

# The Bristol Jewish Recorder



## EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

HAROLD SEYMOUR  
BETTE BURKE  
NAT SMITH

All communications to

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APRIL, 1973

NISAN, 5733

## BRISTOL HEBREW CONGREGATION THE SYNAGOGUE, PARK ROW, BRISTOL

### Synagogue Services:

Friday Evenings 7.30 p.m.  
Saturday Mornings 10.0 a.m.

### Minister:

Rev. M. Modell,  
66 Harcourt Road,  
Bristol, 6.  
Tel: 40616

### Hon. Sec.

Mr. I. Kushner,  
37, Long Eaton Drive,  
Whitchurch,  
BRISTOL.4.  
Tel: Whitchurch 3576

Talmud Torah Classes: Sunday mornings  
10.00.a.m. to 12.45.p.m.

Hon. Sec. Mrs. M. Kushner,  
37, Long Eaton Drive,  
Whitchurch,  
BRISTOL.4.  
Tel: Whitchurch 3576

Bristol Jewish Ladies' Guild:

Hon. Sec. Mrs. C. Culank,  
113, Nags Head Mill,  
St. George,  
BRISTOL.5.

Bristol W.I.Z.O. Group:

Hon. Sec. Mrs. S. Tobias,  
12, Meadowside,  
Thornbury,  
BRISTOL.

Both Ladies' Organisations  
hold regular meetings and  
functions throughout the year.

## for your diary ...

### Tuesday, 3rd April

W.I.Z.O. - 19, Highnam  
Close.

### Sunday, 8th April.

Eight for Eight Evening  
Meeting

### Monday, 9th April.

Evening Meeting - 77,  
Parrys Lane.

### Monday, 16th April.

Erev Pesach.

### Sunday, 20th May.

Bristol Zionist Society -  
Inaugural Meeting.

YAHREZEITS:

Friday	6th April	Mr. G. Cole	Nisan 4
Tuesday	10th April	Mr. S. Bloom	Nisan 8
Sunday	15th April	Mr. P. Winberg	Nisan 13
Tuesday	17th April	Mr. H. Seymour	Nisan 15
Monday	23rd April	Mr. M.B. Silverman	Nisan 21
Tuesday	24th April	Mr. L.G. Gould	Nisan 22
Saturday	28th April	Messrs. N. & I. Sacof	Nisan 26
Monday	30th April	Mesdames Lazarus Sisters	Nisan 28
Thursday	3rd May	Mr. H. Springer Mesdames Lazarus Sisters	Iyar I.

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MR. SYD DYSCH:

Jennie Dysch wishes to thank Rev Moddel for the wonderful Services conducted, also Family and Friends, for their overwhelming show of sympathy at the loss of her beloved husband, Syd.

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Pauline, Daughter of Syd Dysch, Son in Law Joseph, and Grandchildren, thank Rev. Moddel, Relatives and Friends, for their concern and sincere condolences at their very sad loss. He will be sadly missed, and a gap will be left in our hearts.

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(From the Jewish Chronicle, March 23rd).

Mr. Solomon Dysch:

The Bristol Jewish Community was saddened by the death last week of Mr. Solomon (Syd) Dysch, at the age of 65. He and his wife, Jennie, had only recently celebrated their Ruby Wedding. A member of one of Bristol's oldest and largest Jewish families, Mr. Dysch was one of four brothers and five sisters, five of whom are still living and serving the community. For his services to the Congregation, Mr. Dysch was made a life member of the Council. He was a long serving member of the Chevra Kadisha, a past Chairman of the Polak branch of the British Legion and Ajax, and a leading figure in J.P.A. and other local communal affairs. He is survived by his widow and a daughter.

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Many tributes to the late Syd Dysch have been made by individuals and Communal bodies in the past weeks - all of whom were deeply shocked at his untimely death. As one of the Editors of the Recorder, it would befall me, or one of my colleagues, to write his Obituary, conveying to you, the Members of the Community on your behalf, our profound regrets, and to wish Jennie and Pauline and the Family, Long Life.

As an "honorary member" of the family, of some 25 years standing, to whom Mr. Dysch was to me "Uncle Syd" from the first day of joining, I find the formality of listing his attributes very difficult. I say "difficult" because Syd never made a million, never became a "man of substance" in the material sense, aspired to high office, or left his mark in the "halls of fame"... but to know him was to love him. I never heard an unkind word pass his lips, his sense of humour was a legend (he was the greatest teller of "shaggy dog" stories I ever knew) and could tell a story against himself with equal enjoyment. As "adviser" to the family, from whom opinions were always sought, he truly lived up to his name of Solomon, giving down to earth "judgements" in the manner of the home-spun philosopher which endeared him to me. It mattered not whether he had the qualifications, it always seemed to make good sense. A visit to Syd's barber shop was always a tonic. No matter how "down" Syd was, I always left chuckling, and a little relieved from the cares of the day. If we ever argued, it was always about paying for the haircut. I always lost. Syd, I'm going to miss you, as will many others, not solemnly as now, during the days of mourning, but with thoughts of our many pleasurable and amusing encounters, and affection tinged with sadness. I'm glad that I knew you.

Nat.

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The Bristol Chevra Kidusha wish to express their deepest sympathy to Jennie, Pauline and Family at the sad loss of Syd. A long serving member of the Chevra, he will be sadly missed, and long remembered.

Sam Nirenberg  
President

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SID DYSCH - A personal Tribute

When I heard late on the evening of Tuesday, 13th March that Sid Dych had died, I experienced a feeling of overwhelming emptiness - almost impossible to describe - it was as if something of indefinable value had suddenly ceased to be. Then I thought of Jennie and the bereaved family - but mostly of Jennie for whom the loss of Sid would be the bitterest blow. When someone is seriously ill, his loved and loving ones will thank God that each succeeding day sees him still alive and still able to enjoy life - but, when he dies, leaving his partner of forty years, alone and desolate, however much the passing may have been anticipated, the shock and the agony are just as great. Jennie has our sympathy, but she also needs our help - the kind of help Sid would have given to another in the same circumstances.

Strangely, my next thoughts were of Sid's great sense of humour and his zest and enthusiasm for life. I thought of the many occasions - coming out of Shool on Yom Tov, or after a Yahrzeit, or perhaps before or after one of the many Meetings he used to attend - he always had a story or we used to laugh at something which had happened in his shop, or some bit of harmless amusement over something that had occurred in the Community. It is no exaggeration to say that Sid brought sunshine into the darkest days. I didn't have the pleasure of knowing him during the War years, but I have heard from others of the way he could cheer up everyone when he came home on leave, but in spite of his great good humour he was not just a joker. He was capable of great understanding and had the gift of diplomacy in every one of the many facets of community life, in which he took an active part. I am not unmindful of the assistance he gave me personally, when some years ago, I suddenly found myself acting President (because the then holder of that office had gone to another town). Sid stepped into the breach of Vice-President over the Yom Lovim. He would be the first to admit that it wasn't an easy transition for him, but as usual he performed the office with enthusiasm and good will. Since his illness, we have missed Sid in our deliberations, but at least we could and I am sure did, consult him, when some advice or a special bit of diplomacy was needed. Now we no longer have even that pleasure - but we have his example. With more like him - it is no mere platitude to say - the world would be a very much better place. So I say thank God for Sid Dych, may he rest in a well deserved peace.

SYDNEY CURWEN.



EDITORIAL NOTICES

We would like once more to bring to the notice of contributors that we ask for all matter to be in by the 24th of the month IN WRITING. None of the Editors is capable of writing shorthand, and we will no longer be prepared to write down dictation over the telephone.

In the last few months we have had an enormous amount of extraneous matter to be included in the envelope with the Recorder. This entails extra work and postage, and although we sympathise with organisations whose only reason for existence is to do good works, we feel that in future, a donation of £1.00 must be included with each request for the use of our facilities. This will be handed to the young ladies who up to now, have accepted all the extra work without a murmur.

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COMMUNAL NOTICES - SOCIAL & PERSONAL

On the 21st March, despite a total blackout due to a blown fuse, some three dozen stalwarts had a most entertaining evening.

We had a group and a Caller and we did a series of Square Dances. Most of us had never before attempted this, but as the Caller so aptly pointed out "Who's bothered about your mistakes.....enjoy yourselves". Which is what we did. The Electricity Board came and put in a new fuse, and we didn't need the heating anyway, although it was working - it wasn't working half as hard as we were.

We haven't had so much fun in the Shool Mall since Rev. Model fell over the cable during a Film Show !

Most of us were more breathless from laughing than from our efforts, and we can hardly wait to do it again....

H.S.

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* PLEASE NOTE THAT THE ISRAELI DANCE
* COMPANY "HATZABARIM" ARE IN
* BRISTOL ON WEDNESDAY,
* 2ND MAY, 1973
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PASSOVER PROVISIONS:

Kays, 51, Millicent Street,  
Cardiff.

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BRISTOL ZIONIST SOCIETY

The Inaugural Meeting of the above Society will take place on Sunday, 20th May. Guest Speaker will be the Israeli Consul General. Full details in the May issue of the Recorder.

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EIGHT FOR EIGHT

The next Meeting of the Group will be held on the 8th April, (Sunday) at 8.00.p.m. at the home of Eve & Gerald Levy, 6, Ellesmere, Thornbury, Bristol. We have not been told what form the evening will take, but to be prepared for surprises - why not come and see what happens.

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BIRTHS:

Mazeltoy to Janis & Martin Abrahams on the birth of their Daughter, Lisa Jane, on the 14th March, 1973.

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BUILDING SUB-COMMITTEE/BUILDING FUND

It is some time since you have received a formal report of the Committee's activities on your behalf. This does not mean that the Committee is either inactive or reticent. It DOES mean however, that funds are low, and that we are unable to proceed with any major work. We will shortly embark on further work in connection with the Communal Hall (Mr. Seymour's Hall/Wall/Floor Project), and a sum of money is still outstanding for roof Turnerising, which has to be carried out periodically. Maintenance in general is a day to day necessity, but regrettably, since the initial impetus of our Centenary Celebrations, our financial resources have almost dried up, leaving much work to be done, and maintenance of existing work neglected. We are having to proceed with essential items, involving safety and security, regardless, but there are many items demanding attention. We appeal for funds, as we consider it our duty to do so, but we also appeal for physical help and expert knowledge and advice. Future labour charges for work carried out is likely to be high.... are there any Members in the community who would be willing, and able to....Glaze a window....do a little decorating. some simple carpentry...rod drains....keep down weeds etc. etc.?

thereby enabling us to use our limited resources for the larger works and emergency contingencies. Whatever you have to offer in time, materials, money or advice, please contact any Committee Member.....

HAROLD SEYMOUR

HAT SMITH

HENRY SPRINGER.

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The Festival of Passover commences on Monday, 16th April, 1973 in the evening, and terminates on Tuesday, 24th April, 1973.

TIMETABLE FOR THE SERVICES ON PASSOVER

<u>Sunday, 15th April</u>	Search for Chametz at nightfall
<u>Monday, 16th April</u>	<u>EREV PESACH</u> Eating of Chametz is forbidden after 10.05 a.m. Fast of the First Born. 7.p.m. MINCHAH-MAARIV SERVICE
<u>Tuesday, 17th April</u>	<u>FIRST DAY</u> 9.15.a.m. Morning Service 7.00.p.m. MINCHAH MAARIV SERVICE
<u>Wednesday, 18th April</u>	<u>SECOND DAY</u> 9.15.a.m. Morning Service
<u>Friday, 20th April</u>	<u>INTERMEDIATE SHABBAT</u> 7.00.p.m. MINCHAH MAARIV SERVICE
<u>Schabbat, 21st April</u>	<u>9.30.a.m.</u> Morning Service
<u>Sunday, 22nd April</u>	<u>EREV YOMTOV</u> 7.00.p.m. MINCHAH MAARIV SERVICE
<u>Monday, 23rd April</u>	<u>SEVENTH DAY</u> 9.15.a.m. Morning Service 7.00.p.m. MINCHAH MAARIV SERVICE
<u>Tuesday, 24th April</u>	<u>Last Day of Pesach</u> 9.15.a.m. Morning Service (YIZKOR)

The Festival of Passover terminates on Tuesday, 24th April at 9.15.p.m.

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MESSAGE FOR PASSOVER 1973/5733

After the long period of the dark and cold winter months, we have now entered the season of Spring. It is the time when we are getting ready for the CHAG HA-AVIV this Spring Festival of Passover. It is the Festival which brings to our mind that the great EXODUS of the Jewish People from Egyptian bondage is an event which happened not only over three thousand years ago but which occupies our mind at this very day, as we are reciting it in our HAGGADAH when we are sitting round the Sedertable with the following words:-

"B'CHOL DOR VADOR CHAYAV ADAM LIR'OT  
ET ATZMO K'ILU HU YATZA MIMIZRA'YIM"

"In every generation one must look upon himself as if he personally had come out from Egypt"

The glittering Sedertable with all the specifically traditional dishes brings back to our memory what the Jewish People had to suffer under the Egyptian dictators and stirs our conscience for those Jewish men, women and children who are now persecuted by the Soviet Russian authorities. The Exodus of Egypt has brought the freedom of three million Jews. It is this idea of freedom which we have proclaimed to the world that each individual has the right to live according to the fundamental principles of humanity and religion.

There is no other Festival in the Jewish Calendar than the Passover with the Sedernights celebration on which we have the opportunity to explain to our children the meaning of our Jewish tradition and the great miracles of our past and present history. It is this kind of celebration which has brought joy and happiness to our Jewish homes.

By fulfilling our obligations as Jews, we hope p.g. to look forward to the time when Jewish People all over the world will be able to live in Freedom and to celebrate this wonderful Passover Festival in the State of Israel.

Let us hope that the approaching 25th Anniversary of Israel's Independence Day will bring a final redemption to our Jewish People as we say it at the end of our Seder celebration.

"L'SHANAH HABA-AH BIRUSHALAYIM HABNU'YAH"

"Next year in Jerusalem Rebuilt"

With this Message, go our best wishes for a happy and pleasant YOMTOV to the Hon.Officers and all the members of the Bristol Congregation.

WITH CHAG SAMEYACH

Rev. & Mrs. Modell

Susan & Sidney  
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BRISTOL JEWISH WOMEN'S GUILD

Owing to unforeseen circumstances (which we all know), we regret that the Meeting arranged for the 14th March had to be cancelled.

The next Meeting will take place on Monday evening, 9th April, at 77, Parry's Lane, Stoke Bishop. The Hostess will be Mrs. Curwen.

C. Culank  
Hon. Secretary.

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BRISTOL W.I.Z.O. GROUP

A Coffee Morning was held on Tuesday, 6th March in the home of Mrs. S. Silverman.

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PURIM LUNCHEON

Many thanks to our hostesses, Mrs. Burke, Mrs. Caplan and Mrs. Berkovitch, for the most enjoyable luncheon held at Mrs. Burke's home on the 21st March. A total of £15.30. was raised for the funds. Mr. I. Gilbert, of the Zionist Federation, gave a most interesting talk, which made this luncheon a most memorable occasion.

FUTURE MEETINGS:

The next Meeting will be held on Tuesday, 3rd April at 8.00 p.m. at the home of Mrs. G. Ornstein, 19, Highnam Close, Patchway, Bristol.

SHEILA TORIAS  
Hon. Secretary

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The Students Union Israel Society invite all members of the Community to a Film Show to be held in the School Hall on Sunday, 6th May next. The film will be

"CAST A GIANT SHADOW"

with Frank Sinatra, Kirk Douglas and Yul Brynner.

The film is of the Israel War of Independence and should be well worth seeing.

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BRISTOL TALMUD TORAH

The team entered for the 15th International J.W.F. Quiz held at Cardiff on Sunday, 25th March, consisted of:-

Stephen and David Silverman  
Barry Kushner and Jonathan Dembo

They competed in the British Regional Finals and were only defeated in the last round by Penylan Team who were last year's runners-up in the British Finals.

Despite the fact that they were the youngest competitors, they remained until the very last round and were defeated by only a few marks. They scored 18 points this year as against 6 points last year. This is a very commendable effort and deserves to be recorded.

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PASSOVER GREETINGS TO SOVIET JEWS:

Please send cards or letters, on the Jewish Festival of Freedom, to the Soviet Jews listed below, that the Bristol Campaign has been allocated by London. Post them NOW, and in addition send greetings to anyone you have adopted through the Campaign.

Zinaida Sonkina, Leningrad, Varshavskaya 77, kv.31, U.S.S.R.

Valery Panov, Leningrad, Moskovski per. 86, kv.183, U.S.S.R.

Solomon Rosen, Leningrad, ul. 4th. Sovietskaya 36, kv. 17, U.S.S.R.

Lena Belenkaya, Fritzevna, ul. Krasnaya 42, kv.10, Leningrad,  
U.S.S.R.

Lilia Dreizner, Leningrad P-49, ul. O.Koshevogo 19, kv.23, U.S.S.R.

Gersh Klebenar, Nukhemovich, Leningrad, 12 Linia, 15, kv.2,  
U.S.S.R.

Mira Kaminskaya, Natanovna, Leningrad 196190, Novoizmailovski,  
pr. 75, kv. 9, U.S.S.R.

Yulia Mogilever, Isakovna, Leningrad, ul. Telmana, 360/11,  
kv. 209, U.S.S.R.

Bronig Veinger, Leningrad, pr.Malina 26, kv. 25, U.S.S.R.

Musia Yagman, Khaimovna, Leningrad OK 18, ul.Karbysheva 6,  
kv. 80, U.S.S.R.

Lev Poliakov, Leningrad, Nevski Prospekt, 76, kv. 40, U.S.S.R.

A 5p stamp goes air mail. Put your address on the back.

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FORTHCOMING SHOW TRIALS

Five men have been charged with "slandering the State" i.e. wishing to leave the U.S.S.R. The charges are false. Shkolnik faces death with a charge of "espionage".

The five "accused" are:-

Isaac Shkolnik  
Efim Davidovich  
Gedalia Kipnis  
Grigory Goldshtein  
Isai Goldshtein

As a matter of urgency, please send a letter of protest to:-

1. Mr. Smirnovsky, Soviet Ambassador, 13, Kensington Palace Gardens, W.8.
2. Nikolai Podgorny, President of the Supreme Soviet, Kremlin, Moscow
3. R. Rudenko, Prokuratura SSR, Pushkinskaya 15A, Moscow, U.S.S.R.

calling for the repatriation of these men and their families to Israel, as a matter of legal right and civilised practice.

ONLY BY EXERTING THIS KIND OF PRESSURE CAN WE  
TOGETHER HELP THE JEWS OF THE U.S.S.R. SPARE  
A FEW SHILLINGS AND AN HOUR OF YOUR TIME.

THANK YOU.

MARTIN SUGARMAN

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YOU ARE INVITED TO A SHOWING OF THE FILM

"LET MY PEOPLE GO"

ON SUNDAY, 29TH APRIL AT 8.P.M.

AT THE  
SYNAGOGUE HALL

Refreshments

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### NOTICE

Will Congregants please note that during the month of APRIL Friday evening services will commence at 7.p.m. and that from MAY onwards they will commence at 7.30.p.m.

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### LOTTERY

The March Lottery was won by Mrs. N. Dembo.

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### "WEEK END" by Karen Seymour

A WEEKEND at the Ambassador in Bournemouth. I hadn't realised quite how entertaining that could be.

Twelve years had passed since our last visit. So most of it was new to me, as I couldn't remember much about my original childhood impressions. Except perhaps getting stuck in the lift (a traumatic experience for a 9 year old), and Michele, then nearly 3, asking a fat, bejewelled lady why she wore purple lipstick ?.

Our first meal on Friday evening set the scene for the rest of our stay - it seemed as though we were eating the whole weekend!

Our table was in a good position (that is, we had an excellent view of everybody walking in), or at least we thought we were favourably situated until the gentleman at the next table started noisily leading everyone in 'Grace After Meals' !

After eating, we retired to the lounge for coffee. That was when we had the best opportunity to survey the scene.

Walking past tables, I heard what appeared to be one continuous conversation: "She married my brother-in-law's cousin..." "...everyone thought she'd marry the dentist, but..." "my husband's in that line, too." "I thought I knew your face; do you remember Abe Goldstein?".

We didn't sit there long, eavesdropping on these conversations that we'd heard a hundred times before; we went for a walk through town.

On our return we were gasping for that late coffee. To my amazement, everyone was sitting just where they had been when we left an hour and a half before! That was something I



learnt to expect later on; just as, when we walked along the beach on Sunday morning, the only people we saw sitting down were wearing Mogen Dovids!

One wonders what the staff think of it all. I was convinced that our waiter was Spanish; my father wasn't sure about nationality, but was certain he was Jewish. So we asked. "From Iraq, Sit", he said in his strong (I-swear-it-was-Spanish) accent. "But you're Jewish?", asked Daddy. "Oh no, Sir. Sorry, Sir, I'm Christian". Well, you can't win 'em all.

Another member of staff who must have been prejudiced, but I wasn't sure in which direction, was a gentile gent who asked me to dance.

He spoiled it all by saying, "You see, I'm the hotel's dancing taxi." (I hadn't guessed). "I dance with all these widows, divorcees and little lost girls". (In which category was I?). "You know, it's only the Jewish hotels that bother to employ hosts".

Still he couldn't have been complaining; after all, I can think of worse ways of earning extra geld!

The only other staff member of whom I took much notice was the little old bartender in the lounge.

Due to alterations he had to serve from a makeshift bar. At the end of each night, he would lock his bottles away in what appeared to be a filing cabinet and cover the 'bar', complete with glasses, in a white sheet. I still have a mental picture of him getting under that sheet too; I never saw him anywhere other than safely tucked away behind his bar.

What did he think of these people who only left the lounge to go to the restaurant? And for that matter, what do I think? Am I the same, or will I get like them? Perhaps another visit in twelve years' time will give me the answer.

Karen.

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Mr. Phillips of Coventry has kindly consented to allow us to print the story "He Who Listens", and reserves the copyright in his name. More to come when space permits.

The Editors.

HE WHO LISTENS by Henry Phillips

IT WAS strange, enigmatic, this sudden empty uncontrollable feeling. It had begun from his bowels and spread.

He could not account for the mental picture of his aunt. Confused by her enlarged countenance, he searched his mind for an explanation. Why? His whole body had become hollow.

Uneasily, his mind chased back over the barrier of years, amazed at his own selfishness, of his thoughts' willingness to linger and indulge in the depths, by remembering only the good things. He willed the search on. His parents.

He remembered his father - a Polish Jew - worn out from the length of his working days, coming over to his bedside, peering to see if he was sleeping, then waking him up. After a few minutes of play, he would start to recite in Yiddish nursery rhymes from his native land to send his child back to sleep. He would turn joyously to greet the mother holding her gently in his arms, teasing her and would, to her embarrassment, tell everybody that entered their humble home "Here - come - meet my heart, my wife, Sarah."

Mother, overawed by father's affection in front of his aunt, would utter a scathing remark, and secretly thank God for directing the Shadchen, who introduced this kind little man to her and not her sister. The Almighty had blessed their arranged Shidack.

It happened in the Spring. The cleaning and changing of pots for Pesach had begun. His father, an egg candler, a skill that had run through his family for many generations, awaited the coming festival, for Pesach is the time for eating eggs.

Cheap eggs imported by their thousands, from Poland Czechoslovakia, Germany and China. His father working an average of eighteen hours a day meticulously testing egg by egg, checking crate after crate against his candle's flame for clarity. He was paid by the consignment.

Mother cleaning, and then in the best of Jewish traditions, armed with her feather and candle, going around the room searching for bread, until she was completely satisfied her home was now Pesachdik. Truly happy with her

clean shining home, she would sit down in her favourite chair to await his father's homecoming. Father had been very busy, there would be money. She sang to herself a promise of the forthcoming Good Yontov.

Always the morning after Seder night, the first morning of the festival, father would rise early, and go to Shul, as it was the duty of all first-born sons of Jews, offering their divine and universal thanks to our Saviour for delivering us from bondage in the Land of Egypt.

It was this day, Mother having prepared and laid the table for lunch, that she awaited her husband's return. Spiritually uplifted, he entered, jubilantly proclaiming "Good Yontov". He shouted louder. Still his wife did not appear. He entered the living room and saw her, as if asleep in the fireside chair. He hesitated, knowing how demanding Pesach could be. There his beloved Sarah was, stealing a little sleep. He called her name softly at first. "Sarah". He gently shook her, to wake her up. Then he screamed "SARAH". She was dead. She had had a stroke.

During the mourning prayers his aunt tried to comfort his father, telling him she, like Sarah, prayed regularly to God, and if and when the Almighty would decide to call her, it would also be in the month of Nissan, as only the Lord's most honoured devotees are called to enter everlasting life during Pesach. It was the Almighty's declaration to the world. Sarah, like her, was a pious woman.

His aunt fussed over his father as he cried. As for himself, it seemed an eternity, observing people coming and going, handing their gifts of food to his aunt. As they left they would pat him on the head, adding "You've got to be a brave boy". He could not understand their sadness, but accepted this as the custom of a Shivah House.

Was this the feeling he was trying to identify? His fluids were beginning to dry. "I must go on", he thought.

His father, having refused to remarry, begged his Patriarch to release him from the burden of three score and ten, had his wish granted, and died within six months from a broken heart. He was fifty and was laid by the side of his beloved Sarah.

He was nine, and an orphan. He recalled that being alone disturbed him, but he was too young to feel the full weight of the misery that surrounded him.

His maiden aunt was obliged to take him in to her home. She was a bitter, disillusioned woman, who cursed his father for saddling her with a penniless orphan, and for not marrying his wife's sister according to their custom.

She took vengeance by beating him regularly, reaping some compensation from the changing colours of his skin. He never whimpered nor complained to outsiders, paying dearly for his father's willed death.

He had heard once again the anger in his aunt's voice, but still the reason, this overpowering numbness, eluded him.

He smiled, knowing this was not what he was searching for, as he relived his slow vibrant anger while rummaging through his aunt's wardrobe and chest of drawers. She had confiscated his parents' remaining possessions, his legacy, and taunted him with the fact that now they were hers.

He found his mother's string of wooden beads, with which he had played lovingly. There, too, was his father's tin candle egg tester with its grubby stub of melted wax. He wiped the red hot tear that ran past his nose, as he took out his father's tullis and sidorin from the drawers. He took off his shirt to use as a kit bag, and placed the retrieved treasures into it. He was going. He had heard the wind and seen the snow; he was going with little money and no food. His aunt's meanness kept the larder locked.

In the wardrobe he had come across the moth-eaten jumper that had belonged to his father. With a flourish he slipped it on, for warmth, and for a moment stood triumphant, admiring his image in the snow-covered window. He had methodically checked the room and had not overlooked anything. Satisfied with his preparations, as soon as his aunt retired to bed he would be off. The wind and the snow applauded him as he opened the window.

He waited. Hearing his aunt's first snore, he slung the bundle over his shoulder and stealthily stole out, taking from his pocket a newspaper. His aunt, afraid of evil spirits, which she believed roamed at night, secured all the doors and windows, so, as he left, he had jammed the door with the newspaper to remain open all night.

He swore he would never return. As he made his way towards the cemetery, the cold began to bite him. Hearing his aunt's voice, as often she had related to him as she checked and double-checked the locked doors and windows: "When the possessors of the evil eyes were asleep, Satan would call and their evil spirits would arise, as night demons, to do the devil's bidding. And if, God forbid, you were accosted as their victim, you became a blabbering imbecile, or like them forced to become a Dybuk. GOD FORBID".

She would then reveal a large piece of red ribbon on the inside of her dress, spit three times, the ritual for God's Protection. He fought to overcome his inherent fear.



Panicing, he began to run, not noticing the blinding snow or the automatic rubbing of his hands. He had a vision of his aunt being terrorised by the Devil's messengers, an ice cold black swirling whirlpool, freezing its victims, then sucking them up, and, like a sausage machine, coughing out high pitched laughing, hysterical idiots alternating with goblins with large winged clawing hands, shrieking, squealing as they all congregated over his aunt's bed, and there at the front door he had wedged open, a large floating Evil Eye covered in icicles, controller of the horror.

He screamed out aloud his need of God, pleading to the King of the Universe to help him. Hallucinating, his blood turning solid, he made his way along the nearby snow-covered graves, stumbling, falling, until he finally reached the graveside.

He had been brought up in the belief of life after death, and in his distraught mind, conjured up a childish ritual, chanting his affirmation to God in the only hebrew he knew, the blessing for wine and bread, he called for his parents' spirit, begging their forgiveness for having to leave heaven to comfort him. His delirious mind rambled on, blaming the God of his forefathers for their desertion in placing him, an innocent, in the hands of his cruel aunt, demanded the Father of Abraham and Jacob to wreak supreme justice. He had suffered, bared his starved abused body, to show the bruises, evidence of his aunt's inflicted hatred. He had left the door open for the Angel of Death.

Blinded by snow, his body singing with pain, he pleaded to the Lord to enter his sanctuary, expressing his hopelessness, and a desire to rejoin his parents.

He had no idea how long he had been there, first he stood, then sat, now lay there saturating the ill-shaped frozen mound with his tears. Demented by grief he fell asleep, dreaming of himself entwined in his parents' angelic embrace.

There had been no money, no headstone of remembrance. Who was to say if they had ever been alive?

The graveyard was overcrowded with paupers, only the Almighty knew where his parents were buried. The boy, exhausted, slept unaware of the tragic dilemma.

God did not wake the boy, let him sleep in tranquility, allowing nobody to disturb him, covered him over in a heavy blanket of white snow.

His aunt's next-door-neighbour, noticing the doors and windows were open, called in and found her dead, her body covered in snow, her face distorted by fear. God had listened.

He puzzled no more. He had crossed the barriers, the reason of life. His life cannot be accounted for in so few years, but must be calculated in eternity of peace. He knew then they were both dead.

Two weeks passed before his body was discovered by an old man who tended the grounds. He took off the boy's boots, and keeping his belongings, prayed to God. For he who taketh, also provides.

End.

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