

## Amen by Shelley Saposnik

Here in this silent dusk  
before I light the candles  
for Shabbat,  
I say the name  
I am taught to say,  
Hashem  
Hear my prayer.  
You are fire and the  
hidden force  
within the flame,  
born out of the air  
I breathe.

Days are short and everlasting  
and a moment passes never  
to return.

I write my days in the wind  
longing to see the mystery  
in images plucked  
from the dark,  
the silver fragile thread  
that joins my heart  
to Yours.

For I have been gone so long  
tumbling through a whirling world  
accumulating chit chat  
of this or that-  
spending hours  
chasing after knowledge  
that fades with the setting sun.

I thirst for words You wrote  
in parchment long ago  
traveling through the centuries,  
that live before me now  
and ask for nothing  
but to roll open a scroll

to taste the letters  
written there.

And yet for that  
I feel small.

Adoshem, hear my prayer:  
Amid the cacophony of sounds  
the day's brash light that  
covers images of You,  
give me strength  
to stop,  
bring up a chair,  
pour a cup of tea  
and study Thee.

For You are my sustenance,  
that carves a path within my soul  
and gives me power to loiter  
in benediction and in grace.

Hear me now, hear my plea.  
The name I whisper deep within  
Is Eli,  
my God  
and  
I will say  
AMEN.

*Shelley attributes her love of all things Jewish to the two years she lived and studied in Jerusalem. She graduated from Columbia University with a B.A. in English Literature and acquired an M.F.A. in Writing from the Vermont College of Fine Arts. Currently, she teaches Creative Writing and Modern European Literature as an adjunct in Touro College.*