

# Now Close Your Eyes

עכשיו תעצמו את העיניים



Eliaz Cohen

אליעז כהן

Now close your eyes  
Imagine:

עכשׁו תַּעצְמוּ אֶת הָעֵינַיִם  
דַּמְיִנוּ:

None of this happened  
A night phobia perhaps a hallucination  
That's what it was  
The fruit of the feverish  
Poet-mind

דָּבַר מִכֵּל זֶה לֹא קָרָה  
בַּעַת-לַיְלָה אוֹלֵי הַזֵּיָה  
זֶה מֵה שְׂזָה הָיָה  
פְּרֵי מַחֹו הַמְּשׁוֹרֵר  
שֶׁל הַקּוֹדֵם

None of this happened

דָּבַר מִכֵּל זֶה לֹא קָרָה

And the thousand and more did not ascend in a storm

וְלֹא עָלוּ הָאֲלָף בְּסַעֲרָה

And now open your eyes again

וְעַכְשָׁו פָּקְחוּ אֶת הָעֵינַיִם חֲזָרָה

*Translation by Larry Barak*

## **Eliaz Cohen (1972– )**

*Eliaz Cohen was born in Petach Tikvah into a religious-Zionist family. At age seven he moved with his family to the West Bank settlement of Elkana. As a child, he studied Arabic and befriended Arab children in nearby villages. These experiences and relationships remained central to him leading him during his military service to create and train his fellow soldiers in "humane checkpoint conduct," conveying the importance of the people to people interaction at the checkpoint. Following the army, Eliaz returned to Yeshiva and received a degree in social work. He served as editor of Mashiv Haruach, a journal that features the writings of observant Israelis addressing religious and moral issues related to post-1967 Israel. His poetry suggests a classic motif found in Jewish literature throughout the ages of talking to and even "arguing" with God. In 2006 he received the Prime Minister's Prize in poetry.*