

A Piece of Silk

Lynn E. Levin

You with that gold ring in your nose,
 you sleeping in his tent each night
 with all those pillows,
 you at his side when he visits kings,
 you whose hands are fine enough
 to bake bread for angels,
 just remember I'm the one he runs to
 when he fears death.
 He grows hard just being near me.

Do you think we've stopped seeing each other?
 Under the pomegranate tree he often visits me.
 Sometimes we even speak of making a little brother
 for our Ishmael.
 He gave me gifts the other day—
 some eye paint and a piece of silk
 so fluid that, if I were in the desert and thirsty,
 I could drink it.

Oh! Do not send me away!

I know that I'm the concubine and you're the wife.
 But, sister, listen.
 It's not you or I.
 What he really loves is that Voice.
 That Voice
 with its wings, its claws.
 He's so afraid that it will leave him.

Lynn Levin's poems have appeared in Reconstructionist, The Jerusalem Review, Judaism, and Jewish Spectator, as well as in The North American Review, Poetry New York, and other publications. Her first collection of poetry, A Few Questions About Paradise, was published in 2000 by Loonfeather Press.