

Day Of The Locust, Israel

Biblical stories were
like Grimm tales until
the locust darkened
our blue Israeli sky

“Look, mom, just
like the teacher said!”
the locust coming in waves
like ashes brought to life

“See, mom, this
big one’s after Pharaoh!”
carpeting sidewalks like spit
out of the blue
Israeli sky

And on the promised land
our small feet trampled wings
shiny as chariots, until
the blood rested calm
as the red Nile. All
of a sudden

Someone remembered the Lord
said unto Moses *such*
a plague had never been, nor
shall ever again be!

“Look, mom, our corn’s all gone”
“The bugs have eaten our plants”
“The orange trees are all gone, mother”

And what’s left now but
to hold on to our fathers, wondering
what they’ve done, and waiting
once again for the Lord’s
uncertain wrath.

— Irena Friedman