*A Speckle of Fig and Jasmine*

There’s Jasmine, skipping past the Old City Walls  
With her satchel and her pony-tail  
And a Hey, look at me!  
“What eez your name?” we bandy  
And I exclaim she has a pretty name  
Before the morning breezes waft us on our separate ways  
Me to the Sabbath, Jasmine to her doings  
In the shade of a fig tree, where chickens scurry  
A tourist bus wheezes up the slope and Jasmine bounces by  
Like a blossoming placard for a meeting between enemies

Or brothers - in grief and blood and newborn hopes  
Dashed against the rocks -  
Something we forgot in our prayers, could be  
That’s where we should have started from this time around  
Like winter, reaching out of thirsty pods -  
The way the seasons taught us.

The light of revelation is breaking  
Far away, a crashing light  
Charges us with words,  
The sole immortals here:  
“Es Stand, it stayed,  
The sweetness stayed,  
A speckle of fig stayed  
On your lip.”

\* “Es Stand”, a poem by Paul Celan, written during his only visit to Jerusalem in October 1969.

Michal Govrin, from: And So Said Jerusalem, Poems and Hymns  
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