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| <p>הַיְסוּאָנִי בְּאֵתִי מִן אֲנִי אוֹכֵלֶת תְּאֵנִים מֵעֵץ הַלֵּימון שֶׁהֵבִיאה סִבְתָּא הַיִּשָּׁר שְׁלִי כָּל הַדֶּרֶךְ מִלְּבוֹב וְנִטְעָה אוֹתוֹ בְּבוֹר עִם הַמִּפְתָּח הַגָּדוֹל שֶׁל הַבַּיִת שֶׁקִּבְּלָנוּ מֵעֲמִידָר בְּיוֹם בַּת הַמִּצְוָה שֶׁל אִמָּא שְׁלִי רִקְדָנוּ סָבִיבוּ מִשְׂמֵחָה גַם בְּיוֹם שֶׁבִּאתִי זֶהְבָּה כְּמוֹ הָאֲרִיּוֹת שֶׁל יְרוּשָׁלַיִם סַעֲדִימַת־בְּאַחֲרֵי הַטִּיּוֹל שֶׁל הַפֶּתַח אֶל חוּר הַנְּשִׂיא שֶׁל הָרֵי יְהוּדָה וּבְאַמַּת -לְמַרְגְּלוֹת יַד מְלוּחַ לִי בְּפֶה מְרוּחַ הַיָּם הַסְּפִינָה [מִפְּרָסִי יִשְׂרָאֵל מִפְּרִשְׁתֵּי הַפִּילָה א הָאִיטְלִיקִית וְסִעְרָה יוֹם וְלַיְלָה וְרַק סָבָא שְׁלִי יָרַד בְּעוֹד הַמִּלְחָמִים לִסְעֵד עִם כָּלנוּ נִהְפַּכְנוּ לְדָגִים מֵעֲשׂוֹנִים עַל הַגְּלִים הַסּוֹעְרִים שֶׁמְנַעְנְעִים עַם שֶׁבְּתוֹךְ הַדְּלִי שֶׁהִיחָאֵת הַמִּפְתָּחוֹת וְהַמְנַעוּלִי מִבֵּיא בְּעָרֵב לְתַקוֹן דְּלִתוֹת בֵּית הַסֶּפֶר יְבוֹאוּ יִשְׂרָאֵל חֲבָרִים וְהֵם כָּל הַיּוֹם אֶל הַחֶצֶר לְמִסְבַּת הַחַג בֵּין הַדְּגָלִים וּבְלִי עֲזָרָה שֶׁל אֶף אֶחָד טַפְסָתִי אֶל הָעֲנָפִים רָטַס אֶל פְּרַח זֹגוֹת וְזֹגוֹת צְרוּרִים בּוֹתְלִיתִי מִפְתָּח עִם כָּל הַדְּבָדְבָנִים בְּעֵץ שֵׁם בְּגָנָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם שֶׁל סִבְתָּא קְרִינָה.</p> | <p>And I Came from the Sea¹</p> <p>I eat figs from the lemon-tree² that my grandmother brought all the way from Lvov and planted here in the pit along with the big house-key of the home we got from public housing on the day of my mother's bat-mitzvah we joyfully danced around it also on the day I arrived golden as Jerusalem's lions after the school trip to the ruins of Se'adim at the foothills of the President's memorial³ in the Judean mountains and indeed I taste the salty sea breeze that climbed the sails of the Italian ship and a mighty tempest came down day and night and only my grandfather went below into the hold of the ship⁴ to dine with the sailors while all of us turned into smoked-fish on the crashing waves that shook the keys and the locks in the bucket that he used to bring every evening to repair for the Alliance Israélite Universelle and indeed all of them will come today to the holiday party between the flagpoles and with no one's help I have climbed the branches and hung key to flower two and two tied by ribbons along with all the cherries in the tree there in the garden in the Jerusalem of my grandmother Krinna.</p> |
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¹ See Moshe Shamir, *With his own hands* (Jerusalem: Institute for the Translation of Hebrew Literature ; Israel Universities Press, 1970). [*Bemo Yadav, Pirke Elik*, (Hebrew), 1951] The book's hero, Elik, who fell in the war of independence (1948) is portrayed as an icon of the new Jew, the quintessential sabra. The opening lines "Elik was born in the sea" became a focus of many critical discussions about the Zionist ethos that celebrates the Israeli born sabra as the one that is born *Ex Nihilo* – from the sea. See Anita Shapira, *Israel : a history* (Waltham, Mass.: Brandeis University Press, 2012). P. 257; David Ohana, *The origins of Israeli mythology : neither Canaanites nor crusaders* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012). Hannan Hever, *Toward the Longed-for Shore: The Sea in Hebrew Culture and Modern Hebrew Literature* (Jerusalem: Van Leer Jerusalem Institute & Hakibbutz Hameuchad publishing House, 2007).

² Refers to the movie *Lemon Tree* (2008) by Eran Riklis. The movie describes the legal effort of a Palestinian widow to stop the destruction of her family's Lemon orchard by Israeli developers.

³ *Yad Kenedi*, a memorial to J. F. Kennedy, the 35th President of the United States, located in Judea Mountains at the outskirts of Jerusalem.

⁴ *Jonah*, 1:5

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| <p><i>Tode ti</i> למשה ולאַריסטו שְׁבִתוֹכְנוּ</p> <p>זֶה לֹא זֶה זֶה זֶה הוּא זֶה זֶה לֹא מִקְרִי שְׁאֲנִי מֵאֲבָד אֶת עֲצָמֵי כְּאִלּוּ הֵייתִי הַכְּחַל שְׁלִי אוּ הַכְּאֵב בְּטֶן שְׁלִי אוּ הַחֲמֵדָה שְׁלִי וּנְתָר לְאַחַר שְׁבִתְרֵנוּ אֶת הַבְּרִית לְחֻלְקֵיהֶימָה כִּי הַיּוֹנֵה כִּי הָאֵיל כִּי הָעֵשֶׂן הַמְּסַמָּא אוֹתִי מִלְרְאוֹת אֶת רִגְלֵי הַפְּסוּקוֹת כִּי כּוֹאֵב, כּוֹאֵב שֵׁם לְמִטָּה שֶׁזֶה גַם אֲנִי וְלֹא רַק מִקְרָה שְׁקָרָה נָנִי יוֹדֵעַ מֵהוּ הַזֶּה שֶׁהוּא לֹא זֶה, כְּלוּמְרֵלִי וּכְבָר אֵי אֲנִי יוֹדֵעַ שֶׁהַזֶּה שֶׁל אֶהְבֵּתְנוּ הוּא הַזֶּה שֶׁהוּא אֲנִי וְכָל הַבְּתָרִים הִלְלוּ רַק הִטְעוּ אֶת אֲבִינוּ וּמֵאֵז צְעֵדְנוּ בְּשִׁבְלֵי אֲבוֹדִים דִּי לְרְאוֹתֵהֶם מִהָאֵיל וְעִמּוֹסֵי עֲצִים וְכִי אֶת זֶה שֶׁהוּא זֶה זָרְקְנוּ גְּפֻרִים אֶל הַפְּנֵה וְאִיזָה מִזֶּל שֶׁהוּא הַתְּעַקֵּשׁ וְלֹא כְּלָה וְהוֹנֵה אֶת אֲשֶׁר אֶהְיֶה וְהֵייתִי אֲנִי הוּא זֶה.</p> | <p>To Moses and Aristotle in Us – <i>Tode ti</i>⁵</p> <p>This is not something and that is that and it is not merely an accident that I misplace myself as if I am my blues or my stomach ache or my delight and what is left after we have cut the covenant of the pieces⁶ to its parts here is the dove there the ram here the smoke that screens my eyes from gazing at my parted legs because it hurts, it hurts down there and I know that it is not merely an accident that occurred to me, now I no longer know what is this that is not something , that is to say, I know that our love is the something that is me and all these pieces only confused our forefather and ever since we trek along lost paths away from the ram, with loads of fire wood,⁷ and in order to see the that which is something we throw matches to the <i>Sneh</i> and how lucky we are that the <i>Sneh</i> is stubborn and refuses to be consumed⁸ and is all that I'll ever be and all that I ever was I am that I am this something.</p> |
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⁵ *Tode Ti* – an Aristotelian terminology usually translated as “this something” or “a certain thing,” being a determinate individual. A substance must be a determinate individual that is capable of existing on its own. See for example Pamela Hood’s discussion of the term in Pamela Michelle Hood, *Aristotle on the category of relation* (Lanham, Md.: University Press of America, 2004). p. 45-46. And Jiyuan Yu, *The structure of being in Aristotle's Metaphysics* (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003). Chap. V. “Tode Ti and Toionde”.

⁶ The Covenant of Pieces, *Genesis*, 15.

⁷ *Genesis*, chap. 22: 6-7.

⁸ *Exodus*, chap. 3.

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| <p>Morning With Amnon⁹</p> <p>I will rise before you and stretch like a lion in the chilliness of the morning I'll spread a checkered table cloth on top of the wooden table and place a fork, a knife, and a spoon alongside the saucer that kisses the soft dew while the sun sends teasing rays to the tree leaves that reach for the red jar of jam like licking fingers I'll sooth you and leave you to wake up my beloved wrapped with the scent of breakfast omelet and just like in movies, I will put on a pink dress and tie my hair with a reddish ribbon and let my hair fly in the wind, yes, I will ride a white bicycle straight from Alsace and in the picnic basket I will put wine, two glasses and biscuits for you and we will laugh as if we were kids and crumbs will glitter like dew drops in the sun which will spread thousands of sparks on your curls, igniting your hair like a crown then the trees will cover us and I will unbutton your shirt slowly my tongue will curl along the lines of your strong smooth chest that rises and falls with each breath I will caress your back, rest now, hush... I'll kiss your eyes and thrust three spears through your heart¹⁰ oh my Absalom.</p> | <p>אֲמֹנוֹן עִם בֶּקָר</p> <p>אֲנִי אָקוּם לְפָנֶיךָ וְכֹאֲרֵי אֶתְמַתַּח אֶל צִנַּת הַבֶּקָר אֶפְרָס מִפֶּה מִשְׁבָּצָת</p> <p>עַל שֶׁלַחַן הָעֵץ אֲנִיחַ מִזְלֵג, סַפִּיר, וְכַפִּית לֵיַד הַצְּלַחַת שְׁנוֹשְׁקֵת שֶׁמֶשׁ מְגַשֶּׁשֶׁת לְאוֹר קֶרְנִים מְדַדְדוֹת פְּלוּמַת הַטֵּל אֶל אֶת עָלֵי הָעֵצִים וּמִתְרַפְּקוֹת אֶל צִנְצִנַּת הַרִיבָה הָאֲדָמָה כְּמוֹ אֲצִבְעוֹת לֹקְקוֹת אֲנִי מְנִיחַ לְךָ</p> <p>קֶשֶׁת שֶׁתְּעוֹרֵר לְבָבִי הָעֵטוֹף בְּרִיחַ טִיגוֹן הַבִּיצָה שֶׁמִּקְשׁ וְכִמוֹ בְּסֶרְטִים אֶלְבָּשׁ שֶׁמְלֵה וְרִדָה וְאֶקְשֶׁר בְּמַתְּכַת לְשַׁעְרֵי סֶרֶט אֲדַמְדֵם וְאֶבְדֵר אוֹתוֹ בְּרוּחַ כֵּן אֶפְלוֹ אֶרְכַּב סָבִיב עַל סֹ וּבְסֻלְסֻלַת הַקֶּשׁ אֶטְמִין יַיִן זֶלֶם הַלְבָנִים הַיִּשָּׁר מֵאֶהָאוּפְנֵי וְשִׁתֵּי כּוֹסוֹת וְתוֹפִינִים אֲגִישׁ לְפִיךָ וְנִצְחַק כְּמוֹ הֵיינו לְשֶׁמֶשׁ יִתְפָּזֵרוּ רְסִיסֵי לִילָה שׁוֹב יְלָדִים וּפְרוּרִים יִנְצָצוּ כְּמוֹ כְּאֵלֶּה</p> <p>זֵיקוּקִים עַל תְּלַתִּיךָ וְיִצִּיתוּ אֶת שַׁעְרֶךָ לְכַתֵּר כְּכוֹ עֲלֵינוּ וְאֶפְרָם אֵט כְּפַתוֹר מְלוּלָאָה אֶת חֲלָצְתְּךָ וְהָעֵצִים יִסּוּ וְלִשׁוֹנִי תִתְּפַתֵּל בְּקוֹנֵי שְׁרִירֵי חֹזֶק הַתְּלַק , אֶלְטָף אֶת גְּבֶרְךָ, מְרַצָּה בְּנִשְׁמֹת עוֹלָה וְיִוֹרֵד לְעֵינֶיךָ וּשְׁלֵשָׁה שְׁבָטִים בְּכַפֵּי אֲנִשְׁקָ ... נוֹחַ , שֶׁשׁ אָבִיא בְּלֶבְךָ הוּ אֲבִשְׁלוֹם שְׁלִי.</p> |
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⁹ For the biblical stories of Amnon, Tamar, and of Absalom see 2Samuel chapters 13-18.

¹⁰ 2Samuel, chap. 18:14.

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| <p>"הֲלַעֲיִטְנִי נָא מִן הָאֵדָם הָאֵדָם הִנֵּה כִּי עַיִף אֲנֹכִי" "</p> <p>אחים</p> <p>אָדָם, אָדָם זֶה טוֹב. עִם אָדָם אֲנִי יָכוֹל לְהִתְמוֹדֵד קְשֵׁהוּא יוֹשֵׁב וּמִבְשֵׁל לִי מָה... מָה גַעְגּוּעַ מְעַרְבֵב וּפּוּעָה פּוּעָה, זֶה טוֹב. אִם כִּבֵּר פּוּעָה, אֲזַ אֲנִי יָכוֹל לְשִׁמּוֹעַ בְּתוֹךְ תּוֹכֵי הַסִּיר אֶת הַקּוֹל שֶׁמְרִטִיט אֶת סִיבֵי הָאוֹר שֶׁבְּשִׁיחָה. שִׁיחָה, הוּ שִׁיחָה זֶה טוֹב עִם שִׁיחָה אֲנִי יָכוֹל לְבוֹא אֵלֶיךָ וְאֶתָּה תִּלְעִיטְנִי מָה שֶׁקָּרָה וְתִצִּיג לִי אֶת לְאֵהֶבְכֶּל וְרַחֵל וְכָל בֵּיתְךָ וְאֶפֶל עַל צְנֹאֲרֶךְ הַלְבָן לָבָן, לָבָן, לָבָן, לָבָן זֶה טוֹב מְאֹד. עִם לָבָן אֲנִי יָכוֹל לְדַמְנֵן מַפָּה שֶׁנּוֹצֵיר בָּהּ בֵּיתֵנוּ לְקִשְׁאָשׁוּבְתָא הַ בְּמִרְחָקֵי הַיָּם שֶׁבִּינֵינוּ לְשִׁמּוֹעַ אֶת הַבְּטֵן הַפּוּעַ יָם, הוּ יָם, יָם זֶה טוֹב. עִם יָם אֲנִי יָכוֹל לְשׁוֹט מִמֶּךָ וְאֵלֶיךָ וְרוּחַ, הָא רוּחַ, יֵשׁ בִּי רוּחַ לְמִכְבִּיר וּכְבֵּר זֶה טוֹב אִם כִּבֵּר אֲזַ כִּבֵּר מְאֹד מְאֹד וְלֹא מִחֵר בְּשַׁעֲרֵיהָ נִשְׁבַּ כִּי בְשָׁכְם כְּמוֹ בְשָׁכְם וְלֹא שָׁמַעְתָּ לִי אָחִי.</p> | <p>"Please let me have a swallow of that red stuff there, for I am famished." (Gen 25:30)</p> <p>Brothers</p> <p>Red, red is good. Red I can manage while he sits and cooks for me yearning, he mixes and bleats, bah, bah, bah... Bleating is good. If bleating anyway, then I can hear from the depths of the pot voices that excite threads of light in the conversation. Conversation, oh conversation is good with conversation I can come to you and you will fatten me with all that had happened and present Lea and Rachel and all your house to me and I will fall on your white [Laban] neck¹¹ white, white, white White is very good. With white I can imagine a map on which we will draw our home when I return to hear the gurgling stomach in the distant sea between us sea, oh sea, sea is good. On the sea I can sail from you and unto you and wind, oh wind, I have plenty of wind now and now is good if indeed now then let it be now and not tomorrow in <i>Seir</i> we will settle because in <i>Shechem</i> like in <i>Shechem</i> and you have not listened to me brother.</p> |
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¹¹ Genesis 33:4; and see two opposing views in the Midrash: (a) *Pirke derabi Eliezer*, “as it is said “And Esau ran to meet him and embraced him and fell on his neck and kissed him and they wept.” Read not: “and kiss him” but: “he bit him!” which upon Jacob’s neck turned to marble...” and (b) *Avot derabi Nathan* “Could this have been a kiss of love? R. Shimon b. Eliezer said: But surly Esau’s deed were motivated by hate – except this one, which was inspired by love.” As translated in Nehama Leibowitz and Aryeh Newman, *Studies in Bereshit (Genesis) : in the context of ancient and modern Jewish Bible commentary* (Jerusalem: World Zionist Organization, Dept. for Torah Education and Culture, 1981). p. 375. See also *Genesis Rabba*, 78:9; and *Midrash Tanhuma*, Vayishlah chap. 4.

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