

The Tree

Translated by Beni Gothajner (2014)

My people face hard days that clamour
like children around their father's sickbed;
and in my yard, a deeply devout tree
holds his hands up forever and prays.

Sometimes, one tries to tell out the shouts like bells,
as my street wraps itself in silence under the blankets.
But then my room is jerked from sleep, appalled:
the tree has knocked on the pane with his branches...

I pray... God, you are great, my request is tiny:
grant my people just one day without grief.
The tree rests his head on my window
like a klezmer lays his ear to the fiddle.

1938, *Der Moment*