

Wedding Poem

Joan Gelfand

In the shadow of the Mayacamas
In a field somewhere in time
The dirt beneath us pliant and yielding
Like a child, I stroke your brow, your neck.
Rough moss hangs from gnarly branches,
Like the veins and hairs on my grandmother's body.
What was the beginning of this ancient tree, roots deep enough
To survive even a severe lack of water?
Beneath an invisible maypole our fates are woven.
We are nearly ready for our vows.
Our roots intertwine and
Our souls are lit.
"I know you. I've known you before. In Russia, in Poland, in Germany,
In Brooklyn. We were the peasants with the strong love of God,
We were the children who prayed
By our parents' sides, recited the Shma, glowed
In the light of Chanukah, Shabbas and Yahrzeit candles."

We are blown about by a gentle breeze, nurtured by the soil of each other.
Celebrate the love that is about rain, and the lack of it.

Joan Gelfand's poems, articles, and letters have appeared in numerous national literary journals and publications. She currently serves as President of the San Francisco Chapter of the Women's National Book Association. Her web log may be found at: <http://jg.typepad.com/ciel/>.