

Under Alien Skies by Yossel Birstein

Everywhere

Translated by Malke Bachman

Everywhere there are homes like this
with simple people, who keep quiet company
with themselves. Lips mute
from grief. Bent with pain
they dwell silently inside themselves –
everywhere there are homes like this.

Everywhere there is earth like this.
Bend down and see: how every place
is soaked through with grief; how our word bears,
under its veils of lament
such faith in a festive day to come –
everywhere there is earth like this.

Everywhere there's a shining eye
that watches over the heavy drag of tired feet.
It opens, the way a poem opens up
and every line blesses like a prayer
the sweat and toil of workingmen—
everywhere there's an eye that shines.