**DUNYA MIKHAIL ANOTHER PLANET Iraq 1996**

I have a special ticket

 to another planet

beyond this Earth.

A comfortable world, and beautiful:

a world without much smoke,

 not too hot

and not too cold.

 The creatures

are gentler there,

and the governments

 have no secrets.

The police are non-existent:

there are no problems and no fights.

And the schools don’t exhaust their students

with too much work

for history has yet to start

and there’s no geography

and no other languages.

And even better:

the war has left its “r” behind

 and turned into love,

so, the weapons sleep

beneath the dust,

and the planes pass by

 without shelling the cities,

 and the boats

look like smiles

 on the water.

All things are peaceful

 and kind

on the other planet

beyond this Earth.

But still I hesitate

to go alone.

(TRANSLATED FROM THE ARABIC BY KAREEM JAMES ABU-ZEID)

**Dunya Mikhail** is an Iraqi American poet and writer. After graduating from the University of Baghdad, she worked as a journalist and translator for *The Baghdad Observer*. Facing censorship and interrogation, she left Iraq in 1995, first to Jordan and then to America, settling in Detroit. She earned a Master’s degree from Wayne State University and she currently teaches Arabic at Oakland University in Michigan.

According to the Christian Science Monitor, Dunya Mikhail is “one of the foremost poets of our time.”