

Batya:

Welcome to the All of a Kind Podcast. I'm Batya Wittenberg.

Merav:

I'm Merav Hoffman.

Batya:

We loved these books when we were kids. We love them now and we hope you do too.

Merav:

Today's chapter is the one where Charlotte and Gertie eat candy in bed.

Batya:

All right, once again, I think this is three for four, maybe four for four, one of my favorite chapters of all time.

Merav:

This is an all-time favorite.

Batya:

Yes. Summary: When Mama's younger brother comes for dinner, the girls face the happy dilemma: how will we spend the extra penny from Uncle Hyman? Charlotte and Gertie decide to spend theirs on candy. They visit the local candy shop and the grocery store, and then make a mischievous plan to eat their goodies in bed under Mama's watchful eye. Will they be caught?

Merav:

Welcome to Heidi Rabinowitz. She's gonna be our guest today. She is the host of the Book of Life podcast. That's bookoflifepodcast.com, and she is part of the Sydney Taylor Schmooze Mock Award blog. She's probably gonna talk about that a little bit herself. Welcome, Heidi.

Batya:
Welcome.

Heidi:
Thank you very much. I'm so happy to be here.
I was very excited when I heard about the
creation of this podcast, I have to tell you.

Merav:
We were very excited. I was at the CAJE
conference when I started talking to Susan,
that's Susan Kusel, who hopefully will be
appearing on a future show. And she started
texting a bunch of people from the Sydney
Taylor, from the actual Sydney Taylor Award.
And everybody was going, eeeeeeeee, in the
text messaging.

Batya:
(laughter)

Merav:

So I was very excited. And I felt seen because we really love these books.

Heidi:

Yes, I was on that text chain. Yeah, we've got this sort of posse of Jewish Kid Lit fans, some of whom are past members or chairs of the Sydney Taylor Book Award committee, and then just some other friends who are into this stuff. And yeah, as soon as she met you, she was telling us all about it, and we were very excited.

Merav:

We're very thrilled to have you here.

Batya:

Very much so.

Merav:

Tell us a little bit about the stuff that you've been

working on.

Heidi:

Okay, well, I wear many hats. So my day job is that I am the library director at Congregation B'nai Israel in Boca Raton, where I'm a children's librarian. I work closely with the preschool and also with the religious school. So I do story time all week for those children, and I also teach them computers. But in my copious spare time, I do a lot of other projects that promote Jewish children's literature. So as I mentioned, I'm a former member and chair of the Sydney Taylor Book Award Committee for the Association of Jewish Libraries.

With my friend Susan, and also with another past chair, we're a bunch of past chairs, me, Susan Kusel, and Chava Pinchuck, three past chairs of the Sydney Taylor Committee. We co-founded the Sydney Taylor Schmooze mock

award blog, which provides book reviews. We have a whole committee of volunteer reviewers who review Jewish children's books for us all year long, and we post those on the blog. I've been podcasting at BookOfLifePodcast.com for 18 years, I think. I was an early adopter.
(laughter)

Merav:

That's amazing.

Heidi:

Yeah, it's incredible that I've been able to keep it going. But what keeps me going is that it's just so much fun to talk to authors. And this gives me an excuse to call them up and talk to them about their books. So I keep doing it. What else? Oh, another project that I'd like people to know about is that Susan and I co-founded a Facebook group a few years back called Jewish Kidlit Mavens.

Batya:

Mmm.

Heidi:

Which is a discussion space for people who have an interest in Jewish children's literature. So librarians, educators, authors, publishers, booksellers, agents, editors, and also just people who are interested to discuss anything related to this topic.

Batya:

Fantastic.

Heidi:

So – I can't think. I'm sure there's more because I do a lot of things, but those are like the main things occupying my time these days.

Merav:

Yeah, that's amazing. My mom is actually a Jewish children's librarian so I have a giant bookcase behind me.

Heidi:

Oh, perfect. She should be part of Jewish Kidlet Mavens.

Merav:

She doesn't really do Facebook –

Heidi:

(overlapping) Oh, well, okay.

Merav:

– but I will tell her about it, and maybe she will, because she does love this stuff, and she likes to stay hooked into all the new books. We have a family allergy to paper, so it becomes a little harder, but a lot of them are in e-books these days.

Batya:

Terrible, terrible allergy to have when you're so passionately about books.

Heidi:

Yeah, that's kind of tragic.

Merav:

Yeah, well –

Batya:

But thank heaven for eBooks.

Merav:

Thank God for eBooks. Yep, exactly. So we're gonna get into the meat of this chapter with our favorite feature, what's on the page?

Batya:

And what's not on the page?

Merav:

All right, so we're going to start with the “who do we meet in this chapter?” And we like, right off the bat, we get a brand new character. We get Uncle Hyman, who is mother's youngest brother.

Batya:

We get Uncle Hyman. I love Uncle Hyman so much.

Merav:

Tell me why.

Batya:

It's not that he actually resembles any of my uncles, but he feels like a person I have met. He feels like so many people I have met in little different ways. I love how – he doesn't really talk of it, we don't see him talk very much to the

kids, but – he loves being in the house with the kids and he knows money is tight, so he makes sure that he pays Mama when he eats at her house. And also, unnecessarily, he's gonna give extra pennies to the kids. It's just very much the uncle whose primary means of interacting with the kids is giving presents when he visits. I love that. He's – he means so well. He doesn't have a lot of tools in his toolbox for how to deal with kids, but you give 'em pennies. He can do that.

Merav:

(laughter) Yeah, it does stipulate that he is the youngest brother. I've been reading *From Sarah to Sydney* again, and Mama actually has another younger brother called Joe. So I don't know whether deliberately this was like we're going to put together these two characters, or whether for some reason Joe is no longer in the picture. But in the book, he's the youngest

brother. In reality, it does look like there was another younger brother. So that's just kind of an interesting detail that I noticed, when it said youngest brother, and I was like, wait, wasn't there another one? So, yeah, the Marowitzes were quite a large family.

Batya:

Hm.

Merav:

I thought it was really interesting that they really physically describe Uncle Hyman. And I feel like the description of Uncle Hyman most closely resembles the descriptions we get of the peddlers in chapter three.

Batya:

Interesting.

Heidi:

That is interesting because, yeah, I felt like the descriptions of the peddlers were slightly uncomfortably stereotypical.

Batya:

Mm hmm. Yeah, we talked about that in the last episode.

Merav:

Yes, which Heidi has not heard.

Heidi:

Yeah, so –

Batya:

(overlapping) That's right.

Heidi:

Right, which I wasn't there for that, but it's interesting that Uncle Hyman is also described in that kind of stereotyped way. I'm not sure

what it's a stereotype of exactly. I mean, it doesn't necessarily fit, you know, a Jewish stereotype, but just sort of, I guess, a bachelor, maybe? Like it says he says he doesn't wash his face. And surely (laughing) if he had a wife, she would make him wash his face.

Merav:

Yes.

Heidi:

So I guess it's sort of meant to show his stage of life or something?

Merav:

Or his individuality. He really is just like, oh, I'm just made this way. And I thought it was interesting that it's called out that he doesn't really, like, eat the food the family is eating. He eats what he eats. And I kind of wonder, and I don't know if this was deliberate – you know the

idea of same food? Like the autistic idea of same food. Like, I'm going to go to the restaurant, and I'm going to always order the same thing, because that's the thing I know I like, and I'm guaranteed not to have a bad sensory experience. I wonder if this was just a depiction of, like, maybe something's a little different about Uncle Hyman, we don't know what that is, but this is what he always does. And I was wondering if that might be an early depiction of autism in Judaism. So I just thought that was interesting.

Batya:

Hmm.

Heidi:

That is interesting.

Batya:

Yeah, or some sort of neurodivergent thing that,

that what I've read about same food is that it's not just the same, that it's the same food every time, but that it is specifically a kind of food that is not likely to vary widely. Like you get an apple, you do not know when you bite into that apple, how sweet is it going to be? How juicy is it going to be? How tart? You get a thing of raspberries.

Every single raspberry in that box is going to taste different from every other raspberry and different from any previous raspberry. It's not a reliable sensory experience and ... that is actually one of the things I really like about raspberries and it's a thing that I can really see being incredibly jarring.

No pun intended. I'm so sorry. if you really like to know exactly what you're about to put in your mouth. And if I recall correctly, I'm not going to bother trying to recall. I'm going to pick up the book, which I have here. Yeah. His favorite

meal is “six hard-boiled eggs and half a loaf of sour rye bread spread with butter.” And now boiled eggs and bread are things that are likely to be pretty much the same every time.

Merav:

Yep, so consistency.

Batya:

Especially, you know the baker, and you know this baker reliably produces the same tasting sourdough rye every time.

Merav:

Yep, exactly. And I think that that's also significant is the fact that the idea of white food, like this food is white and therefore I like it, is a phase a lot of little kids go through.

Batya:

Oh, I had not heard of that. Like liking food

because of color.

Merav:

A lot of kids go through a phase where they eat egg whites and they eat yogurt, but they won't eat anything that isn't white. And this is actually very close to that, because the rye bread is a little bit brown, but you could categorize it as being a white food. Butter is a little bit yellow, but it's sort of... So I may be pushing the envelope there with that one.

Heidi:

(laughter)

Merav:

But it does occur to me that that's also a prediction pattern for people who like same food is that they also go through a white food phase.

Heidi:

Well, and another thing is, if he's a bachelor and a lot of the time he feeds himself, this is really easy to make at home.

Batya:

That's true.

Merav:

Yes.

Heidi:

So he just got used to it and his sister knows that that's what he likes and so she just does that for him as well. Or maybe he even brings it with him. No, because he said he paid for his dinner. Right.

Merav:

Yes, this is what Hyman eats.

Heidi:

Or maybe he even brings it with him.

Merav:

(overlapping) Well, no, because he's paying her. Yes.

Heidi:

(overlapping) No, because he said he paid for his dinner. Right.

Batya:

But, uh, but that's interesting. He comes to be part of the life of the family, but he's not coming there to get food he can't make for himself.

Nope, he's not putting her to that kind of trouble. He wants the boiled eggs and the bread and butter.

Merav:

And I think that that's, he really just is there for

the camaraderie.

Batya:

Yeah, for the company.

Merav:

And as somebody who has to bring her own food all the time, because I have all these food allergies, I totally get that. Like it's all right, I'm going to eat what I brought, but like, y'all eat what you're eating and I'll just eat this. But it's good to talk to you, right? It's good to be in a home with other people and feel like you're at home with your family.

(pause)

Merav:

So now we get into the next phase of the story, which is the important thing where, hey, we've got extra money this week, let's go spend it.

Batya:

Yes.

Merav:

We get a very brief, what are the other girls spending their money on? But the focus goes right to Charlotte and Gertie. We're following them around for the first time. We get the beginnings of our neighborhood, right? We have Mrs. Bloomberg, who is the candy store owner, and we have our grocery store owner. And they are actually, this is what's really interesting to me, there's a little bit of omniscient narrator here, right?

Batya:

Yes.

Merav:

Where we actually get the author going into the

head of, um ...

Batya:

First Mrs. Bloomberg and then Mr. Basch as what they're thinking looking at the kids, which is kind of sweet.

Merav:

(overlapping) Yes, exactly, watching the children. Which we get also in chapter one when Miss Allan sees the girls. So this is that same omniscient narrator of like, hey, an adult who isn't a family member is seeing the girls. She doesn't do it with Uncle Hyman.

Heidi:

But she does it with Mama. Mama gets that omniscient narration as well.

Batya:

(overlapping) No, you're right.

Merav:

(overlapping) She does do it with Mama in chapter two. Yes.

Batya:

Mama gets that a lot, but we do not get Hyman's point of – well, no, we sort of get it. Says that he knows that money isn't too plentiful in the household, but that's a thing you could just reasonably assume from his behavior. That's an established thing that the family knows.

Merav:

Right.

Batya:

It's not really in his head, showing us what he thinks.

Heidi:

So they keep saying that this family is poor and they have to watch their money. And yet they give these kids a penny a day and there are five of them. They're giving out five cents a day, every day, and a penny goes pretty far at that time. So it's kind of almost a mixed message. I don't know, like, how poor are they really? They're poor, but not that poor. They have pocket money at all and they have pocket money on a daily basis.

Batya:

Mm-hmm.

Merav:

Yeah, that's true.

Batya:

Yeah, and we get really a glimpse in this episode, in fact, in this chapter, I should say.

We get a glimpse in this chapter of the buying power of a penny.

Heidi:

Exactly.

Merav:

Exactly.

Batya:

I remember when I was a kid reading this being, you get all that for a penny? (laughter)

Merav:

I remember that too. I was like wow.

Batya:

Because I was a kid in the 80s when a penny did not go nearly so far, and kids now would look at the spending power of a quarter when I was a kid and go, you could get all that for a

quarter?

Merav:

Yeah.

Heidi:

(overlapping) Exactly. And I actually looked up what the buying power of a penny, like I was curious about that. So I looked that up and supposedly it's gone up by, it's three times as much. So a penny is supposedly worth about 33 cents or something. But that doesn't actually make sense because you can't buy any candy or any snack for 30 something cents. Like you have to have at least 50 cents or more to get even like a gumball, probably. Certainly to get a bag full of candy that's enough to share.

Merav:

Yeah, and I mean, we have the sequence where, you know, once they get all the candies,

Charlotte dumps it out in her skirt and they're just overwhelmed by how much it is.

Heidi:

Yeah. So the buying power of a penny is even more than what I looked up.

Merav:

And I mean it's possible, like, I was, I looked up I went down a rabbit hole today looking at cookies and crackers because it says crackers, but as we find out later – spoiler! – it's cookies in the cracker barrel.

[cut sound!]

Merav:

Back to our story. (laughter) So the girls enter our candy shop. Our candy shop has a huge array of sweets. And I wanted to kind of talk about Charlotte and her decision-making

powers, because keep in mind that Charlotte is six.

Batya:

Charlotte is six! (laughter) I keep thinking of that during this chapter, is these are small, small girls. And like partly just how very assertive and decisive Charlotte is at that age. Love that, love that for her. But also just that nobody seems to think anything at all unusual of a six-year-old going out to buy her own stuff. With her four-year-old sister in tow and no parental supervision at all. Or even older sibling supervision.

Heidi:

I think that on the Lower East Side with these lower-income families, some of those kids would be actually working. So, for them to just go to the shops is no big deal. Probably they are sent to the shops to pick things up for their

mother. In fact, we know that because the grocer assumes that. He says, oh, what does your mom need? So that's completely normal for them. Well, since they have been all getting a penny a day, I'm sure this is not the first time she's bought candy. In fact, we don't really know whether this is the first time they've played that game of having snacks in bed. It almost sounds like it's not the first time.

Batya:

Yeah, I get the feeling this is a, if not a regular thing, certainly a repeated thing, that they have done this before. A lot of Charlotte's very firm decisions have to do with not how the candy tastes – although, and I think a couple of cases, she mentions either how much or how little you get, or this is a mixed kind and we don't like this, but, it was the jelly beans?

Heidi:

Right.

Batya

They like the black ones best, which is hilarious to me because it is so common for people to dislike the black ones – but so much of what goes into her decision-making process is thinking about: how is this going to work for our game?

Merav:

Right, it's really the game first.

Heidi:

Yeah.

Batya:

That is absolutely the goal here, is we need to buy the right candy for our game.

Heidi:

I think that that's a really good point, that she's not just going by this is the candy I like best or is the yummiest. You know, it's definitely how is this candy physically going to interact with the game itself, with being in bed, you know, needing to eat it quietly. You know, there's a lot of factors going into this.

Batya:

Mm-hmm.

Merav:

I will say, gun on the mantel, there is no, this is too messy.

Batya

That's true. They don't think of that. (laughter)

Heidi:

(laughter)

Merav:

(laughter) There's no, this is too messy, we're gonna get chocolate on the sheets. Nobody says that. And I feel like that's the one thing that led me to believe that this was the first time they were trying this, because as we will see later in the chapter, that's what gives them away eventually.

Batya:

I think it might be that this is the first time they try *crackers*.

Merav:

That's very possible.

Batya:

Like maybe they've done this before with candy, but this is the first time with crackers. And they discover why that's maybe not a good idea.

Merav:

So you were saying about the rejected candy types. I actually did a dive today and kind of looked at all of the different kinds of foods.

Batya:

Yes, tell us about the candy.

Merav:

Rejected candy types! A new feature. (laughter)

Batya:

(laughter)

Merav:

So the first candy they reject is called Indian bars. And “Indian bars” – you can't see me putting quotes around this, but Indian bars are literally just chocolate covered peanut bars. They sell these to this day. They're called peanut chews. I don't know where the name

comes from. I'm going to assume it's something awful. I will probably look this up later when I'm not going to be on the air and have to tell you. But if you are curious, I'm going to put links in the show notes so that you can go and see modern versions of these candies and in some cases versions of the candy that actually date from the period. The next rejection is licorice drops.

Heidi:

Sorry, can I ask you a question about the peanut chews?

Merav:

Please!

Heidi:

So I feel like there's, isn't there a brand of peanut chews that has a Jewish name like Goldberg's Peanut Chews? Goldenberg's

Peanut Chews!

Batya:

Goldenbergs! I was just thinking –

Merav:

Yes.

Batya:

Goldenberg's Peanut – I had a teacher in fifth grade. Flashback! I grew up in Seattle, and I had a teacher in fifth grade who was from New York. That was Rabbi Klestzick. If any member of the Klestzick family is out there, Rabbi Hal Klestzick, a beloved teacher of mine. He had a passion for Goldenberg's peanut chews, which you could not get at that time in Seattle, but you could get them in New York. And he said, I will give an A averaged into your final grade on your report card if you can bring me a bag of Goldenberg's peanut chews. And I believe one

kid in my grade did take him up on it and brought him one, and he was as good as his word. Getting to try Goldenberg's peanut chews later, I remember thinking, Okay, these are good. I don't think they're worth an A.

Merav:

They were my go-to movie candy when I was like fifteen because, and this is a very Charlotte thing, because they would last. Because you had the chocolate comes off, dissolve the center, chew the peanut, take another bite.

That's a good fifteen minutes before you take a bite. So like there's definitely a enjoy as you go.

Batya:

That's so funny, because she rejects the chocolate peanut bars on the grounds that they would be finished too soon.

Merav:

I wonder if that has to do with the fact that the chocolate melts.

Batya:

Oh, could be.

Merav:

Because I was perfectly content to leave part of it in the wrapper and not touch it, because I have fairly bad circulation, so I wasn't melting it with the heat of my hand. But we know from this chapter that Charlotte has moist, warm hands, because she's clutching those two pennies. So possibly that's a Charlotte thing.

Batya:

Also, they wouldn't have gotten them in a plastic wrapper.

Merav:

Right.

Heidi:

Right.

Batya:

Or a foil one, they would have gotten them just whole.

Merav:

These are in paper bags. In fact, that comes up in a minute where they talk about transferring the candy from the paper bag, which is going to crackle, into one of Papa's red handkerchiefs. And we'll get into red handkerchiefs in a minute. Back to rejected candy. Rejected candy number two, licorice drops. All the pieces are the same. So I'm assuming that this is not licorice allsorts. I found an old-fashioned candy type that's literally just like big black licorice drops.

Batya:

That's gotta be it.

Merav:

And it's funny because they said that they love the black jelly beans the most.

Heidi:

Which taste like licorice.

Merav:

But these are theoretically the same flavor, but they're all the same.

Heidi:

Yeah, it's also funny because what they ultimately choose, the chocolate babies, are all the same.

Merav:

Yes.

Batya:

They're all the same, but they have a shape that you can play with the variety of –

Heidi:

Right.

Merav:

Yes.

Batya:

– you eat the head, you eat the feet, you eat the hands. So those are fun, even though flavor-wise and shape-wise, they are all the same, they have built right in ways to play with them.

Merav:

Right, and I think the red cherry hearts go the same route. Just they're too similar.

Batya:
Most likely.

Merav:
So those get rejected. I did find red cherry hearts out there. Chicken corn is candy corn. I was pretty sure it was candy corn. It starts out life as chicken corn I actually found a history and I'm going to put that in the show notes.

Batya:
Oh, excellent.

Merav:
The multicolored jelly beans, we've already mentioned why they get rejected. They mostly get the white ones. And I'm assuming the white ones are coconut.

Batya:
Oh, that's very possible.

Merav:

I don't know for sure, but I can't think of another flavor that would be white. Lemon drops.

Lemon drops get rejected because they're only sucking candy. So everything else up to this point is theoretically at least partially chewing candy. I'm guessing these are sour balls. You don't want to get like, if you ever have bitten down on a sour ball, you get candy shard in your mouth.

Batya:

Yeah, lemon drops. I've had lemon drops. They are very tasty, but – what you want when you just want to suck on a candy for a long time. There's not a lot of variety.

Heidi:

It would slow the game down.

Merav:

Yes, exactly. And then we get to caramels, which are too hard to chew. It's just too much like, chomp chomp chomp. Maybe it's too loud. It doesn't get said. Chocolate pennies get rejected because they are gone too quickly. I think we're back to the chocolate problem of, you know, body heat makes the game end faster.

And our winner, the chocolate baby.

Batya:

Chocolate babies!

Merav:

So I went and looked this up. Chocolate babies are incredibly disturbing to look at.

Batya:

(laughter) Oh no. Oh no.

Heidi:
(laughter)

Merav:
I always pictured something really delightful, but it looks like they're a form of gummy candy, which explains sort of the, like, they chewed happily.

Heidi:
It's not just chocolate. It's chocolate flavored, chewy stuff.

Merav:
It's not just chocolate. Exactly. So it's basically –

BatyaSomething like Tootsie Rolls?

Merav:
Kind of like Tootsie Rolls, but shaped like a little person. And there were a couple of different

varieties of these. The only ones I was able to find pictures of were from the 1940s. And they're literally, they kind of look like tin soldiers. And they have arms at the sides. They've got a big head. They've got little tiny feet. And they've got two arms kind of down the sides of them. And then there are legs and a torso. So they're a little disturbing looking. And moreover, there is a history of these with the African-American community. Yep.

Heidi:
Yep.

Batya:
I didn't want to ask, but I had a feeling chocolate baby-shaped candy is going to wind up with caricatures on it.

Merav:
It is not great. I get the impression that there

was another name for these, which obviously Mama's girls would not use.

Batya:

Oh boy.

Merav:

Yeah, but I don't think the girls are aware of that. They just know that these are tasty and they want to eat them. And the whole idea of little white girls consuming things that potentially look like black people is a whole other podcast.

Batya:

Yeah –

Heidi:

I had looked it up a little bit too. It sounds like you found a lot more information than I did, but I had seen that the reason that they no longer

sell them, one reason is the racism. And then another apparently is the kids love biting off the heads, biting off the feet. And then the adults are like disturbed (laughter) by children's cannibalistic tendencies.

Batya:

Yep.

Heidi:

They are no longer sold apparently, or maybe just in specialty, where you can order old-fashioned candy for nostalgia's sake, but they're not generally sold.

Merav:

There is, yeah, there is a place you can actually get them on Amazon. I went looking this up to see, I think they're being made by Necco, N-E-C-C-O, the Necco wafer people. And yeah, they look like, you know, any kind of gummy

candy, but they're shaped like a person. And so, yeah, there's definitely a cannibalism aspect to this, which I definitely got reading the chapter when Charlotte's like, OK, we're going to bite off their little heads. It's a little disturbing.

Batya:
(laughter)

Heidi:
But the same thing happens with gingerbread men, and chocolate Santa Claus, and –

Batya:
Gingerbread men, I was going to say, I've read about this happening with Easter bunnies, that the kid is delightedly savagely biting off the head and parents going, (uncomfortable noises) do you have to –? (laughter)

Heidi:

Yeah.

Merav:

Mm-hmm.

Merav:

My aunt worked at a shop called Chocolate Charm in Toronto. Shout out to Chocolate Charm! I don't think it's still going. And she used to send us cats in boxes and they were little chocolate hollow cats because she knew we all loved cats. What would happen is they would come in these neat little white boxes and we wouldn't want to eat them because they look like cats. And then my sister got very clever one day and knocked hers off the counter and then it was just a bunch of chocolate shards.

Heidi:

(laughter)

Merav:

And she was like, “Oh, oops, I dropped my cat. I guess I better eat it.” And so that solved the cannibalism issue.

Heidi:

That's so cat-like to knock it off the counters, embodying the spirit of a cat.

Batya:

Yep, yep, yep. But this does kind of – if they discontinued the chocolate babies because of parental discomfort with childish savagery, that does make a lot of sense, because stuff that gets marketed to kids is really more marketed to their parents who are the ones doing the buying. Which, in this case, is not what's going on.

Heidi:

Especially now, parents are doing the buying.

Batya:

Kids have their own money and are buying their own stuff. These days – stuff that is marketed to kids has to be marketed to the parents, sometimes in direct opposition to what kids would actually prefer.

Merav:

So I was kind of amazed that after the whole conversation that she has with the store owner about whether you can split a penny into four –

Batya:

Oh yes.

Merav:

Because that's Charlotte's first thing, and she's like, "Hey, can I get a four-way on my penny? Can I get like a quarter pound of this and a quarter pound of that?" And she's like, "Listen,

kid, it's already hard enough for me to give you half a pound of this and half a –” It's not actually half pounds, but half penny and half penny of that. I'm really surprised Charlotte doesn't go for half penny on something, right?

Heidi:

Yeah, it's true. She just spends the entire penny on chocolate babies.

Batya:

Yeah.

Merav:

Right? Like why only chocolate babies? Maybe they're just flushed with wealth, I don't know.

Batya:

Or just, the chocolate babies are suddenly perfect, we don't need more variety, we have these guys.

Merav:

And besides, we're going to the grocery next.
So I'm assuming she already had in mind the
idea of getting into the cracker barrel, not
literally getting into the cracker barrel –

Batya:

Yeah, which also comes with its own variety.
Just – little side thing, very amused that Mrs.
Bloomberg says “woe is me!” when asked if she
can split a penny four ways. That has to be –
you don't say that in English. That is *vey iz mir!*

Merav:

Yeah, 100%.

Heidi

Right.

Batya

And it is precisely the correct usage of *vey iz mir*. It's extremely, extremely Yiddish, and I love it.

Merav

Yes, woe is me. These children have entered my shop and are going to spend money. How will I cope?

Batya

(laughter)

Merav

My life is so hard. No, it probably is actually hard. Running an independent shop in this era is actually quite difficult. Speaking of which, we're about to enter Mr. Bosch or Mr. Bash's store, we don't know. So this is one of the first people that we meet who is explicitly visually Jewish. And I think that that's significant. He's a store owner. He's wearing a kippah, which gets

called a skullcap. He is smoothing his long white beard. This is a very visually Jewish person. And, you know, he only speaks Yiddish, which the children clearly can understand him. And they, you know, he understands them. I think the children are probably speaking German back. And I've seen this in action in person. My father was speaking Yiddish with my mother-out-law who is a German speaker, and the two of them were able to understand each other. But I don't know. I do think that, I'm not positive that there was Yiddish in the Brenner household.

Heidi:

Hmm. Why would there not be?

Merav:

That's a good question. I mean, Mama is German and Papa is sort of Polish, Russian, moved to Germany. He probably has a polyglot

of different Yiddish. So probably the kids speak Yiddish. But mostly what we've seen the kids speak is English.

Heidi:

Well, they live in a Yiddish neighborhood.

Merav:

They do.

Batya:

Well, as you said, they live in a Yiddish neighborhood, and I think sometime in the next chapter it is called out that they are virtually foreigners in this Yiddish-speaking place because they speak English.

Merav:

But that doesn't mean they don't speak Yiddish.

Heidi:

But they don't only speak English.

Batya:

It doesn't mean they don't speak Yiddish or don't understand Yiddish, but English is what they habitually speak, apparently. And so again, I'm thinking about my mother's family. This is stuff I didn't know until I was already in my early 20s. My mother's parents spoke Yiddish fluently, but in the home when their kids were growing up they spoke English so that their kids would learn English because they needed to, to get along in America. I didn't know my mother could speak Yiddish conversationally. Until as I said, I was in my early 20s. I never heard her do it when we were growing up. I heard – the Yiddish I know is a handful of phrases and it's mostly what I think of as nursery Yiddish. I know a couple of lullabies, I know a bunch of endearments, and I know expressions of impatience.

Heidi:
(laughter)

Merav:

Yeah, that's definitely true for me as well. I actually found the quote I was looking for in *From Sarah to Sydney*. It says, no record remains of whether Mama insisted that Yiddish not be spoken or if Papa simply elected not to teach it to his children. The names he and his wife chose for their daughters were mainly derived from German and not from Yiddish. So it does look like they deliberately didn't pass Yiddish down, but Cilly is a German speaker and clearly the girls speak at least a *bissel*, a little Yiddish, because there is a bit later in one of the chapters where they make fun of the peddler singing in Yiddish by singing it back and forth between themselves. So they clearly at least understand that much.

Batya:

So I'm wondering if in this conversation, we've got the thing that happens in a lot of immigrant communities, where one person is speaking the language of the old country and the other person is speaking English and they understand each other well enough to be going on. Whatever it may be, I've seen this in another book specifically with Chinese.

Merav:

Yeah, and Papa is specifically trying to improve his English. We know that he read trade journals, specifically trade journals on woolen goods, because that was not only a way for him to improve his English, it was a good way for him to figure out how to channel the woolens he was getting into the rag shop into money. And one of the things that he hit on was the ability to sell it to places that would turn it into yarn and

they would then sell it to mills. So he was providing the raw goods to recycle the woolens. And that was one of the ways that he was learning English was by reading about these supply chains in journals.

Batya:

That's very cool. That also gives him specifically the English vocabulary to do with his business.

Merav:

Right, exactly. So even better than ulpan. Or I guess today that would be Duolingo.

Batya:

(laughter)

Heidi:

So I read the chapters up through this chapter to get ready to speak to you. And I think that this is, as far as I can tell, only the second direct

mention of Judaism. Earlier there was a mention of Yom Kippur –

Batya:

Mm-hmm.

Heidi:

– Henny says something about apologizing, or not apologizing to her friend that she's mad at right now, not speaking to. And one of the others says, well, you'll have to apologize on Yom Kippur. And she says, well, that's a long way away. So that was like the first mention. And then this, where it says he speaks Yiddish, that's the second mention.

Merav:

Exactly.

Heidi:

The word Judaism hasn't come up. Or Jewish.

Batya:

I think you're right. It has not.

Heidi:

But to, you know, explicit markers of Judaism.

This is only the second one.

Merav:

Exactly.

Batya:

We have the language, we have the skull cap, and the beard by itself wouldn't necessarily signify being Jewish, but in combination it tells us this is very much a gentleman in the old style.

Heidi:

Right. And then it continues because he's going to give them some lox as a snack.

Batya:

Yes!

Merav:

Yeah, so the children, the children come in and interact with him. And as they're leaving, they've had their way with the cracker barrel, and now they've got their bag of crackers. I love the description of, you know, scooping out the crackers. It's one of my favorite things from the whole series. It's just the idea of a cracker barrel, which was so foreign to me. Boxes of crackers with little sanitary sleeves, which was coming very soon after this. The Uneeda Corporation made the sanitary sleeve for the soda cracker very soon after this takes place.

And then he's like, "No girls don't leave yet. I have a treat for you!" And I love that. Like, that's a very familial, like the neighborhood raises the

children thing.

Batya:

Mm-hmm. And also, it's a sort of thing that it feels very period, which is maybe an odd thing to say. But it's like, this is a thing of this time and place, that a shopkeeper would give a little extra something to someone who would probably be a returning customer. A gesture of goodwill, gesture of neighborhood friendliness, and that's part of how you keep your customers coming back is they know you, you're friends. I have a very dim memory of a book I had as a kid that was set, not quite at this time, somewhat later, but a book for younger children that I think was called Casey's Sick Day or Casey's Sore Throat Day or something like that.

And the entire plot of it is little boy is sick with a sore throat and his Mama puts him to bed and goes shopping at a bunch of different shops,

because this is before supermarkets, to get things to make him a nice dinner because he's sick and that dinner is of course going to include chicken soup. And I don't believe this was a Jewish family, but the healing powers of chicken soup are known far beyond our own people.

Heidi:
(laughter)

Batya:
And I recall, I have no idea why this thing sticks in my head, but the butcher, when he gives her the chicken to make the soup with, also gives her as a gift, doesn't charge her for it, a little sprig of parsley. He says, that'll be nice on top of the soup.

Merav:
Right. We used to put the parsley right in the

soup in our family. But yes, definitely. But also, I think it's significant that this is a Jewish shop with Jewish neighbors. Mama is living right over this shop. So to hear that Mr. Basch gave her children a nice snack isn't going to freak her out. She knows who he is. He's a neighbor. They're both neighbors. They're both Jewish. She knows that he's not going to feed the children something they shouldn't eat.

Batya:

Mm-hmm.

Merav:

That's actually something that's very interesting to me is like, I was like, well, what's the kashrut of all of this, right? Like, how are they observing the Jewish dietary laws? In this scenario, we have two Jewish shopkeepers. Presumably, the goods they're selling are kosher certified, things that Mama would have in the house. And we

don't really get into kashrut for quite a long time in these books. I think we actually move uptown before we actually really talk about kashrut.

Batya:

I think you're right, yeah.

Merav:

There was definitely a bit of a fight between Sydney Taylor and her editor. And I think a lot of the Judaism did kind of get pushed off the page. But we do eventually get a scene where she's kashering chicken. I think it's Ella and Grace are kashering a chicken. But at this point, it's just kind of a non-issue, right? The girls go and they buy foods that they presumably know are safe for them to eat and to bring into the house. It's not, oh, we're getting some kind of a, we're going to go and get cracklins. We're going to eat cracklins and – but no.

Heidi:
(laughter)

Merav:

Not only would Mama kill them, they wouldn't know where to go to get them, because that's not something that occurs in their neighborhood. Their neighborhood is predominantly a Jewish space. But we've seen in the previous chapter that Papa's peddlers are not all Jews. And so obviously, they're living cheek by jowl with other neighbors who are non-Jews. And so that reality is part of it. And then I also thought it was interesting that it doesn't emphasize that Mr. Basch's shop is clean or tidy, but I also get the impression that Mama would never choose to move in over a store that might have mice or rodents or insects.

Batya:

Huh.

Merav

But it is interesting because that's a known fact of living over a shop is, "Oh no, the bugs are going to come up from the shop." It does not get mentioned here. And I don't know if that's just sort of a veil over the reality, or maybe that's part of why Mama is so, "We must clean the house." It's unclear. But I thought that was an interesting thing in the depiction, is that just bugs don't exist in this reality.

Batya:

I think it has to be, this was a thing that was there in their real lives, but who wants to see that on the page.

Merav:

Right, exactly.

Heidi:

Well, it's a very romanticized view of the whole Lower East Side, and I'm sure that that's part of what got smoothed over in order to make it this cozy, sweet version of that reality.

Batya:

Yeah. Although in other chapters, it's not as romanticized as it might be. I mean, certainly the ugliest parts are not talked about. But I recall from at least the last chapter, there's mention of how the Lower East Side isn't pretty, and there's no trees and there's no grass and the river stinks. So she does not want to sanitize and romanticize every aspect, but there's certainly stuff, there is certainly stuff that she's leaving out.

Merav:

One thing I did learn in my various peregrinations around the internet today while I

was looking this stuff up is that the cracker barrel apparently was kind of like a water cooler in the past.

Batya:

Huh!

Merav:

Like a water cooler-like gathering space for people where they would stand around the cracker barrel and talk about stuff. And I don't know if this is because they were like shoveling crackers out of it, or if it just happened to be a good gathering spot in the store. But they actually made cracker barrels where you could reverse the lid, and on the other side of the lid there'd be a game board. And so you could play checkers or chess on the top of the cracker barrel, and people would stand around talking at the cracker barrel. And that is a way of life that gets lost when the cracker barrel goes out

of fashion.

Batya:
Ahh.

Merav:
And that gets a verse in *The Music Man*, the musical, in the Harold Hill sequence at the very beginning where he's talking about how everything changed when they came up with these sanitary packages. There's an entire verse about the cracker barrel, and I'll stick that in the show notes.

Batya:
I never put that together, but yeah.

Heidi:
And I think that's why Cracker Barrel restaurant is trying to sort of cash in on that. Oh, let's gather. Let's be friendly. Let's hang out. Yeah.

Batya:

(overlapping) For sure!

Merav:

Exactly, and that is definitely the vibe that they go for. There's apparently a person whose job it is purely to secure antiques for Cracker Barrel restaurants. And there's actually a cute little YouTube video of like his storage space where he's, you know, sourcing all of these different things like miner's picks and cracker barrels and all kinds of different things that are of an era that we don't really see anymore. I'm not endorsing Cracker Barrel restaurants. There's been some somewhat ugly politics around them. That being said, they're carrying on the word "cracker barrel" into a future state.

Interestingly, one of the things I learned is that cracker barrel came to be applied to what we would today call a bodega. They were

sometimes called cracker barrels, meaning the entire store was referred to as a cracker barrel. “Oh, I'm going to go to the cracker barrel and get some cheese”

Batya

That's so interesting. And that's got to be why the Cracker Barrel chain named itself that as much as anything else.

Merav:

Almost certainly.

Batya:

You say “the cracker barrel,” you have something in mind, we're going to capitalize on that. It's clever.

Merav:

Yeah, I thought that was pretty interesting. Another gun on our mantel as we go through our chapter, and – obviously there are no guns

in these books, that's just a phrase meaning a thing that's coming up later –

Batya:
(laughter)

Merav:
– is that Charlotte and Gertie get really thirsty after eating the salmon. And that's gonna pay off again later when –

Batya:
Oh, that's right. That's right.

Merav:
(overlapping) Yep, very thirsty, very thirsty indeed. Keep that in the back of your brain. We're gonna talk about switching the food into the handkerchiefs. Anyone got a theory as to why Papa's handkerchiefs are red?

Batya:

I was – I just thought a red handkerchief was, like I don't think it necessarily suggests anything beyond red is a bright and cheery color. It's nice to have something that's a bright color.

Heidi:

Yeah, it didn't – I mean, now that you say that, I'm thinking, what is it, like, communist or something? I mean, lots of Jews were socialists. I don't think this family in particular was, historically. But I agree with what Batya said. I think it's just a pleasant color for a handkerchief.

Merav:

I think so too. Papa probably just got some cloth into the shop and was like, oh, this will make nice handkerchiefs. I don't know if he's buying them or making them, but I thought it was a really nice detail that Papa's

handkerchiefs are red. Because we get so little color for Morris because he's kind of constantly in this world of the dark basement. I thought it was nice that he had bright cheerful handkerchiefs. There is a story in... I think it's in *From Sarah to Sydney*. Let me just see if I can find it.

About Papa and candy. And I think one of the girls asked Papa what it was that he ate for candy. Yes, here it is. “Ella remembered a number of stories about her father's childhood poverty that affected her deeply. When she asked him what kind of candy he enjoyed, expecting him to mention the old world equivalent of jelly beans or lemon drops, her father chuckled ruefully and said he would take a few lima beans from the soup pot and slip them into his pocket to eat later as candy.”

Batya:

Oh gosh.

Merav:

“After she heard that story, Ella could never eat lima beans again without thinking sadly of her father's childhood privations.”

Heidi:

Wow. That's the worst version of candy I ever heard. Lima beans.

Merav:

So the children all go to the – the girls would go to bed at the same time.

Batya:

Love this detail.

Heidi:

I like how they go into Mama's psychology so often.

Batya:

Mm-hmm.

Heidi:

Like you sort of feel like you're switching back and forth from the child point of view to the mom's point of view. And so you kind of get to know the whole family really well. And I think that it made sense, her reasoning that just send them all to bed at the same time. The parents get a little quiet time and the kids can bond. Because they don't have that feeling of, "Oh, it's not fair you let her stay up later than me." And they get to hang out and bond as sisters because some of them aren't ready to go to sleep necessarily so they can just talk or play or whatever. I thought that was a really sweet plan that their mother came up with.

Batya:

It's really good. It's good on so many levels. And what's just occurred to me talking about it now, Sydney Taylor was writing this as someone who had been a mother, who had raised – how old was her daughter Jo at the point where she was writing these? Was Jo really little? Was she older?

Heidi:

My sense is that she was probably sort of an elementary school age because she was young enough that she was asking her mother to tell her bedtime stories, but old enough to pay attention to family stories rather than just something kind of short and quick and goofy. But she was an only child. So I think that it was – Sydney Taylor's experience of motherhood would have been very different from her own mom, who had to raise a whole household full and she just had this one child.

Batya:

Very different. But I feel like that has got to be part of what – part of Sydney's thinking writing this is specifically that, comparing and contrasting her own parenting experience with her mother's, and I do have to wonder and I don't know if this would be in any information that we have now, is did she talk to her mother at this point or earlier, about parenting? About, so like, tell me about what you were doing when you were raising us. I mean, not even necessarily for purposes of writing the book, although possibly that too, but just for the point of view of, I'm having to do the parenting thing now, talk to me about how you did it.

Merav:

It's very likely that at some point, they either talked about it or Sydney just sat down and thought about like how her mother had raised them and came up with this. And it's pretty clear

that Mama was incredibly smart. She's reserving reading time for herself with five children. I mean, that's, you've got to be really smart to get that.

Batya:

Yes, so important.

Merav:

Exactly. Reading and knitting are called out, but also talking with Papa, which is keeping up the intimacy of the marriage by having quiet time with her husband. That's an important thing. And it's really, as you said, sort of giving the girls a chance to bond, while also having this space for herself. And I think that is a big part of Mama's psychology, how do I make the children independent? How do I give them tools to become independent? And I think that that's an interesting factor in a lot of the interactions we see between Mama and the girls, even just in

the first five chapters.

Batya:

Mm-hmm. There's making them independent. There's also, as we saw in the Dusting is Fun chapter, there's the how do I make this not a fight if it doesn't have to be? Well, fight it wouldn't necessarily have been, but how do I make this not a matter of me asserting authority and the kids obeying? But the kids, the kids going along with things or doing things because they themselves are good with it rather than feeling forced to do it. Which is some smart parenting, I tell you that. That's a good way to do things.

Merav:

Definitely. And I mean, speaking of papering over some of the difficulties that really were occurring, Sydney talks about Cilly having good days and bad days. There's the bit where we

have the children being tucked into bed by Mama. And Mama is putting the irons into the feet of the bed. And for anyone who's never seen a warming iron, it's like a flat piece of metal. You heat it up in the oven, and you wrap it in a towel or something. You put it at the foot of the bed. And it's a nice, it's like a heating pad. Right, because these rooms are not heated. Right, it's pretty obvious. Like we're in November or December at this point in the year. It's very cold in the bedroom. The girls are racing to get under the covers. And a bag of candy is not actually going to keep you warm. The giggling might, but the bag of candy itself will not.

Heidi:

(laughter)

Batya:

No. (laughter)

Merav:

So Mama is walking around the bedroom and putting heating irons into the beds. And this brings up a very interesting story that's in *From Sarah to Sydney*, where Papa at one point tried to do this for them. And in trying to heat the iron, he accidentally dropped it and broke Cilly's new sink. And the two of them actually had a fight. And the girls were like, "Oh my God, our parents are fighting. This is not OK."

Batya:

The world is ending.

Merav:

And I thought that it was really interesting that obviously that's a story of interest. Like, it's mentioned in the biography. But it's very much not in the books. And if we go with the picture we get in the books, Mama consistently is

always happy and cheerful and putting the iron in the bed every night. But the reality is that this is sort of a smashed-together recollection of what I would say are the good times. So I think that that's an interesting thing. This is such a happy chapter, but I do think that, you know, just leavening that a little bit with the reality that Mama is not always gonna be 100% perfect either. Right, everyone has foibles.

Batya:

Yeah, there's no such thing as a person who doesn't have bad days.

Merav:

But we don't see a lot of Mama scolding the children. We will get to Sarah in Trouble later, which is the soup chapter. And we'll sort of see what the flavors of discipline look like at that point. In the meantime, in the freezing bedroom, our girls are in bed. And I thought the bed

configuration was really interesting.

Batya:

Yes. It's so interesting. I love this. Again, such a great character detail. The way they're paired off. There's five of them. It's an odd number. But yet, Henny does not like sharing a bed with anyone.

Heidi:

It makes perfect sense. If anybody's going to kick their bedfellow, it would be Henny, right? (laughter) I mean...

Merav:

And I feel sort of bad for Ella who must have had to share a bed with Henny at some point, or Sarah possibly. But at some point Henny must have shared a bed.

Heidi:

Back when there were four children.

Batya:

When there were four most likely, and very probably she leapt at the chance to have her own bed once it was available. I feel that, I feel that. I did not grow up sharing a bed, but I did grow up sharing a room. One sister and one brother. My brother, owing to the vagaries of gender, got his own room, my sister and I had to share, right up until my brother moved out of the house to go to college. And I was like, “I get my own room now.” And I did, and I was very happy about it.

Merav:

I was raised in a family where we all had our own rooms, but we would all sneak into each other's rooms at night to talk. We definitely wanted that like All-of-a-Kind Family thing where like you sit up at night talking in bed, we

didn't have it. So we would recreate it.

Heidi:

Well, that's the thing. This, the fun of this chapter is only possible because they share a room and share beds. Otherwise, you couldn't even do this.

Batya:

Yeah.

Merav:

Right, exactly. And because of Mama's leniency, Mama's like, "Oh, they're resting their bodies, they're fine, they'll go to sleep when they're tired." She doesn't care that her girls are talking and staying up. Right, she says bedtime is at X time, and after that, you're on your own, kids. Right? Come and get me if you have an emergency.

Batya:

I suspect if there were loud talking or if there were sounds of them moving around, there would be a mild intervention.

Merav:

Right, or tickling or shrieking.

Batya:

Yes, but talking quietly is fine. And that's, again, very strong parenting choice there. But yes, you have Ella and Sarah spend all their time building an imaginary house. I love that so much. I love that. They're just going to go into thorough detail about how this room is decorated, how they've got names for the rooms.

Heidi:

I think that's especially charming because it's a shared imaginary space. And it doesn't say that

they're like drawing this on a piece of paper so they can both see the same thing. Like they're just describing it to each other so vividly that they both know what they're talking about and can imagine it physically. Like where are we putting the furniture? They can see the same space in both of their minds. So that's some really strong imaginary play.

Batya:

Yeah.

Merav:

And that's just so interesting, like for sisters to do that. So that they have this shared world that doesn't exist for anyone else.

Batya:

Yes, and it's not, like I don't think this ever occurred to me as a kid, but they are not each decorating their own dream house. It's not, oh,

when I grew up, this is gonna be my house. What's your house gonna be like? It's not that at all. This is, it's not clear whether they imagine this to be a house they will live in one day, or if it's just a story house, but it is a single place that they are jointly imagining together. And I love that so much. And it says so much about Ella and Sarah's relationship that they can do that.

Merav:

And also it's, they're winding down, right? They're like, oh, let's, let's decorate the pink room tonight. Like instead of eating something or playing a game, their game is to make a house that they can both sort of dream into. And that's kind of nice. It's like a future investment in themselves.

Heidi:

Right.

Batya:

Yeah,

Heidi:

Well, and it's very domestic and you could consider it to be a gendered activity because they are expected to grow up to be homemakers. But on the other hand, a boy could be expected to grow up to provide a home. So maybe it's not necessarily gendered to think about a possible future home or how you would want your home to be. Or, and you know, as you said, it could be just like an imaginary fantasy house that they don't expect to ever live in something like this. Maybe it's like a pretend dollhouse that they have imaginary family living in it.

Batya:

I feel like it is a dollhouse. A space to furnish

and play in, a shared space that is fantastical and elaborate and ... infinitely elaborate, in potential at least. That they don't have to follow any sorts of real-world rules of economy or even physics if they don't feel like it.

Heidi:

(laughter)

Merav:

Right, exactly. They could put the furniture on the ceiling if they really wanted to. It may not occur to them because they're doing this in a very mundane context, but they are creating a world. And interestingly, one of the things it says is that the regular activity of Charlotte and Gertie is that Charlotte tells stories to Gertie. And I think it's interesting that Sarah becomes a writer, and Charlotte becomes a writer. And I don't know if Ella also becomes a writer, but Charlotte actually published a memoir, which is

not something that I've been able to get my hands on. I don't know if it was published outside the family. But Charlotte felt the need to like write down her life. And I think that these early storytelling sessions are probably sort of the backbone of that writer brain that's forming for her and for Sarah. I think that that's pretty interesting. And Henny is plotting mischief.

Batya:

Henny is plotting mischief. (laughter)

Merav:

At least that's what it says. Although to me it sounds like Henny has already done the mischief and is plotting how to get out of it.

Batya:

Yes, what is it that it says that she's got a note she's got to get signed?

Heidi:

Right, she hasn't done her homework for several days and the teacher sent home a note so that the parents will know about it and it has to get signed and she's trying to figure out how can I get it signed and avoid a spanking.

Batya:

Yes. I was thinking of that earlier, that like the fact that, Mama goes for coaxing rather than dominating does not in any way mean that punishments don't happen. And they are, as was the, the done thing at the time, they were corporal punishments. Not always, but spanking was very much on the table as a punishment for having done something wrong.

Merav:

Mm-hmm. Yeah, definitely. So speaking of doing things wrong, we now have the somewhat inept attempt to hide the ill-gotten goods. We've got candy. We've got what are

called crackers, but we know are actually cookies. And Charlotte is convinced that no one will find them under their pillows. And so she sticks the things under the pillows. And then she comes into the bedroom again, even though no one's going to look there, to hide the candy and the crackers under the bed because she knows that Mama is going to fold up the bedspreads. And presumably plump the pillows. Because it's occurring to her that maybe this isn't the best hiding place and now the food goes under the bed.

And Mama is making the bed ready for the girls to get into it. And she clearly does this every night. This is like a ritual. And then Charlotte and Gertie are like, they get in the bed and they're really excited and they get the candy from under the bed and now Mama's coming with the iron. And they throw their hands over it. Why don't they shove it under the sheets?

Batya:
(laughter)

Merav:
I don't understand, like they already have this idea of like, put it under the pillow. They don't do that. They just cover it with their hands and they hope Mama won't find out.

Batya:
And the only reason Mama doesn't figure out what's going on just from looking at their faces is that there's almost no light in here.

Merav:
Yep, it says it's just the gas light from the kitchen, and so their guilty faces are hidden.

Heidi:
Although at the end, it implies that Mama knew

the whole time and was just letting them get away with it.

Batya:

It's very possible, yes, that she was entirely aware all the time.

Merav:

It's very possible.

Batya:

But they have this delicious, exciting feeling of getting away with something.

Heidi:

Right.

Merav:

Exactly. So here they are, finally. And this is like the whole chapter is anticipation, right? Like it's all building towards this moment when they

finally dig into the food. So here we are. It's time. What is the first thing we're gonna eat?

Heidi:

So they'd start with the chocolate babies –

Batya:

Start with a chocolate baby. Eat only the head.

Heidi:

Eat only the head, then nibble the feet, like we were talking about, you know, the cannibalistic (laughter) method of eating this candy. But something that I thought was so interesting is the game itself, the way that the whole point of the game is just to make up rules. Like that's what games are, right? Like if you open a box of a board game, what do you do? You read the rules. It's the first thing. How do you play? By knowing what the rules are. Gertie is excited to follow Charlotte's rules because that's what

makes it so interesting. Because if you just ate the food, it wouldn't be anything special. It would just be a snack.

But by following these rules, you feel like you're doing something. Charlotte has control, she's feeling a sense of control because she's making up rules and getting somebody else to follow them. And Gertie is having a sense of mastery because she's accomplishing the rule and she's able to fulfill it and carry it out. And I think that that's what is compelling to them about this method of snacking in bed. (laughter)

Merav:

It's parallel to a lot of kid games like Simon Says and – I don't know if you guys know What Time Is It Mister Wolf.

Heidi:

Yeah.

Batya:

Yeah.

Merav:

But like all these games are specifically, you know, you take a couple of steps and then you can do a thing, you can do an action. But if you do it wrong, you get sent back or you get eliminated. So Charlotte has sort of derived what makes those games fun and has found a way to make a game that can be just her and Gertie to play in bed without being able to jump around.

Batya:

Yeah, it is really more Simon Says than anything else, because like, the difference between this and like the kind of game that you brought up, Heidi, is that there are rules and

there is an objective in some of those games, and you have to achieve the objective while navigating the rules. In this, there is no objective except follow the rules.

Heidi:

Right, that's true.

Batya:

Which makes it that much simpler. And the only objective is, can you successfully follow the rule? Can you nibble off the feet even though they're so very close to the legs? Can you chew the cracker for 25 counts even though – it puts it so well. Crackers become nothing in your mouth very quickly.

Merav:

And Gertie has anxiety about it.

Heidi:

Right. And, and Gertie was worried because, right, exactly. She's worried because it might not last long enough. And there's no consequence if it doesn't, but still, you want to follow the rules. Yeah.

Batya:

No, it's just you failed. Yes.

Merav:

I feel like the consequence is you have stopped sharing in the experience.

Heidi:

Mm.

Batya:

Yeah.

Merav:

Right, Charlotte still has something in her

mouth, Gertie no longer has something in her mouth, Gertie has failed. And so she feels like she has to, and this made me think of the Frances books, Russell Hoban's Frances books, where there's a bit where Frances talks about watching her friend eat his lunch, and he eats it so that all of the bites come out even from all of the different things. So he eats a bite of the egg and a bite of the, you know, each thing he's being bitten in the right proportion to come out even with the other things so that at the end you have a mini meal left of one bite of each thing. So they're basically doing this the same kind of like, I've made rules for myself. And this goes back to Uncle Hyman right at the beginning, right? He's made rules for himself about food. And here, you know, his nieces are making rules about food. So it's interesting to me that those two things are in the same chapter. And I don't know if that was deliberate, but it definitely is there as a family trait of

enjoying making rules about food.

Batya:

I like that. I think you're right.

Merav:

So this brings us to the crackers. And I had forgotten that crackers in this chapter are cookies, right? Like I was waiting for like saltines or, you know, some kind of water cracker, cream cracker –

Batya:

Cheese crackers, onion crackers, nope.

Merav:

Nothing.

Batya:

They're mostly sweet.

Heidi:

Yeah, I had wondered about that whether there actually was a sort of cracker that was a lemon snap or a ginger snap or a chocolate snap or if they were literally cookies.

Merav:

I went looking. They seem to be cookies, and I don't know why they're called crackers in this chapter.

Batya:

I mean, the difference between cracker, the difference between cracker and cookie is a little arbitrary, kind of like the difference between bread and cake. You know, how much can you sweeten and enrich the bread before you have got cake there? Which, if you come from a Jewish background and you have the tradition of saying blessings on food, this becomes relevant because the blessing you say on cake

is not the same as the blessing you say on bread. Which is not the same as the blessing you say on other baked goods that aren't bread either. And so the question of, is this bread or is it something else, can be practically relevant.

Merav:

Isn't there a whole TV show called, Is It Cake?

Batya:

If there isn't, there should be.

Merav:

But yeah, Batya, you make a really good point that like bread is a very specific category in Judaism.

Batya:

Whereas crackers versus cookies, there are people who would say graham crackers, for instance, are crackers and not cookies. Animal

crackers? Are those crackers? I don't know. Do they resemble – If you have animal crackers and you have those little cheese-flavored goldfish crackers and you have a nice chunky oatmeal chocolate chip cookie, does the animal cracker more closely resemble the goldfish cracker or the cookie? You tell me.

Merav:

That's a texture thing for me. Like I would say the goldfish belongs with the animal crackers.

Batya:

So would I.

Merav:

But at the same time –

Heidi:

(overlapping) But the flavor, the animal crackers are more sweet.

Merav:

Yes.

Batya:

Exactly, are you saying sweet equals cookie?

Or does a cookie need a different sort of a texture, and something that is flat and crispy and not chewy goes with crackers? I feel like – defining a ginger snap as a cookie versus a cracker is a very, very ambiguous and arbitrary thing.

Merav:

We do get three flavors of snap.

Batya:

We do.

Merav:

And I looked this up because I was curious,

what is a snap? And snaps literally are cookies that make a snapping sound when you snap them. But the reason they're called snaps is not an English reason, it's a German reason. And the reason is snapping them up.

Batya:
Huh!

Merav:
But they also have that snap, which keeps them fresh in the cracker barrel. And that's why you need a cracker barrel, because otherwise they would become moist. And if that happens, they are ruined, and they cannot be eaten. And I mean, we're getting the sense that the cracker barrel is kind of the scraps. Right? It's all of the bits and pieces of cookie together and then you sort of take it out with a scoop. And it also talks about like how many different kinds there are, but only three get mentioned. And I was sort of

curious about that –

Batya:

I wonder what the other kinds are. I'm so curious.

Merav:

Right, what's the other stuff? I know, I really want to know what else was in the cracker barrel. And I did all kinds of fancy Googling to try to figure out like what it would be.

Heidi:

Mm-hmm.

Merav:

Ginger snaps, obviously, are kind of the most common one. But there are all kinds of these. Mi-Del actually makes a lot of these cookies. M-I-dash-D-E-L is a cookie brand that I grew up with. And they actually make these. You can get

little bags of them in various flavors. And I think that that's kind of a carrying on of this tradition. They're a Jewish-owned company. So it was kind of interesting to me that was the first result I found. It was like, oh, I wonder if they were making them way back. And no, they've only been making them since the 40s.

Batya:

But nonetheless probably deliberately invoking the older forms of crackers.

Merav:

Yeah, definitely.

Batya:

So much of food production is nostalgia based. It's fascinating to me. That you have a food that is Like What You Could Get When You Were A Kid.

Merav:

So dragging ourselves back into the narrative of our world – The girls play their game until they are spent, and so are the crackers and candies. They eat every last bit but the crumbs.

Batya:

And we get a very brief foray into – their sisters haven't interrupted because they're busy with their thing. Ella and Sarah still decorating the pink room. This is where we get what Penny is, why did I say Penny? This is where we get what Henny is puzzling with, the issue of the note. We don't ever find out what became of this, I don't think.

Merav:

No. I feel like that's just character color for this chapter.

Heidi:

Right.

Batya:
Yeah.

Heidi:

Well, so an interesting thing related to the ginger snaps, there's a callback to this chapter in *All of a Kind Family Hanukkah* –

Batya:
Yes! Yes there is.

Heidi:

– by Emily Jenkins, illustrated by Paul Zelinsky. It was the 2019 Sydney Taylor Book Award winner. A beautiful picture book. And what's so funny is when I first read that picture book, I was sure that they had taken an incident from the original books and turned it into a picture book. But it's actually original content.

Batya:

Mm-hmm.

Heidi:

It's, it's basically fan fiction, but it's so well done that it feels like part of the original series. So there's this incident where Gertie is upset because nobody's letting her help to make the latkes because she's too little. And she just has a tantrum and a meltdown and she gets sent to her room. And so when she's in the bedroom and everybody else is out there cooking and she's sulking and she crawls under the bed to sulk all the better and Papa comes looking for her. And instead of admitting that he sees her, he kind of cajoles her out from under the bed by talking to other objects to say, where's Gertie? He says, Pillow, where's Gertie? Library book, which of course is a callback to the first chapter, library book, where's Gertie? And then he sees

a handkerchief full of ginger snaps and he says, Oh, handkerchief hidden under the pillow and full of ginger snaps. Ginger snaps, you are not supposed to be here, but do you know where Gertie is?

Batya:

(laughter) I love that so much.

Heidi:

And he puts a ginger snap on his hand and he sticks his hand under the bed with a ginger snap. And so of course she giggles and eats the ginger snap and comes out from under the bed. But I just thought that, you know, I chose this chapter because it was such a strong memory for me and obviously other people relate to it strongly as well because it got its own callback (laughter) in *All-of-a-Kind Family Hanukkah*.

Merav:

Yes. Of the chapters I recreated in my own life, this one got the most recreation. I would go to bed with like cheese and an apple and read a book –

Batya:

Oh yes.

Merav

– and like pretend that I was, you know, making a game of it. I would like eat all the peel off the apple first and then I would eat the cheese until it was just like a little round bit in the middle. And like it wasn't a big piece of cheese. It was like, you know, like a good, you know, two inches of cheese, like, you know, half an inch thick. But like that was a whole big deal for me, was I would read a Johnny Gruelle book – for those of you that like Raggedy Ann and Andy, I was a big fan as a kid. I had *Camel with the*

Wrinkly Knees. And that was my cheese and apple eating book. So if I wanted to play All-of-a-Kind Family, I would read Johnny Gruelle because it felt right.

Heidi:

Well, that's interesting.

Batya:

I don't have any specific memories of doing this particular thing, but I am dead sure that my little sister and I recreated this as well, and I do not remember whether we said, well, we better not do the cookies in bed because that's how they got caught, or if we said, no, we've got to do the cookies in bed because that's what they did.

Heidi:

It's canon.

Batya:

I could see us doing either. (laughter)

Merav:

Right, and that is the end of the chapter, is that the girls do get found out whether Mama was complicit or not, because there are crumbs in the bed when Mama makes the bed. And so presumably they got an earful from Mama about it.

Batya:

Ah, and there is also one of the guns on the mantle you mentioned earlier. They've eaten all these crackers and they are now thirsty because crackers are dry.

Merav:

Oh yes.

Batya:

And so they call out for Mama if she can bring

them a glass of water. And Mama's like, well, that's odd.

Merav:

Yes, strange that both the girls –

Batya:

But doesn't know why until the next day when she makes up the cracker-crumbed bed.

Merav:

Exactly. And the girls resolved that they're gonna keep doing this, but not with crackers.

Batya:

They're gonna stick to candy.

Heidi:

So I think what drew me to choosing this chapter when you asked me, you know, what chapter would I like to talk about? I think it's the

very sensory nature of this chapter. I mean, obviously with the food, it's sensory. But I think it's such a cozy chapter because it's so sensory. Because, you know, when it says it's dark except for the gas light, and they stretch their toes deliciously to meet the warmth of the iron, the heated iron in their freezing bedroom. They're eating these yummy treats. And I think all of that sensory stuff, and then the companionship of sharing the fun secret with a sister, the reassurance from the omniscient author that Mama doesn't actually mind, even if she knows. And so when you put all of that together, it just paints such a vivid picture. And I think that's like why you were saying you recreated it because you can imagine yourself there so well.

Merav:

Yes.

Batya:

Yeah. And it is so cozy. It's so sweet.

Heidi

Right.

Merav:

It's both literally and figuratively sweet.

Batya:

Yes.

Heidi:

Yes!

Merav:

Like there's the other sensory moment for me is them standing in front of the candy glass and being like, oh, we can eat any of these! Right? Like there's just the world of possibility. And it's interesting is this is chapter about narrowing

possibility, right? Like we can have any of these, we have chosen this. Okay, now we're gonna choose this. We're gonna narrow it down and narrow down our pleasure, which is very Jewish.

Batya:
Hmm.

Heidi:
(laughter)

Merav:
Right? Like, you know how in Judaism, we always say, oh, you know, even in our time of greatest celebration, we're going to break glass, you know, at a wedding, we break a glass to remember the destruction of Jerusalem. It just feels very Jewish to me that they're, we can have anything, but we have to have it in moderation, but we're still gorging ourselves,

but we're doing it in moderation.

Batya:

Come to think of it, it's also very Jewish to go like, yes, we are going to enjoy this luxuriously – according to the rules. That we will argue about. (laughter)

Heidi:

Ha!

Merav:

Yes! Well, they don't argue about it. That's what's really interesting.

Batya:

They don't argue about it. Not argue in the sense of disagreeing, but like that we are going to go into very meticulously and make sure we do it exactly right.

Merav:

Yes. And that is where Heidi's earlier point about Charlotte sort of being the person setting the strategy and Gertie being the pupil. My teacher is proud because I have done right. And these are not girls who are in a religious school structure. So, you know, teacher is proud of me is very much like a day-to-day thing. They want to make their teachers proud. They want to make their parents proud. And I think that reflects back into, I want to make my older sisters proud. So that's kind of an interesting little, little gloss on the story.

Batya:

(overlapping) Yeah, I think you're right.

Heidi:

Yeah, and in fact, somewhere it says, maybe it's in the first chapter, it says that Charlotte is Gertie's idol, right? When, when Sarah is so

upset about losing her library book and Gertie goes to hold hands with Sarah to make her feel better, forsaking her idol, Charlotte. So yeah.

Batya:

Yeah.

Merav:

Yes, exactly. Yeah, we definitely get that closeness between the two of them where Gertie is definitely looking up to Charlotte. It's funny because she could totally idolize one of her older sisters, but Gertie has accessibility with Charlotte. Charlotte's right there in the bed with her every night. And so she's the sister that she fixates on because she's right there.

Batya:

Yeah.

Heidi:

And they're so close in age, so they can relate better.

Merav:

Yeah.

Batya:

They're very close in age and there's, there's a sort of a Charlotte is the, the intermediary between – from Gertie's point of view, the intermediary between where I am, which is the youngest, the baby, and the world of the big people.

Merav:

Yeah, Charlotte's the explain-it-all-for-you person for Gertie.

Batya:

Yes, and Charlotte clearly loves doing that. Charlotte is the storyteller and the rule-setter,

and you can tell. It's probably, it's really good for Charlotte to have a little sister to whom she can be the explainer and the guide.

Merav:

Yes. And I think that might even also be Charlotte's way of exploring the world, not just for herself, but for Gertie. And that gives her motivation to be a good teacher and to be a good kid, honestly. I don't want to set a bad example for my sister, so I'm going to be.

Batya:

Aww. Yeah.

Merav:

And it's interesting that you have that Ella-Sarah connection in the same chapter, where, like, okay we're going to skip Henny, because Henny's off getting in trouble, but Sarah's going to fixate on Ella. And we see a

little bit of that also in the chapter where they get the books.

Batya:

Mm-hmm.

Merav:

Where it's the two of them that are deciding what to read and their rule setting for Henny. And Henny's like, you guys have got this. I'm just gonna read whatever you bring home. It's gonna be great.

Heidi:

You know, as a librarian, it might have been expected that I would pick chapter one with the one about the library book or the chapter where they find the used books in Papa's Junk Shop as my favorite, but I think I'm really drawn to this one because of that sensoryness, that coziness, and the deliciousness.

Batya:

Deliciousness, yes.

Heidi:

You know, you can't really go wrong with good descriptions of food, especially when the food is being eaten in an interesting way.

Merav:

Yeah, definitely. And I think in my head, I elongated this chapter significantly because the food component is so prevalent that it almost feels like they're eating from beginning to end of chapter. And so in my mind, the sequence where they're in bed eating is much longer, but it is actually just a whole –

Batya:

There's actually not that much of it –

Merav:

No!

Batya:

– but yeah, it feels bigger than it is.

Merav:

It does, because we just get all of the sort of sampling and all of the eating of the lox and the sampling in the skirt. And then all of a sudden they're in the bedroom and they're eating, it's like the main event. And it's just, it's interesting how food focused it is when we know that these girls do eat, you know, reasonably well, but there's that predilection for snacking.

Batya:

Yes.

Merav:

Because snacking is special. And I think that

that permeates the chapter, it's, not only do they get one treat that they bought for themselves, *two* treats that they bought for themselves, but they also get the third treat of the lox, which a modern kid would probably turn up their nose. Depends on the kid, I guess.

Batya:

I don't know, salmon skin is pretty good.

Merav:

It is pretty good. They actually throw away the skin. They eat the fat and they eat the fish, because the skin has not been treated. It's not seared.

Batya:

True, yeah, but still.

Merav:

But I mean, I love salmon skin. But I can see a

modern kid being like, lox, I don't want to eat that. But the candy description really kind of carries the story. And I think that we get a lot of that sensory delight from the story, the same way that Uncle Hyman gets it from the eggs and the bread and the thickly spread butter, which is also just really vivid.

So OK, well, we're going to come into another chapter next time, with even more food descriptions –

Batya:
Oh yes.

Merav:
– so stay tuned. But in the meantime, we want to say goodbye to Heidi, who has been an amazing guest.

Batya:

Yeah, thank you so much for joining us.

Merav:

Heidi Rabinovitz, where can we find you?

Where can we find you, and what are you working on?

Heidi:

So you can find me at bookoflifepodcasts.com and also at sydneytailorshmooze.com, and on Facebook at Jewish Kidlit Mavens. You can look for the group. So there are a few places to find me.

Batya:

Can I ask you to spell schmooze for the people who don't know how it's spelled?

Heidi:

Yes, well actually that's interesting. In this case we chose to spell it S-H-M-O-O-Z-E. We left out

the C that you might expect to find there, thinking that it might make it easier for people, but I think maybe it doesn't because the people who expect the C don't see the C that they're expecting to see.

Batya:

(laughing) I've seen at least five ways to spell schmooze, so I wanted to be sure we got the right one.

Heidi:

Yeah, that's the problem with anything transliterated, but anyway it's just SH at the beginning. I did want to say that there were a couple of other read-a-likes that I wanted to suggest for All-of-a-Kind Family. I don't know if this is something that you have been doing in the podcast.

Batya:

(overlapping) Oh, please.

Merav:

Please. No, we love that.

Heidi:

There's a Jewish book called *The Family with Two Front Doors* by Anna, I think you say Ciddor, C-I-D-D-O-R is her last name. And it's actually – Did you read?

Merav:

I actually read that a couple of years ago. It's great.

Batya:

I never have, tell me about it.

Heidi:

So it's sort of like an All-of-a-Kind Family feel because it's a story about a big family, but it's in

Poland. It's actually not that different time period, it's like the 20s. It's more heavily religious because this is a Orthodox family in the old country. So the religious restrictions affect their life more than this family on the Lower East Side, but it's a similar flavor. And then – something that's not Jewish from a more modern perspective is the Penderwicks. So it starts with, let's see what's the name of the first one, *A Summer Tale of Four Sisters, Two Rabbits, and a Very Interesting Boy* is the subtitle of the first volume of the Penderwicks and it's by Jeanne Birdsall and there are five books in the series. It's about a family with four sisters and it's very different in terms of the setup. You know, they're modern, their mother passed away, so they're being raised by their father as a single dad. But it's just got that same feeling of family solidarity, of creativity, of each kid has their own personality that shines and gets, you know, there's different chapters that

focus on different children to see what they're up to now. So, and that you can sort of relate to them for their for the different things, like so Jane is a writer, she wants to be a famous writer when she grows up and that's like her thing is to be creative and imaginative, and the oldest sister is more like Ella she is the responsible one who takes care of the others, and the littlest sister is like Gertie that she's the baby of the family and everybody else has to kind of look out for her. So I would definitely recommend for people who have finished All-of-a-Kind Family and want something else with that same flavor. Uh, these would be some good things to try.

Batya:

Lovely. Thank you.

Merav:

That's amazing. I love finding out about

read-a-likes. My favorite read-a-like for All-of-a-Kind Family is a little different. It's a fantasy novel trilogy. It's called *The Secret Country*. I don't know if you guys have read –?

Heidi:

No. Who's it by?

Merav

Batya, I think you've read these.

Batya:

I've definitely heard of *The Secret Country*, I do not think I've read it.

Merav:

They're by Pamela Dean. They were reissued in 2003, I think. And they're originally from the 80s, 85, 86, and 89. And you again have those kids from multiple families, I think it actually is. And they kind of form a family and they have

adventures. And it's fantastical. There's a portal fantasy aspect to it. But it's got that same familial feel. And I think it reads alike.

Heidi:

Oh, that's interesting that a fantasy could reproduce this feeling of, you know, it's such a sort of domestic mundane kind of story. So that's fascinating that a fantasy could reproduce the flavor.

Merav:

It has a lot of details, at least for me. It has –

Batya:

I was going to ask, that isn't the same setting as *The Dubious Hills*, is it?

Merav:

It is.

Batya:

Ah, then I have read that one.

Merav:

Yeah, *The Dubious Hills* is sort of a related book. It's not part of the original trilogy. So there's a fourth book. And that was written in 94 and reissued in 2007, I think.

Batya:

Mm-hm. But having read *The Dubious Hills* there is just this incredibly strongly domestic, day-to-day, just how do you – how do you function as a family? And in this particular case, it's a family that does not currently have parents in it. So it's navigating sibling interactions and simultaneously having to parent your siblings.

Merav:

Yeah, which reminds me again of, of *I Capture the Castle* by Dodie Smith, which has a similar,

she calls it a kitchen sink novel. And I think that that's a really accurate sort of depiction.

Batya:

Oh, what a delightful term for that.

Merav:

Yeah, it is my aspiration to eventually write a kitchen sink novel because they're just so cozy and so loving and there is a movie of *I Capture the Castle*, if you want to sort of, like, immerse yourself in that world, the movie is actually pretty delightful.

Heidi:

Can I tell about one other project?

Batya:

Please do.

Merav:

Yeah, please.

Heidi:

So as I mentioned, the Sydney Taylor Shmooze is a mock award blog for the Sydney Taylor Book Award, where there are book reviews of Jewish content, picture books, middle grade, and YA, young adult books that are being published year round. We've just added a section to this website, which is the mock award program, so that if a – for instance, a teacher wants to do a mock award with students. This gives some guidelines about how to do that for the Sydney Taylor book award, for the mock Sydney Taylors. So you can go to SydneyTaylorShmooze.com and find that section. There's a tab at the top that says mock award program, and it'll explain how to do it. And it's got suggested titles for this year. You don't have to use those suggestions. We just put the books that we thought would work well.

But really, choose any Jewish books you want for discussion and go for it. So I encourage people to do that.

Batya:

That's really nice.

Merav:

Yeah, I love this. I –

Heidi:

Oh, and just to give you a sense of the timeline, the Sidney Taylor Book Awards are announced each year in January, along with the Newbery and the Caldecott and everything else at the Youth Media Awards. So the end of January, usually, at the American Library Association.

Merav:

So you can build a really nice curriculum starting in September.

Heidi:

Yeah, so now in the fall semester, is a good time to do that so that you can do it and then be ready to see what actually wins.

Batya:

Lovely.

Merav:

That's wonderful. I love the idea of the kids getting invested in a book and sort of backing it in an award. That's really wonderful.

Batya:

That is a splendid thought. All right. Okay, so I think we're wrapping up. Thank you so much for joining us, Heidi. This was lovely.

Heidi:

Thank you very much for having me, I really

enjoyed it.

Merav:

Please come back anytime.

Heidi:

Oh, thanks. Maybe I will.

Merav:

Thanks so much for listening, everybody. I'm
Merav Hoffman.

Batya:

And I'm Batya Wittenberg, and we're really glad
you're here.

Merav:

Tune in next time when we'll hear Mama say,
"Who wants to come to market with me?"

Batya:

Our opening theme music is the public domain *Dill Pickles Rag*, performed here by Arthur Pryor's Band, courtesy of the Internet Archive. Our closing theme music is the *La Sirene Waltz*, also in the public domain, written by Pietro Deiro, performed here by Daniel Gunderson and Sunnie Larsen. All-of-a-Kind Podcast's logo is by Al Benbow. Please see our full production credits on our website at <https://all-of-a-kind-podcast.com>.