

A Woman Asks to Be Named

Yiskah Rosenfeld

Speak me.

Let my name be gossiped by stars
travel light-years to its next exchange
all that silence still trailing.

Speak me.

Let my body be knitted by roots
scripting my limbs with skeins
of feathered dark.

Speak me the way you spoke
light into being, the way you moved
dark aside
as if it were nothing.

Speak me the way you spoke
the very first of us from dust
mouth to mouth.
I know you remember.

Speak me as if I were
that new, that needed
garden-tiller, rain-maker, helpmeet,
sabbath to rest inside.

Speak me.
I have represented myself poorly.
I am not a mouth filled with dirt.
I am not a final letter sealed in its end.

Etch me the way you carved
Anochi on tablets of stone
white fire on black fire
your mouth to his hand.

Brush the first fine point of me
here or there
ink-seed in the infinite palm:
I am.



Yiskah Rosenfeld holds an MFA in poetry from Mills College and is studying to be a rabbi. Her poems have appeared in journals such as Bridges, Maggid, Lilith Magazine, and Yentl's Revenge: The Next Wave of Jewish Feminism. She currently teaches workshops in Jewish studies and creative writing in the San Francisco Bay Area.