

---

## A Word Before the Last, About Loss

*Linda Zisquit*

for I will go into the grave unto my son mourning (GENESIS 42:38)

*Precisely because you are alive  
there is no comfort in this world.  
Because wherever you are not  
I search, and where I hear your step  
you have not been or left a mark.  
So the roads are trampled by one,  
not two. And the past is maimed  
by remembering more. Just as  
an old man cannot live at peace  
clutching a rag of strips as proof  
without a swish of snakes underneath,  
without imagining profoundest dis-  
ease that follows him—a body of  
bones, a soul clanking around,  
it is asking for comfort where  
there is none, possessing the one  
thing alive that has no end.*

---

*Linda Zisquit is a poet, teacher, and translator who has been living in Jerusalem since 1978. A volume of her poetry, Ritual Bath, will be published in Fall 1992 by Broken Moon Press.*