

Baruch November – Three Poems

Endless Voice

My friend tells strangers too much.
He is generous like an ocean
with its waves—some waves
are full of sand and debris.
Some waves are soft as we dream
women to be.

I wish my friend would choke someday
on all that he tells others—
only enough
to turn his face red
and learn his lesson.

He tells the receptionist
all about me—
how I am "going to be
a great writer."
It is my face that reddens, my soul
that jerks within my body.

Lights buzz above brightly.
I tell the receptionist
my next book
is about a man
who can't help but
share too much
with strangers.

There is a pause.
She laughs a laugh
that tells us
She is too beautiful
for either of us.

An Education

Sometimes you still have to
remind yourself you won't be

that teenager again,
in a Hebrew Day School,

who painfully shied away from beautiful women,
who was too serious

about reading Hawthorne, Hesse, Kafka,
who became furious playing basketball in a gym

that was not a real gym,
since sometimes when you shot, the ball did not

complete its arc, hitting
the too low

ceiling of possibilities
with the chaffing sound

of a crude machine rejecting
everything it's fed.

You began to know what
life was like—

exactly what
it should
not be.

The Party Continues

Nietzsche proclaimed,
*He who has let go
of G-d, clings
all the more
strongly to the belief
in morality—*
like the bald man
overboard does
to the cold buoy,
knowing that having fallen
after dusk, the party
will continue
without him
long into his
desperate night
of a billion bright
careless stars.

Baruch November is the author of *Bar Mitzvah Dreams* and *Dry Nectars of Plenty* (co-winner of the BigCityLit chapbook contest). His poems and short fiction have been featured in *Paterson Literary Review*, *Lumina*, *New Myths*, *The Forward* and *Jewish Journal*. For nearly two decades, Baruch has taught courses in Shakespeare, poetry, and writing at Touro College in Manhattan. His poem "After Esav" was nominated for a 2021 Pushcart Prize.