinema of memory.

Except your eyes. Only these are off limits.
Perhaps it is the angle of the camera, the photographer racing to capture
what we may never know. Perhaps it is the guarding of self,
the retreat of the subject: *not me, surely not me. Here are these others.*
Mother, there is no need to look at the camera.
Even caught unawares, you are prepared.
Even in contour and still I see you.

Before Dusk in the Herb Garden

There is a time of day
when the herb garden green of my bathroom is not folly,
when the remarks of friends—
of one: that she could never apply make-up against this backdrop,
of another: that these walls evoke pea soup,
and of another: that it needs to be changed immediately
for there should be a law with a heavy fine levied against walls this color
and of a gentle yet another: that the color is really not so terrible—
do not sting and do not linger in soap or skin
but are only periodically examined from within a desk drawer

There is a time of day
when the herb garden green of my bathroom is not folly,
when I recall the excitement of color selection
in the big box store, the whirling/weaving of elements on the wheel/loom,
my need to bring garden indoors,
to feel myself nude daily in green,
my wish to heighten the green of the Yiddish poster announcing sports
tournaments of muscular Jews who would not long thereafter likely
have been felled into mass graves in the forests of Poland or elsewhere,
and I am reminded of the forest's ability to conceal and to restore

There is a time of day
when the herb garden green of my bathroom is not folly,
when the beige-ness that preceded it does not at all beckon
when the privilege of ownership of home, however small it may be,
of finally having entered adulthood and of having made it
as defined in a land of plenty (for some),
is laced, but not doused, with ambivalence,
for yes the bathroom is quite small, and the floor tiles so worn,
and the bathtub surround and the sink countertop are so very plastic
and it's really the bank that owns all of this anyway

There is a time of day
when the herb garden green of my bathroom is not folly,
when the rays of the setting sun beam through the window
and transform the walls into panels of green gold brightness
and I am walking whitely after bath
into a grove of leaf and quiet
whispered to by Jewish athletes doing chin-ups in the forests of Poland
and all that I have known to be folly final and irrevocable is mere mistake,
and perhaps minor at that, or perhaps simply steps on a path pebbly,
to be embraced in the light of ebbing day.

“Movement, in Black and White” and “Before Dusk in the Herb Garden” appeared in Taub, Yermiyahu Ahron. *The Education of a Daffodil: Prose Poems/Di bildung fun a geln nartsis: prozelider* (Saarbrücken, Germany: Hadassa Word Press, 2017).

77.

The shelves were coated in distance.

What prayers had been whispered over these pages?

How could I hope to glimpse the obscure scenario?

How would these words be shaped?

Under the library moon, the skin of the black tulips opened.

די פאָליצעס זײַנען געווען באַשמירט מיט ווייטקייט.
וועלכע תפילות האָט מען געשושקעט איבער די זײַטן?
ווי וואָלט איך געקענט האָפֿענען צו כאַפֿן אַ בליק אויף דעם אומקלאָרן סצענאַר?
ווי וואָלט מען געפֿורעמט די ווערטער?
אונטער דער ביבליאָטעק-לבנה האָט די הויט פֿון די שוואַרצע טולפֿאַנען זיך געעפֿענט.

Poem 77. appeared in Taub, Yermiyahu Ahron. *What Stillness Illuminated/Vos shtilkayt hot baloykhtn* (West Lafayette, Ind.: Parlor Press, 2008; Still Verse Editions).