

*Ann and Aaron Pore Over Freud's
Fainting Spells in Jung's Presence*

THE UNKNOWN FREUD: FIVE PLAYS . . .



Group photo (1909) in front of Clark University in Worcester, MA.
Front row, Sigmund Freud, G. Stanley Hall, Carl Jung.
Back row, Abraham Brill, Ernest Jones, Sandor Ferenczi.

Ann and Aaron Pore Over Freud's Fainting Spells in Jung's Presence

*Some day, perhaps, even remembering this
Will be a pleasure.*

—Aeneas to his crew. VIRGIL, *The Aeneid*. Book I.
(Robert Fitzgerald's translation, 1983)

*One day you will remember the years of struggle
as the best.*

—Sigmund Freud to Carl Jung, in letter dated September 19, 1907,
one day after Yom Kippur, 5668, posted from Rome.

*When the empire I founded is orphaned, no one but
Jung must inherit the whole thing. As you see, my
politics incessantly pursues this aim. . .*

—Letter from Sigmund Freud to Ludwig Binswanger,
dated March 14, 1911.

CAST of CHARACTERS

Rabbi Aaron Handel Fifty-five, looks like Sigmund Freud, beard and all.
Ann Handel Rabbi Handel's wife, about the same age, attractive.

SETTING

The book-lined library-study of the Handel home in Louisville, KY. On the mantle above the fireplace there is a large Menorah, a 14-inch or so bronze-colored figurine of Michelangelo's *Moses* and a photo of Sigmund Freud. Center-stage, in addition to the Rabbi's file and book-cluttered desk which contains several Egyptian, Greek, and Roman antiquities, there is an oblong table between a sofa and a comfortable armchair; a footstool; and a 4-drawer file cabinet, the top of which has a few family photos, a pipe rack, and a Chicago Cubs baseball cap.

TIME

About 9:30 P.M., Friday, the second day of Passover, April 10, 2009.

AARON is seated on the couch, writing on a legal pad, as ANN enters with a tray containing a teapot, two cups, and a dish of macaroons and tea matzohs.

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ANN

Comfort food?

(Laying the legal pad beside him, AARON puts pencil in mouth and clears folders from the coffee table.)

(ANN pours tea as AARON lifts cup, and also for herself. Seating self, SHE lifts the legal pad.)

Another of your hero's dreams?

AARON

No, a fainting spell of his in Carl Jung's presence. (Offering ANN the dish.)

ANN (Choosing a macaroon)

When was this?

AARON

In November 1912, in Munich, just two months before their final break. This wasn't the first time. Freud had fainted before Jung three years earlier. Both times Freud believed that Jung had unconscious death-wishes against him.

ANN

Is this your interpretation, Aaron?

AARON

According to Jung, that's what Freud had told him. But Freud held back.

ANN

You're sure?

AARON

I'm sure. His essay,

(With the legal pad, HE goes to a shelf of Freud's *Collected Works*; gets vol. 21.)

years later, in 1927, on Dostoevsky cued me in. Specifically, Freud's explanation for Dostoevsky's apparent epileptic seizures which Freud claims were actually hysterical fits—fits, Ann, like the two he had before Jung.

(Handing ANN the now open book, HE points to a passage from "Dostoevsky and Parricide.")

Ann, please read.

ANN (Reads:)

. . . these death-like seizures signify an identification with a dead person, either with someone who is really dead or with someone who is still alive and whom one wishes dead. The latter case is the more significant. The attack then has the value of a punishment.

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One has wished another person dead, and now one is this other person and is dead oneself. For a boy this other person is usually his father and the attack is thus a self-punishment for a death-wish against a hated father.

AARON (Pointing to passage.)

“. . . a self-punishment for a death-wish against one's father.” This, Ann, is bedrock—

ANN

Are you saying that when he fell away Freud had death wishes against his father, Jakob?

AARON

Not Jakob . . . (From the fireplace mantle HE gets the statuette of Michelangelo's *Moses* with the Tablets of the Law, and lays *Moses* on his back on the floor.)

ANN

Moses? Aaron, haven't you heard? Moses is dead.

AARON

Not so long as the Law exists—

(Pointing to the Tablets.)

ANN (Re-reads, with emphases:)

“. . . the attack is a self-punishment for a death-wish against a *hated* father.” Surely, Freud didn't hate Moses?

AARON

Freud admired Moses, even identified with him,

(Lifting *Moses* high, AARON'S eyes stay focused on *Moses*, as if in awe.)

but he held that great man responsible for our people's never-ending misery—

ANN

Anti-Semitism?

AARON

Anti-Semitism.

(Replacing *Moses* on the bookcase, AARON gets the last book on a shelf of Freud's completed psychological works, *Moses and Monotheism*.)

Ann, this is from Freud's last major attack on religion, *Moses and Monotheism*. (HE reads:)

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. . . we venture to declare that it was the one man Moses who created the Jews. It is to him that this people owes its tenacity of life and also much of the hostility it has experienced and still experiences.

(AARON starts flipping pages.)

ANN

Aaron, I don't understand.

AARON

Freud was bent on destroying the Law—

ANN

The Torah? Our Tree of Life? To what end?

AARON

To rid the world of anti-Semitism. (Resumes reading:)

Christians have not got over a grudge against the new religion which was imposed on them; but they have displaced the grudge on to the source from which Christianity reached them. The fact that the Gospels tell a story which is set among Jews, and in fact deals only with Jews, has made this displacement easy for them. Their hatred of Jews is at bottom a hatred of Christians . . .

In other words, Ann, because of the psychology of the good Christian, anti-Semitism will continue to exist so long as there is such a thing as Christianity.

ANN

“Such a *thing* as Christianity”?

AARON

Just channeling my hero.

ANN

Well, I don't like it! . . . (ANN silently reads the passage.)

Now, let's see if I have it. Not possessing the courage—the moral courage—to acknowledge their own hatred for their exacting religion which obliges them to renounce their aggressive inclinations and their illicit sexual desires or lust, Christians displace their hatred for Christianity on to the ones who had imprisoned them in their moral straight-jacket—

(Mimes being shackled and unable to set herself free.)

AARON

Christians, like the creep who knocked Jakob's new *Shabbos* hat, er, his *Shtreimel*, into the mud as he shouted, “Jew! get off the pavement!”

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(Mimes the anti-Semite.)

ANN

Was Freud there?

AARON

No, it happened before he was born, when Jakob was a young man. Still, just hearing Jakob relate the incident on one of their Sunday walks around Vienna was plenty traumatic. (Gets *The Interpretation of Dreams*.)

This is from his masterpiece, *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Freud is either ten or twelve.

(Miming young Freud or Sigi looking up at Jakob, who is holding his hand:)

—And, papa, what did you do?

—Sigi, I went into the roadway and picked up my hat.

(Mimes humiliated Jakob picking up hat.)

Ann, it was as though God Himself had died.

—This struck me as unheroic conduct on the part of the strong man who was holding the little boy by the hand.

(Miming Sigi, head down, wiping eye.)

ANN

So that's what drove him!—a passionate desire to avenge Jakob.

AARON

Ann, Freud was a good hater, but his thirst for vengeance against Christians wasn't what ultimately drove him.

ANN

What then?

AARON

Guilt.

ANN

Guilt?

AARON

An intolerable sense of guilt from his early childhood. But, for now, let's stay with the spells—

ANN

Aaron, you can't leave me hanging!

AARON

Ann, I'll get to it, I promise. But for now, I need your input.

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ANN

(Finding *Moses and Monotheism's* publication date.)

Aaron, *Moses and Monotheism* was published in 1939.

AARON

Right! The year Freud died, His mouth and jaw eaten up with cancer, he completed it the summer before, in exile in London.

(Mimes Freud in pain, penning last sentence.)

ANN

Leaving Vienna at the last possible minute. It's as though he had a death-wish—

AARON

He gave up the ghost on Yom Kippur. He was 83—

ANN

The Day of Atonement? That's uncanny. That is, if Freud was really out, as you claim, to destroy the Torah. But, Aaron, there's a problem with your detective work, isn't there? A big one—

AARON

And that is?

ANN

Freud's explanation for anti-Semitism

(Replacing *Moses and Monotheism* on bookshelf.)

hit the bookstores in 1939, over a quarter of a century after both fainting spells.

AARON

Ann, Freud was a concealer! When he broadcasts his explanation for anti-Semitism means absolutely nothing!—

ANN

If you say so.

AARON

Let's sum up so far. In Freud's eyes, given his understanding of that perpetual scourge, there is no alternative—the Law must go.

(Emphasizing with fingers.)

No Torah, No Judaism, no Christianity, no miserable anti-Semitism.

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ANN

Had they known his elegant solution to the Jewish Question calls for the destruction of their Tree of Life, Freud's B'nai B'rith lodge brothers would have stoned, if not castrated him.—

(Mimes throwing stones at AARON/FREUD, who protects his head and genitals.)

That is, if they could have gotten away with it.

AARON

That he'd suffer their hatred and contempt, Freud understood only too well. . . . In April 1900, two days after Passover, he dreamt that these "brethren," as he called them,

(Looking up the dream in *The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess*.)

were, quote, "unkind and scornful of me."

ANN

Aaron, what does Freud say about their scorning him?

AARON

That's just it, he doesn't reveal his interpretation, not even to Fliess. At any rate, the dream's never been published. And, Ann, if dreams are, as he claims, wishes, why on earth would Freud wish for the disdain of his "brethren," other Sons of the Covenant? Well? . . . Ann, how about?: 'At long last I am making my move, showing my hand.'

ANN

For the sake of argument, say you're right. Still, he persisted, didn't abandon his, his project?—

AARON

Right! Otherwise, he'd lose the will to live!—

ANN

"Lose the will to live"? Aaron, that's pretty strong!

AARON

Well, that's the case—as you'll see, that is, if you'll stay with me—

ANN

A deal. . . . But, Aaron, without God or His visitations, wouldn't everything be allowed?—Rape, murder—anarchy—would prevail.

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AARON (Gets a book.)

Not in Freud's Promised Land. He alludes to it here in *The Future of an Illusion*—the illusion, Ann, being religion—

ANN

Why am I not surprised?

AARON (reads:)

. . . New generations, who have been brought up in kindness and taught to have a high opinion of reason, and who have experienced the benefits of civilization at an early age . . . will feel civilization as a possession of their very own and will be ready for its sake to make the sacrifices as regards work and instinctual satisfaction that are necessary for civilization's preservation . . . If no culture has so far produced human masses of such a quality, it is because no culture has yet devised regulations which will influence men in this way, and in particular from childhood onwards.—(Skips pages)

ANN

And this is Freud the supreme realist?! Why, he's a dreamer, a deluded utopian dreamer!

AARON (resumes reading:)

By withdrawing their expectations from the other world and concentrating all their liberated energies into their life on earth, they will probably succeed in achieving a state of things in which life will become tolerable for everyone and civilization no longer oppressive to anyone. Then, with one of our fellow-unbelievers, the great poet Heine, they will be able to say without regret:

“We leave Heaven to the angels and the sparrows.”

(HE mimes releasing sparrows.)

ANN

(Taking *The Future Of An Illusion* from Aaron.)

And he actually believed he could this pull off, an enlightened secular world?

AARON

Ann, this was his Promised Land! A brotherly world grounded in reason, where at long last the seed of Abraham can move freely across frontiers.

(HE mimes crossing over frontiers.)

As for his pulling this off, let's say he hoped against hope... And, after all, he was born in a caul, a membrane on his head . . .

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(Miming the newborn Sigismund struggling with his hand
against the 'blinding light.')

which his mother, Amalia, never let her first-born son forget.

(Now HE mimes Amalia Freud:)

My "goldener Sigi," you are destined to become a Great Man!

Little did his proud mama know that to become a Great Man, her undisputed darling, her "goldener Sigi," must kill that Great Man, Moses.

(Laying *Moses* figurine on the carpet.)

ANN

Aaron, you know this, this, reading of yours is,

(Mimes a Talmudic sage bent over a text.)

well, it's hard for me to accept.

AARON

Ann, already by 1900, the noose has been tightening . . . For Freud, as with Theodor Herzl—and for any Jew with eyes to see—the return of the Middle Ages, when our people were blamed for all epidemics, is around the corner.

(Miming going around corner)—

Just a few of the miserable signs . . . (Emphasizing with fingers:)

The miserable Dreyfus Affair in 'fraternal' France; the ever popular Mayor of Vienna, "I say who is a Jew!," Herr Doktor Karl Lueger!— the first politician ever elected on an anti-Semitic platform!; the sentencing to death in Czechoslovakia of Leopold Hilsner, a young Jewish shoemaker's assistant, for 'killing' a 19-year-old Christian woman for her blood to bake the Passover matzohs—

ANN

The blood libel?! (Horror!)

AARON

(Offers a matzoh to ANN, who, repulsed, turns head away.)

You sure? (Taking a bite.)

It's fresh and quite tasty, just the right amount of—

ANN

Aaron!

AARON

Salt.

(Suddenly, AARON sinks on to footstool:)

By the waters of Babylon we sat and wept!

(Flooded with tears.)

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ANN (To self:)

The hate-filled lament of the Babylonian captivity.

AARON

O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed—
(Becoming enraged.)

ANN

(Concerned, ANN rushes to AARON, who resists her.)

Aaron! Aaron!

AARON

Happy *shall he be*, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.
Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against
the stones.

(As AARON pounds the floor, ANN rushes to him.)

ANN

Aaron, don't you see what you are doing to yourself!? Leave Freud to the
psychoanalysts!

AARON (Massaging his painful hands)

Ann, you don't understand. Psychoanalysts, when it comes to their father,
they blind themselves!—

(Mimes plucking his eyes out.)

ANN

(Facing him, holding him by the shoulders.)

Aaron, face it! You're losing it!

AARON

On *Pesach*, the season of our deliverance? No way!

(With her help, AARON seats self on couch.)

ANN

(On her knees before Aaron, takes his hands.)

Aaron, at least take a break . . . Freud won't go away.

AARON

Promise?

ANN

You have my word.

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AARON

Not your heart? (Touching her breast.)

ANN

That, too. (Placing HER hand over his.)

AARON

Then we continue? . . . Just a few more minutes—

ANN

On one condition. You call Klein.

AARON

You think his couch—my *Zoftig* Sophie—misses me?
(Mimes a patient on the couch squeezing cushion.)

ANN

Aaron, *I* miss you!

AARON

First thing in the morning, promise!... (Mimes phoning)
(Getting up from couch.)

Now, Ann, unlike Theodor Herzl, Freud doesn't broadcast his ambition. You see, for his Promised Land to be realized, secrecy is essential.

ANN

Concealing this even from Martha?

AARON

From everyone—

ANN

Everyone, except you.

AARON

May I continue? Now, just as it got the better of Dostoevsky, his bad conscience or guilt got the better of Freud—

ANN

Filial piety?

AARON

Right! Freud loved his gray-haired, Talmud-reading papa.

ANN (Lifting the legal pad.)

Nu, this all-important fainting spell?

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AARON

As I said, the first fit happened in 1909—in Bremen, Germany. At the time, Jung *hakens a chainik*, keeps going on and on, about prehistoric corpses recently discovered in marshes of Northern Germany, confusing these naturally preserved bodies with mummies stored in lead cellars in Bremen.

ANN

And the topic of mummies, you believe, called up in Freud’s mind Egypt and Moses?—

AARON

Did you hear me say that?! This fit happened on August 20th, the day before Freud and Jung are to sail on *The George Washington* for America. That invitation to lecture at Clark University was a recognition of consequence!—the first such for Freud and psychoanalysis. Freud could almost taste *his* Promised Land—

ANN

Where do you suggest we hang the shingle,
(Miming looking for a suitable place.)
“Reb Handel, mind-reader extraordinaire!”?

AARON

You through? According to Jung, Freud told him that his “chattering about corpses” meant that Jung had unconscious death-wishes against him.

ANN (Again, lifting legal pad.)

And this second spell?

AARON

Like the earlier one, this spell happened when they were dining. At the time, Jung was tearing into a recent paper by another of Freud’s disciples, Karl Abraham. In the paper, Abraham, whom Freud greatly valued, claims that a particular pharaoh—because he ordered his father’s name chiseled out from monuments—had had death-wishes against his father.

(Mimes this chiseling behavior on *Moses* figurine.)

Now, Ann, according to Freud, it was from this Pharaoh, Pharaoh Akhenaten, that Moses got his monotheistic religion—

ANN

But, Aaron, it’s only at the end of his life that Freud asserts this.

AARON

Ann, I’ll say it again! Freud’s a concealer, a careful concealer. It matters not

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when he reveals something.

ANN

A regular Kabbalist. You seek! You find!

AARON

A Kabbalist, am I?!

(Agitated, AARON lifts the Menorah from the mantle, holding it up ANN's face.)

Ann, what is this?!

ANN

(Rising, ANN mimes an unsure charades participant.)

A remake of *Dracula* by Mel Brooks?

AARON

Even our precious little Miriam knows! Well, doesn't she?!

ANN (Mimes Miriam)

"I want to wight the wymnora." She was so cute.

AARON

(Replacing the Menorah, AARON opens *The Letters of Sigmund Freud*, edited by his son, Ernst; HE hands Ann the book.)

Ann, just the underlined part. You'll understand why . . . It's to Martha.

ANN (Reads reluctantly:)

Until nightfall I was...in the Christian and Jewish catacombs. In the Jewish catacombs the inscriptions are Greek, the candelabrum—I think it's called Menorah—can be seen on many tablets—

"I *think* it's called Menorah"?! (Shaking HER head in disbelief!)

How can he not know for sure it's called a Menorah?

AARON

That's just it!

ANN

What's just it?!

AARON

A 51-year-old Jew whose beloved Talmud-reading father not only instructed him at age seven in Torah but also conducted the Passover Seder in Hebrew—and without the aid of a Haggadah—(Holds the Haggadah.) cannot not know for sure this is (Lifting the Menorah) a Menorah!

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ANN

Okay?

AARON

Ann, here's how I see it: Freud, knowing that his correspondence—especially letters to his wife—will be pored over, is trying to keep his biographers off-track—

(Retrieving the book from ANN, AARON mimes poring over the text.)

ANN

By concealing his knowledge of Judaism? But for what purpose?

AARON

Ann, what have we been talking about?!

(Searching his file and book-cluttered desk)

His creation, psychoanalysis, must not be identified with Judaism. It's got to be seen as a science, an objective discipline, one that could have been created by anyone, Gentile as well as Jew. Ah! Here it is.

(Lifting a sheet from his yellow legal pad.)

Ann, have I your attention?!

ANN

Full!

AARON

Now what riled Jung especially was Abraham's claim that monotheism, Akhenaten's great creation, originated in Akhenaten's unconscious hatred of his father, that is, in his negative Father complex.

(AARON gets *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*.)

Here, in his 1961 memoir, Jung relates that Freud slides off the chair, faints,

(Mimes Freud sliding off chair, but catches self)

just as Jung is pointing out to Freud that Pharaohs other than Akhenaten had also chiseled out or crossed off their father's name from monuments, yet they—Ann, this is a direct quote—“yet they had inaugurated neither a new style nor a new religion.”

ANN

Okay?

AARON

(Pointing to it, HE re-quotes the phrase:)

“. . . they had inaugurated neither a *new style* nor a new religion.”

Don't you see, Ann, Freud faints just as his Promised Land is called up in his mind—

ANN

Aaron, that's a stretch.

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AARON

An enlightened, socially just world grounded in Reason, a brotherly world in which the seed of Abraham can at last move freely across frontiers—

(Miming doing so)

this is not a radically new style?! And in the magnetic Jung, Freud believed he had his Joshua, who, by knocking down the resistances of the *goyim* to psychoanalysis and its findings, would be instrumental in ultimately instituting his Promised Land.

(Quickly lifting a sheet of paper.)

Several months after Jung had entered the psychoanalytic fold, Freud, in May 1908, wrote Abraham:

. . . as a Christian and a pastor's son Jung finds his way to me only against great inner resistances. His association with us is the more valuable for that. I nearly said that it was only by his appearance on the scene that psychoanalysis escaped the danger of becoming a Jewish national affair.

(AARON hands the letter to ANN, who gestures for it; ANN studies the letter.)

Ann, don't you see?

ANN

What?! That Freud's other followers were all Jews?

AARON

The very first ones were, Ann, but you miss the point.

ANN

And that is?

AARON

Freud here is all but confessing to Abraham that psychoanalysis, like Theodor Herzl's Zionism, is at bottom

(Pointing to the phrase on the sheet.)

“a Jewish national affair”—that is, it's a political movement to deliver the Jews—

(ANN Hands Aaron back the letter.)

And as with all others, Freud kept Jung in the dark—and a good thing that he did. After the breakup he called Freud, “The Pope in Vienna”—

(Extends right hand for ring to be kissed.)

ANN

Well, at least he didn't call him the Jewish Pope.

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AARON

In his first editorial of a Nazi-controlled psychiatric journal, his erstwhile Joshua will put down psychoanalysis, claim that its “Jewish categories” do not apply to Gentiles. And he all but swoons over National Socialism with its mighty “Germanic soul.”

ANN

Aaron, when was this?

AARON

In January 1934—

ANN

Just as Freud feared, psychoanalysis dismissed as a Jewish science—

AARON (*Gets Totem and Taboo*)

And all the while Freud continues preparing the ground, especially with his radical notion, here in *Totem and Taboo*, that religion can be traced back to the first patricide, the killing of their father by the sons of the primal horde.—

ANN

“The first patricide” . . . “sons of the primal horde”?! You know how your would-be Moses sounds?—This primal horde business, just why is it so significant?

AARON (*Raising Totem and Taboo*)

Because with this revolutionary account of the beginnings of religion, Freud, in 1913, prepares the way for the essential hypothesis of *Moses and Monotheism*—

ANN

His *farshtunkeneh* speculation that Moses was actually a high-born Egyptian?

AARON

Ann, that’s not the essential premise. Rather, it’s Freud’s hypothesis that the Israelites repeated that first patricide—that is, banding together, they killed Moses, (Mimes stabbing *Moses* figurine.)

And here is the key point—

ANN (*Raising the Bible*)

Now he rewrites Deuteronomy! Moses died when he was 120. And for this desert fantasy Freud, I suppose, has evidence?

AARON

Not really, he’s clutching at straws.

(ANN presses palms on temples, as though a headache is coming on.)

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Now, Freud goes on to claim—and this, Ann—
(HE notices ANN holding her head.)

ANN

Aaron, all this is giving me a headache.

AARON

Ann, we're almost there. Okay? (Places his arm around her shoulder.)

ANN

Okay.

AARON

Now, Ann, here is the key point: like Akhenaten's monotheism, Jewish monotheism is nothing but a reaction-formation stemming from the Jews' guilt and remorse over the killing of Moses.

ANN

The *alleged* killing of Moses. And this is how Freud accounts for Judaism?—

AARON

Not only for Judaism but also, against all odds, its persistence. You see, according to Freud, from generation-to-generation each and every Jew possesses indestructible unconscious memory traces of that traumatic event and terrible deed—along with the related patricidal sense of guilt and remorse.—

ANN

Such torturous speculation. Aaron, I'm sorry, but he sounds like a crank. A deluded, opinionated crank.

AARON

That may be, but to bring it back home: Ann, in my unconscious, I'm one of the rebellious Israelites who had banded together to kill Moses—
(‘Stabbing’ *Moses*, to the floor.)

ANN (Raising hand, hesitantly)

I'm afraid to ask: Just how does this account for Judaism's persistence?

AARON

Ann, consider me transgeneration Everyman Jew. Understand, all this is unconscious: by abiding by the Law I expiate having taken part in the murder of Moses; hence Judaism endures—

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(Dusting the Tablets of the Law, and raising *Moses* high,
AARON kisses the Law.)

ANN

And if Judaism is just a, a, reaction-formation, then the Law, being a mere
creation (Points to the Tablets)
of man, is not divine—and Christendom and anti-Semitism are no more—

AARON

You got it—that’s his secret game plan.
(Replacing *Moses* on the bookshelf.)

ANN

A game plan that is fatally flawed: Aaron, the unconscious memory traces
of the killing of Moses are, as you have just said, indelibly imprinted in the
Jew’s DNA—never to be erased or destroyed—forever stamped!

(‘Stamping’ with hand Aaron’s forehead.)

According to his own theory then, Freud’s ‘messianic ambition’ is doomed
from the start, isn’t it ?

AARON (wincing.)

Ann, Freud pinned his hopes on Reason or the Intellect prevailing. To quote
Freud, “The voice of reason is a soft one, but it does not rest until it gains a
hearing . . .”—

ANN

That’ll be the day!
(Doing a two-step, her headache returns; SHE holds her head.)
Oy! I hope I can still work on my papers.

AARON

I’ll help grade them.

ANN

Aaron, that’s all I need!

AARON

Anyway, we’re almost through . . . The powerful Jung has just lifted and
carried Freud from the hotel dining room to a couch in the lounge. Here,
Jung relates what happened next. (AARON reads:)

Freud half came to, and I shall never forget the look he cast at
me. In his weakness he looked at me as if I were his father.

“. . .as if I were *his father*.”

ANN

I got “father” without your help. Aaron, if, as you say, Freud is bent on destroying

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the Torah, then his sense of guilt at the time of the fit has got to pertain to Jakob—

AARON

Freud's guilt of course pertained to Jakob, his beloved first instructor in Torah. But, Ann, during the fit, Freud's Promised Land was called up, the realization of which, again, requires what? . . . That Moses die, once and for all, right?! So, Freud's guilt had to pertain as well to the great man who—to re-quote Freud—"created the Jews," Moses.

(Again, AARON lays the *Moses* figurine on floor.)

Or, to paraphrase Freud on Dostoevsky:

The attacks have the value of a self-punishment. Freud wished Moses dead, and now this impious striver who would be Moses *is* Moses.

(Miming Freud, AARON falls away to rug next to *Moses*. and is dead himself; with fingers closes his eyes.)

ANN

(Dusting and replacing *Moses* on bookshelf.)

And Freud's terrible guilt from childhood? It's time, Aaron, don't you think?

AARON (Getting up)

After Sol's, er, Jakob's death at age 81 in 1896, Freud, feeling as though he had been torn up by the roots, begins his systematic self-analysis, mainly by studying his dreams.

(Mimes Freud at desk with pen in hand, over large writing pad.)

Only to discover to his horror,

(Miming Freud, anguished, hunched over desk, his left hand covering left eye in the manner of one of the doomed in Michelangelo's *Last Judgment*.)

that he is a Cain!

ANN

A Cain?—

AARON

Psychoanalysts call it a "return of the repressed." Freud believes that his jealous, hateful wishes had killed his baby brother, Julius—

ANN

When was this?

AARON

In his birthplace, the little Catholic town of Freiberg, in Moravia, and where the good Christian had humiliated Jakob. Freud was 23 months old, and Julius was either six or eight months old.

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ANN

. . . “six or eight months old?”

AARON

Ann, the date of Julius’s birth hasn’t been determined.

ANN

His birth record is lost?

AARON

Right! We only know when Julius died, April 15, 1858—

ANN

As brilliant as he was, Freud continued to believe his hateful wishes had killed his baby brother?

AARON

He just couldn’t shake it—

ANN

How he must have suffered . . .

AARON

And in silence . . . Freud’s atheism, I am convinced, can be traced back to Julius’s death—

ANN

‘If there *is* a God in Heaven, would He have allowed Julius to die?’—

AARON

You got it, Ann—Freud’s atheism wasn’t reasoned out. It was that of a tormented, lost soul. . . Now, soon after the second spell, here is what Freud related to another disciple, Sandor Ferenczi. . . It’s relevant.

(AARON hands Ann Vol. 2 of Ernest Jones’s authorized biography of Freud.)

ANN (Reads:)

Freud expressed the opinion that all his attacks could be traced to the effect on him of his younger brother’s death—

AARON

And what more fitting way for this haunted Cain to redeem himself than by, by—? Come on, Ann . . . Think! (gesturing, encouraging . . .)

ANN

By delivering *der Kinder*, other Juliuses . . .

(Hears for a large wall photo of their granddaughter.)

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and Miriams. . . .

AARON

That, Ann, is his salvation—

ANN

Aaron, I hate admitting it, but I'm intrigued.

AARON

It's contagious, isn't it?

ANN

Aaron, a thought. Couldn't it have been the case that just as he had wanted Julius out of the way, that Freud wanted Jung out of the way?, that rather than Jung wanting to kill Freud, that Freud, at the dinner

(Eyeing and handling the knife-shaped letter opener.)

was sorely tempted to sink his steak knife into Jung?

AARON

Ann, this helps! (He jots feverishly.) Were the increasingly rebellious Jung to defect, as seems just a matter of time—Jung especially resented Freud's making the Oedipus Complex into a dogma—Freud's redemptive Promised Land could be nipped in the bud. (Snaps pencil in half.)

ANN

Reason enough for Freud to want his "Joshua" dead! . . .

AARON

Which would make his death-like spell purposeful—it kept Freud from acting on his increasingly aroused murderous feelings.

ANN

A most effective defense, no? . . . Of course! (Slapping her head!)

It's the other way around! (Massaging her pained head.)

AARON

The other way around?!

ANN

Freud wanted Jung to murder him!

AARON

Hm! . . . "How sweet it must be to die."

(Lifts Vol. I of Jones's biography of Freud.)

Those were Freud's first words upon awakening. "How sweet it must to

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die.” . . . Finally, this Cain would be out of his misery . . . no more inner torment—

ANN

Some psychologist! The father of psychoanalysis killed by one of his rebellious sons. . . Think generations!— . . . Think primal father of the clan—

AARON

Freud . . . the new Moses!—

ANN

No longer “seen from afar,” his redemptive Promised Land realized at last. And for all eternity!

AARON

(Rapidly jotting bold letters with a felt-tipped pen on a blank sheet of the yellow legal pad, HE says:)

Ann, as the great Maimonides said, “The gates of interpretation are always open!”

(Tossing the pen, AARON, *now manic*, and armed with his yellow pad or ‘tablet,’ cries:)

From Moses to Moses who is like unto thee!

(Turns 360 degrees for all to see in bold letters the new ‘Law.’)

“Know Thyself!”

(Suddenly grief-stricken, the ‘Law’ slipping from his hands, AARON lowers himself on to the footstool.)

Ann, I miss Sol. (Breaking down.)

ANN

(Like a mother, comforts Aaron.)

I know, Aaron. Aaron, I know.

AARON

Klein keeps telling me I’ve got to bury him . . . How the hell do you bury your father? . . . He was a milkman—All Jews have money. Right?!

ANN

Aaron, Sol was rich in other ways.

AARON

What do I do? Sit shiva another two years?! (In pain.)

ANN

You realize, Aaron, that’s almost how long—

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AARON

I've been working on Freud! (An awareness; lost in thought . . .)

ANN

Aaron, have I your attention?

(Taps AARON's shoulder; HE jumps.)

Even as you were analyzing or dissecting Freud, you were taking him in to yourself.

(Closing eyes, ANN swallows piece matzoh, like a Roman Catholic at Mass taking Communion Wafer.)

And because not even Freud can replace Sol, this, this, cannibalism has naturally failed to fill the hole in your heart—

(ANN puts down remainder of the matzoh.)

AARON

Last session, suddenly at the hour's end, Klein, like a Hebrew prophet of old, stands over me in the half-gloom—

(AARON mimes Klein, with German or Austrian accent:)

Aaron, you cannot be blind—To no avail have you been internalizing Freud. Aaron, you must your longing embrace! Your sorrow, it must flood you—

ANN

And so you bolted!—So, it wasn't the two-hour drive to the psychoanalytic institute after all! Freud, I see, is not the only Jew who is a careful concealer—

AARON (Now lying on couch)

While Klein is embracing air, quiet as a mouse, Jakob, I mean Sol, appears, wearing his black pea coat and favorite Cubs cap, *The Courier-Journal* folded in his pocket and carrying a milk gallon from the plant.

(In a trance-like state, AARON—re-experiencing his acute longing for Sol which had 'broken through' or surfaced that session—rises, tries in vain to embrace 'Sol'; overwhelmed by grief, AARON breaks down, as he sinks on to the foot stool . . .)

ANN

(To self, as SHE restrains herself from comforting him:)

Ann, don't you dare! He *must* go through this!

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AARON

(Steadying self and wiping his eyes, HE heads for the file cabinet, from the top of which AARON lifts a nondescript pipe, fondling it as HE examines it; bending His head, AARON ‘inhales’ the pipe bowl, as if trying to ‘take in’ Sol’s spirit . . . Coughing, HE ‘comes back.’)

Ann . . . I feel lost.

(Now, smelling Sol’s Chicago Cubs cap.)

I don’t want his smell to go away. Does that make sense?

(As HE again breaks down, ANN hands him tissues.)

(AARON, collecting self, replaces the Cap tenderly.)

Emotionally drained, catching myself drifting off at the wheel, I—

(Mimes trying to stay awake.)

ANN

Over the phone, I could hardly hear you.

(Mimes holding phone, trying to hear.)

Spending the night in Cincinnati was the sensible thing to do.

AARON

(Looking at Ann out of corner of his eye, AARON opens up:)

Ann, in the Ramada I had a distressing, but eye-opening dream . . . it was all but transparent.

(HE seats self at ‘hotel room’ desk and writes, ‘analyzing’ his dream:)

A large black labrador with a long leash is running free. Frantically, as though it’s a matter of life and death, I try getting hold of his leash. . . . “Black Labrador”—black dog—Churchill’s “Black dog!” “Black dog” is what Churchill called his bouts of depression. Hm! I’ve been trying to reign in or choke off my huge black dog, my depression. . . . Black, black, Sol’s black pea coat. The black dog of the dream is as elusive as Sol was this afternoon in Klein’s gloomy office—

(HE mimes attempting to embrace Sol.)

Is the elusive black dog of the dream then also Sol, whom I’ve been trying so desperately to hold on to, “as though it’s a matter of life and death”?—But if I don’t let Sol go, if I don’t face head-on my grief, I’ll never come back to myself, never be whole, never rid myself of my “black dog” depressions. But to be whole, to have a life without Sol, how’s that possible? (Anguish) Let alone not to crack-up?

(ANN resists comforting him, an inner struggle.)

So, naturally—to use your apt term, Ann—your brave husband—“bolted.”

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(AARON, as wipes his glasses:)

I left my good glasses at Klein's office. Freud says there are no accidents—

(HE goes to wall calendar; writes:)

"Call Klein." Ann, this might not look like it, but it's written in stone!

ANN

Already, I'm jealous of *Zoftig* Sophie.

AARON

I confess, I do tell her things I don't tell you.

(Starts pouring Mogen David into two wine glasses.)

But it's just talk.

ANN

That's a relief!

(AARON laughs, almost spilling the wine.)

Careful! What's so funny?

AARON

I was just seeing myself being wheeled into Our Lady of Peace:

(Bent over like Groucho, wine glass in each hand, HE stretches arms laterally.)

"*Schwesters, Schwesters*, make way for the *rebbe!* . . . Sisters, make way for the *rebbe!*—

ANN

Aaron, that *is* funny! (Giggling)

AARON

After two thousand years, a fitting reversal—the Church making way for the Jew!

(AARON hands glass to Ann.)

ANN

Nu, meschugganah lunatic, when do we broadcast?—

AARON

A rebbe and rebbetzin from Louisville, Kentucky, who'd listen?

ANN & AARON (THEY toast)

L'Chaim! L'Chaim!

To life! To life!

ANN

Next year in Jerusalem!

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AARON

Not the fleshpots of Egypt?! . . .

(THEY kiss passionately.)

ANN

This was some session, don't you think?!

AARON (Looks at watch.)

Worth every Shekel! . . . My Ann, an analyst. Who'da thunk it!?

(‘Belly dancing’ backward, ANN, blowing a kiss, EXITS.)

(Spotting the yellow “Know Thyself!” legal pad, HE raises it—)

“Know Thyself!” Yes, Ann, my love, it was quite a session!

(Gathering his research pages.)

That's all we need, Sol—Good Christians armed with yet another club.

(HE rips the papers...)

(From the top of the file cabinet, HE takes the Cubs cap; smells and returns it. And then dials . . .)

Dr. Klein, this is Aaron Handel . . . Yes, those are my glasses—

END of PLAY

This play was given a staged reading at the Cincinnati Playwrights Initiative on September 14, 2010.