

weeping and fragile heart. One is mine now... all mine, and I salute you.

"Welcome to the fold, brother Hanna... welcome."

"Zeev... I will go forth among my people and your people, armed with my Jewish heart and Arab mind. I will spread the message of brotherhood and peace, tolerance and understanding. I will promise to take good care of your heart, your precious gift to me. I will make you proud me."

"I will pray for you Hanna... I will."

"Zeev, the world has lost its way and we have become strangers and enemies among our own people and in our own household. Truly these are hard times and there is strife in the land. Father against son, brother against brother, Moslem against Jew and Catholic against Protestant..."

Pray for us Zeev... pray for the living. Almost 4000 years ago your Sarah and our Hagar, your Isaac and our Eshmael lived for a brief period under one roof, in Abraham's tent. Then they parted and went their own way, bitter, disillusioned and resentful... Pray for us estranged cousins to get back under one roof again... Pray for your people, pray for my people... Go in peace... Shalom... Shalom...

me! I am getting its message and I feel differently. God, what a glorious experience, what an exhilarating feeling...", and he tried to sit up.

"Rest my friend... please rest."

"I don't want to rest," he almost shouted at Zeev. "I want to tell the world. I want to get it off my chest. My Jewish heart is singing... It is singing."

"I have listened to its singing, Hanna. It is beautiful, it is a message from paradise, a message of hope and faith and forgiveness, a celebration of life."

"Zeev, please listen to me. Years ago I read the history of your people. One of the most painful chapters is the cruel and inhuman and unjust expulsion of Spanish Jews in the 15th century. While your savagely uprooted and terrified people were seeking refuge in other lands all over again, somewhere on the shores of North Africa rumors got around that some of these rich refugees had swallowed their precious gems and diamonds for safekeeping.

The greedy natives savagely ripped open the bellies of helpless men, women and even children looking for precious stones which were not there. I cried when I read that chapter, even though that very day your soldiers had blown up my brother's house accusing him of having harbored terrorists, and one of your plastic bullets had injured my daughter. Yet, I cried for those refugees and cried for the inhumanity of man to man."

"Now you know why a Jew's heart cries often."

"Zeev... Zeev," Hanna almost shouted again, his chest heaving. "Your Jewish heart within me is doing wonders. I have suddenly made a startling discovery."

"What is that?"

"Those savages who cut open the chests of your people almost 500 years ago looking for non-existent gems, missed the real one. The gem was there all the time."

"What gem?"

"The gem that is a Jew's heart! the Jewish Jewel, the bleeding, compassionate and forgiving heart, a forgiving heart of the likes of Anna Frank, who despite witnessing Nazi's atrocities, still wrote that she believed in goodness of man. The heart of a Hebrew... And today... today I have been given this Jewish Jewel, this golden heart, this

the door.

"Hanna, I must go now. Take good care of my heart... Goodbye. Goodbye."

"Wait... don't go yet... I need your help. I need guidance."

"I am a spirit now. I cannot help you."

"Yes you can... Yes you can."

"How?"

"Please listen to me Zeev. I am 54 years old. When I was 12, we were driven from our land by you people, and I have harbored intense aversion and loathing for Jews ever since. We have not been able to forgive and forget."

"But now my heart is beating inside you... You have a Jewish heart."

"I know... I know and this is exactly my problem. I am scared and confused."

"Why?"

"Now I have a Jewish heart but I still think with an Arab brain. These two will be in conflict all the time, torturing and destroying me. Help me."

"How?"

"Tell me how to bring peace and harmony between them? Where can I find you when I need guidance? Your heart is weeping again. Tell me what to do. Calm it down before you go... talk to it; it understand your language."

"But it is your heart now."

"But it has been beating in your chest for years and in mine for only a few hours. Do something Zeev, please."

Zeev's ghost approached the bed and put his hand on Hanna's throbbing chest and recited the old Priestly Benediction:

MAY THE LORD BLESS YOU AND KEEP YOU...

MAY HE SHINE HIS COUNTENANCE UPON YOU...

The transplanted heart calmed down and Hanna looked up at Zeev with gratitude and much tenderness. His eyes were filled with tears and suddenly and miraculously he was transformed. A new personality emerged and the tone of Hanna's voice changed.

"Zeev... Zeev," he said excitedly. "Your heart is making peace with

"You are right Hanna. You are absolutely right, but tragically you started sliding and things deteriorated. Gradually a cultural metamorphosis and subtle mutation took hold and your attitude changed, especially when the State of Israel came into being. Your animosity grew and your leaders fanned the fire of hatred."

"You cannot love those who drive you out of your land. Striking back is a natural response."

"But it is much deeper than that, Hanna, the frightening flaw in your psyche is the disguised animosity of Arab against Arab."

"You are exaggerating... you are blowing it out of proportion."

"I am not. Look at your people and your leaders! Look at the relations between Syria and Iraq, Egypt and Lybia. Vengefulness and petty tribal quarrels and hostilities have now deteriorated into vindictiveness among most Arab states and most of their leaders. It hangs like albatross around Arab's neck. Look at what you did to Anwar Sadat. Look at 15 years of killings and devastations in Lebanon. Observe Hafez Assad's unbelievable butchery in his own country and to his own people. He savagely massacred 10,000 inhabitants of one town, young and old, men and women, simply because they opposed his policies. Listen to Ghaddafi: Any action that hurts Israel and U.S. will have our support. Observe Saddam Hussein using poison gas on Kurds, some of them his own people. Look at terrorist groups, whose members assassinate each other with the same ease as killing and blowing up the non-Arabs."

"Zeev, these co-called leaders are not true representatives of Arab masses. They have discredited us with their ruthlessness. We are not blood thirsty people."

"Perhaps. But fanning the flames of hatred and revenge by outsiders, has contaminated your souls and has impaired your vision, brainwashing you and bringing out the worst in you. Every rock thrown at us by a 7 years old kid or a 70 years old Palestinian, is the manifestation of misplaced anger and misguided fury; passion and resentment deliberately inflamed and grievances, some perhaps legitimate, manipulated."

Act of violence against any moderate Palestinian wrongly accused of being a collaborator, is also an act of traditional hatred of Arab against Arab, masquerading as animosity towards Israel..."

There was a protracted silence as Zeev's ghost moved towards

blemishes and all."

"But in your own book God accuses you of being stiff-necked and unruly and ungrateful. He is even toying with the idea of destroying you! You are disrespectful even to your awesome Yahveh. Explain this to me."

"Perhaps, but we are people with guts too."

"What guts?"

"The guts and courage to record all these, frankly and honestly, in our own Torah for the entire world to see. We were not afraid of being judged, and recorded our shortcomings and faults."

"You are self-centered and clanish."

"Perhaps... perhaps, but we had to fend for ourselves in a hostile world simply because seldom anyone had gone to bat for us. Yet with all the brutality and mistreatment bestowed upon us all these 4000 years, we have not become bitter and vengeful, and have shown love and compassion for the downtrodden and for the disfranchised."

"Self-praise does not take much. You Jews are expert in making others feel guilty and indebted to you."

"This is not true Hanna! Look! At this moment you are resting in a Jewish hospital, in Jewish land, with the heart of a Jewish soldier beating in your chest; a Jew who was brutally slain by your people. Jewish nurses and doctors are hovering over your bed, while Arab kids, a few miles away are throwing rocks at our people, and their grown-ups are plotting our destruction."

"Zeev, man rebels and reacts often violently when he is dispossessed and driven from his homeland. But we were not always your enemies. There were times, and not long ago, when we Arabs were masters of the world. Our wise leaders were patrons of arts and science, philosophy and literature. Minorities, including Jews thrived under our rule and multiplied. Remember the great Maimonides, physician and friend to Saladin? We were generous and hospitable. We gave you a much better deal than the Christians of centuries past.

Look at the history of Christian Europe, Vatican and the Crusaders... Look at Ferdinand and Isabella and their atrocities. Even now this ruthless queen is being considered for sainthood by Vatican! Remember the Holocaust and the terrible Programs of Tzarist Russia and Poland. Zeev, we treated you fairly; we were good to you."

and trembling heart of a Jew for the rest of my life? With all this new lease on life, I may be despised and threatened by my own people. I am a loser."

"You are not a loser Hanna! You and I are both winners, though for different reasons. I gave my life for my people, something we Jews are used to and good at; and you, my friend, gained a strong and noble heart, a compassionate and special heart, a Jewish heart."

"What is so special about a Jewish heart? What is so noble about it?"

"A Jewish heart is the symbol of all the magnanimity and courage, faith and forgiveness of a persecuted nation throughout its painful history. It is the seat and storehouse of Jewish Collective Unconscious, remembering all the indignities and suffering of exile, genocide and inhumanity of man to man."

"But suffering is not the monopoly of you Hebrews. We Arabs too have suffered and have tasted the bitter fruits of homelessness and tyranny and wandering. Are you bragging or complaining?"

"Neither. I am simply lamenting the disproportionate share of pain and suffering fate has assigned to the children of Israel, ravished, brutalized and driven off. We have carried the invisible cross of being a Jew, thousand of years before one of our Rabbis (kown to the world as Jesus)carried the wooden version of it. Yet we have forgiven our enemies and have remained a passionate and caring people."

"But you people too have shown your dark side and have had your share of ruthlessness and lust for massacre and bloodshed. While fresh out of bondage in Egypt you burned and looted town after town and on one occasion your angry Yahveh specifically ordered that not even the animals and the cattle of a conquered town be spared. Don't tell me about the Jewish compassion and love of humanity. How about the brutal treatment of our Hagar and her son in the hand of your Sarah?"

"Hanna, every nation has blind spots and unpleasant chapters in its history of which he cannot be proud of. Our sages have always reminded us and the world the the Old Testament is a book about men and not about saints! Men and women with flaws as well as virtues. Men and women with dark sides, vengefulness and deceit as well as angelic tendencies and love for their fellow men. Old Testament is a mirror held up to man, Jew and Gentile to observe himself as he is,

In the Intensive Care Unit of Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, Hanna Khader the 54 years old Arab who had been in desperate need of a heart transplant, awoke to the beat of a strong heart in his chest, pumping life-giving blood throughout his body.

Although heavily sedated, a feeling of intense joy overwhelmed him and he stirred. But he felt a sharp pain in his chest and passed out again.

Inside the semi-dark ICU the air was cool and the eerie silence was broken by the gentle beeping beats and the whisperings of computers and other monitoring machines, sending up cool green bubbles, mysterious signals and coded messages.

Hanna felt a gentle breeze on his cheek and opened his eyes. The blurred image of a man in military uniform was bending over him, gently touching his feverish forehead.

Who are you?

I am the ghost of Zeev, Zeev Traum an Israeli officer. This morning I was assassinated by some of your people in Gaza, and now my heart beats in your chest giving you a new lease on life... Take good care of it. It is my gift to you; it is a gift from a Jew to an Arab, to an estranged cousin.

"But why is your heart within me weeping constantly?"

"A Jew's heart weeps often. It has been weeping on and off for thousands of years."

"Why? For whom?"

"For its owner, for other Jews, for all the injustice in the world, for the six millions and their shattered hopes, unfulfilled dreams and snuffed out lives. For the painful, uncertain fate of a wandering tribe, which even now, returning home after centuries of exile, cannot live in peace and must offer more sacrifices... For my wife and my children who were sleep when I felt them this morning, and woke up as widow and orphans."

"It seems that a Jew's heart weeps for Jews only."

"No! A Jew's heart is a universal heart. It weeps for all humanity, friend and foe alike. It even weeps for your wife and your daughter Jamileh who are frightened by the unpredictable reaction of your own people to this vital gift, a new heart."

"But what is my sin?" Why should I be burdened with the weeping

"... For more than 2000 years Jews have been the stepchildren of human race... Long before a monster named Dr. Mengele used Jewish children as guinea pigs in his diabolic, so-called medical experiments, inflicting immesurable pain and suffering on them, we Jews were human guinea pigs in history's laboratories.

... The world experimented upon us all manners of cruelties, torture, wholesale slaughters, exile, burning and forced conversion and got away with it! The anti-Semite gradually came to believe that Jewish blood was cheap, and Jews were expedable.

A Jew in Galute (Exile) was often born with uncertainty, lived in fear and died in doubt. And when he made love to his mate, inadvertently he passed these traits to his offsprings as a sort of Kosher disease. The Jew did not belong because he was not allowed to belong...

Of more than 5 billion souls inhabiting this earth, only 4 out of 1000 are Jews. Yet, the Jewish share of supplying millions of victims and martyrs is sickeningly out of proportion to its meager numbers. No other nation, sect or group lost one third of its people to Hitler, although more than 100 years ago Mark Twain observed: 'All things are mortal but the Jew, all other forces pass, but he remains'... Yet no other people was clearly marked for total annihilation and the 'final solution'... How many Jews went up in flames of the crematoria? How many poets, doctors, musicians, writers and scientists...?

And now, our enemies together with some of our so-called friends are frowning upon, and are threatening us, trying to block the return of frightened Soviet Jews to the Promised Land from a region that for 73 years did not allow God to enter...

In the galleries of history and the showrooms of anthropology, we Jews have often been labeled as BRAND-X "X" for Exiled, Expired, Executed and Exterminated..."

**(Zeev's ghost of Hanna In ICU, after heart transplant)**