

Light Figure Final Reflection Paper: Emma Lazarus

Zoë N. Shulman

Department of Art Therapy & Counseling, Southwestern College

CN AT 531-3: Consciousness II: Cultivating the Healing Presence of Love

Professor Awbrey Willett

June 8, 2024

Light Figure Final Reflection Paper: Emma Lazarus

My Light Figure is Emma Lazarus, who was a Jewish-American author and progressive activist who lived from 1849 to 1887 (“Emma Lazarus”, 2024). Lazarus was a creative challenger and her foremost Light Figure quality includes her contribution towards the collective liberation of the Jewish-American immigrant community through creative writing, social advocacy, vocational training, and volunteer support (Emerald, 2017, 02:12:00; “Emma Lazarus”, 2024). A descendent of Portuguese Sephardic Jews who fled the Spanish Inquisition, Lazarus had a spiritual knowing that called her to aid the Ashkenazi Jewish refugees who fled to America from the bloody anti-Semitic pogroms of Eastern Europe (“Emma Lazarus”, 2024; Teng & Nuñez, 2019, p. 17). Between 1880 and 1924, it is estimated that as many as 3 million Ashkenazi Jews came through Ellis Island (Library of Congress, n.d.). This historical paradigm set the stage for Emma’s socially-charged subject matter, which countered the extreme levels of anti-immigrant and anti-Semitic narratives (e.g., “the Jewish problem” debate) that were occurring in response to these new immigrant communities (Lazarus, 2002, pp. 16, 20). When she wrote the Statue of Liberty’s “The New Colossus” poem, her multicultural ethos was incredibly unpopular and the first anti-immigrant laws were being enacted (Lazarus, 2002, pp. 19-20). Today, it is easy to take her radical hard-won truth for granted as something that has always been foundational to American values.

Emma’s story is personal to me, because these were the same horrific Russian pogroms that my Ashkenazi Jewish grandfather had later fled when he arrived at Ellis Island as a child refugee in the early 1900s. Upon revisiting the Statue of Liberty, which is inscribed with Lazarus’ poem titled “The New Colossus”, my elderly grandfather wept (“Emma Lazarus”,

2024). Through her social justice work on behalf of the impoverished Ashkenazi-Jewish refugee community, Lazarus demonstrated one of the twelve dimensions of love outlined in *Measuring Love in the Journey for Justice: A Brown Paper*, which is “love fused with power” (Teng & Nuñez, 2019, p. 10). By owning and helping to materialize and share Jewish power, Lazarus worked to build power for collective liberation (Teng & Nuñez, 2019, p. 10). Lazarus’s work as a Jewish author and activist inspires me to think about how I might also embody loving power to support the Jewish community, which is currently experiencing extreme levels of anti-Semitism.

During one of my recent at-home ketamine sessions, I was feeling particularly vulnerable about this anti-Semitism and prayed to HaShem for help and wisdom. Beneath my eye mask, a dark tunnel emerged and I felt Emma’s presence. In reading *Emma Lazarus: Selected Poems and Other Writings*, I learned that Emma was also a Zionist back in the mid-1800s (Lazarus, 2002, pp. 16-17). Through the dark tunnel, I heard Emma tell me not to ever let anyone else define my identity as a liberal Zionist Jew. She encouraged me to define and reclaim my narrative, no matter how unpopular it may be, just as she had done as a creative challenger and proud Jewish poet.

For my Light Figure presentation, I decided I would honor Emma’s historic contributions to the Jewish-American community by sharing poems about my Jewish family’s immigrant history in America. My poem traversed a one hundred and fifty year span of history and was divided into three parts: 1) two of Emma’s poems, titled “The New Colossus” and “The New Ezekiel”, 2) the first half of my father's poem he had written for my grandfather’s 75th birthday about his life story as a Jewish immigrant in America, and 3) my poem about me and my family's life in the Jewish-American diaspora. By opening with “The New Colossus”, I wanted to set the

stage with Emma's pro-immigrant ethos which helped make my grandfather's harrowing journey possible (Lazarus, 2002, pp. 19-20). "The New Ezekiel" contextualized the perpetual Jewish diaspora as a several thousand year old trauma that has caused a deep yearning to return to our ancestral homeland of Israel (Lazarus, 2002, pp. 32-33). Reading "The New Colossus", my heart began to swell with emotions when I read the line, "Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free" and I began to shed tears (Lazarus, 2002, p. 279). I could see a vivid image of my grandfather arriving at Ellis Island as a six-year-old boy, having narrowly survived being held up on the end of a Cossack soldier's sword and threatened with impalement. In "The New Ezekiel", I felt my shadow reveal the archetypal orphan who represents the global Jewish community's profound longing to belong (Pearson, 2015, 01:33:00). Having known of two Israeli hostages who were abducted in Hamas's October 7th pogrom, tortured for months, and ultimately murdered, I felt the agony and exhaustion of always needing to defend or flee. As the sole Jewish nation-state, Israel stands as a refuge and beacon of hope for many Jews, the same way Ellis Island was for my grandfather. In this context, terror attacks on nations like the United States and Israel make me and many other Jews feel as though we are cornered and have nowhere left to run.

At the same time, reading through my father's illuminating poem of my grandfather's life story gave me resilience. Picturing my grandfather's gradual rise from the indigence of box-trapping pigeons in Russia to help feed his starving family, to putting his Jewish body on the line to fight the Nazis, to becoming one of America's leading retail entrepreneurs, helped me tap into the epigenetic light qualities that flow through my veins. I recall a photo of my grandfather taken during his World War II deployment, where he was one of very few soldiers smiling up at

the camera. He always had a million dollar smile and I aspire to channel that joyous courage as I grow into a professional art therapist. In my poem, titled “Family Continuum”, I meandered through the social complexities of my life as a Jewish lesbian from Texas and arrived at the solace of being part of a damaged, yet ever-growing diaspora family. I concluded my presentation with the unanswered question of where and how I will finally take root and belong in the world.

Now that I have relative security living in the United States, I am looking to Emma Lazarus for guidance on how to best serve my community, just as she had served the Jewish-immigrant community over one hundred and fifty years ago. At times, when I have felt pulled into the warrior archetype’s shadow side of opposition and control, I have to remember and practice Emma’s love ethic (Pearson, 2015, 01:33:00, 03:48:00). Emma’s ethic of “love fused with power” allowed her to be courageously and creatively outspoken against anti-Semitism, while also socially supportive of destitute Ashkenazi Jewish immigrants who desperately needed vocational and housing assistance (“Emma Lazarus”, 2024; Teng & Nuñez, 2019, p. 10). Emma’s unique ability to address systemic injustice through a combination of public education, social advocacy, and creative problem-solving has inspired me to continue working within my sphere of influence to cooperate with higher authorities and implement practical DEIB policies (“Emma Lazarus”, 2024). Further, by vulnerably sharing my family history through poetry, I believe I have encouraged my peers to expand their consciousness around Jewish identity, history, and culture, which have unfortunately been left out of Southwestern College's multicultural curriculum.

My Light Figure process has required me to be present with the discomfort of my Jewish epigenetic trauma, reflect on both its shadow and light qualities, self-compassionately hold myself accountable for any unintegrated shadow parts that are contributing to Dreaded Drama Triangle (DDT) dynamics, and forge an empowering pathway through this trauma as a creative challenger (Emerald, 2017, 02:12:00). I could apply this expanded consciousness to working with clients in two major ways: 1) by providing psychoeducation about The Empowerment Dynamic (TED), and 2) by employing narrative art therapy directives to help them explore and meaningfully integrate light and shadow aspects of their identities (Emerald, 2017, 02:01:00). Having explored my epigenetic trauma, I am aware of how painful such an integration process can be. In this work, I would take a trauma-informed and multiculturally sensitive approach to facilitating clients' Jungian deep dives. For example, if a minority client needed to unpack the discrimination living in their trauma body, I would utilize somatic grounding techniques (e.g., yogic breathing, body scanning, bottom-up emotional processing, and mindfulness meditation), open questions and body posture, active listening, and reflection to hold a safe space for the client to be vulnerable about their lived experience. To avoid going into perpetrator or rescuer role play, I would center their challenges and needs while being extra careful not to engage in countertransference by over-identifying and projecting my shadow onto their narrative. After getting to know the client and developing a better rapport, I would be a coach and offer them sprinkles of analysis and insight to empower them on their path towards healing.

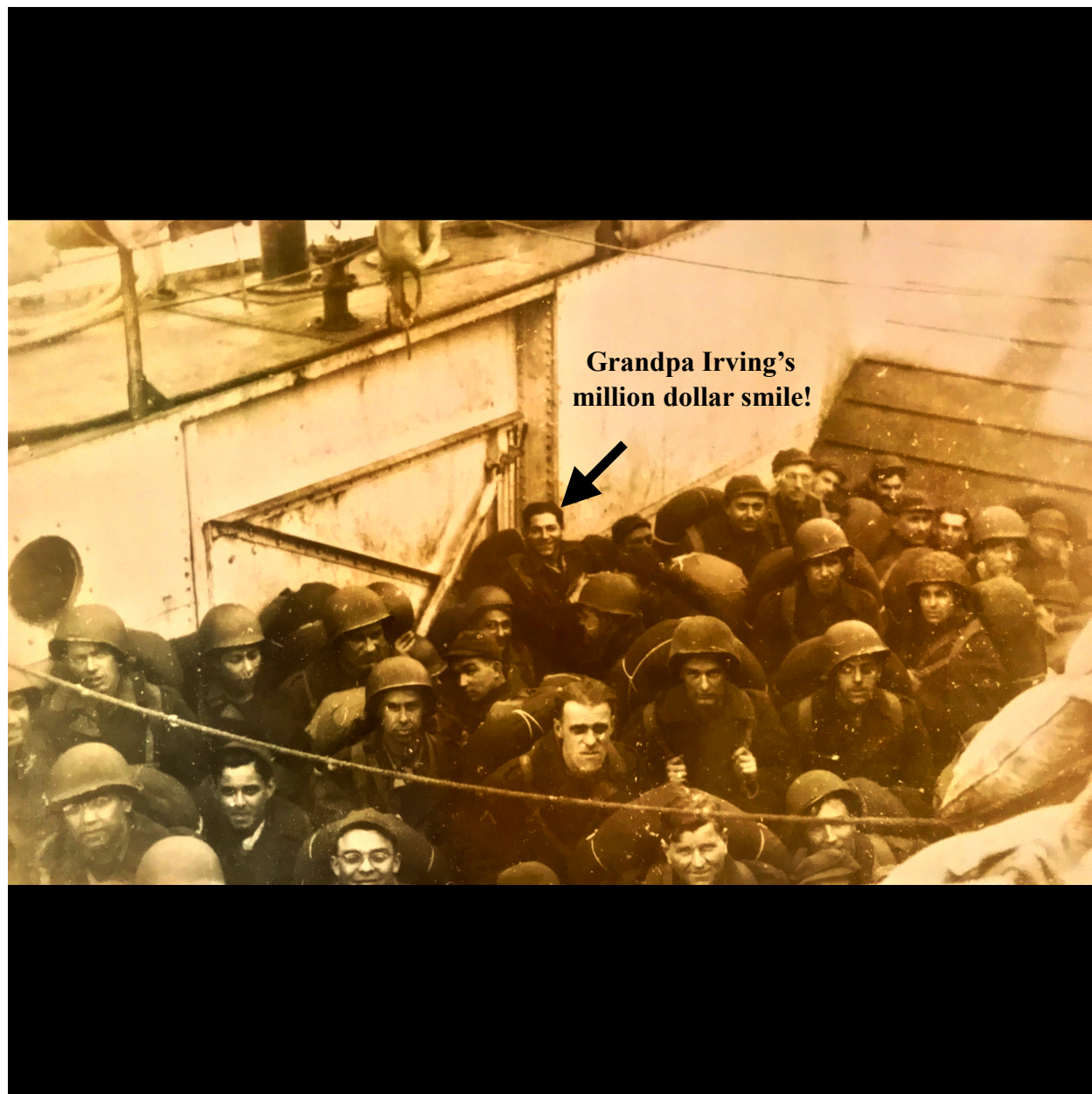
This semester's inspiring course material has expanded my consciousness and allowed me to integrate four additional lessons and consider one avenue for further investigation: 1) applying the love ethics of interdependent trust, open communication, respect, and care; 2)

utilizing managed concern to stay informed while titrating my exposure to human suffering, 3) identifying attachment styles within DDT and TED dynamics, 4) receiving the love that others reflect to me in order to have mutual reciprocity and connection, and 5) investigating how my Jewish values might inform my therapy practice. These five areas can be utilized in a therapeutic context with clients.

First, after providing psychoeducation about TED, I can facilitate my clients building mutual trust in their interpersonal relationships by encouraging them to move slowly, openly communicate needs, and set healthy boundaries (hooks, 2001, 01:14:00). If this foundational care is present, I believe the toxic need to deceive, manipulate, and control another person will be stopped and that the disempowered domination posturing of the DDT (i.e., the victim, perpetrator, and rescuer) will be rendered defunct (Emerald, 2017, 02:01:00; B. Weinhold & J. Weinhold, 2017, p. 18). Second, I can utilize managed concern to set boundaries with myself as a therapist and limit the amount of negative news I consume before working with clients. I believe this can help me avoid internalizing toxicity from clients' media-saturated lives and have a fresh lens to hold their concerns regarding the current events that are more directly affecting them. Third, I can help clients identify and put secure attachment styles associated with TED into practice within their interpersonal relationships. The "two-hands" exercise can be used to effectively demonstrate one's attachment behavior in spatial proximity to others. Fourth, I will practice receiving love and care from my clients by using "I language" to take ownership over the light qualities they are reflecting back to me. In doing so, I will also model to them how to receive love and care from others and sustain mutual reciprocity in their interpersonal relationships. Further, encouraging clients not to apologize for expressing genuine shadow

emotions like sadness and anger can help them be more vulnerable, honest, and communicative of their needs. Lastly, I felt inspired by one of my classmate's Light Figure presentations that used symbolic prayer flags to explore how Christian values might inform her practice as a therapist. This made me want to deeply study Torah and explore how concepts like tikkun olam (i.e., the Jewish repair ethic) may support my understanding and practice of psycho-educational concepts in a therapeutic setting with clients.

Nonverbal Page



References

Emerald, D. (2017). *The empowerment dynamic: 10th anniversary edition* (R. Sitzberger, Narr.)

[Audiobook]. Polaris Publishing. https://www.audible.com/pd/B075DHDVKF?source_code=ASSORAP0511160006&share_location=pdp

Emma Lazarus. (2024, March 25). In *Wikipedia*.

https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Emma_Lazarus&oldid=1215542812

hooks, b. (2001). *All about love: New visions* (J. LaVoy, Narr.) [Audiobook]. HarperAudio.

https://www.audible.com/pd/B0CL1GKWC7?source_code=ASSORAP0511160006&share_location=pdp

Lazarus, E. (2002). *Emma lazarus: Selected poems and other writings* (G. Eiselein, Ed.) [eBook

edition]. Broadview Press. https://www.amazon.com/Emma-Lazarus-Selected-Poems-Writings-ebook/dp/B01HQFG9K/ref=tmm_kin_swatch_0?_encoding=UTF8&qid=&sr=

Library of Congress. (n.d.). *Immigration and relocation in u.s. history: A people at risk*.

<https://www.loc.gov/classroom-materials/immigration/polish-russian/a-people-at-risk/#:~:text=In%20the%201880s%2C%20more%20than,processing%20center%20at%20Ellis%20Island>

Pearson, C. S. (2015). *The hero within: Six archetypes we live by* (J. Oppenheimer, Narr.)

[Audiobook]. HarperOne. https://www.audible.com/pd/B0B8Q5V76X?source_code=ASSORAP0511160006&share_location=pdp

Teng, S., & Nuñez, S. (2019, July 19). *Measuring love in the journey for justice: A brown paper*.

ABFE. <https://abfe.issuelab.org/resource/measuring-love-in-the-journey-for-justice-a-brown-paper.html>

Weinhold, B. K., & Weinhold, J. B. (2017). *How to break free of the drama triangle and victim consciousness*. CICRCL Press.

Light Figure Presentation Poems

Zoë N. Shulman

Department of Art Therapy & Counseling, Southwestern College

CN AT 531-3: Consciousness II: Cultivating the Healing Presence of Love

Professor Awbrey Willett

May 26, 2024

THE NEW COLOSSUS.¹

Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,²
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand
Glowing world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities³ frame.
“Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!” cries she
With silent lips. “Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!”

5

10

¹ Written in aid of the Bartholdi Pedestal Fund, 1883. (Lazarus’s note, which appears in her manuscript book of poems and in *Poems*, 1: 202.) A committee working to raise money to build a pedestal for Auguste Bartholdi’s *Liberty Enlightening the World*, the Statue of Liberty, asked Lazarus to write a poem for a fund-raising auction. In November 1883, she wrote this sonnet, which was read at the auction on 3 December. At the official dedication ceremony on 28 October 1886, the poem was read again. In 1903 Lazarus’s

THE NEW EZEKIEL.¹

What, can these dead bones live, whose sap is dried

By twenty scorching centuries of wrong?

Is this the House of Israel, whose pride

Is as a tale that's told, an ancient song?

Are these ignoble relics all that live

5

Of psalmist, priest and prophet? Can the breath

Of very heaven bid these bones revive,

Open the graves and clothe the ribs of death?

Yea. Prophecy, the Lord hath said. Again

Say to the wind, Come forth and breathe afresh,

10

Even that they may live upon these slain.

And bone to bone shall leap, and flesh to flesh.

The Spirit is not dead, proclaim the word,

Where lay dead bones, a host of armed men stand!

I ope your graves, my people, saith the Lord,

15

And I shall place you living in your land.

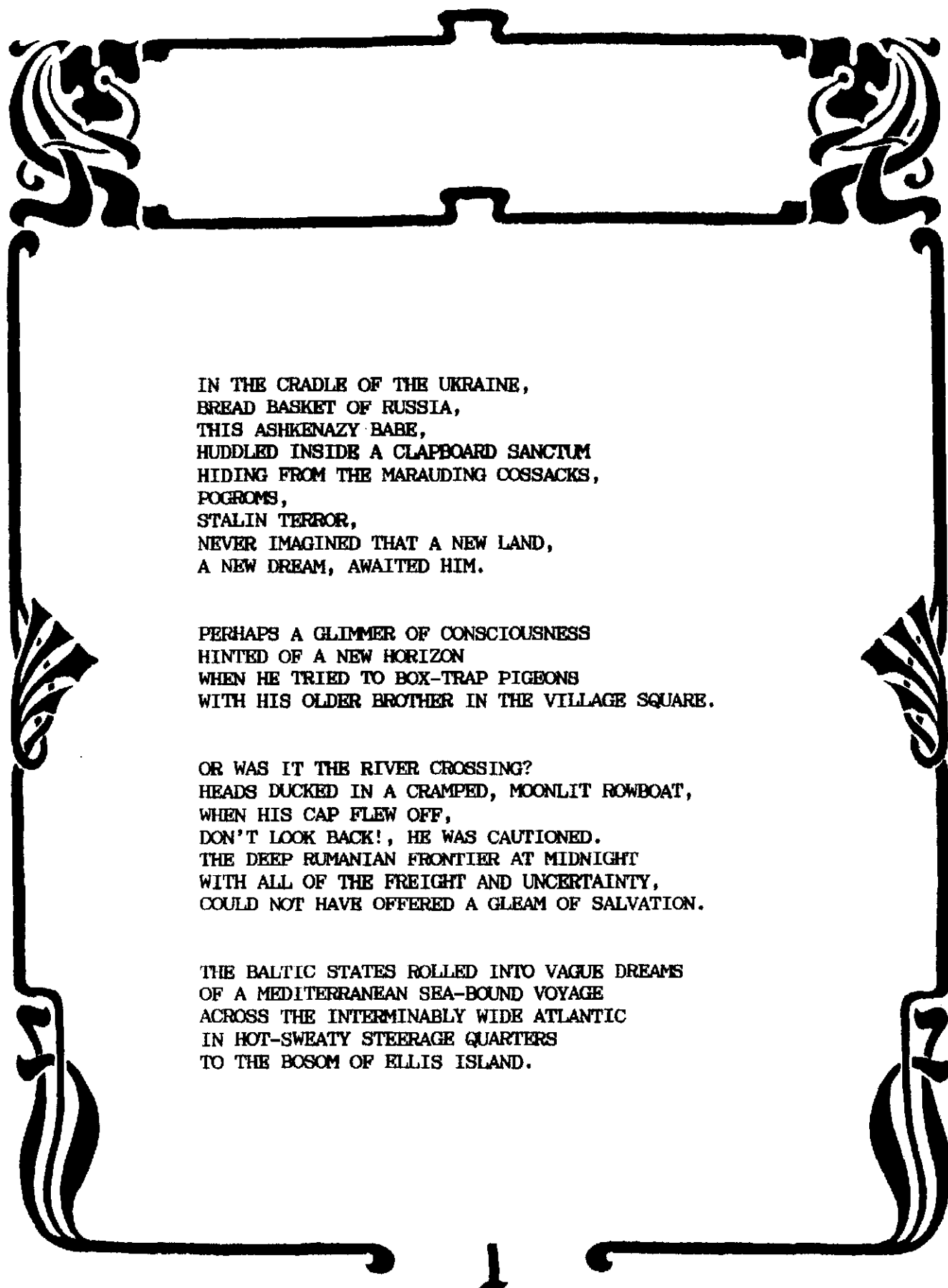
¹ See Ezekiel 37.

* IRVING J. SHULMAN, HIS LIFE AND TIMES *
* AS TOLD FROM THE IMPRESSIONS OF HIS SON, MICHAEL *

TO MY DAD ON HIS 75th BIRTHDAY!!

MAY 6, 1989

LOVE, MICKEY!!

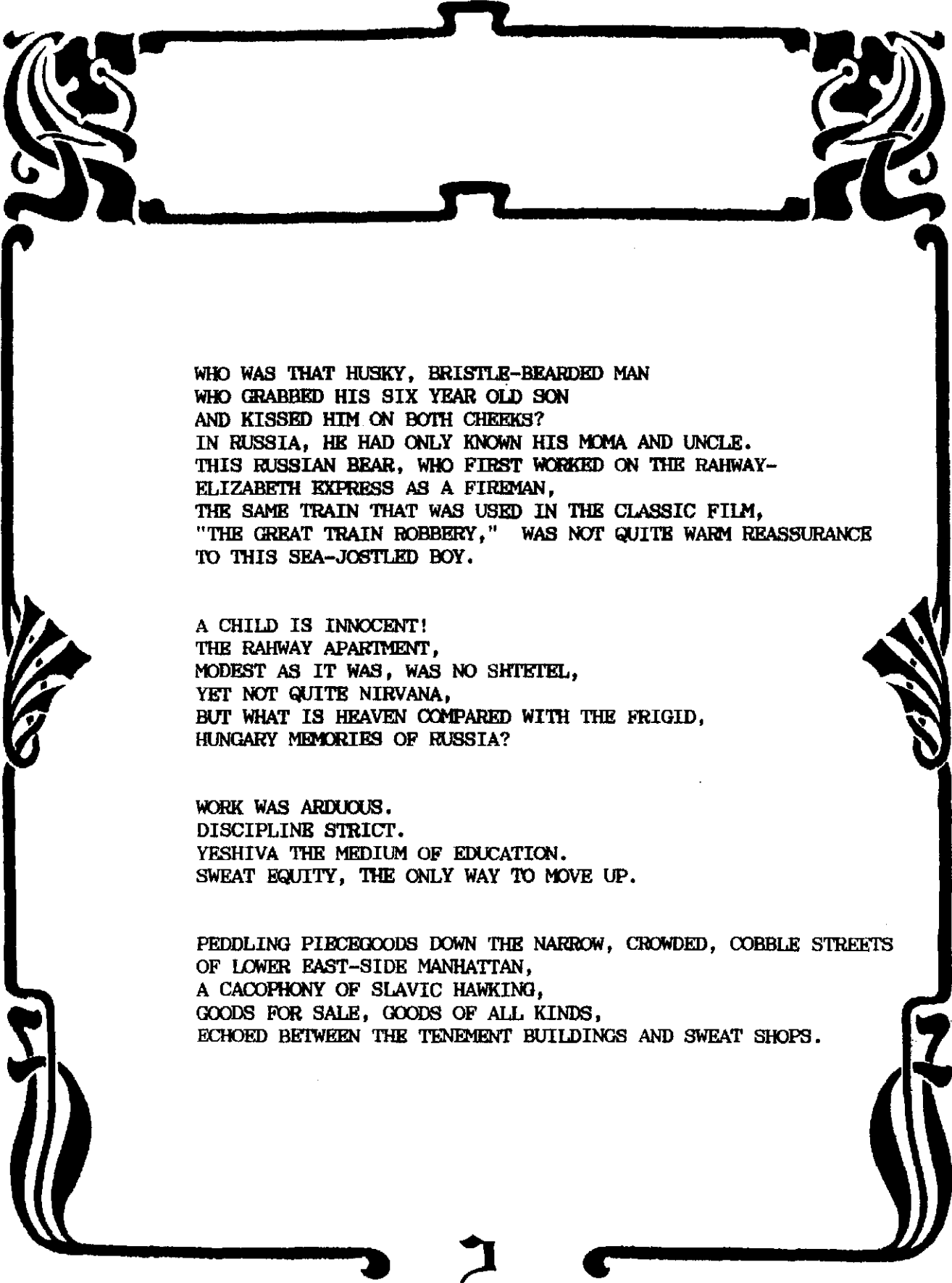


IN THE CRADLE OF THE UKRAINE,
BREAD BASKET OF RUSSIA,
THIS ASHKENAZY BABE,
HUDDLED INSIDE A CLAPBOARD SANCTUM
HIDING FROM THE MARAUDING COSSACKS,
POGROMS,
STALIN TERROR,
NEVER IMAGINED THAT A NEW LAND,
A NEW DREAM, AWAITED HIM.

PERHAPS A GLIMMER OF CONSCIOUSNESS
HINTED OF A NEW HORIZON
WHEN HE TRIED TO BOX-TRAP PIGEONS
WITH HIS OLDER BROTHER IN THE VILLAGE SQUARE.

OR WAS IT THE RIVER CROSSING?
HEADS DUCKED IN A CRAMPED, MOONLIT ROWBOAT,
WHEN HIS CAP FLEW OFF,
DON'T LOOK BACK!, HE WAS CAUTIONED.
THE DEEP RUMANIAN FRONTIER AT MIDNIGHT
WITH ALL OF THE FREIGHT AND UNCERTAINTY,
COULD NOT HAVE OFFERED A GLEAM OF SALVATION.

THE BALTIC STATES ROLLED INTO VAGUE DREAMS
OF A MEDITERRANEAN SEA-BOUND VOYAGE
ACROSS THE INTERMINABLY WIDE ATLANTIC
IN HOT-SWEATY STEERAGE QUARTERS
TO THE BOSOM OF ELLIS ISLAND.

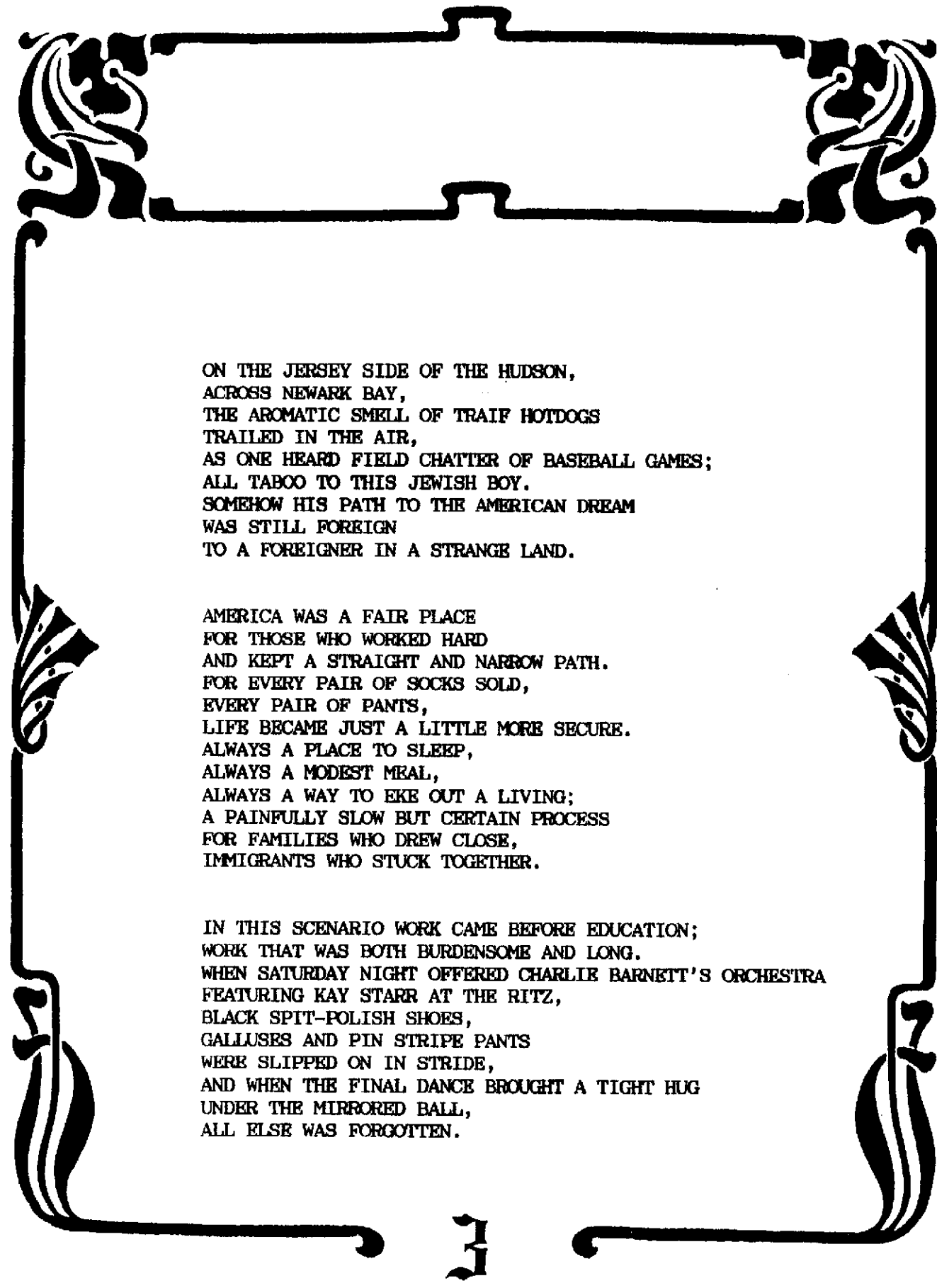


WHO WAS THAT HUSKY, BRISTLE-BEARDED MAN
WHO GRABBED HIS SIX YEAR OLD SON
AND KISSED HIM ON BOTH CHEEKS?
IN RUSSIA, HE HAD ONLY KNOWN HIS MOMA AND UNCLE.
THIS RUSSIAN BEAR, WHO FIRST WORKED ON THE RAHWAY-
ELIZABETH EXPRESS AS A FIREMAN,
THE SAME TRAIN THAT WAS USED IN THE CLASSIC FILM,
"THE GREAT TRAIN ROBBERY," WAS NOT QUITE WARM REASSURANCE
TO THIS SEA-JOSTLED BOY.

A CHILD IS INNOCENT!
THE RAHWAY APARTMENT,
MODEST AS IT WAS, WAS NO SHTETEL,
YET NOT QUITE NIRVANA,
BUT WHAT IS HEAVEN COMPARED WITH THE FRIGID,
HUNGARY MEMORIES OF RUSSIA?

WORK WAS ARDUOUS.
DISCIPLINE STRICT.
YESHIVA THE MEDIUM OF EDUCATION.
SWEAT EQUITY, THE ONLY WAY TO MOVE UP.

PEDDLING PIECEGOODS DOWN THE NARROW, CROWDED, COBBLE STREETS
OF LOWER EAST-SIDE MANHATTAN,
A CACOPHONY OF SLAVIC HAWKING,
GOODS FOR SALE, GOODS OF ALL KINDS,
ECHOED BETWEEN THE TENEMENT BUILDINGS AND SWEAT SHOPS.



ON THE JERSEY SIDE OF THE HUDSON,
ACROSS NEWARK BAY,
THE AROMATIC SMELL OF TRAIFF HOTDOGS
TRAILED IN THE AIR,
AS ONE HEARD FIELD CHATTER OF BASEBALL GAMES;
ALL TABOO TO THIS JEWISH BOY.
SOMEHOW HIS PATH TO THE AMERICAN DREAM
WAS STILL FOREIGN
TO A FOREIGNER IN A STRANGE LAND.

AMERICA WAS A FAIR PLACE
FOR THOSE WHO WORKED HARD
AND KEPT A STRAIGHT AND NARROW PATH.
FOR EVERY PAIR OF SOCKS SOLD,
EVERY PAIR OF PANTS,
LIFE BECAME JUST A LITTLE MORE SECURE.
ALWAYS A PLACE TO SLEEP,
ALWAYS A MODEST MEAL,
ALWAYS A WAY TO EKE OUT A LIVING;
A PAINFULLY SLOW BUT CERTAIN PROCESS
FOR FAMILIES WHO DREW CLOSE,
IMMIGRANTS WHO STUCK TOGETHER.

IN THIS SCENARIO WORK CAME BEFORE EDUCATION;
WORK THAT WAS BOTH BURDENSOME AND LONG.
WHEN SATURDAY NIGHT OFFERED CHARLIE BARNETT'S ORCHESTRA
FEATURING KAY STARR AT THE RITZ,
BLACK SPIT-POLISH SHOES,
GALLUSES AND PIN STRIPE PANTS
WERE SLIPPED ON IN STRIDE,
AND WHEN THE FINAL DANCE BROUGHT A TIGHT HUG
UNDER THE MIRRORED BALL,
ALL ELSE WAS FORGOTTEN.

DEPRESSION DAYS MADE EVERYONE APPRECIATE THE LITTLE THINGS,
DERIVE MUCH FROM PRACTICALLY NOTHING.

IN 1933, A \$19.00 PER WEEK OFFER IN A FT. LAUDERDALE,
FLORIDA SHOE STORE MUST HAVE SEEMED LIKE THE POT OF GOLD
AT THE END OF THE RAINBOW.

SO THIS ENERGETIC TEENAGE KID PACKED UP HIS '33 CHEVROLET COUPE
WITH HIS JOINT VENTURING COMPANION
AND FOUGHT HIS WAY SOUTH
THROUGH THE VIRGINIA SNOW DRIFTS
UNTIL THE VAST, EMPTY WHITE SAND BEACHES OF SOUTHERN FLORIDA
REFLECTED IN HIS EAGER EYES.

IRVING HAD A UNIQUE CHARM,
A MYSTIQUE.

PEOPLE ALWAYS LOVED HIM,
BUT CHARM WASN'T ENOUGH DURING THE DEPRESSION,
FOR YIDDISH BOYS COULDN'T ACHIEVE UPWARD MOBILITY
IN THE RETAIL SHOE TRADE.

PERHAPS THAT FACT MOTIVATED HIM TO DO BETTER THINGS!

AS FAMILY GATHERED AROUND THE OLD STAND-UP R.C.A. RADIO,
WHO HAD EVER HEARD OF PEARL HARBOR?

ALL THEY KNEW WAS THAT SOMEHOW THE WORLD THEY HAD KNOWN
WOULD NEVER BE THE SAME.

F.D.R. TRUMPETED THE CALL TO ARMS,
AND FOR THE FIRST TIME IN OVER A DECADE,
THE COUNTRY HAD A SINGULAR FOCUS AWAY FROM THE DEPRESSION.

BEFORE THE WAR, IRVING HAD SPIED AN AUBURN BEAUTY,
A UNIQUE WOMAN OF CHARM AND CLASS,
AND EXCLAIMED TO A FRIEND,
"YOU SEE THAT GIRL, I'M GOING TO MARRY HER!"
A CHEAP, HOT-DOG DATE DREW A SLAP,
NOT THE EXPECTED KISS.
ROME HAVING NOT BEEN BUILT IN A DAY,
INSPIRED IRVING TO PERSEVERE.
SHIRLEY, HIS BRIDE TO BE, FINALLY ACQUIESCED.

THE NATION WAS MOBILIZING AT A FEVER PITCH.
THE JAPANESE ONSLAUGHT AND NAZI DECLARATION OF WAR
HAD AWAKENED A SLEEPING GIANT.
IRVING, WHO HAD A DEEP SENSE OF DUTY TO HIS ADOPTIVE LAND,
DID NOT HESITATE TO PUT ON THE KHAKIS
WHEN THE CALL FOR SERVICE SOUNDED.

AS THE SILVER METEOR SLICED THROUGH THE DARKNESS,
SHIRLEY PROPPED HER WEARY HEAD ON THE SEAT BACK,
TRYING TO CATCH A FEW MOMENTS OF SLEEP,
ON A SEEMINGLY ENDLESS TREK TO TEXAS TO ACCOMPANY IRVING.

THE G.I.'S WIFE HAD AN UTTERLY IRREDEEMABLE EXISTENCE.
MAKESHIFT ACCOMMODATIONS, UNWELCOME STATUS, MENIAL
JOBS, LIMITED RATIONS AND BOREDOM.
AS THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF AMERICA UNFOLDED,
SHIRLEY TRIED HARDER TO HIDE HER PROGRESSING PREGNANCY
FOR FEAR OF BEING TERMINATED FROM EMPLOYMENT.

THE DREADFUL DAY HAD COME.
IRVING'S TROOP CARRIER LAUNCHED INTO THE BLACK WATERS
SURROUNDED BY A MASSIVE FLOTILLA OF VESSELS.
FRESH AIR SHIFTS WERE TAKEN TOPSIDE
AS IRVING LEANED OVER THE RAIL, STARRING OFF INTO NOTHINGNESS,
A BURSTING, FLASHING FLAME ERUPTED THROUGH THE TRANQUILITY.
A GERMAN WOLF HAD MARKED A FREIGHTER.
WHO WAS NEXT?

BITING IRISH COLD FELT LIKE A JAGGED KNIFE BLADE
PIERCING HIS BLANKET
AS HE LAY IN A PUP TENT
WONDERING WHETHER HIS SWEET HEART HAD GONE INTO LABOR;
KNOWING THAT AT THAT SACRED TIME,
SHE WOULD NOT KNOW WHERE IN THE WORLD HE WAS.

GOOD NEWS FINALLY BROKE, A GIRL!!
SPIRITS LIFTED, SLIGHTLY WARMER IN HIS NEWLY ACQUIRED
NAVY P. COAT, IRVING EMBRACED THE IMAGE
OF HIS NEW DAUGHTER,
LOVELY WIFE,
AND CONTEMPLATED BUSINESS STRATEGY
'TO BE EMPLOYED AFTER THE WAR.
HOPES AND DREAMS INSPIRED HIM AND KEPT HIS MIND
FROM FOCUSING ON THE DAILY DEATH AND DESTRUCTION:
LIKE THE INSTANCE WHEN HE WAS LOFTED IN THE AIR
FROM A BOMB BLAST ON A LONDON STREET.

FATE SOMETIMES HAS AN UNUSUALLY DEMONSTRATIVE WAY
OF WRINGING ITS COLD HANDS.
ONE CRISP MORNING SAW THE ALTERNATE ALPHABETICAL DIVISION
OF IRVING'S COMPANY.
"S'S" OVER THERE...
WHO WOULD EVER HAVE KNOWN THAT THE GROUP
IN WHICH IRVING WAS NOT INCLUDED,
WOULD SOON BE CHRONICLED
AS ONE OF THE MANY HEROIC SACRIFICIAL UNITS
OF THE NORMANDY INVASION?

THE DARK, PERVASIVE CLOUDS OF WAR LIFTED.
AT LAST, IRVING WAS UNITED WITH HIS LITTLE GIRL,
NOW A TODDLER.
THE CONCERN FOR FAMILY HAD INSPIRED HIM EVEN MORE
TO BREAK OUT AND "MAKE IT",
WAR HAVING LEFT HIM WITH A TOTAL OF A \$500 U.S. SAVINGS BOND.
IT WAS TIME FOR HIS DREAMS, THOSE VISIONS PONDERED
DURING THE WAR, TO BE REALIZED.

AS THE SHOWER OF SOLDIERS' CAPS SETTLED
IN NEW YORK'S TIME SQUARE,
A WAVE OF ENERGY WAS RELEASED.
THE NATION'S HEATED PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY
RAPIDLY SHIFTED TO A PEACETIME ECONOMY.
ALL THAT IRVING NEEDED WAS AN AUTOMOBILE
AND TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS.
A TALL ORDER FOR POSTWAR AMERICA.

HE WAS BURSTING WITH ENTHUSIASM.
HE HAD TALENT AND "KNOW HOW", BUT NO EQUITY.
SO IRVING TURNED TO HIS BROTHER SAM,
WHO, HAVING BEEN TOO OLD FOR THE DRAFT
MAINTAINED A BUSINESS DURING THE WAR.
THE OUTCOME OF HIS REQUEST WAS A PARTNERSHIP.
IF IT COULD BE BOUGHT CHEAP
AND SOLD AT AUCTION FOR A PROFIT, THEY BOUGHT IT!!

THE FORD "WOODY" BARRELED DOWN THE PASTORAL
NEW JERSEY ROAD CRAMMED BEYOND NORMAL CAPACITY WITH GOODS.
IT WAS SATURDAY NIGHT-AUCTION NIGHT.
THE LOCAL MINISTER ADMONISHED IRVING NOT TO MAKE
PROVOCATIVE COMMENTS DURING THE RITUAL.
A CARNIVAL ATMOSPHERE PERVADED THE BUCOLIC LANDSCAPE.
IRVING, WHO HAD SLAVED ALL WEEK IN PURCHASING, LOADING,
TRANSPORTING, AND UNLOADING THE EVENINGS' OFFERINGS,
LOVED THE EXHAUSTING ROLE AT CENTER STAGE.
THE NIGHT GROSSED ONE THOUSAND.
NOT A BAD START!

NOW WHAT WAS NEEDED WAS A PERMANENT LOCATION.
BUT WHO HAD VACANT SPACE? NOBODY.
THEY SCoured THE TOWNS AND CITIES
UNTIL THEIR SEARCH LANDED THEM
ON THE NARROW BRICK STREETS OF HOBOKEN.
AN OLD WAREHOUSE WAS DISCOVERED.
IT WASN'T MAGNIFICENT, BUT IT HAD TO DO.
THEY CHOSE A NAME FROM THE COMIC STRIP CHARACTER,
"MICKEY FINN."
IRV WOULD BE KNOWN AS "MICKEY" FOR MANY YEARS TO COME.

Family Continuum

By: Zoë Shulman

The youngest of three,
my father could have been considered a Hanukkah miracle
in light of the bloody pogroms and genocidal Nazis that threatened my grandparents.

My young father asked, “What is the American Dream?”
as he gazed across the New York City skyline, a figurative Third Temple,
where grandpa Irving had intrepidly established his successful family business.

Standing at the foot of Irving Shulman’s daunting summit,
my father discovered his own path
towards tikkun olam.

From stopping a toxic chemical company’s illegal dumping
to protesting the Vietnam War in the face of charging Cleveland Bays, clubs, and bayonet rifles,
the rebel heartbeat of the lone wolf pounded strong in my father.

In a feat of primal courage, he followed his migratory heart toward justice and love.
First, in the fields of Kenya, where he studied the anthropological origins of humankind,
And then southbound to the Talmudic stage of the Oklahoman courtroom, where he argued with God.

Amidst a row of New Age books, he cosmically collided with my Irish mother,
herself a free-spirited rebel, who embodied the beauty of Lady Guinevere.
Together, they ran off and got secretly married by a Black Moravian priest in St. Croix.

Just a few years later, my parents would take home my older brother,
and eventually, me, in their ‘80s-style brown Subaru station wagon.
“Our little Irish bagels!” They both used to say as they gazed at us affectionately.

An interracial couple, they never imposed formal religion on me or my brother,
and instead wisely opted to expose us to Ashkenazi Jewish and Irish Catholic culture,
which allowed us to choose our unique faiths as consenting adults.

White limestone gravel crunched beneath the wagon's tires
as it drove down a street with no name to our house,
situated in the rolling twilight of the rural Texas Hill Country.

Between avoiding gettin' eaten by 6-foot rattlesnakes
and dodging our gun-toting Neo-Nazi neighbors,
many limestone clouds got kicked up into the air!

As the chalky dust settled, we became covered in white,
smothered beneath a veil of good ol' fashioned American Jesus,
with all of its capitalist idolatry of colonial proselytization.

Occasionally, the white would smudge and we would be subjected to suspicious glares,
and the ever-dreaded question: "Are you Jewish?"
This was certainly no invitation to Shabbat dinner.

I was sixteen the last time I ever saw my maternal grandfather, David Barry Sr.,
when he and his second wife joked about the Holocaust in front of my father,
asking, "What did the Jews do to piss off God so bad?"

Unlike her broken father,
my mother's Irish Éire burned brightly,
and she proudly stood by and protected her divine family creation.

Grandpa Irving, who put his Jewish body on the line to defend America against the Nazis,
always used to exclaim, "Wouldn't you know, when I was guarding a POW camp full of 90,000 Germans,
there was never a single goddamn Nazi! They were all just following orders!"

When I envision my family tree,
I see beautiful pomegranate branches that have been singed on multiple sides.
Plagues of abandonment, betrayal, prejudice, cruelty, and rejection have stunted its growth.

And yet, I also see the next generation sprouting up — of Filipino, St. Lucian, and Italian heritage,
carrying the blessings of their pomegranate seeds with them
further into the Diaspora's rich American melting pot.

Through my individuation into a lesbian and patrilineal Reform Jew,
I have carried my seed far, often yearning to take root somewhere,
but I restlessly fear the encroaching toxins of systemic discrimination, terrorism, and genocide.

Every time I feel that I do not belong in America,
I always think of Irving's military sacrifice,
through which he attained his first-ever citizenship status, and reckon with my alienated identity.

Whether I plant my seed in America's fragile refuge,
or the Jewish ancestral soil of Zion,
I will always belong to a larger family continuum.

Like my mother, I will choose to stand proudly by it.
She always has the last word, and I can hear her southern voice telling me now,
"No matter what, don't you dare forget that you also have an Irish fire under your ass!"