

Ever Dying

*T*he professor, looking at our jagged history, came to the conclusion that Jews are “the ever-dying people.”

Every generation convinced they are the last link, the final chapter of the book.

Yet, to think that we are ever-dying is oddly enough life-sustaining. My father, every so often, placed his hand against his chest convinced that this was a heart attack. But he lived to an old age because the fear made him pay attention.

The will to live out of the threat of death, immortality wrested out of the shadows of mortality.

The ever-dying people is not born yesterday. It carries scars of expulsion, auto-de-fé, inquisition, pogrom, crematoria, and again and again, resilient, miraculous resurrection. Egyptian red waters blocked escape, the fires burned relentlessly. But a people that knows it is ever-dying will not drown, will not be consumed.

Creatio ex nihilo — out of nothing, creation. Out of darkness and chaos a new heart and a new spirit. An ever-dying people defies obituary notices, ignores necrology. The wandering Jew kisses the old-new soil. A state is born, a language revived, a culture reborn, a hope renewed.

Ever-dying, ever evolving.

