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## Lirone's Star

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## Lirone's Star

Camille Besser

My American steps-  
I can feel the difference when I walk beside him.  
Big American strides in big American shoes...  
But I'm still running to catch up.  
Up to his patient pace.  
I feel conspicuous, loud.

When I'm with him I forget where I am.  
I get lost in his foreign features as he's searching for a word to explain an image  
that doesn't exist in America.

My head snaps up at any passersby speaking English.  
I'm in California for God's sake!  
But I feel a million miles away next to him.  
Like we are strolling through his native Israel, or traveling Europe.

Every time he speaks it strikes me as profound.  
He takes his time to choose his words, and it's always surprising how he can trans-  
late life so well.  
Things my big American mind can't grasp.

When I'm speaking with him- hung up on the accent,  
I feel ignorant- naive.  
I look into his eyes and see so many places, so much learned.  
I want to be like him. He makes me see how much there is to know. And how  
unimportant this all is-  
The motions, the pretending, and all the hate.

I walk beside him and wonder why he's asked me to visit.  
I can't believe he would have any interest in my big American "plans" and "goals"  
that aren't planned goals at all.

I feel useless, ashamed.  
I sit in his house and partake in the Hanukah ritual without knowing what it  
means- unable to pick out the words from the racing Hebrew he is reciting.  
I know it's an honor, to light the candles, but I'll never understand it how they do.  
I'll never know what it's like to wake up fearing home.  
Maybe I should be afraid; of hating and ignorance.  
When I look at him I can't imagine being against his people.  
They want nothing but to live.

Inside my American body beats a big foreign heart that makes me cry many un-  
American tears.