

## **Cake and Bread**

Lois Rosen



We didn't worry about weight then  
so soon after the war. Uncle Benchie  
arriving from somewhere, maybe Poland,  
Russia – some Jew-killer country  
not to be talked about with children  
though I heard him mutter  
*Stalin bren un zeller*: Yiddish  
for “Stalin burn in hell.”

And though our clothes  
came from Klein's basement,  
we gobbled seven-layer cakes,  
chocolate cream pies,  
charlotte russes,  
linzer tortes  
with raspberry jelly oozing.

We didn't need to worry  
about hooligans, bloody  
round-ups or pogroms.  
Night after night, Papa  
returned home unbeaten,  
white boxes gleaming  
from the bakery,  
bags brimming with challah,  
frozen-dough rolls, seeded rye.  
He repeated, “Never  
save on your stomach.”

