

## DIANA YAROS

### Midrash from My Namesake

*... and Dina, the daughter of Leah,  
went out to see the daughters of the land.  
(Gen. 34:1)*

This is the story of a woman with a purpose

This is the story of Dina  
who went out to meet the daughters of the land

She came upon Shechem who was startled  
to meet a woman who carried herself with  
such determination and strength  
her face radiated with the joy of it.

Now Shechem was empty inside  
He wanted what Dina had  
He wanted Dina  
So he raped her and took her to his house  
to keep her for himself.

When Yaacov, Dina's father,  
and her brothers heard of this  
They were angry  
And they sought revenge for the insult they  
thought  
was theirs  
They brought Dina home.

Dina sat.  
She felt dead inside, hopeless, purposeless  
Then she was angry, vengeful  
Then she was empty.

Then after several new moons  
On the eve of the new moon  
her eyes fell upon the sandals  
half hidden in a corner of her tent  
sandals that she had made at the beginning of  
her journey.

Her eyes sent a message to her heart  
and a spark was ignited  
She felt the surge of energy move down to her  
feet  
she wiggled her toes, and giggled,  
stood up, and put on her sandals

They felt familiar, slightly worn, already  
stained with sand from many places.

Now Dina hadn't spoken since she was raped.  
She was silenced.  
She was silent.

Her brothers spoke  
her brothers acted  
her brothers were behaving as Shechem  
taking their vengeance on the women and  
children

Dina took her drum and went out of her tent  
to sit alone under the stars  
and the encouraging smile of the new moon

She walked for a time watching the moon  
emerge from darkness  
She felt her anger stronger with each step  
rising from the earth  
resonating in her body

She was angry with Shechem and his father  
Hamor  
She was angry with her brothers  
and with her father Yaacov  
for the men took  
and did not ask her what she wanted  
She was not given a choice  
She was silent in their story.

The anger sitting as bile in her gut began  
to rise upon into her throat.  
Her hands began to beat the drum,  
and Dina found her voice.

The sounds she made were strong and free  
they reverberated through the desert mountains  
until the whole community could hear her.

They heard Dina's story  
they heard about how she had left on a journey  
of her longing to do this.

They heard about how she was stopped

how she was silenced  
they heard her rage  
and they heard her grief.

Dina chanted and drummed for a long time  
The night got darker, the stars brighter  
until the fire of purpose was strong again  
in Dina's soul.

and she remembered.  
She remembered her desire to go out and meet  
with the women of the land  
Would she let Shechem and his like stop her?  
Should she stay in her father's tent until he  
decided who should have her?

She felt the cool leather straps of her sandals  
well moulded to her feet  
She glanced at the moon beginning a new cycle

and she knew that she had a purpose  
she knew that no man would stop her  
She wouldn't be a part of Yaacov's story  
nor her brothers', nor will you find her there  
any more  
She would make her own story.

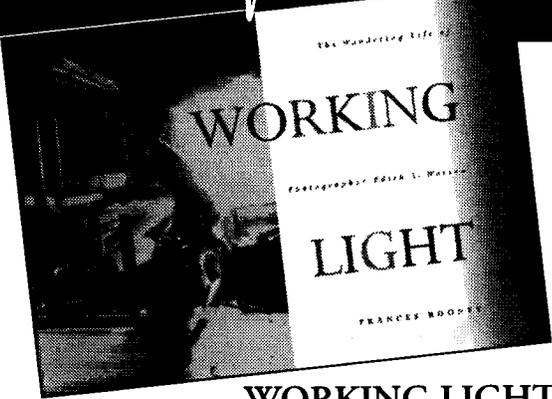
and Dina daughter of Leah, a woman  
of Israel  
went out to meet the women of the land.  
She was filled with joy.

and there you will find her still  
where it is her particular pleasure to meet  
other women who also journey towards  
their heart's desire.

*Kol Simcha* (voice of joy  
*My heart's desire* my heart's desire  
*Ani m'kabbelet* I receive)

*Diana Yaros is a psychotherapist living in Montreal. She is currently involved in creating new rituals and songs based on traditional Jewish forms.*

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