

## *the house*

**Avot Yeshurun**

*Translated from the Hebrew by Ariel Resnikoff*

**Translator's Note:** Avot Yeshurun's (1904–92) “ha-bayeet” (the house) is a textured polyglot long-poem that moves between multiple idiolectal slangs and inflections across Hebrew, Yiddish, Arabic, and Aramaic registers, in a haunting chronicle of Zionist urban renewal. Yeshurun's poetic thinking enacts an ongoing translational event in this work, perpetually in the midst of code-switching as a mode of sociolinguistic and aesthetic rupture. “home tongue / earthquake,” he writes, in the final section of the poem, “sometimes the voice / it's a / garbage can / & sometimes a / delicate presence.” Language acquisition for Yeshurun, like urban renewal, is somewhere half-way between production and destruction—between the newly built and the already (or soon to be) demolished. The translingual poetics of “ha-bayeet” serves, in these terms, as a (po)ethical imperative to give voice to this destruction, as “an instance of the re- / novated house, that's still / in mourning holes.”

The Hebrew text is published here by courtesy of Helit Yeshurun and Hakibbutz Hame'uchad-Sifriat Poalim Publishing House, Israel.

### **berdichevsky house<sup>1</sup>**

berdichevsky house  
four.  
four  
floors.

they're coming to renovate.  
first off  
comes a bulldozer  
& smashes

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<sup>1</sup> I use lowercase throughout my translation in stylistic echo of Yeshurun's nonstandard Hebrew.

the cornice. that's  
 the first thing.  
 they who removed  
 the cornice, who pulled-off

the facade  
 of the house, the builders  
 attached—as a model  
 of what had been—

the front  
 door,  
 there *dvoyrele*<sup>2</sup>  
 is seen who hated

the neighbors  
 “including you”  
 & her mother whose husband  
 divorced & wandered

to the ends of America  
 to become a cantor.  
 all this  
 spilled out w/

the mortar & plaster  
 & the soot into piles  
 of rubble from the skeleton  
 house number

four. & the house  
 remains like a skeleton  
 of bones, w/out  
 internal organs.

house w/  
 gaps that were  
 once doors.  
 holes that were

---

<sup>2</sup> Yiddish diminutive of Deborah.

once windows.  
 the house looks  
 like a guy w/  
 long legs

white in underpants.  
 enjoying the breeze  
 bare from all  
 sides supported.

### **heats & materials**

the human sounds  
 quieter  
 than the material sounds.  
 the people pace

bent like walking  
 on all fours  
 on the roof  
 inspecting & groping

in ancient prejudice.  
 & the material sounds,  
 in hammer & gravel  
 a free hand.

when the air is thin  
 or a blind one  
 passes. & when thick—  
 a ribbon of horns.

the shadow that hid  
 in the cavities of the house  
 began to look out  
 from the house to the street.

the human sounds  
 heartwarming.  
 the material sounds—  
 their knowledge tamed.

came took  
 gravel—& threw away  
 came took  
 binder—& threw away.

ran bringing  
 mortar—& poured out.  
 ran bringing  
 sand—& poured out.

came bringing  
 water—& poured out.  
 the cylinder poured out  
 a bucket of mixture

one above  
 one below.  
 raised up above  
 threw away below.

filled up above  
 threw away below.  
 the workers divided  
 in equal portions

the mixture  
 on the roof  
 w/ no shortchanging.  
 & smoothed-it-out.

the crows in morning  
 bringing food  
 from source to source  
 to the hatchlings.

this one fills  
 & this one lifts.  
 this one fills  
 & this one lifts.

one raises up,  
 one throws away.  
 one raises up,  
 one throws away.

bit by bit  
 the house is flipped  
 a factory  
 in & of itself.

no need  
 for the street's mercy.  
 its walls scabbed  
 silicate brick.

### **skeletal sounds**

till now  
 the skeletal sounds  
 bare nude  
 as before

the start to archeology.  
 but they raged  
 cement-mixer mechanisms  
 w/ the cylinder,

& cast  
 the roof, & cast  
 the shadow  
 to the walls of

the house. beams  
 & stakes. flat  
 staves. after  
 they cast the

roof, they cast  
 today  
 the skies' names  
 of the roof.

today were heard  
 carpenter hammers'  
 sounds & blacksmith  
 hammers' sounds

	blacksmith
detonator	
	blacksmith
detonator	
	sound
on	
	sound
growling	
	sound
on	
	sound
landing	
	to land
a blow	
	on
this.	
	this
on	
	this.

**silence of**

miracles & wonders.  
 people on  
 the roof pace  
 as shadows. as sounds.

hammer dents  
 in a verse of  
 two hard  
 words & three

short ones. dialogue  
 of the hammer & the material.  
 outstretched like a woman  
 in expectation.

today they banged  
 w/ carpenter hammers  
 smooth & vulnerable  
 w/ secret blows

as on planed  
 staves in a planer.  
 not nails  
 in a big head

& not nails  
 in a small head,  
 one beside  
 the other click-clack.

today begins  
 forming silence  
 of the rooms w/  
 each pleasure

of first brick  
 begins the veiling  
 it kept to itself  
 each room

isolated it  
 -self from the noise.  
 but the house  
 demanded of itself.

blacksmiths banged—  
 & saw it was  
 good. carpenters  
 banged—& saw

it was good.  
 every thing  
 & saw it was  
 very good.

but the house  
 demanded of itself.  
 rose from roof  
 twd roof,

from wood twd  
 wood. resurrection  
 of the road w/  
 the construction process.

**the roof at night**

the roof at night  
 looks like a *boidem*<sup>3</sup>  
 or cabin  
 in the vineyards in 1932

like in bayt-dajan<sup>4</sup>  
 in *ayun-kara*<sup>5</sup> in cloudy  
 skies, just  
 to dream by them.

clouds to drift-off  
 by them. to seek  
 my soul's  
 love in the vineyard.<sup>6</sup>

**the floor**

cast floor  
 wanted to return,  
 pushed back.  
 no need.

banged the slant—  
 sideways. banged  
 the supports—sideways.  
 banged the posts.

when they had  
 a task, there was  
 grace, & when not  
 none. now

one heap  
 resembles one.  
 each one,  
 technical & spiritual.

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<sup>3</sup> Yiddish for “attic.”

<sup>4</sup> Bayt Dajan (also known as Dajūn) was a Palestinian Arab village six kilometers outside Yaffo. On April 25, 1948, as part of the actions and reactions leading up to the Arab-Israeli War, the village was entirely depopulated. The Israeli town of Beyt Dagan was erected on the same site in 1948.

<sup>5</sup> The Arab village of Ayun Kara (eight kilometers south of Tel Aviv) was the site of a bloody battle between Turkish troops and the New Zealand Mounted Rifles Brigade on November 14, 1917.

<sup>6</sup> Echoes Song of Songs 3:1: “I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not” (KJV).



took uniforms  
& went home.  
took language,  
& voiced sound.

plank floor  
brought closer to the edge.  
bent back.  
wanted to return.

once & twice  
wanted to return.  
banged outside:  
no need.

the wood expelled.  
no trees,  
& not animals.  
but foundations.<sup>7</sup>

#### **acoustics**

was perfect.  
the acoustics of  
berdichevsky street—  
like *heichal ha-tarbut*.<sup>8</sup>

sirens—we hear.  
what in the house  
between man  
& wife—we hear.

what people  
buy at the store—  
we hear  
on the street.

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<sup>7</sup> Echoes Jeremiah 31:37: “Thus saith the LORD; If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the LORD” (KJV).

<sup>8</sup> Hebrew for “the Culture Palace,” referring to the largest concert hall in Tel Aviv, just a few minutes’ walk from where Yeshurun lived on Berdichevsky Street.

the house demanded  
 of itself all  
 the beams, all  
 the supports

from the wood below  
 to the wood above,  
 bent as a  
 man bears

a surface of planks  
 on which they cast  
 an upper roof.  
 bent to erect

to pull back  
 once inside  
 once ahead  
 once in midst.

straight ahead  
 erected back.  
 to support the gravel  
 roof—how?

as beams supporting  
 a curve of sky  
 so too at a slant  
 in the universe supports.

as a horse standing  
 on hind legs  
 as hands in a tallis  
 during priestly prayer.<sup>9</sup>

as a horse stops  
 insisting on its front  
 & w/ hind legs  
 pushing fwd.

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<sup>9</sup> The priestly prayer or priestly blessing, also known in rabbinic sources as the “raising of the hands,” is a Hebrew prayer which Jews of the priestly order (Kohanim) recite to this day. During the course of the prayer, the Kohen spreads his hands out over the congregation with the fingers of both hands separated so as to make four spaces between them. Each Kohen’s tallis (Hebrew/Yiddish, “prayer shawl”) is draped over his head and hands so that the congregation cannot see his hands while the blessing is being said.

**bound in grief**

all the beams  
 & supports & plank  
 floors were bound  
 & packed & thrown.

like in the vineyards  
 in 1932, at the end  
 of harvest, the guards  
 took a man

's parcel & he went  
 home on paths  
 length- & width-wise<sup>10</sup>  
 between vineyards,

between shrubs,  
 of grape clusters  
 the guards went & returned  
 the franks<sup>11</sup>

to their houses in *rishon*  
*l'tzion*<sup>12</sup> w/ one  
 room & one  
 bed & frankenia.<sup>13</sup>

all the beams,  
 all the supports  
 were packed in a rope  
 & thrown below.

even w/out  
 apprehending that one  
 of them wd evade  
 returning to the prior

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<sup>10</sup> Echoes Genesis 13:17: "Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee" (KJV).

<sup>11</sup> Derogatory Hebrew term for North African and Middle Eastern French-speaking Jews, generally associated with an East European Jewish prejudice against African and Middle Eastern Jews.

<sup>12</sup> Rishon L'Tzion (Hebrew, literally, "The First to Zion") is the fourth-largest city in contemporary Israel and was founded in 1882 by Jewish immigrants from the Russian Empire; they purchased land that had previously been townland of the Arab village of Ayun Kara in order to establish an early Zionist settlement.

<sup>13</sup> A particular shrub genus in the Frankeniaceae family of flowering plants.

status. discarded  
 one by one,  
 voiced in protest.  
 rose in upheaval.

no help  
 whatsoever.  
 no voice  
 & no answer.

in a moment  
 a car disappeared  
 w/ beams  
 & supports.

the workers sat  
 to eat. looked like  
 a day of celebration<sup>14</sup>  
 for them. their hats

one moment cluster  
 together one to the other.  
 drank water  
 from bottle & corked.

### **they lowered**

the bell's a hammer  
 & the house a crystal.  
 the house rings  
 & the hammer performs.

the hammer's a chatterbox  
 & house drowned-out.  
 they've already lowered  
 the crane.

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<sup>14</sup> Yeshurun uses the Aramaic phrase *yom genusya* here, a Talmudic term for a birthday or coronation (of a king).

**the wall dweller**

finished placing  
a line till  
windowsill  
settled on

the wall as one sits  
on the pot.  
this is the beginning of  
man in the house.

man in a renovated  
house. began  
the man to live  
in the house.

bit by bit  
the house put on  
white bricks  
like a white nightshirt

as a woman stretching  
to uncover a head  
of circuit ends  
to the consumption of flesh.

**he who is merciful cannot give mercy**

tonight we see  
quadrangle rhythm:  
hand head  
hand foot.

like the wall  
of the catholic  
church in krasnystaw<sup>15</sup>  
from the XVII century.

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<sup>15</sup> Krasnystaw, a town in present-day eastern Poland, was Yeshurun's hometown and the place he left behind when he moved to Palestine in 1925.

all this  
 an instance of the re-  
 novated house, that's still  
 in mourning holes:

uncovered in the uppers  
 covered in the lowers  
 from krasnystaw  
 till here.

### **krasnystaw house**

in tel aviv  
 i loved houses  
 till they were destroyed  
 & built anew.

i'm sorry they're destroyed  
 the old i've forgotten.  
 if i forget thee  
 krasnystaw house.

### **the landlords**

lawyers  
 renovated the house.  
 they're the landlords<sup>16</sup>  
 & who opposes them?

the neighbor fears  
 the lawyers.  
 they removed the fence  
 to half the sidewalk.

public domain!  
 theft of community!  
 the law of the land  
 is the law.<sup>17</sup> *of disturbers'*

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<sup>16</sup> Yeshurun uses the Yiddish term *balebosim* here, which might also be translated as “masters” or “overlords” but also “hosts.”

<sup>17</sup> Yeshurun quotes the Talmudic Aramaic phrase *dina d'malkhuta dina* here, referring to the Jewish rabbinical law (halakhah) that the law of the country is binding and in some cases even overrules Jewish law.

it's law—justice?  
 the neighbor fears  
 re-moving back.  
 to start-up w/ them.

a pensioner's fear  
 of lawyers.  
 retiree & bald  
 worthless asshole.

### **the law uprooted?**

there's a law  
 wd uproot a tree.  
 if uprooted  
 the law's tree

or a tree  
 the law  
 it wd uproot,  
 so to say.

there's verdict  
 of uprooting trees.  
 if verdict  
 wd uproot the

tree, or  
 the tree wd uproot  
 the verdict,  
 so to say.

stands a tree  
 in mid-sidewalk.  
 wd it uproot the verdict,  
 so to say?

### **today heard**

today heard  
 a bird  
 pecking a branch  
 to find a worm.

braver  
 than water  
 swifter  
 than time.

no past  
 no present  
 no future  
 there's time.

tune this  
 into yr heart.  
 go home  
 & rest & don't

talk anymore  
 of abundant blessings.  
 & ask  
 yair hurvitz.<sup>18</sup>

**it's the house**

the house dressed itself  
 white from legs  
 & body's beginning  
 till the chin.

i started w/ this  
 that a woman stretching  
 a nightshirt from the head  
 at the body's end.

now the nightshirt  
 till the chin.  
 b/c the house  
 it's a woman.

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<sup>18</sup> Yair Hurvitz (1941–88) was a poet who was active in the Hebrew poetry scene in Tel Aviv from the early 1960s until his abrupt death in 1988.



**sliced from the stairs & w/ all the stairs**

one day a door sliced the second-story  
 & the whole sand-loam-concrete floor rose & shifted & moved  
 & spilled & fled & was thrown from the stairs & w/ the stairs.  
 the room on the second-story remained lit in the sun as before in wood's supports naked  
 as before.

from whence was this taken?  
 from where does it derive?  
*what's it called?*  
 what's it say?<sup>19</sup>

**however much**

however much  
 i do not  
 pass on  
 the house it's

still wrecked  
 as *dvoyrele's* image  
 in holes & in the door  
 & the hole in the cement-mixer.

the house resembles  
 a box made of matches  
 that we hear only  
 open & close.

the house is quiet.  
 casting solidifies.  
 everything dries.  
 the cement-mixer w/

a frail circumcised  
 organ erects  
 wretched w/  
 a hole in the belly.

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<sup>19</sup> Yeshurun performs a code-switching here between Yiddish and Hebrew, writing the first and third lines of the quatrain in Yiddish and the second and fourth in Hebrew. Each Hebrew line appears to roughly translate the Yiddish line above it, subverting the traditional relationship between the two languages, where Hebrew is treated as primary and Yiddish as secondary.

the house at the time  
 of its building appears  
 all the time  
 increasingly destroyed.

each patch  
 they add to it—  
 an accent of debris.  
 how wrecked!

4th of Sivan 5749 to 4th of Tishrei *Tashan*, June 7 to October 2, 1989

### **home tongue**

home tongue  
 earthquake.  
 sometimes the voice  
 it's a

garbage can  
 & sometimes a  
 delicate presence.  
 return from life.

from hot prayer  
 return twd  
 the simple things  
 more ordinary:

the house looks out  
 still eye-holed  
 from *dvoyrele's*  
 door spilt

earth floor  
 outside & the doors  
 sway in agony  
 open as extended

hands. in the book  
 hid a prayer  
 to god that disclosed  
 to them the ancients.

the ancients thought  
 -up god to them  
 to give  
 order to what.

22nd of Tevet *Tashan*, January 19, 1990

הבית

בְּרִדְיָצ' בְּסִקִּי בֵּית  
 בֵּית בְּרִדְיָצ' בְּסִקִּי  
 אַרְבַּע.  
 אַרְבַּע  
 קִמּוֹת.

בְּאִים לְשִׁפְץ.  
 קִדְם כֹּל  
 בָּא בְּלִדְוֹר  
 וְנִתַּץ אֶת

הַכֶּרֶכֶב. זֶה  
 דְּבַר רֵאשִׁן.  
 מִשְׁהַרִּיד אֶת  
 הַכֶּרֶכֶב, מִשְׁעָקֵר

אֶת חֲזִית  
 הַבַּיִת, הַצְּמִיד  
 הַמְּשַׁפְּצִים – כְּדָגְמָא  
 לְמָה שְׁהִיָּה –

אֶת דְּלֹת  
 הַכְּנִיסָה,  
 שֵׁם דְּבִנְיָ לָהּ  
 נִרְאִית שְׁשֻׁנָּה

אֶת הַשְּׂכֵנִים,  
 "כֹּלֵל אֶתָּה",  
 וְאִמָּה שְׁבַעֲלָה  
 הַתְּגַרְשׁ וְנִדְד

לְמַרְחָקֵי אַמְרִיקָה  
 לְהֵיט חַזֵּן.  
 כָּל זֶה  
 גִּשְׁפָּף עִם

הַטֵּיט וְהַטִּיחַ  
 וְהַפִּיחַ לְעַיִי  
 הַחֲרַבְתָּ שְׁלֹךְ  
 הַבַּיִת מִסֵּפֶר

אַרְבַּע. וְהַבַּיִת  
 נִשְׁאַר כְּשֶׁלֶךְ  
 עֲצָמֹת, בְּלִי  
 אֵיבָרֵי עֶבֶל.

בַּיִת עִם  
 רוּחִים שֶׁהִי  
 פַּעַם דֹּלְהַת.  
 חֲרִים שֶׁהִי

פַּעַם חֲלֹנֹת.  
 הַבַּיִת נִרְאָה  
 כְּגִבֹּר עִם  
 רִגְלִים אֲרַכֹּת,

לְבָנֹת בְּתַחְתָּנִים.  
 נִהְיָה מֵאֹיִר  
 צַח מְכֹל  
 צַד נִחְמָד.

חֲמִים וְחֲמִרִים  
 הַקִּלְתָּ הָאֲנָשִׁים  
 יִתָּר שְׁקִטִים  
 מִהַקִּלְתָּ הַחֲמִרִים.  
 הָאֲנָשִׁים מִתְהַלְכִים

כְּפָפִים כְּהֶלְכִי  
 עַל אַרְבַּע  
 עַל הַגָּג  
 בְּדָקִים וּמְשֻׁמָּשִׁים

בְּדַעַה קְדָמָה.

וְהַקְלַת הַחֲמֻרִים,  
בְּפִשִׁישׁ וּבְחֻצָּץ,  
יָד חֲפִשִׁית.

כְּשֶׁהָאֹיִר דָּלִיל  
אוֹ עֹנָר  
עֲבַר וּכְשֶׁעָבָה –  
סָרַט קַרְנִים.

הִצֵּל שְׁהִסְתַּגֵּר  
בְּהִחְלָל הַבַּיִת,  
הִתְחִיל לְהִסְתַּכֵּל  
מִהַבֵּית לְרֹחֵב.

הַקְלַת הָאֲנֻשִׁים  
מִחֲמַלֵי לֵב.  
הַקְלַת הַחֲמֻרִים –  
דַּעַתָּם מִתְבִּיָּתָת.

בָּא לְקַח  
חֻצָּץ – וְזָרַק  
בָּא לְקַח  
זִיפְזִיר – וְזָרַק.

רָץ מִבֵּיא  
מָלֵט – וְשָׁפַד.  
רָץ מִבֵּיא  
חַל – וְשָׁפַד.

בָּא מִבֵּיא  
מִים – וְשָׁפַד.  
הִצִּילֵנִדָּר שָׁפַד  
דְּלִי תַעֲרֹבַת

אָחַד לְמַעְלָה  
אָחַד לְמַטָּה.  
הַרִים לְמַעְלָה  
זָרַק לְמַטָּה.

מִלֵּא לְמַעְלָה  
זָרַק לְמַטָּה.  
הַפְּעִלִים חֲלָק  
שָׁוָה בְּשָׁוָה

אֶת הַתְּעַרְבֹת  
עַל הַגֵּג  
וְלֹא קִפְחוּ.  
וַיִּשְׁרַח הַכֹּל.

הַעֲרָבִים בְּבִקְרָה  
מִבֵּיָאִים מִזֶּן  
מִמֶּקֶר לְמֶקֶר  
לְבַנֵּי עֵרֶב.

זֶה מִמְּלֵא  
וְזֶה מִנִּיף.  
זֶה מִמְּלֵא  
וְזֶה מִנִּיף.

אֶחָד מְרִים,  
אֶחָד זֹרֵק.  
אֶחָד מְרִים,  
אֶחָד זֹרֵק.

לְאֵט לְאֵט  
הַפֶּדֶף הַבַּיִת  
בֵּית חֲרָשֶׁת  
שֶׁל עֶצְמוֹ.

לֹא זָקַק  
לְרַחֲמֵי הָרְחֹב.  
קִירְתֵּי הַגְּלִיד  
לְבַנֵּי סִילִיקָט.

שְׁלֹדֵי קֶלֶת  
עַד עֲכָשׁוּ  
שְׁלֹדֵי הַקֶּלֶת  
חֲשָׁפִים עֲרָמִים  
כְּאֵל לְפָנַי

הַכְּנֶסֶה לְאַרְכָּאֵלֶגְיָה.  
אֶבֶל סַעֲרָה  
מִכְנֹת הַמְעַרְבֵּל  
עִם הַצִּילִינְדָה,

וַיִּצַק אֶת  
הַגָּג, וַיִּצַק  
אֶת הַצֵּל  
לְקִירֵהוּ שֶׁל

הַבַּיִת. הַמַּלְכָּה  
וּסְמֻכְתּוֹ. מִשְׁטַח  
קְרָשִׁים. אַחַר  
שִׁיִּצַק אֶת

הַגָּג, יִצַק  
הַיָּם אֶת  
שְׁמֵי הַשָּׁמַיִם  
שֶׁל הַגָּג.

הַיָּם נִשְׁמַע  
קֹלֹת פְּטִישֵׁי  
נְגָרִים וְקֹלֹת  
פְּטִישֵׁי נִפְחִים

נִפְחָ  
נִפְזָ

נִפְחָ  
נִפְזָ

קֹל  
עַל

קֹל  
מְנַהֲמִים

קֹל  
עַל

קֹל  
מְנַחֲיָתִים

הַנְּחָת  
מִכָּה

עַל  
זָה.

זָה  
עַל

זָה.

## דְּמַמַּת

נָסִים וּמִפְתִּים.  
אָנָשִׁים עַל  
הִגָּג מִתְהַלְּכִים  
כְּצִלִים. כְּצִלִים.

דְּפִיקַת בְּפִטִּישׁ  
בְּפֶסֶק שֶׁל  
שְׁתֵּי מַלְאִכִּים  
חֹזֶקֶת וְשִׁלְשׁ

קִצְרָת. דְּשִׁיחַ  
הַפִּטִּישׁ וְהַחֲמֹה.  
הַשְּׂרַע כְּאִשָּׁה  
בְּשִׁעַת יַעֲדָה.

הִים דְּפֶקַ  
בְּפִטִּישֵׁי נִגְרִים  
חֲלָקִים וְחֲשָׁפִים  
בְּדְפִיקַת סֶתֶר

כְּעַל קִרְשִׁים  
מִקְצָעִים בְּמִקְצָעָה.  
לֹא מִסְמְרִים  
בְּרֹאשׁ גְּדֹל,

וְלֹא מִסְמְרִים  
בְּרֹאשׁ קָטָן,  
אֶחָד לְיָד  
הַשְּׁנַי טְלִיאַק־טְלִיאַק.

הִים הַחֲלָה  
לְהוֹצֵר דְּמַמַּת  
הַחֲדָרִים עִם  
כָּל הַנְּחַת

לְבִנָּה רֵאשֻׁנָּה  
מִתְחִילָה הַהֲצָעָפָה  
הַשְּׁמֶרָה לְעֲצָמוֹ  
כָּל חֶדֶר



ובדלת את  
עצמה מרעש.  
אף הבית  
דרש מעצמו.

דפק נפחים –  
וירא כי  
טב. דפק  
נגרים – וירא

כי טב.  
כל דבר  
וירא כי  
טב מאד.

אף הבית  
דרש מעצמו.  
עלה מגג  
אל גג,

מיער אל  
יער. התחית  
הרחב עם  
תהליך הבניה.

הגג בלילה  
הגג בלילה  
נראה כבידום  
או כמלנה  
בפרמים ב־1932

כמו בבית־דגן  
בעזרקרא בשמים  
מעננים, רק  
לחלם בהם.

עננים לגם  
בהם. לבקש  
את שאהבה  
נפשי בפרם.

## הַרְצָפָה

רְצַפְתָּ יְצִיקָה

רְצַתָּה לְחֹזֶר,

דְּחַפּוּתָּה תִּזְרָה.

לֹא צָרִיד.

דְּפַק הָאֵלֶכְסָן –

הַצְדָּה. דְּפַק

הַתְּמָכִים – הַצְדָּה.

דְּפַק הַסְּמָכִים.

כְּשֶׁהָיָה לָהֶם

תְּפִקִּיד הָיָה

חוּ, וּכְשֶׁאֵין –

אֵין. עֲכָשׁוּ

עֲרַמָּה אַחַת

דְּמָה לְאַחַד.

כָּל אַחַד,

הַטְּכֵנִי וְהִרְחֵנִי.

לְקַח מֵדִים

וְהִלֵּךְ הַבְּיָתָה.

לְקַח שְׂפָה,

הַשְּׁמִיעַ קֹל.

רְצַפְתָּ קְרָשִׁים,

קִרְבָּה לְקִצָּה.

הַתְּכַפְּפָה אַחֲרָה.

רְצַתָּה לְחֹזֶר.

פַּעַם וּפַעַמִּים

רְצַתָּה לְחֹזֶר.

דְּפַקָּה הַחֲצָה:

לֹא צָרִיד.

הַיַּעַר טָהֵר

, אֵין עֲצִים,

וְלֹא חַיִּת.

יֵשׁ מִסְדָּת.

אָקסטיקה  
 הִיָּה מְשָׁלֵם.  
 הָאָקסטיקה שָׁל  
 רָחֹב בְּרִדִּיץ' בְּסִקִּי –  
 כְּהִיכֵל הַתְּרַבֵּת.

צְפִירָה – שְׁמָעִים.  
 מֵה שְׁבִבִית  
 בֵּין אִישׁ  
 לְאִשְׁתּוֹ – שְׁמָעִים.

מֵה שְׁאֲנָשִׁים  
 קָנִים בְּחִנֵּת –  
 שְׁמָעִים אֶת  
 זֶה בְּרָחֹב.

הַבַּיִת דָּרֵשׁ  
 מֵעֲצָמוֹ כָּל  
 הַתְּמוֹכָה, כָּל  
 הַסְּמוֹכָה,

מִיעֵר מְלֻמָּטָה  
 לִיעֵר מְלֻמְעָלָה,  
 הַתְּכַפֵּף כְּאִישׁ  
 אֶחָד לְשֵׁאת

מִשְׁטַח קָרְשִׁים  
 שְׁעָלָיו יִצָּק  
 גַּג עָלָיו.  
 הַתְּכַפֵּף לְזָקֵף

לְמִשְׁךְ אַחֲרָה  
 פַּעַם לְפָנִימָה  
 פַּעַם לְקֹדִימָה  
 פַּעַם בְּאֶמְצָע.

יֵשֶׁר קֹדִימָה  
 זָקֵף אַחֲרָה.  
 לְתִמּוֹךְ בְּגַג  
 הַזִּיפּוֹף – כִּי־צֵד?

כְּקַרְנֵי תַמְכַת  
 בְּעֵקֶם בְּרָקִיעַ,  
 כֵּן בְּאַלְכֶסֶן  
 בִּיקָם סִמְכַת.

כָּסֶס עֵמֵד  
 בְּרִגְלֵי אַחֲרִית  
 כִּי־דִים בְּטִלִית  
 בְּבִרְכַת כְּהַנִּים.

כָּסֶס עֵצָר  
 מִתְעַקֵּשׁ בְּקִדְמִית  
 וּבְרִגְלֵי אַחֲרִית  
 יִדְחֶף קְדִימָה.

תְּכַרְכֵּ בְּתַגָּה  
 כָּל הַתַּמְכַת  
 וְהַסְמַכַת וְרִצְפַת  
 הַקְרָשִׁים תְּכַרְכֵ  
 וְנֶאֱרָז וְהַשְׁלֵכֵ.

כְּמוֹ בְּכַרְמִים  
 ב-1932, בְּגִמְר  
 הַבְּצִיָּה, לְקַח  
 הַשְּׁמָרִים אִישׁ

חֲבִילָתוֹ וְהִלָּךְ  
 הַבִּיטָה בְּמִשְׁעָלִים  
 לְאַרְבֵּ וְלִרְחֹב  
 בֵּין הַכְרָמִים

בֵּין הַשִּׁיחִים  
 הַגְּמִלִים מְאֻשְׁכָּל  
 הָלֵךְ וְחֹזֵר  
 הַשְּׁמָרִים הַפְּרָנְקִים

לְבַתִּיהֶם בְּרֵאשׁוֹן  
 לְצִיּוֹן בְּחֹדֵר  
 אַחַד וּמִטָּה  
 אַחַת, וּפְרָנְקִינִיָּה.

כָּל הַתְּמוּכָה,  
כָּל הַסְּמוּכָה,  
נֶאֱרַז בְּחֶבֶל  
וְהִשְׁלַךְ לְמִטָּה.

אֶפֶל מִבְּלִי  
לְחֹשֶׁשׁ שְׂאֵחַת  
מִהוּ תִתְחַמֵּק  
לְשֵׁב לְמַעַמַּד

הַקֶּדֶם. הַשְּׁלֶכֶת  
אֶחַת אֶחַת,  
הַשְּׂמִיעַ מִחֶאָה.  
יֵצֵא בְּטָרָאֶסֶק.

לֹא עֶזֶר  
לָהֶן כָּלֶם.  
אִין קַל  
וְאִין עֲנָה.

כְּעֵבֶר רִגַע  
מְכֻנֵּית נְעֻלְמָה  
עִם הַתְּמוּכָה  
וְעִם הַסְּמוּכָה.

הַפְּעֵלִים יִשְׁבּוּ  
לְאָכֹל. נִרְאָה  
יִם גְּנֻסְיָה  
לָהֶם. כְּבֻעֵיהֶם

רִגַע צְפֻפִים  
זָה לְזָה.  
שֵׁת מִיִּם  
מִבְּקֶבֶק וּפְקֶקֶה.

הַרִיד  
הַפְּטִישׁ פְּעֵמֹן  
וְהַבֵּית בְּדִלָּה.  
הַבֵּית מִצְלָצֶל  
וְהַפְּטִישׁ מִנְגֹן.

הפטיש פִּטְפֹּטֵן  
וְהַבַּיִת מִחְרִישׁ.  
כָּבֵד הַרִיד  
אֶת הַמְנוּף.

הַיֹּשֵׁב עַל הַקִּיר  
גָּמַר לְהַנִּיחַ  
שָׂרָה עַד  
אָדוֹן הַחֲלוֹן,  
הַתְּיֹשֵׁב עַל

הַקִּיר כִּי־שָׁב  
עַל הַסִּיר.  
זֶה רֵאשִׁית  
אָדָם בַּבַּיִת.

אָדָם בַּבַּיִת  
הַמְשַׁפֵּץ. הַתְּחִיל  
אָדָם לָגֵר  
בַּבַּיִת.

לְאֵט לְאֵט  
לְבֶשׂ הַבַּיִת  
לְבָנִים לְבָנֹת  
כְּכַתְנֹת לְבָנָה.

כְּאִשָּׁה מִתְחַת  
לְגִלֵּי רֵאשׁ  
עֲגִלֵי סֶף  
לְגֹמֵר הַבְּשָׂה.

הָא רַחֵם לֹא יִכַּל לְהִית מְרַחֵם  
הַלְּיָלָה רֵאשׁ  
רַחֵם מְרַבֵּעַ:  
יָד רֵאשׁ  
יָד רֵגֶל.

כְּמוֹ הַקִּיר  
שֶׁל הַכְּנִסְיָה  
הַקְּתִלִּית בְּקִרְסֵי־סֵטָאוּ  
מֵהַמָּאָה ה־XVII.

כָּל זֶה  
 דְּגָמָא לְבֵית  
 הַמִּשְׁפָּצַי, שְׁעָדִין  
 בְּחָרִים אֲבָלִים:

מְגֵלָה בְּעֵלְיָנִים  
 מְכֶסֶה בְּתַחְתָּנִים,  
 מִן קַרְסְנִיסְטָאוּו  
 עַד הַנָּה.

קַרְסְנִיסְטָאוּו בֵּית  
 בְּתֵל אָבִיב  
 אֶהְבֵּתִי בְּתִים  
 עַד שְׁנֵהָרֶס  
 וְנִבְנֶה מַחְדָּשׁ.

הַצְטַעַרְתִּי שְׁנֵהָרֶס  
 הַיִּשּׁוֹן שְׁכַחְתִּי.  
 לְ שְׁכַחְתִּי  
 קַרְסְנִיסְטָאוּו בֵּית.

הַבְּלָבְתִים  
 עֵרְכִי דִין  
 שְׁפָצַ הַבֵּית.  
 הֵם הַבְּלָבְתִים –  
 וּמִי כְּנִגְדָם?

הַשְּׂכֹן יָרָא  
 מְעֵרְכִי דִין.  
 הַצִּיאַ הַגֶּדֶר  
 לְחֻצֵי הַמְדָרְכָה.

רְשַׁת הַרְבִּים!  
 גִּזְלֵ הַצֶּבֶר!  
 דִּינָא דְּמַלְכָתָא  
 דִּינָא. דְּעַ כְּרִי

דִּינָה – דִּינָא?  
 יָרָא הַשְּׂכֹן  
 לְהַזִּיז חֲזָרָה.  
 לְהַתְחִיל אִתָּם.

פחד פּוֹסֵינֵר  
מְעַרְכֵי דִין.  
גְּמֵלֵי וְקִרְחַת  
שְׂוִים לַתַּחַת.

הִיעָקַר הַדִּין  
יֵשׁ חֶק  
עַץ יַעֲקֹר.  
אִם יַעֲקֹר  
עַץ הַחֶק,

אוּ עֵץ  
אֶת הַחֶק,  
הָא יַעֲקֹר,  
זֹאת אִמְרָת.

יֵשׁ דִּין  
עֲקִירַת עֲצִים.  
אִם דִּין  
יַעֲקֹר אֶת

הָעֵץ, אוּ  
הָעֵץ יַעֲקֹר  
אֶת הַדִּין,  
זֹאת אִמְרָת.

עֵמֵד עֵץ  
בְּאִמְצַע הַמְּדַרְכָּה.  
הִיעָקַר הַדִּין,  
זֹאת אִמְרָת.

הִים שְׂמֵעַ  
הִים שְׂמֵעַ  
כְּמוֹ צֶפֶר  
מְנַקֶּרֶת בְּעֵנָף  
לְמִצַּא תִּלְעַת.

גְּבֵר  
מִמֵּיִם  
מִהִיר  
מִזְמַן.



אִין עָבֵר,  
אִין הָוָה,  
אִין עֲתִיד,  
יֵשׁ זְמַן.

שִׁימִי זֹאת  
לְתֹף לִבִּי.  
לְכִי הַבַּיְתָה  
וְתִנְחִי וְאֵל

תְּדַבְּרֵי עַד  
מִשְׁפַּע הַבְּרָכָה.  
וְהִשְׁאַלֵי אֶת  
יְאִיר הוֹרְבִיץ.

זֶה הַבַּיִת  
הַבַּיִת הַתְּלַבֵּשׁ  
לָבוֹ מֵהַרְגָלִים  
וְיִסַּד הַגֹּף  
עַד הַסְּנֵטָה.

הַתְּחַלְתִּי בְּזֹאת  
שְׂאֵשָׁה מִתַּחַת  
כְּתִנַּת מֵהָרֵאשׁ  
בְּסוֹף הַגֹּף.

עֲכָשׁוּ הַכְּתָנֹת  
עַד הַסְּנֵטָה.  
כִּי הַבַּיִת  
זֶה אִשָּׁה.

נִפְלְחָה מִן הַמְּדַרְגָּת וְעַם כָּל הַמְּדַרְגָּת  
יֵם אֶחָד נִפְלְחָה דְלֹת הַקְּמָה הַשְּׁנִיָּה  
וְכָל רִצְפַת הַחֲלִי-חֲמֻדָּה-בֵּטֶן הַתְּרַמְמָה וְזָעָה וְזָזָה  
וְנִשְׁפָּכָה וּבְרָקָה וְנִזְרָקָה מִן הַמְּדַרְגָּת וְעַם הַמְּדַרְגָּת.  
הַחֲדָר שְׂבֻקְמָה הַשְּׁנִיָּה נִשְׂאָר מְאֹר בְּשִׁמְשׁ כְּמִקְדָּם בְּסִמְכַת הָעֵץ הָעִירְמֹת  
כְּמִקְדָּם.

פן וואנען נמט זיך דאס?  
 מאין זעה נבע?  
 וואס הייסט?  
 מה זאת אמרת?

כל כמה  
 כל כמה  
 שאני לא  
 עבר על  
 הבית הא

עדיו חרבה  
 שדמת דביר'לה  
 בחורים ובדלת  
 והחר במערבל.

הבית דמה  
 לקפסה מגפררים  
 ששמעים רק  
 כפתח וכסגה.

הבית שקט.  
 נח מייציקה.  
 הכל מהיבש.  
 המערבל עם

אבר מילה  
 חור עמד  
 עלב עם  
 חר בבטון.

הבית בזמן  
 בנייתו נראה  
 כל הזמן  
 הלך ונהרס.

כל טלאי  
 שמסיפים לו –  
 הדגשת ההרס.  
 כמה הרס!

שִׁפְתַּי הַבַּיִת  
 שִׁפְתַּי הַבַּיִת  
 וְרַעֲיִדַת אֲדָמָה.  
 לַפְּעָמִים הַקָּל  
 הָאֵשׁ

קִפְסַת פֶּחַ  
 וְלַפְּעָמִים זֶה  
 נֹכַחַת עֲדִינָה.  
 חֲזָרִים מֵהַחַיִּים.

מִתְפַּלֵּה חֲמָה  
 חֲזָרִים אֶל  
 הַדְּבָרִים הַפְּשָׁטִים  
 שִׁיִּתֵּר מִצִּיִּים:

הַבַּיִת מִבֵּיט  
 עַד בְּחָרִים עֵינַיִם.  
 מִהַדְּלֵת שֶׁל  
 דְּבִיר' לֵה נִשְׁפָּכָה

רִצְפַת הַסֵּפֶר  
 הַחֲצָה וְהַדְּלֵת  
 מִתְנַדְּדֵת בְּדוֹי  
 פְּתוּחַת כְּיָדַיִם

פְּשֻׁטוֹת. בְּסֵפֶר  
 טְמֵנָה תְּפִלָּה  
 לֹאדְנִי שְׁחֻשָּׁפ  
 לָהֶם קִדְמוֹנִים.

הַקְּדָמוֹנִים חֻשָּׁב  
 לָהֶם אֱלֹהִים  
 לְמַעַן לָתֵת  
 מִשְׁמַעַת לְמַהֵת.