

I Have a Garment

I have a garment which is like a sieve
Through which girls sift barley and wheat.
In the dead of night I spread it out like a tent
And a thousand stars pierce it with their gleams.
Sitting inside, I see the moon and the Pleiades
And on a good night, the great Orion himself.
I get awfully tired of counting all the holes
Which seem to me like the teeth of many saws.
A piece of thread to sew up all the other threads
Would be, to say the least, superfluous.
If a fly landed on it with all his weight,
The little idiot would hang by his foot, cursing.
Dear God, do what you can to mend it.
Make me a mantle of praise from these poor rags.

Translated by Robert Mezey

Copyright © Robert Mezey, 1973.