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Yeshua Sits Cross-Legged with His Classmates and Listens to  
Artemis's Parable of the Soccer Match, and: Memorial to the  
Canaanite Woman

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## **In a Different Voice**

### **YESHUA SITS CROSS-LEGGED WITH HIS CLASSMATES AND LISTENS TO ARTEMIS'S PARABLE OF THE SOCCER MATCH**

*Benjamin Bagocius*

At the soccer match  
players kick the ball out of bounds  
into the stands

The ball floats at you  
It is big and soft. There is no way  
you will not catch it

No one else in the stands moves to clutch it  
They relax

That it is meant for you  
is obvious

Just sit there

Who you are does not rise  
and clamor for foul balls  
that fly into the throng

The game is where you sit

and watch God's big, rounded softness  
waft into your lap

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## MEMORIAL TO THE CANAANITE WOMAN

*A Canaanite woman from that vicinity came to Jesus, crying out,  
 “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on me! My daughter  
 is suffering terribly from demon-possession.”*

—*Matthew 15:22 (NIV)*

In the city, obelisks  
 reaching toward heaven celebrate the  
 nation's founder.

A domed cathedral  
 praises the man  
 whose acts of diplomacy  
 in war  
 we rehearse on the designated  
 holiday.

A building with seven columns  
 at the end of a garden  
 resembling a football field  
 protects the ideas of he  
 who championed the right side  
 of brotherhood.

There are no plaques for the Canaanite Woman.

Few know they pass  
 her house on a street off the thruway  
 to the obelisk, the cathedral,  
 the garden of columns.

Was it a brick home? This street?  
 The thruway takes us past.

Every time you love  
 beyond love's barbed wire  
 fence and no one knows,

not even you yet  
 in your unspeakable strain,  
 you visit the invisible structure.

You honor her.

**Benjamin Bagocius**, PhD, writes and teaches across literature, queer thought, and spirituality. An associate professor of the humanities with Bard Early Colleges, Ben's first book of poetry, *The Canaanite Woman*, was released in Summer 2022, and his second book of poetry, "*The Gospel According to B.*," is slated for publication in 2024. Ben's writing appears in a range of venues, including *On Being*, *The Other Journal*, *Modernism/modernity*, and *Tulsa Studies in Women's Literature*. Ben is founding director of the *Institute for Spiritual Poetry*, which hosts writing workshops and other events and publishes a journal. Reach out and learn more at [BenjaminBagocius.com](http://BenjaminBagocius.com) and [InstituteForSpiritualPoetry.com](http://InstituteForSpiritualPoetry.com).