

**Maxim D. Shrayer**

**My Woven Kipa**

I bought my kipa  
from an old mystic  
who spends his days  
at Shuk HaKarmel.

My kipa is woven  
from many strands:  
black like memory  
of the 9th of Av,  
blue like the eyes of  
murdered Litvak maidens,  
white like the linen shroud  
I will wear to my burial,  
coarse like salt  
from the Dead Sea,  
soft like sand of the Negev,  
silken like milk  
of Bedouin camels.

My best childhood friend  
from Moscow,  
who lives north of Tel Aviv  
in a rickety building  
without a bomb shelter,  
told me, "You've become  
a religious Zionist,"  
when we spoke  
two or three days  
after the Hamas attack  
and I was seething  
with useless words  
of righteous rage.

I didn't want to argue.  
My friend stood in the landing  
by the window. Missiles were  
flying across his phone screen.

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