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צוויי לידער • Two Poems

By **Miryam Ulinover**, translation by Mindy Liberman

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דריי לידער

Two Poems

Miryam Ulinover

translated by Mindy Liberman

Introduction: Miriam Hirshbeyn (1888/1890 – 1944) was born into an observant, middle class family in Łódź, Poland. Sholem Aleichem encouraged her to write when visiting Lodz in 1905. In 1912 she married Volf Ulinover, a merchant from a Hasidic family; they had two daughters. She wrote first in Polish, German and Russian but eventually only in Yiddish, publishing in Yiddish newspapers and journals from 1915 on. She published a book of poetry, *Der bobes oytser* (Grandmother's Treasure,) edited by poet and critic Dovid Frishman in 1922. It was well received, but it remained her only published book. Several of her poems were included in Ezra Korman's anthology *Yidishe dikhterins* (Yiddish Women Poets) Chicago, 1928. Five handwritten poems were found in the Warsaw Ghetto Ringelblum Archives. They are included in Poetry in Hell: Yiddish Poetry in the Ringelblum Archives, translations by Sarah Traister Moskovitz. She had apparently sent them to Itsik Manger at *Haynt*, a Warsaw daily, where some were accepted for publication. Ulinover mentored younger poets, hosting a literary circle in her home. She and her family were interned in the Łódź ghetto in February 1940. She continued to hold the literary evenings until deported and murdered in Auschwitz, August 1944. It was thought she had manuscripts with her, but none were found. *Der bobes oytser* was reprinted in Jerusalem, 1975, edited by Dov Sadan. with Hebrew translations by Yehoshua Tan Pai, A complete collection of her poems appeared as *Un Bonjour du Pays Natal*, edited and with a scholarly introduction by Natalia Krynicka, with French translations by Batia Baum, Paris, Bibliothèque Medem, 2003. Her work is discussed in *A Question of Tradition* by Kathryn Hellerstein, Stanford University Press, 2014.

A Sabbath Horror

Silent and peaceful everywhere
Lay a weary Sabbath calm,
In the air, vibrating gently
Came a tender Sabbath song.

But suddenly a cold wind blows
A loud lament swells up and grows:
Someone has killed his little wife
Using the challah-blessing-knife! . . .

In the Morning

And Sabbath morning dawns under sunlit skies,
Wonders of the Bible dance before our eyes,
When we gossip about grandmothers we knew,
How Mother Sarah, her best scarf on her head,
Proud as she could be, the angels' words came true,
Laughed with merriment right out loud in her bed . . .
And from the golden east wafts a sweet perfume,
And the Be'er Sheva winds bathe the orchard blooms.
And the blue skies smile, such miracles, such joy:
In her grandmother years, a small baby boy!

אַ שבת-גריןל

שטום געלעגן איז אַ מידער
שבת-פֿרידן אומעטום,
אין דער לופֿט אַ שבת-ניגון
איז געגאָנגען ציטריק אום.

פלוצלינג בלאָזט אַ ווינט אַ קאַלטער,
ס'וואַקסט אַ יאָמער, גרייט, אַלץ גרעסער;
ס'האַט אַ ייִד געקוילעט ס'ווייַבל
מיט דעם שבת-מוציא-מעסער!...

צו מאָרגנס

און שבת צו מאָרגנס ווערט ליכטיק און שיין,
קאָנסט ווונדער פֿון טייַסט-חומש הערן און זען,
ווען פֿון באָבעס ווערט בייִ אונדז אַרומגערעדט,
ווי די מאַמע שׂרה לאַכט זיך אויס אין בעט
אין איר שענסטן קאָפטון, גליקלעך, שטאַלץ ביז גאָר,
אַז מלאַכים-צוזאָג איז געוואָרן וואָר...
און פֿון גאָלד'נעם מיזרח שטראָמט אַ זיסער דופֿט,
און דאָס סעדל באַדט זיך אין באַר-שבע-לופֿט,
און די הימלען שמייכלען נסימדיק און בלאָ:
אין די באָבע-יאָרן ג'האַט אַ זונעניו !