A crocodile cloud swallowed a cloud-cloud.
All is clogged
and where did the war go?
The pier is painted yellow and red
with the inscription: Tel Aviv.
The drums of the depths are indifferent.
In the sky shadowy figures
slowly go berserk. An infinite wrestling arena
in slow-motion takes.
A crane rises above the luxury hotel Hilton. And where did the war go.
A crocodile cloud swallowed a cloud-cloud. Where
did the war go. Up in the depths
soft clouds make love to planes.
The air fills the lungs
with spiky salt and laughter.
The sun, a fading photograph.
Shorebirds grayly peck the sand.
The sea—its muscles groan.
A lone woman, a synthetic kerchief
on her head what is she
in face of a thunderstorm.
The diving board, too, is painted orange.

An old woman, her lips attempt:

He was an angel
He was an angel
From the Songs of Crazy Dolores

1.
I am the child
above whose bed
Mexican gods laugh

Seasons go by, a sun reigns
and pyramids do not turn upside down

There are many antiquities in the land of Mejico
and I am the smallest among them

2.
I love Beli-Belik-Boom
(once I called him Le-Le-Le)
and I'll always love Le-Le-Le.
But Belik does not understand
what love is.

Belik is a strange man.
He wrote me a poem of love
yet refused to kiss my bare soul
under the huppa*. It was a huppa
made of a parachute
and he jumped with it out of there
down,
leaving me to freefall.

Of course I arrived before him.
Boom.

* The wedding canopy.
I managed somehow 
to break my bones. 
And I have a few memories left.

When I was broken 
and a memory only 
Belik would kiss me on my cheek (Le-Le-Le) 
every evening. 
Later he swapped me 
for a cat. 
When he photographed me 
he would photograph me in double 
exposure. 
Somehow I managed to appear in the picture. 

Boom.

3.
I am made of glass 
and my father is a glazier 
I tell you I’m as 
transparent as a yogurt jar 
without the yogurt 
try to look through me just try 
and you’ll see that you can see everything 
lean your head on me children 
and your noses will be squashed flat 
and your mouths will be pulled 
like a down-in-the-mouth blowfish 
take a look inside me I’m transparent absolutely 
I am made of glass 
because my daddy is a glazier 
and my mother dons a tulle dress 
take a look children take a look
it will do you good
only be a little cautious please
yesterday someone looked through me too hard
and saw as far as the Bali islands
and he rode a blue whale in the Bali islands
and then my glass broke
into a zillion shards
and I was pricked and pricked and pricked
and I was all glass glass
in a zillion red puddles

4.
Dolores jumps rope
Dolores plays hopscotch

She looks into a kaleidoscope
tube builds
broken tunnels in a dream
Dolores lives her life backward
swings on a rusty groaning gate
looks for puppies to adopt
dead chicks to revive
diamonds buried in trashcans
in order to help refugees
hiding in a tunnel under
Keren Hakayemet Boulevard
on the other side of the world

Dolores jumps rope
always jumps rope
to the other side of the world

* Boulevard in Tel Aviv named for the Jewish National Fund.
5.
I am Dolores-not-Dolores
I am in the dream of some god

It seems to me that my life is a life
but really it is only
a particle in the dream
of a sleeping god
who dreams me with love

Dolores-not-Dolores

I have to pinch myself hard
because the hour when images switch in his brain
is near

Yes Dolores  no Dolores  yes Dolores  no
Dolores  birds  Dolores sea  Dolores
a loose shoelace  Dolores a broken blue glass  a milky
way bathing a world
a white horse lost in the plain
tunnels inside time
time going  backward
a snake shedding its skin  a mobile of broken galaxies
suspended on fine transparent fiber

I have to pinch myself hard
because the hour when images switch in his brain is near
I must watch myself so I don’t sink
in a dream
when he dumps me from his brain
like a crumb dropping
from indolent fingers
A Brief Love

Slices slices silence cut
into us

He took me from the noise
and time became a summer of grace
between killings
and I reached my hand and he came like a rain of grace
and on Mount Zion the darkness was thick
and the little light in the churchyard was frail frail
and I reached my hand and he fell into me in despair despair
and later he led me by the hand
like the sighted lead the blind
and we saw so much so much
it was possible to touch the very roots of things
and we saw until our eyes refused to retain
two beautiful weeks
between wars
do you know what it means two full innocent weeks
between death and death
one cannot ask for more and were we to ask for more
it would have been a kind of arrogance

It was a cruel beauty

And such a silence
on the altar*

* Alludes to the covenant God made with Abram (Genesis 15:18).
From *Freefall* (1979)
Traveling to Jerusalem on a Moon Night

The window travels the clouds travel I
travel the road travels the moon travels the trees travel the pane
travels the moon travels the travelers travel
the earth travels the mountains travel the planet travels the
thoughts travel
the time travels
the light travels the glass travels the galaxy travels the moon
travels
and God
eternally
stands
Hair of Night

To weave the locks of darkness
a thick braid on the downy nape
of the earth
to mold with moist hands
the clay of dark craving
tremor-plaited trees
coiled branches of devotion
and a broad meadow
waiting in vain

Night combs its long hair like a woman
seated at her window at night

Night hungry runs barefoot through the streets
weeds spread rumors about it

Night begets day what will day bring
night its dreams undone
breaks the heart of a city
tears a street apart
how I wish to dye
the hair of night
a startling orange

How we wished for a blaze to spread in the twigs twigs as blaze
to sweep the trail of excess words
to leave a clear polished dance floor for thick dense emotions
to spin into a dance into a giant ball

How I wished for the great night’s hair
to wrap around me like snakes but warm
Such naked truth even the down of dusk
stiffens
the mind’s shutters knock violently
a blow of darkness
rescues a night
whose hairs got all tangled up

Dreams, the heart’s sweat,
on night’s taut skin
its hair pulled back its temples damp
secretions of dreams drop from it
drip
drop
cool
salty

Such an old night
its chimes still clear

And we
crawl on its belly
and it welcomes us inside
like a mad satyr who’s fallen asleep
  blissfully
Freefall

And until the sound of my falling plea was heard
I would eagerly fall
through the sky’s chimneys
toward the land of my desires

Falling falling the floating angels wailed
this is how the wishes drop from
the bitter gravitational pull this is how it is in life
this is it said the stones lying inert
on the ground since time immemorial
long ago we too dropped with a bitter wail
look at our this-is-it-ness
and learn from us
soon you will be lying with us
hard dull cold to your wants

The sound of the thud
was brief.

Since then
I lie inert.
The Water Queen of Jerusalem

The Water Queen of Jerusalem dived into history

History was hard and she grew fins
she had no air and she schemed
gills rowing and rowing through memory

The Water Queen of Jerusalem has
a bathing suit made of Yiddish
the Water Queen of Jerusalem wallows on a stone beach in Ladino
fearing the rise of water levels in Arabic
the Water Queen of Jerusalem has no sea in Jerusalem
she has a history
Jewish
and she holds
holds her head
above water
Reckless Love

blues

I was a little reckless
he was a little reckless
in a cheap café on the eve of Purim
everyone around us with the face to the TV
up on the wall.
He broadcast to me on a high frequency. I wanted
to broadcast low-low but it came out
high. I was a little reckless he was a little
reckless. My hair was unruly his hair was unruly
my past was undone his past was marred
he had a nervous tick in his hand and I chain-smoked
his dark face twisted in a child’s smile
in my face raced electric currents
we were reckless and we knew we wouldn’t
come out clean.

Outside people with plastic hammers banged
each other over the head and we drank hot chocolate.
His eyes transmitted a black madness and I bit
into it as into a cake. The waitress came out of a Fellini movie
and asked if we wanted Hamantaschen.

He talked about epilepsy. I about paranoia.
It was the eve of Purim. Two clowns showed us some tricks.
We were like children when a large ship
blares and leaves them behind.

Later, in the park, Your skin is like velvet.
Later, in the park, Go home, or your wife will cuss you out.
Later later later I was pure and beautiful.
It was Purim in the street. The air was scented with early spring.
I put lipstick on my nose and matches in my ears.
A red-nosed clown wept his childhood with him.
He was damaged
I was damaged
he traveled in me in land and sea
but he was reckless and I was reckless
he spoke of convulsions I of conclusions
he called for help I called for help
he spoke of silence and I agreed with him about everything.

What a thing it was
a great madness.
We were like two kids when a large ship blares
and leaves them
far behind
in the sand
I Drew My End Near

I drew my end near
and it came near

A couple of cats sat in the tree like calm fruit
I called my end to come near and it lingered on the street corner
one cat leapt and sat on my shoulder
I stroked the animal but my hand hastened to stroke the blood
flowing in my end

My end is soft, I know, and patient,
I wanted so to rub against it
be warm at its side
like an old contented woman next to her old man
For

For it is as if
you chose to die to
preserve your shadow

The flicker of light that is present and vanishes
at once
the open warm night
that is already sinking
in the sludge of lost winters

Things I have loved
are spread like a stain of oil upon
heavy water
Handling Pain

The pain comes
after the inner image

First a dull pain
in the senses which have no words

Later I project for myself
images of future painful states
or of the past or of other times later
on comes the pain the senses can handle and the words too
express it as pain

Whoever watches me at this moment sitting cross-legged
may think I’m deep in Tibetan meditation
I put on Bach’s Cantata 87
and my spirit soared free.
Yet it lasted only a moment.
On the windowsill, to the right, crystal stones—
hard gleaming forms, a world within a world.
They stand opaque before me, completely opaque.
Behind them a glass pane stands between me
and South Jerusalem and I am not
in South Jerusalem.
Life flows at the fringes of life.
I am in the music and the music is in me
the stones come in me, my lover, who has placed them here,
Jerusalem in me
I am in me
but by the time I had finished writing “I”
I was no longer in me only the words only the words
remained like stone-weights at my feet.
So it flows, life, flows at the fringes of life.
Yesterday, an evening with Joe, Jean-Claude, Shami, Karen.
I was more in me more in them
I wove experimental cobwebs
over the ever-present abyss
my body filling up with me.
These are people I love because they help me love myself.
The Cantata continues, without me. It doesn’t need me
but I, I am hungry
for me, longing for something that is more me.
So life flows at the fringes of life.
Jean-Claude, on the stone path, at night, in the stillness,
said that Buddhism is becoming more and more important in his life.
It grows in him and grows.
I envied him so much. I could have devoured him for envy. I wanted his blood to come in my blood, I wanted to become like him. I told him that in me nothing grows. And that which does grow for moments dissolves into the void.

He told me in a clear and enlightened voice that even the knowledge of nothing is something. I was not inside the nothing when he spoke about the feeling of nothing inside me. Later, I’m undone again, filament after filament, and again aspire for myself with desperate hunger.

Now I’m alone. The crystals to the right, the Cantata in the back, my friends distant, downstairs, darkness ahead, to the left a faint light. What a rhymed finale, the void held tight with one thing leading to another, orderly. All right, let it be. Another day. Who was it who said: There’s another world and it dwells within this one.