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## Passing Through

Michal Lemberger

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# PASSING THROUGH

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MICHAL LEMBERGER

1

*Into the wreck of stones that had been the Temple, a despair  
of waste and scattering, someone stepped to pray, to shield  
his words from the wind and thoroughfare.*

2

Whereas, in a late afternoon sky blown  
over with shallow clouds, I saw a bare patch of mountain still shining in  
a strong stain of sunlight.

3

*Behind him, Elijah followed, asked, Why have you come  
to this relic of holiness, deserted by God, open only the sun?*

4

Our shadows lengthening beyond ourselves,  
and somehow, ahead of us, a strip of sand, shifting

4 *Michal Lemberger*

reminder of an ancient sea blown to this ruinous place,  
glowed gold amid the purpling of the landscape.

5

*And what is the voice you heard here, whispering as a dove?  
It cried, Oh, my children, my children, what have you done?*

6

At night, stars hang above the desert, a profusion strung  
to the dome encircling this feeble place, and the infinite  
too big, even here—pressed to this rocky field,  
pulled heavy to this bright spot, glowing.

7

*But you are wise and should know,  
said the prophet. You cannot re-enter here. You can only  
walk in the streets; You can only speak loudly as you go.*

8

This is prayer; straddling time, looking  
into the vastness and whispering, whispering.