

Under Alien Skies by Yossel Birstein

Overcast

Translated by Miriam Koral

An overcast day, as dark as an army coat.
I wrap myself in it
along with everyone else in the crowded tent
to decipher the meaning of life.
Brows tired
shoulders hunched with burden.
In vain did the meaning of life
faintly light up
in someone's eyes.

Faces grey,
the merest word is a waste,
the loudest scream.
In the dark field a crow shrieks
like an echo of pain
poised over us here
blind and bent,
heavy with age
in the crowded tent.
– In vain did the meaning of life
faintly light up
in someone's eyes.