

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.