

POETRY

Four Poems by Ararat Iyob Teklu

Walking Out

Jagged rocks bit my feet
Sharp thorns scratched my forehead
Bloody lines run out of soft skin
Rivers and streams
Slapped wet waves on me
With the dizziness of the slopes
The First time I knew
that the sun could be
very hot on my back.

Waiting Echoes

In the hearth
stands a wooden pole
Warmth has faded
the old surround it now.

Their eyes search corners
where small feet stood once
No laughing faces
Traces are lost forever

Their waiting
echo in the dark
They look and remain silent
memories of yester-year
deep in their souls

The Cactus Village

Yellow flowers on top of mud huts
paths paved through years
trod on by bare feet
streaks of line across
cactus and brown fences
surrounded by bare rocks.

At sunset a shepherd passes
tiny beneath the shadow
of dust following home-coming cattle
his song clear and loud
and the swinging tails.

In the evening gourds filled with milk
pass silently in the dark
to the candle lighted windows
while the villagers gather around the fire
listening to stories of yesterday.

An old banda remembers
a special day in '41
when he and his brother
met two fleeing Italians
on a narrow gorge near a river
asking a way to safety

While being guided across
they talk stepping on the wilderness
hands holding their rifles tight
their "white" eyes gleaming
with anticipation
The old warrior was silent.

A young boy continued to listen
when there was no more
he asks, "why are you all quiet?
did these Italians get to safety?"
The old banda looks at the fire
shakes his head slowly
"no, my child, you see, I understood Italian."

A Dew In The Desert

A nomad child looks up
As the noise breaks the quiet.
He embraces his kid
its fur coat soft and warm.

A nomadic caravan traces its destiny
under the burning sun
dusty winds blow fear in the sky.

Camels step in the sand
tell a never ending saga.
Weeping eyes touching
music on shining stones