

The Angel Who Redeems

כְּשֶׁהָיִיתִי יֶלֶד הִתְפַּלֵּלְתִּי קְרִיאַת שְׁמַע עַל הַמָּטָה.
אֲנִי זוֹכֵר אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה הָרִאשׁוֹנָה,
”הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגּוֹאֵל אוֹתִי מִכָּל רָע”
אֲחֵר-כֵּן לֹא הִתְפַּלֵּלְתִּי שׁוּב, לֹא עַל הַמָּטָה
וְלֹא בְּגִבְעוֹת, לֹא בְּמִלְחָמָה וְלֹא בַיּוֹם וְלֹא בַלַּיְלָה
אֲבָל הַמַּלְאָךְ הַגּוֹאֵל נִשְׁאַר אִתִּי וְהַפֶּךְ
לְמַלְאָךְ אוֹהֵב וְהַמַּלְאָךְ הַאוֹהֵב יִהְיֶה לְמַלְאָךְ הַמָּוֶת
בְּבוֹא הַיָּעַת, אֲבָל תָּמִיד אוֹתוֹ הַמַּלְאָךְ
הַגּוֹאֵל אוֹתִי מִכָּל רָע.

When I was a child I prayed the Shema-on-the-bed.

I remember the first line:

“The angel who redeems me from all ill”

After that I prayed no more, not on the bed

and not in the hills, not in war, neither by day nor by night.

But the angel who redeems remained with me and became

the angel who loves and the angel who loves will be the angel of death

when the time comes, but will always be that angel

who redeems me from all ill.

Yehuda Amichai *from*, Patuah, Sagur, Patuah

Translated by Rabbi Steven Sager