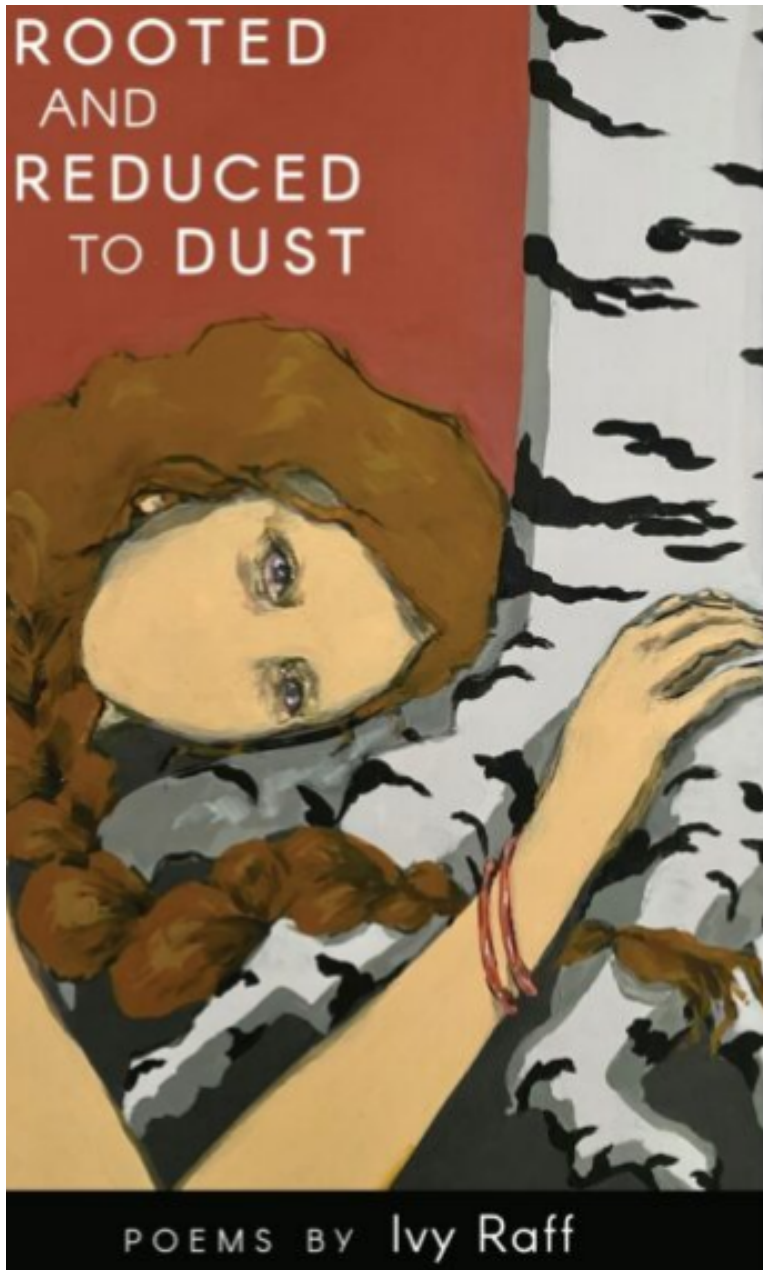


MEDIA KIT



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AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

IVY RAFF



Ivy Raff's second poetry collection, a bilingual English/Spanish translation, won the Dolores Alberola International Poetry Prize and is forthcoming from the Editorial DALYA in 2024. Her individual poems appear in *The American Journal of Poetry*, Electric Literature's *The Commuter*, *Nimrod International Journal*, *Midway Journal*, and *West Trade Review*, among numerous others, as well as in the anthologies *Spectrum: Poetry Celebrating Identity and Kinship* (Renard Press, 2022 and 2023), the *London Independent Story Prize Anthology* (2023), and the *Aesthetica Creative Writing Prize Annual* (2023).

Ivy's *Best of the Net*-nominated work has garnered scholarship support from the Colgate Writers' Conference, Under the Volcano, and the Hudson Valley Writers Center, as well as residencies with Atlantic Center for the Arts and Alaska State Parks. Currently shortlisted for the Bridport Prize, Ivy's poems have placed as finalist in noted literary competitions, most recently the London Independent Story Prize, Jack McCarthy Book Prize, Julia Darling Memorial Poetry Prize, and *Atlanta Review's* International Poetry Prize.

Following a twenty-year career at the intersection of health technology and public policy, Ivy shifted her focus to writing in 2021. In addition to her freelance work as a copywriter, editor, translator, and website designer, she serves on the editorial teams of *Reckoning*, a literary journal on environmental justice, and *Seventh Wave Magazine*. She holds an MPA in public policy from the City University of New York at Baruch College and a double Bachelors in economics and psychology from Fordham University. Ivy has backpacked through 74 countries and lived abroad in Dominica.



Contact



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CURRICULUM VITAE

Ivy Raff 37 Clinton Street #4C | New York, NY 10002 | 646-469-2014 | ivy.raff@gmail.com | ivyraff.com

Education

Baruch College of the City of New York | New York, NY

MPA, Concentration in Policy Analysis | 2009

Dean's List. Cum Laude – 3.7 GPA

Fordham University | Bronx, NY

Double BA, Economics and Psychology | 2004

Magna Cum Laude – 3.796 GPA

Editorial Experience

Seventh Wave Magazine | Seattle, WA (Remote) | August 2023-Present

Reckoning: Creative Writing on Environmental Justice | Detroit, MI (Remote) | April 2023-Present

Publications

Poetry Collections

What Remains. Editorial DALYA, bilingual Spanish/English edition forthcoming 2024. 2nd place winner of the Dolores Alberola International Poetry Prize.

Rooted and Reduced to Dust. Finishing Line Press, forthcoming 2024.

Individual Poems in Anthologies

"Prospect Park with My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy," in *Aesthetica Creative Writing Award Annual* (Aesthetica, 2023).

"Prospect Park with My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy," in *London Independent Story Prize Anthology* (LISP, 2023).

"A Memoirist Asks What Desert I Will Have to Enter to Tell My Story" in *Kinship: Poems on Belonging* (Renard Press, 2023).

"A Bicycle Reminisces About 1962," in *Spectrum: Poetry Celebrating Identity* (Renard Press, 2022).

Individual Poems in Periodicals

"The Devil Knows More From Being Old Than From Being the Devil (1991 / 1941)" and "My Name Is Not in Existence (1975/1983)" in Electric Literature's *The Commuter*, Issue 31, December 2023 (forthcoming).

"The Story That Needs You" in *Midway Journal*, Vol. 17, Issue 4, October 2023.

"No Children" in *Seventh Wave Magazine*, Issue 16, Summer 2023.

"Self-Elegy to a Pine Tree" in *West Trade Review*, Vol. 13, Spring 2023.

"No Sting Lasts Forever" in *Snarl: A Journal of Literature and Art*, Issue 5, Spring 2023.

"The Brothers Ishmael and Ishaq" in *Rise Up Review*, Winter 2023.

"Chief 198" in *The Amphibian*, Issue 4, January 2023.

"In Memory of Thwaites Glacier" in *Reckoning: Creative Writing on Environmental Justice*, Issue 7, January 2023.

"Haibun for a Stud" in *Atlanta Review*, Winter 2022.

"Cortelyou Road" in *Cordella Magazine*, Issue 17, Winter 2022.

"You Learned to Wait" in *Nimrod International Journal*, Vol. 65, No. 2, Fall 2022.

"North Coast Vista" in *The Plentitudes*, Issue 8, October 2022.

"Deep-Winter Days" in *t'ART Magazine*, Issue 4, September 2022.

"I Once Loved Yehuda," "Pantoum for a Eulogy," and "A Thank-You Note to My Father's Depression," all in *Toasted Cheese Literary Magazine*, Vol. 22, Issue 3, September 2022.

"Fantasy No. 3,484," "On Not Speaking My Own Native Language," and "Let Me Die Writing," all in *Exist Otherwise*, inaugural issue, September 2022.

"Hurricane Season" in *humana obscura*, Issue 5, September 2022.

"The Bird Woman" in *Clearline Zine*, Issue 004, July 2022.

"Voracious and Vegetarian" in *South 85 Journal*, June 2022, Online.

"Teresa La Cuoca" in *Stone Canoe*, Vol. 16, April 2022.

"Portrait of a Girl In Relation to a Newspaper" in *Viewless Wings*, April 2022, Online.

"America's Coast Is Ragged" in *The Bangalore Review*, Vol. IX, January 2022.

"East Side Sierra Leone" in *The American Journal of Poetry*, Vol. 12, January 2022.

"The Flatbush Food Co-Op" in *Journal of Expressive Writing*, November 2021, Online.

"The Bay of Sans Souci," "Clung to the Side," "East of Matagalpa," "If Wang Wei Lived," and "Impermanence," all in *Poetry Atlas*, November 2021, Online.

Selected Awards & Honors

SHORTLISTED, Aesthetica Creative Writing Award, for "Prospect Park With My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy," to be judged December 2023.

SHORTLISTED, Bridport Prize, for "Prospect Park With My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy," October 2023.

FINALIST, London Independent Story Prize, for "Prospect Park With My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy," October 2023.

HONORABLE MENTION, Kinship Poetry Competition, for "A Memoirist Asks What Desert I Will Have to Enter to Tell My Story," October 2023.

FIRST PRIZE WINNER, Creative Writing Ink Poetry Prize, for "Prospect Park With My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy," June 2023.

FINALIST, Jack McCarthy Book Prize, for *Brewing*, June 2023.

FINALIST, Julia Darling Memorial Poetry Prize, for "The Bicycle Speaks," Summer 2023.

FINALIST, Wolverhampton Literature Festival Poetry Competition, for "Stakeholder's Prayer" and "The Locals," January 2023.

FINALIST, Tucson Festival of Books Literary Awards, January 2023.

NOMINEE, *Best of the Net Anthology*, for "Voracious and Vegetarian," 2023.

FINALIST, Toni Brown Memorial Scholarship, Stockton University Winter Writers' Conference, 2022.

FINALIST, *Atlanta Review's* International Poetry Prize, for "Haibun for a Stud," October 2022.

SHORTLISTED, Spectrum Poetry Competition, for "A Bicycle Reminisces About 1962," October 2022.

FINALIST, *Snarl* Poetry Contest, for "No Sting Lasts Forever," September 2022.

FINALIST, 53rd New Millennium Writing Awards, for "In Memory of Thwaites Glacier," June 2022.

FINALIST, 2021 sweettooth//HONEY Micropoetry Contest, for "Late In the Year," "Thunder Rolls," and "Burnished Gray."

Press & Media

London Independent Story Prize. "[LISP Writers Club: Ivy Raff, 2023 Poetry Finalist, on 'Prospect Park with My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy.'](#)" November 13, 2023.

QQBH Radio's The Collective: After Dark. Interview by Gina Duran. November 12, 2023.

A Love Letter Podcast. "[all about Ivy.](#)" Artist interview by Colby MacKenzie. November 2, 2023.

Untethered: Living the Digital Nomad Life in an Uncertain World (Exisle Press, 2023). Interview by Nathan James Thomas.

Invited Readings

INsideOUT Artist Presentation | Atlantic Center for the Arts, New Smyrna Beach, Florida | forthcoming October 2024.

Artists Against Hunger | Atlantic City, New Jersey | December 2023.

Kinship: Poems on Belonging Launch Event | Online | October 2023.

JSB Writer's Workshop | Albuquerque Museum | Albuquerque, New Mexico | June 2023.

Wolverhampton Literature Festival Awards Ceremony | Arena Theatre, Wolverhampton, United Kingdom | February 2023.

Spectrum: Poetry Celebrating Identity Launch Event | Online | October 2022.

Clearline Zine Issue Release Party | Room Project, Detroit, Michigan | July 2022.

Colgate Writers Conference Participant Reading | Colgate University, Hamilton, New York | June 2022.

Stone Canoe Issue Release Event | Downtown Writers Center, Syracuse, New York | May 2022.

"The Viewless Wings Poetry Podcast" | Online | Host: James Morehead, Dublin Poet Laureate | May 2022.

Workshops

"Master Class in Poetry" | Under the Volcano, Tepoztlán, Mexico | Instructor: Jennifer Clements | January 2024.

"Black Art Matters Writing Workshop" | Noyes Arts Garage of Stockton University, Atlantic City, New Jersey | Instructor: Raymond Tyler | October 2023.

"Sinéad: Poetic Truth to Power" | Hudson Valley Writers Center, Sleepy Hollow, New York | Instructor: Karen Finley | September 2023.

"Creative Writing Ink Poetry Course" | Online | Instructor: Eileen Casey | Summer 2023.

"JSB Writers Workshop X" | Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, New Mexico | Instructor: Jimmy Santiago Baca | June 2023.

"Magnitude and Bond: A Poetry Workshop" | Colgate University, Hamilton, New York | Instructor: Bruce Smith | June 2022.

"JSB Writers Workshop IX" | Albuquerque Museum, Albuquerque, New Mexico | Instructor: Jimmy Santiago Baca | May 2022.

"Old Friend from Far Away: The Practice of Writing Memoir" | Madeline Island School of Arts, La Pointe, Wisconsin | Instructor: Natalie Goldberg | June 2021.

"Awakening the Joy of Creativity: A Mindfulness in Writing Retreat" | Lucca, Italy | Instructor: Subhana Barzaghi | May 2018.

BOOK INFORMATION

Title:

Rooted and Reduced to Dust

Author:

Ivy Raff

Publication date:

February 9, 2024

Pre-order date:

Until December 15, 2023

Available at:

Amazon (after publication date),
Finishing Line Press

ISBN:

979-8-88838-376-6

Retail price:

\$17.99 after publication date

\$15.99 during pre-order period

Book stores receive 40% discount; email

authorbookorders@finishinglinepress.com

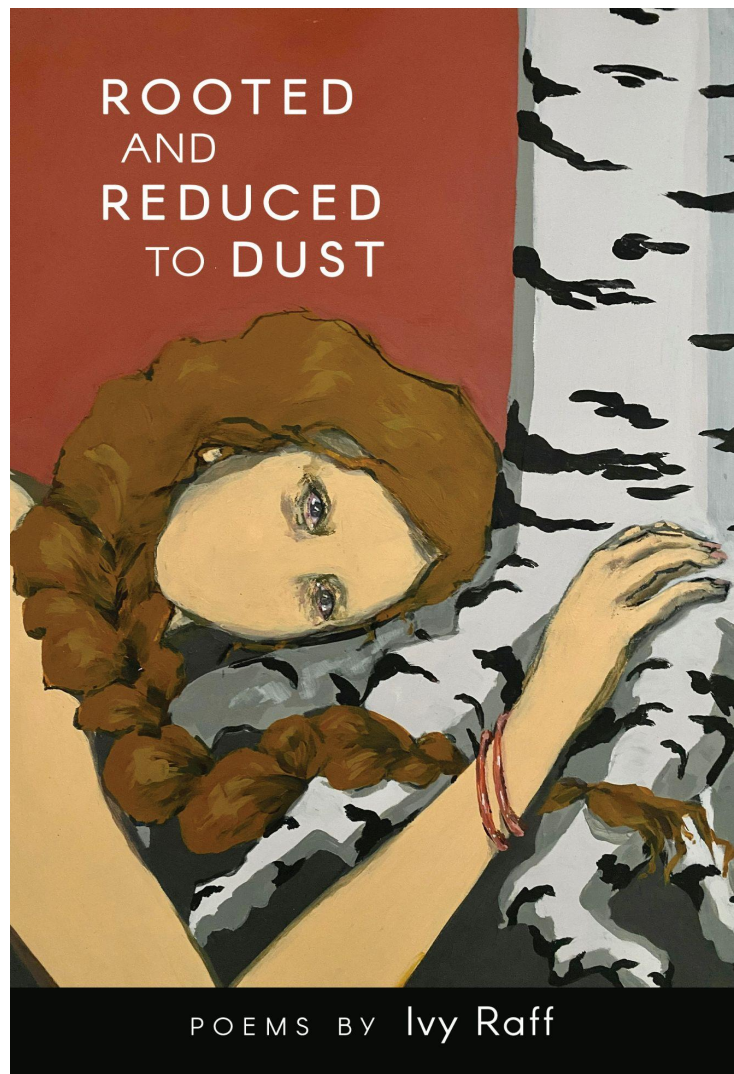
Format:

Paperback

Genre/subgenres:

Poetry, Jewish Poetry,

Womanist Poetry



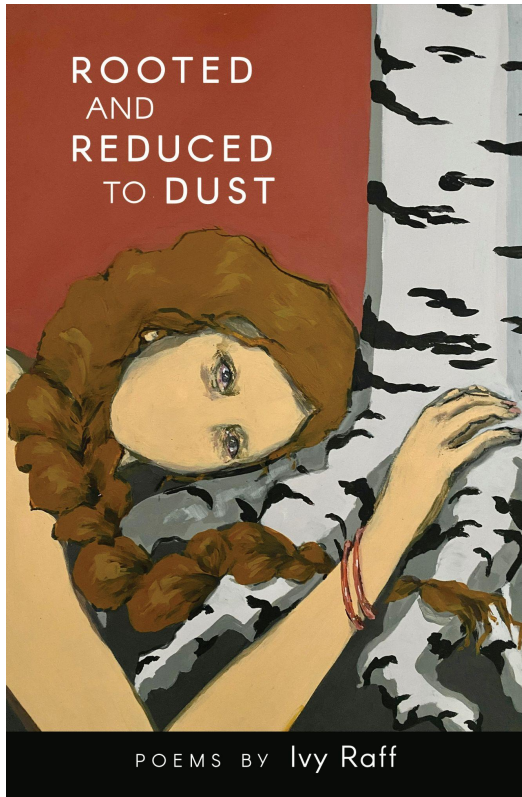
Heaven and earth conspire that everything which has been, be rooted and reduced to dust.

– Isaac Bashevis Singer

So begins **Ivy Raff**'s debut poetry chapbook, which plumbs the depths of movement, of growth: from one generation to the next, from Eastern Europe across America, from sickness to health. With braided fearlessness and vulnerability, Raff bridges the past with the heartbreaking tenderness of today.

PRESS RELEASE

for Immediate Release



Finishing Line Press

Proudly Announces the Publication of *Rooted and Reduced to Dust*, Poems by Ivy Raff

Rooted and Reduced to Dust, Ivy Raff's debut poetry collection, bridges the past with today's heartbreaking tenderness, braiding bravery and vulnerability.

"These poems are alive," writes Bruce Smith, author of seven poetry collections and finalist for a Pulitzer prize and the National Book Award. In *Rooted and Reduced to Dust*, Smith says, Raff's work is "lacerating, honest, an inquest, finally, into the strength of love as it is conducted through the body into the poem."

Jimmy Santiago Baca, winner of the American Book Award for poetry, calls *Rooted and Reduced to Dust* "observant, challenging, sensuous, glowing with an undercarriage of mystique." Baca hails the reverent

physicality of Raff's poems: "[They] are torsos that twist to embrace the universe. Every muscled line is taut, knowing its desire and how to hold what it loves in its arms."

The book is available for pre-order from finishinglinepress.com until December 15, 2023. The publication date is February 9, 2024, at which time it will be available via Amazon and other major outlets. The author welcomes booking inquiries for poetry readings, interviews, and other literary events.

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ENDORSEMENTS FOR *ROOTED AND REDUCED TO DUST*

“Observant, challenging, sensuous, glowing with an undercarriage of mystique, **Raff’s** poems are torsos that twist to embrace the universe. Every muscled line is taut, knowing its desire and how to hold what it loves in its arms.”

Jimmy Santiago Baca,

American Book Award-winning author of *Martin and Meditations on the South Valley*

“**Ivy Raff** writes a poetry of relentless inquiry into the past. She subjects her ‘generational history of displacement’ to a restorative poetic justice and joy. The investigation scrutinizes. It is lacerating, honest, an inquest, finally, into the strength of love as it is conducted through the body into the poem. *I find these poems fearless in tracing the map of the journey from Jerusalem to Far Rockaway to Detroit, establishing a new place full of potential. These poems are alive.*”

Bruce Smith,

author of *The Other Lover*, finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award

“**Ivy Raff’s** powerful collection reveals complex and universal themes of love, loss, family, and yearnings. *The pages of her collection conjure life’s experiences with profound intimacy. Raff’s insightfulness is provocative.*”

Sarah Birnbach,

author of *A Daughter’s Kaddish: My Year of Grief, Devotion, and Healing*

INTERVIEW RESOURCES

Excerpt from:

“LISP Writers Club: Ivy Raff, 2023 Poetry Finalist, on ‘Prospect Park with My Mother During an Ectopic Pregnancy.’”

When and how did you get into writing?

I've been writing poetry and (rough - very rough) travel essays since I was a teenager. I loved writing and knew it lived at the center of me, but the thought of a degree or career in the arts didn't occur to me at all. I grew up with the notion that if something feels good, it's probably bad for you - or at least overindulgent.

Instead I built a twenty-year career in public policy and health technology. At a rough point in that career, I took a two-week writing intensive - and put in my notice three days after it ended. I dove into cobbling together a poetry manuscript from two decades' worth of scribbles in my notebooks. I made a part-time job of submitting individual pieces to dozens of literary journals and magazines. I gobbled up all the craft classes I could - including a workshop with the legend Bruce Smith at the Colgate Writers Conference. I sought community in writing, joining a writing group, a couple of artist collectives, and the editorial staff of two literary magazines. I found that writers deeply need each other.

Fast forward to today. A little over two years after leaving my last full-time job, I have two books forthcoming for publication in 2024. [Rooted and Reduced to Dust](#) is available for pre-order today from Finishing Line Press. *What Remains / Que queda* is a bilingual English/Spanish collection that won the Alberola International Poetry Prize and will be out from the Andalusian press Editorial DALYA in the next few months. I've been awarded residencies for 2024 at Atlantic Center for the Arts and Under the Volcano, where I'll study with Kwame Dawes and Jennifer Clement, respectively. In this short time, I've learned that as a full-time writer, there can be dramatic feasts and famines with respect to uptake of our work. I'm thankful for it all. Thankful for the feasts for obvious reasons. Thankful for the famines because they never fail to bring back to the barest essence of writing.

How often do you write? Do you have a writing routine? And what inspires you to write?

I write five to seven days a week. "I write" here includes the ten-minute spurts I force myself to do when I'm physically exhausted or feel I have absolutely nothing compelling to say. On afternoons when my heart is feeling generous toward me, I can dive into a juicy half-hour meditation followed by a long stream-of-consciousness writing session. On afternoons when my inner cranky toddler is driving the car, it's more like three (3) slow, deep, concentrated breaths followed by aforementioned ten-minute spurt.

I've come to view inspiration as an unnecessary - though lovely and welcome, when it arrives - ingredient in my practice. I don't know if canaries feel inspired to sing; I would guess not. They do it because it lives in them, and if a canary is not singing, it's probably terribly sick. I *need* to write. When I was working a mentally demanding corporate job that drained me too much to write, my spirit was terribly sick. Writing is where all the images, concepts, constructs of my life go - the lost loves, the complicated relationships with my family and community of origin, the sweeping silver Jersey Shore views outside my window right now. These things don't inspire my writing so much as writing is where I locate them so they don't ferment inside my brain.

Can you please give us a few tips about writing Poetry?

For the first draft, get your frontal cortex out of the way and let the writing flow out however it wishes. Easier said than done; most of life here demands we try to control or regulate what's around us. The page is not the place for that. Meditation before I begin writing helps to clear out the to-do lists, the self-judgements. And then I accept whatever comes out of the pen. First drafts of poems - at least mine! - very often don't even make linear sense. If an image of a blue tiger skin rug on a frozen lake pops into my head, you better believe I'm writing that down - even if it's in the middle of a piece about abortion rights. First drafts of poems are one of the few places in life we can get really, intensely wild and nonsensical with zero consequences.

During revisions, I can go back and extract that tiger skin rug and create a new piece about it, or insert it somewhere else, or make a note of it on my "To Be Written" list. Oh yes - keep a "To Be Written" list. This is an idea from (who else but) Natalie Goldberg. We already keep To-Do lists - items that pop into our heads so we won't neglect them. A To Be Written list functions that same way. Don't lose to the relentless daily grind the proud feeling that bloomed in you when you saw your brother's flourishing tomato plants. Add the item to your To Be Written list. Come back to it later.

EXCERPT FROM *ROOTED AND REDUCED TO DUST*

A Memoirist Asks What Desert I Will Have to Enter to Tell My Story

Desert of the czar. Desert of pogrom. Desert of Atlantic.
Of grandmother in ground, of grandmother in hold of ship,
of grandmother's clandestine marriage and kitchen table
abortions. Desert of Brighton Beach. Desert of Williamsburg.
Desert of Bedford Stuyvesant after Desert of Houston Street after
Desert of borders then-unexisted, scrubbed from Desert
of Empire. Desert of the wandered-out Jew: butchers
and tailors and timber merchants. Desert of shoulders
forever compressed, of wrists torqued back. Desert of hip,
of nerve endings, of nerves unending, of nerves beginning.
Desert of factory fires, of picket lines, of fighting for wages
and workweeks, of tenements rat-clawed. Desert of egg breads in braids,
of brined fish in jars, eyeless, matzo-plumped. Desert of soup,
and soup, and soup again. Of celery. Of beets. Of chicken bones
stretched for marrow-days. Of chicken fat rendered, roasting
pan-harvested, plopped in a jar atop the icebox. No butter
in the desert, just schmaltz already heat-proofed.

To tell my story the desert must die and move to the suburbs.
Must choose wallpaper from swatches in great hardcover sample books
while fluorescence hums overhead. To tell my story I must
forget bitter herbs, forget Yiddish poems, unsing songs. Unchant. Unbleed.
Unsubmit. Nonchalant. Relearn womanness. Reassemble
chopped lettuce into whole, crisp leaves. I must forget pants
and wrap myself homespun. I must enter
others' deserts alone: Gobi, Mojave, Sahara, Sonora.
My own Desert died, lady. My Desert drowned
in the Atlantic.

I Once Loved Yehuda

Six thousand year old man swam
from the Gulf of Aden into my
left atrium, pressed an ear to my chest
as it battered and said, *Gentile hearts
are different from ours*. Closed
his face, mewled in ecstasy as my music
echoed inside him.

Before Titus destroyed the second
temple, I looked like Yehuda, I
bound books like Yehuda, I
cracked cardamom seeds with my
molars. Two millennia later he
reoccupied Al-Quds as Yemen
convulsed with hunger pangs.
Yafa sheli, he whispers, my
beauty. And yesterday grimaced
when I stuffed the headscarf
he gifted me into my backpack.

Yehuda and I lay under
a sunbeam in Brooklyn, clean
sheets, gingered lentils softening
on the stove, far and close. With his
medicine lingering in my body dreams
wick me and my grandmother's
grandmother comes, introduces herself
as Rajchel. "The scourge of Europe,"
governments called her when she fled.
And she bound herself to her husband
for protection. She told me to run.
Told me to run.