

Eva Eliav

The Park

Bougainvillea. Black in the dark, not purple. Odourless. Stumbling through a fog of shrubs and flowers, laughing, and then...what do we understand, suddenly frozen like children playing statues? Rolled up jeans, elastic round the waist. Red sneakers powdery with summer dust. *Don't cry*. A fence crowded with sweet pea. The smell of lilacs. Barbara is shouting, "Blackie", and he comes, stiffly on arthritic legs, yelping. The sea laps at my feet. The air is salty. I can barely see your face, but something glitters. A night journey, all of it. Why can't I dig that moment from my heart? Cartoon colours, old, disturbing hopes. Can anyone be rescued from his life? Never erase mistakes, pile paint on paint. Buried colours glow beneath the layers. God, what a rich texture of regrets. A clear light this morning. *Can I look, can I look away?* The sky's shiny as glass. Bushes are growing thick and high around us. They've planted masses of flowers. Birds perch on us and children climb into our arms. When we meet, I must remember to ask you whether you found the courage to grow old.

Eva Eliav received an honours BA in English Language and Literature from The University of Toronto. Her poetry and short fiction have appeared in numerous journals, online and in print. She has published two poetry chapbooks: *Eve* (Red Bird. Chapbooks, 2019) and *One Summer Day* (Kelsay Books, 2021).