

Bourne
toWrite...
creative writing
workshops

View from the ark

by Olivia Sprinkel

This year without a summer
I longed for the sunset scent of wild roses,
the smoothness of bladed grass,
as we floated on ever higher rain.
Inside the boat, lit by the rich oil of olives,
we marked with a scratch of knives the days.

We sought a rhythm for these broken days.
We told stories of past summers,
the celebration of the harvest of olives
and vines, before the clouds rose,
before sky and earth were filled with rain,
when we could still lie on the grass.

We'd collected what we could of grass,
to feed the animals, praying for it to last these days
suspended on these mountainous rains,
not knowing when we'd feel the skin of summer
again, or watch a bud break open to joyous rose
or hear cicadas vibrating, ripening the olives.

We'd left behind the trees, taken with us olives,
these fruits shared, dropped down on the grass,
from which it seemed our civilisation rose,
gifts to nourish and illuminate our days,
to feed us with the taste of summer
as we now lived in constant damp of rain.

We wondered if there'd be an end to rain,
if waters would subside. Then the olive
became our hope, the branch proof of summer
returning, that life would spring back, like grass,
that birdsong would once more fill our days,
that a lover could offer again a rose.

The new songs in our hearts rose
calling back the cycle of dry and rain,
and a regular pulse and beat to our days,
when we would gather in groves of olives,
inhale the sweetness of meadow grass,
and know an autumn, winter, spring and summer.

Will they return? Days edged with rose,
summer watered by a gentleness of rain,
to feed roots of olive trees and waves of grass.