

# POEMS FROM A CAMP SURVIVOR

Dan Pagis

## “Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway-Car”

here, in this carload  
i am eve  
with abel my son  
if you see my other son  
cain son of man  
tell him that i

## “Testimony”

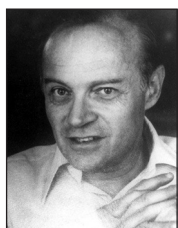
No no: they definitely were  
human beings: uniforms, boots.  
How to explain? They were created  
in the image.

I was a shade.  
A different creator made me.

And he in his mercy left nothing of me that would die.  
And I fled to him, rose weightless, blue,  
forgiving – I would even say: apologizing –  
smoke to omnipotent smoke  
without image or likeness.

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Poems reprinted with permission from “Testimony” and “Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway Car” in *The Selected Poetry of Dan Pagis*, translated/edited by Stephen Mitchell (Berkeley, CA: The University of California Press, 1996). © 1996 by the Regents of the University of California.



### About the Poet

Dan Pagis was born in 1930, in Bukovina, Romania. He spent three of his adolescent years in a Nazi concentration camp in Ukraine before arriving in Palestine, in 1946. He became one of the most vibrant voices in modern Israeli poetry and is considered a major world poet of his generation. Dan Pagis died in Jerusalem in 1986.

Photo courtesy of Yad Vashem