A Poem Joram Piatigorsky

(It is a special event for me to have something of Joram Piatigorsky's in this journal. Joram was a close friend throughout my high school years. Aggravatingly, he seemed always to have marks a point or two higher than mine. There was no catching up to him. We lost touch for fifty years. Then, through the good offices of the internet, we got back into connection. Joram is a research scientist on the verge of retirement. He declares himself ready to begin a new career, as a writer. Following the literary path, in February he went to Guatemala for a writer's workshop on fiction, memoir and poetry. He stayed in a tiny Mayan village, San Marcos, situated on Lake Atitlán. While in the area, he submitted himself to "Mayan chocolate" under the direction of a shaman. He said it didn't affect him much . . . but you wonder. . . . Ed.)

Drifting

Mayan chocolate Alive once, nourished By moist soil Brown mud now

Sweeten it with sugar If you please, or not, he says Or sharpen it with chile And let the sting subside Within your bowels

He continues

The door will open, if you wish And the grey matter of your brain May sparkle

Distance may draw close Shackles may release Passages may change From dusk to dawn, Or not

Your choice, he says Entirely your choice

I lie upon the ground And close my eyes To let the demons roam

I see changing shapes And colors trapped within a grid Of tiny squares of light Feel the energy? he asks I don't, I say But to myself

I drift upon a lake of air Perhaps I feel the energy of space

Wait

The drifting stops The movement is beyond me now My body still Yet very much alive

My many arms are wide and green My legs sink beneath the ground I have no head, no eyes, no ears And drops of water from the rain Despite no clouds above Roll off my leaves But never seem to reach the earth

I am a plant among my peers I cannot see I cannot hear I cannot change my place

Yet still a man, and not *all* plant I sense small living things with hair Move fitfully, in cautious jerks, First here, then there Arriving at No destination

I sleep yet am awake I dream But also I am here

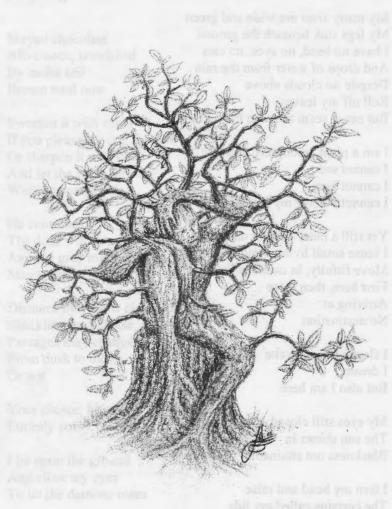
My eyes still closed The sun shines in Blackness not attainable 'til death

I turn my head and raise The curtains called my lids I see few people next to me Who were lying here before

Water planet & Dr 1 With Phy-

The scene has changed The time has come To haul my frame Above my aching legs

> To stomp upon the solid path Avoid the rocks Walk past the plants And find a place to grow new roots, Or not



And colors served within a god

Artwork by Luther Brigman.

Who were lying bere before

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