

Lady of the Harbor

Si Kahn

My grandfather was a scholar
back in the old country,
but he fled from Lithuania in 1893;
with knowledge his companion
and liberty his hope,
he sailed up to the lady of the harbor.

Imagine then, how beautiful
that torchlight must have seemed,
to a frightened Jewish immigrant
caught up in freedom's dream;
but the land had room for many,
and he studied while he worked
by the lamplight of the lady of the
harbor.

Refrain:
Give me your tired, your poor,
your huddled masses yearning to
breathe free,
the wretched refuse of your teeming
shore,
send them the homeless, tempest
tossed to me;
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.

In 1937 with war on every hand,
a band of Jewish refugees
sought shelter in this land;
with Nazis close behind them
they sailed their leaky boat
towards the safety of the lady of the
harbor.

But every door was closed to them
no port would take them in,
'til sick at heart they sailed back home
to Germany again;
where their dreams were turned to
ashes
and their bodies turned to smoke
that drifted past the lady of the
harbor.

Refrain

So if these silent lips could speak,
what reasons would they say -
why some are welcomed freely
but others turned away?
Now as the terror rises,
a fleeing world awaits,
an answer from the lady of the harbor.

For all along the borders,
the question comes again,
as homeless, stateless refugees
seek shelter in this land:
Will the lamp be raised to welcome
them,
or turn them back once more;
only silence from the lady of the
harbor?

Refrain

For more information about Si, visit:

www.sikahn.com