

## Under Alien Skies by Yossel Birstein

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### Signs

*Translated by Jon Levitow (2008)*

Who knows if I see rightly  
human sorrow, the woe of another,  
my own journey from one day to the other,  
my troubles, my own way?  
Who can say?

In Jewish books I sound out songs  
of supplication, sign by sign,  
a B, an A,  
who can say?

Who knows if I see rightly  
my home and everything I call mine,  
or whether things in secret think  
of ways to be unkind?  
Who knows?

The accusations in my poem  
Follow me step by step,  
a B, an A,  
who can say?