



Wildpeace

BY YEHUDA AMICHAH

Not the peace of a cease-fire,
not even the vision of the wolf and the lamb,
but rather
as in the heart when the excitement is over
and you can talk only about a great weariness.
I know that I know how to kill,
that makes me an adult.
And my son plays with a toy gun that knows
how to open and close its eyes and say Mama.
A peace
without the big noise of beating swords into ploughshares,
without words, without
the thud of the heavy rubber stamp: let it be
light, floating, like lazy white foam.
A little rest for the wounds—
who speaks of healing?
(And the howl of the orphans is passed from one generation
to the next, as in a relay race:
the baton never falls.)

Let it come
like wildflowers,
suddenly, because the field
must have it: wildpeace.

The New Colossus

BY EMMA LAZARUS

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glow world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"

Virtuosi

BY LISEL MUELLER

In memory of my parents
People whose lives have been shaped
by history—and it is always tragic—
do not want to talk about it,
would rather dance, give parties
on thrift-shop china. You feel
wonderful in their homes,
two leaky rooms, nests
they stowed inside their hearts
on the road into exile.
They know how to fix potato peelings
and apple cores so you smack your lips.

The words start over again
hold no terror for them.
Obediently they rise
and go with only a rucksack
or tote bag. If they weep,
it's when you're not looking.

To tame their nightmares, they choose
the most dazzling occupations,
swallow the flames in the sunset sky,
jump through burning hoops
in their elegant tiger suits.
Cover your eyes: there's one
walking on a thread
thirty feet above us—
shivering points of light
leap across her body,
and she works without a net.

Rosh Hashanah

BY LUCILLE CLIFTON

i bear witness to no thing
more human than hate

i bear witness to no thing
more human than love

apples and honey
apples and honey

what is not lost
is paradise