

Under Alien Skies by Yossel Birstein

I say farewell

Translated by Beni Gothajner

Who can I reach out a hand to?
a whole house:
a wall, a table, a chair;
even they silently demand
that we remember them.

I concern myself with that desire;
the mutest of all quiet wonders.
Of things without a tongue, without a voice,
that want to be heard out, and each one special.

I reach my hand out one last time,
for the blessing of remembering:
My father reads aloud
the story of a man;
a parable with a human span of years.

He says to me: be in His care,
beware of getting lost.
Perhaps our God is everywhere
but more so in our place of birth.

And I - a boy – attend well
to the yearning of my father's years
and reach my hand out one last time,
for the blessing of remembering.