

Find Again

You came to this land of opportunity,
Escaping the hatred of others,
Hoping for a better future.
For your descendents to never have to know
How to see hidden meaning.

You came to this land
Where freedom rings true
And the people boast,
“Here you can be what you are;
Nobody is allowed to hurt you for it.”

How far did the problems seem,
From this land of opportunity?

Did you remember them
As you smiled
And watched your children grow?
Did you remember them at all?

What about when you taught her
To make latkes, or kugel, or challah?
When you taught her the prayers?
Did you remember when you welcomed the bride?

I know you did,
As every year
You lit the candle
To remember lives cruelly taken.
I know you did.

How could you let yourself think
That the problems would follow?
That they would change to fit this land
You fought so hard to get to?

The new words and phrases,
No longer whispered or shouted,
But typed
Where like finds like
And come together.

Where they cheer each other on
In their hate,
In their promises,
In their violence.

A place they cannot be reached,
Cannot be reasoned with,
Cannot be asked to change their minds,
To stop shouting for the death
Of the innocent.

But it was worth it, you think.
Worth it if I can light a menorah,
Without fear.
Worth it if I can celebrate Shabbat,
Without fear.

It was true,
For a while.
I did not fear,
For a while.
Just for a while.

A family history,
Filled with hope to be safe,
In a land of opportunity.
I wonder where that land went,
And if I could find it again.