

YOUR EYES

by Yisroel Shtern

Translated by Miriam Koral (2005)

So he told her:

Your eyes are pearls.
Yet pearls lie in the sea
and the waves are ever restless –
how can I be sure of you?

And she answered him:

Where the waters roil wilder
is where the swimmer seeks to measure up;
if you're like that – so come!

Then he told her:

Your eyes are children,
black laughing children;
they run around the entire day
from street to street, and from the streets
to the trees – and from the trees
they dance to greet the sun
and late at night they cry:
the moon's saucer! –
how can I be sure of you?

And she answered him:

He who is a good father
laughs when his children laugh,
when they cry – he cries along;
if you're like that – so come!

Then he told her:

Your eyes are tablets,
black fire on white fire:
it may come to pass
that we'll be in the desert long
and sins could occur
and they will break, --
how can I be sure of you?

And she answered him:

When hands get scorched
by the fiery stones
and let them drop to the ground,
out of compassion a Moses grows
between the heavens and the hills
and cries upwards: forgive them!
and brings new tablets;
if you're like that – so come!

(Ed. - date of composition unknown – but before 1935)