

Baruch November – Two Poems

Planet 55555

Only beggars begging each other,
getting nothing but cursed,
ending up in some place that isn't home
because no place is home,
staring at the beautiful stars among the dull
ones above; divining such beauty
from the darkness around it
should count for some minor currency.

They're endlessly wiping the sand
from their brittle bodies.
They hear voices coming off the ocean
asking them to join the undercurrent--
but most of life is stubborn despite
soul-shattering conditions.

Shivering, they awaken at dawn
in the park or under the bridge
(because everywhere is either
under a bridge or in the park in this world).
Frost appears like ghosts of the night
over their brows. The beggars tug
at their knotted beards, squinting
into the new slashes of pink light,
trying to see an oasis
in the distance
that isn't there—
could never
be there.

Planet 66662

Endlessly rainy planet.
Wet days, wet nights, wet lives.
Slabs of soil slide down the hills,
wiping away homesteads.
People accept the deluge.
People accept everything: the heaving
sadness of starless night
after starless night.

Thunderclouds, threaded with lightning,
always moving inward—as if
enemy battleships into the bay,
making sure their claim over the land
remains forever.

Never the promise of a rainbow
or even someone
to send out a turtle dove
to find an end to the flooding—
as though a future
was too much
to expect.

Baruch November's most recent major work is a book of poetry entitled *Bar Mitzvah Dreams*. His poems and short stories have been featured in the *Paterson Literary Review*, *Lumina* and *The Forward*, among other places. He teaches Shakespeare, Introduction to Poetry, and Writing at Touro College.