

Under Alien Skies by Yossel Birstein

At your fiery wedding

Translated by Beni Gothajner

You would have been a virgin bride by now
with all the graces of the young and chaste.
Instead, Death snatched you to his side
and married you in haste.

Who was missing at the ball?
Everyone came; strangers, neighbours, all.
The devil danced a reel with the whole world,
with you – and all Israel in one.

How beautifully you danced; with flare, with flame.
Only our people can dance the same,
committing to the fire both body and heart.
Only our spirit and flesh know how to dance this part.

I alone did not turn up at all
to dance at your fiery wedding ball.