

THE SURVIVORS

RIGHT BEFORE PRESIDENT KENNEDY GOT SHOT, TWO JEWS MET ONE NIGHT ON THE A TRAIN BETWEEN CANAL STREET AND WASHINGTON SQUARE.

IRV ELBOWED HIS FRIEND AND WHISPERED, "THERE'S A WOMAN ACROSS THE AISLE LOOKING AT YOU REAL FUNNY LIKE."
HE LOOKED UP AND SAW HER...

"MITZI MANKOWITZ...I THOUGHT YOU WERE DEAD

"APPARENTLY NOT!", SHE CHUCKLED

"MY GOD, MITZI, YOU'RE STILL A LOOKER!"

"AND YOU, ISH," SHE REPLIED, "HAVEN'T CHANGED A BIT!"

"A LITTLE FATTER"

"THAT COMES WITH AGE. YOU WEAR IT WELL"

"SHALL WE MEET TOMORROW FOR LUNCH AT WOLFI'S?", HE ASKED

"HOW ABOUT ONE?"

"I'LL BE THERE"

SHE WAS SITTING AT THE COUNTER AS HE TURNED THE REVOLVING DOORS INTO WOLFI'S.

MITZI EXPLAINED SHE HAD BEEN SICK FOR LONG WHILE, MUST HAVE BEEN SOMETHING I PICKED UP IN THE CAMPS.

" IT WAS HARD, BUT I 'M HEALTHY NOW."

"THE OLD HEART NEARLY TOOK ME DOWN" ISH REPLIED."I SOMEHOW RECOVERED".

"WELL, GOOD FOR YOU, ISH"

THEY BOTH ORDERED NOY LOX, CREAMCHEESE, TOMATO AND ONION BAGEL

THE TWO HAD WORKED BEFORE THE WAR IN MEIER LEVINSKI'S TRAVELLING YIDDISH THEATRE. ONE OF POLAND'S FINEST YIDDISH COMPANIES. LEVINSKI'S MOST POPULAR PLAY WAS 'THE RETURN' , A ROUGHLY BASED SEQUAL TO THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

SHYLOCK PLAYED BY THE GREAT LEVINSKI HIMSELF, RETURNED TO VENICE IN DISGUISE AFTER TWENTY YEARS TO FIND HIS DAUGHTER, JESSICA, BETRAYED BY HER GENTILE HUSBAND AND GROWING FAT ON VENETIAN SWEETS. EVERY TIME LORENZO SLEPT WITH HIS GENTILE MISTRESS, HE WOULD BRING JESSICA A BAG OF SWEETS.

MITZI PLAYED THE GENTILE MISTRESS ROXANNA AND ISH HAD PLAYED A SEASON AS THE DOGE OF VENICE.

"MEIER JUST DIDN'T WANT TO SEE WHAT WAS HAPPENING ALL AROUND HIM."

"YEAH, THOSE WERE BLACK TIMES," ISH ANSWERED.

"ONE NIGHT IN LODZ, WHEN HE SAID HIS LAST LINE, JESSICA ARE YOU COMING?"

ISH REMEMBERED THAT WAS WHEN THE AUDIENCE USUALLY STARTED APPLAUDING .

MEIER WAS SO DRUNK HE FELL INTO THE ORCHESTRA PIT. THE AUDIENCE WAS LAUGHING SO HARD, WE HAD TO DROP THE CURTAIN.THE GIRL PLAYING JESSICA WAS LIVID".

THE TWO ORDERED COFFEE.

"IN THE END THERE WAS JUST NO MORE AUDIENCE. WE CLOSED THE SHOW. MEIER GOT TO SWEDEN WITH MOST OF THE COMPANY'S FUNDS"

"AND SOL WEIZMANN?"

"POOR SOL NEVER GO BETTER AFTER THEY KICKED HIM IN THE HEAD. HE'D LOOK AT ME SOMETIMES WITH TEARS IN HIS EYES. SOMETIMES, MITZI, I THINK I'M LOSING MY MIND. I TOOK CARE OF HIM FOR AS LONG AS I COULD,BUT HIS WIFE NEVER MADE IT EASY FOR ME."

'BUT YOU ARE DOING FINE?"

"HAVE TO, DON'T I."

IRV CAME IN AFTER AN HOUR AND JOINED US. MITZI ASKED HIM WAS HE ALSO INTO THEATRE. IRV'S FEELINGS WERE HURT.

"NO, I'M AN ACCOUNTANT," SAID IRV GLUMLY.

'NOW, THAT MUST ALSO BE INTERESTING WORK!"

THEY TALKED A LITTLE MORE THEN MITZI SAID SHE HAD TO LEAVE FOR AN AUDITION.

"MITZI LUNCH IS ON ME"

"WELL, IT WAS SURE A MIRACLE SEEING YOU AGAIN, ISH"

"THERE ARE NO COINCIDENCES, MY DEAR"

THEY HUGGED AND MITZI RUSHED TO THE REVOLVING DOOR.

"HEY MITZI, TO LIFE!" ISH CALLED.

"YEAH, TO LIFE!" MITZI REPLIED AND THE DOOR TURNED HER OUT ON TO LOWER EAST SIDE.