

## Screen Treatment--"Have You Seen a Dark-Haired Man with Burning Eyes? An Odyssey of Faith and Love"

### **Contact Information:**

Henya Shanun-Klein, Ph.D, FT, c/o 3rd Coast Books, LLC (Ron Mumford/Publisher)

19790 Hwy. 105 W., Ste. 1318

Montgomery, TX 77356

Email: ronmumford1111@gmail.com. Henya Shanun-Klein- [www.gilis-place.com](http://www.gilis-place.com). Email:  
drhenyask@gmail.com

Websites: [www.3rdCoastBooks.com](http://www.3rdCoastBooks.com) (Registered Treatment posted here)

Amazon link to book- [https://www.amazon.com/Have-Seen-Dark-Haired-Burning-Eyes/dp/1946743151/ref=sr\\_1\\_1\\_twi\\_pap\\_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1550337646&sr=1-1&keywords=henya+shanun-klein](https://www.amazon.com/Have-Seen-Dark-Haired-Burning-Eyes/dp/1946743151/ref=sr_1_1_twi_pap_2?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1550337646&sr=1-1&keywords=henya+shanun-klein)

### **Writers Guild of America, West Registration:**

Screen Treatment Registration #: 1989206

Book Registration #: 1989213

**Genre:** History/Romance. **Unique:** Inspired by a true story.

Thirteen years after Adel's (the author's mother) death, the author embarks on a journey of her own across the Euro-Asian continents to follow and to verify Adel's stories of her ordeal during WWII. Dr. Shanun-Klein listened to the stories during the mother's entire life. She writes the **book** after conducting extensive research, visiting most of the locations mentioned in Adel's stories, interviewing and documenting whenever and whatever was possible.

This book has been accepted into the world famous Yad Vashim library in Israel that contains the largest collections of events that happened to Jewish people during World War II. Although the historical framework is during WWII, this is not a typical Holocaust story.

**Logline:** *Fiddler on the Roof* meets *Dr. Zhivago*.

You are about to experience an authentic voice of a powerful true story. Adel and Itchale were newlyweds who fled Poland after the Nazi invasion of Poland in World War II to find refuge in Russia. When Itchale disappears after going to the marketplace to sell a down blanket in order to buy food, he is captured by Russian soldiers that take him off to a Gulag – a forced labor camp. Adel, a beautiful young, Jewish woman with only *her* language to speak, with no money, food and no formal documents, embarks on a journey of 20,000 kilometers (12,428 miles) of

uncharted land across Euro-Russia, Siberia and Mongolia that will last five years--to find her soul mate--dead or alive.

### **Reviewer Comments:**

"This is not your usual love triumphs over all obstacles kind of novel. Rather, Dr. Henya Shanun-Klein has captured the pathos of the protagonist, Adel, from birth through her life's journey to what seems the ends-of-the-earth to find and bring back the love of her life, her husband Itchale. During the late 30's, as war was upon Europe, the Soviet Red Army purged the *shtetls* of young Jewish boys. Caught up in this terrible happening was Adel's new bridegroom.

Dr. Shanun-Klein masterfully weaves the facts of this story into an incredible Eurasia geographic travel log, the likes of which, if the story was not factual, one would surmise it was fiction. Somehow, the author has uniquely employed her own life experiences, including those of a psychologist and Thanatologist (study of death, dying and bereavement), to provide the reader with a greater sense of empathy for Adel than an author without her background might otherwise provide. Dr. Shanun-Klein moves the reader from words on a page to literally being in the scene with Adel feeling the grayness of the times, but more importantly feeling her boundless spirit of faith and determination to conquer the evil around her.

Move over *Don Quixote*, for this is not a story of imagination, but of a young woman through insurmountable travails that literally "did climb every mountain, and forded every stream." The *Sound of Music* regale. This would make an outstanding, and I do mean *outstanding* movie!

**Alvin L. Zimmerman, Attorney, former Judge, Harris County Texas**

### **Main Characters:**

**Adel:** A young Jewish woman who looked like her Scandinavian ancestors: blonde, blue-eyed, high cheek-boned. Born in Izbica, Poland at the end of WWI. When Adel, the baby, made her first sound, her mother Bela, emitted her last cry. Two years later her father, Hirsh died also. The orphan was raised by her step-sister Zelda, who never let her call her *Mumme*. At 12 years old, she fell in love with Itchale (Izak) who swore to love her forever. She saw him as her *bashert* (destined mate), her soul mate.

**Itchale:** (A nickname for Izak). Jewish, born in a traditional family. He refused to go to a *Yeshiva* (a school for religious studies) and instead, ran away to Warsaw, Poland to work as a painter and enjoy a secular life. During the years away, he wrote only occasionally to Adel. He promised to come back. However, he never mentioned when. She waited for him, rejecting all suitors. Six

long years later, when they were both about 22 years old, a train stopped near the shtetl, and a man holding one brown suitcase stepped off. Instead of walking to his parents' house, he walked straight to Zelda's where Adel lived. There, to Adel's astonishment, Itchale opened the brown suitcase where a white wedding dress was awaiting her.

The young couple tried to resume a normal life when the Nazis invade Poland and Nazi soldiers were already on the banks of the river that ran along the outskirts of the shtetl.

Itchale tried to join the Partisans, but Adel convinced him to escape to Russia where his sister and brother had lived. But, instead of finding a safe haven, they found a country in chaos on the verge of war. No Jew was safe there either especially if they were refugees with no Identification Documents. The young couple tried to make ends meet but one day when Itchale went to the market to sell a down blanket and exchange it for food, unbeknownst to Adel, he was kidnapped by the Soviet Red Army and was sent to a Gulag (a forced labor camp) in Siberia. This is when Adel's journey begins.

### **Other Characters:**

**Zelda:** Adel's strict step-sister that partially raised Adel.

**Marsha:** In Siberia, took in Adel.

**Batbayar:** In Mongolia, took in Adel.

**Yossale:** Itchale's friend who had formerly been in love with Adel when they were both young children, that was now in the Russian Gulag with Itchale.

### **People encountered during Adel's epic journey:**

**Good Families:** Families that took pity on Adel and let her work in their homes; cooking, cleaning, child care during the harsh winters. Adel worked for room and board as she continued her journey during the spring.

### **Bad Encounters:**

People who harassed her in the villages and along the journey. At times, Adel wearing rags as an old Russian woman (babushka) to hide her identity – Jewish, young, pretty - would attempt to board the Trans Siberian trains only to be kicked off by conductors, or sought after by

vagabonds who wanted to harm her. She'd rather die by jumping of a moving train than to let them have their way with her.

### **Locations/Settings:**

**Izbica:** A Jewish shtetl (small town) in southeast Poland, pre-WWII similar to the one depicted in the movie, *Fiddler on the Roof*.

**Russia, Siberia, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Gulag, Kolkhoz** (Adel's journey across the continents by foot and on the Trans-Siberian Train) finding Itchale in the Gulag. Colorful descriptions in the book resembling scenes in the movie, *Dr. Zhivago*.

**Siberia, Uzbekistan,** Adel and Itchale's journey (Escape from the Gulag; death of their two children, life in the Kolkhoz.

**Poland, Izbica, Szczecin; Marseille, Israel** (No Jews left in Izbica, Adel has a newborn in Szczecin, a new camp in Germany; The ship to Palestine is captured by the British Army, and all passengers – Holocaust survivors, are sent to another camp in France. After their release from the camp, they find their way to Israel as in the movie, *Exodus*.

## **Synopsis**

### **Act 1-The Set Up - Poland**

- Adel's childhood years, parents died
- Being raised by her step-sister Zelda.
- Finding her soul mate, Itchale, at age 12
- Waiting six years for his return when he arrived with a wedding dress for her in his suitcase.
- Getting married, being poor, trying to flee the Nazis.
- Itchale does not return from the marketplace, disappears.

### **Act 2 - The Crisis- Russia, Siberia, Mongolia, and Back again. Adel's Journey**

- Itchale taken by Soviet Red Army to an unknown gulag in Siberia – a forced labor camp.

- Adel decides to find Itchale dead or alive and begins her 20,000 km search that lasts about five years.
- "Have you seen a dark-haired man with burning eyes?"
- Put one foot in front of the other and start walking, to where her heart would lead her. Her heart serving as her conscious and her compass.
- She did NOT lose faith in herself and in Itchale. Her love for Itchale and her conscious, unlike her battered body, remained intact.
- Her faith in humanity, the goodness in people, even in times of Evil, strengthened her. Never losing her perspective or her sense of humor.
- Meeting people from all beliefs, religions and occupations. Life savers.
- Five years she journeyed, mostly by foot. Frightened most of the time, hungry all the time and injured.
- Trying to hide her identity and looks from ruthless men who wanted to take advantage of her. Sleeping in open field, along railroad tracks in the Siberian taiga.
- From Lvov in the Ukraine, to European Russia, east and north and across Siberia to Mongolia and on to the edge of Asian Russia to Vladivostok on the Pacific Ocean, then back to the west and south across Mongolia, the Muslim states of Asian Russia and north again to Siberia.

### **Act 3 - The Resolution. Adel finds Itchale, still a long way home yet to come**

- After a year in the gulag, Adel convinces Itchale to escape the gulag the way she found her way in.
- Rumors spread that the War was about to end, confusion, chaos.
- On their journey back to Poland, Adel gets pregnant for the first time, loses baby, Bela, to pneumonia and hunger. Buried her in the snows of Siberia.
- Journey proceeds toward Uzbekistan. Heard that Russia would provide transportation to Jewish refugees back to Poland.
- After months of walking, Adel became pregnant again, a boy, Hershale. He lived a few months and then succumbed to hunger and illness. Two graves left behind in the snows of Siberia.
- Finally, Adel and Itchale made it back to Izbica, no Jews left there.
- Adel pregnant a third time, gave birth to Henya (author of book).
- Adel and Itchale go to a Displaced Persons Camp run by American Army in a German town, Hofgeismar. After a year there, embarked on a ship full of Holocaust survivors sailing to Palestine

- Ship captured by British army, rulers of Palestine, sent passengers to a Detention Camp in Marseille, France.
- State of Israel established May 14, 1948.
- Adel and Itchale arrive in Israel, Arab states immediately declare war on Israel, Itchale drafted into Israeli Army
- Itchale died at age 49 in Israel
- Adel died at age 86 after she lived to see grandchildren, to bury her only granddaughter (author's daughter, Gili) and to hear the heartbeat of her first great-granddaughter Jessica.

### Author Bio/Head Shot



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## About Henya Shanun-Klein

Dr. Henya Shanun-Klein, is a renown Professor of Psychology and a Thanatologist (The Study of Loss, Grief and Bereavement). A pioneer in the field of Parental Bereavement; A volunteer in Rescue missions at disaster areas around the globe; A therapist, researcher, lecturer and published author of many academic publications and novels.

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