

Harbin, 02/07/1923

Dear Father

It's been many years since I've last received your letter. I admit that myself have not corresponded much because I've not had your proper postal address.

During this time I've been through much turmoil. Prior to war, I enjoyed prosperity, I owned jewelry and watch stores on China Street, house No: 21. Residential crises hit town of Harbin during the years of war with flat and house prices skyrocketing. My trade did not stand those huge expenses and as a result I had to sell out all my stocks and close down the entire business.

I still was well off afterwards making good earnings on commissions and third party deals. However, Russian Revolution brought about huge devaluation of Russian Money. Unfortunately, I kept almost all of my assets in Russian Rubles that now have become worthless. So that I've got no possessions and my life-long work has turned out wasted.

I still do some go-between business, but the earnings are not as it used to be. Barely I can earn enough to feed us on daily basis. I keep wondering in the town from morning to night looking for any opportunity to earn even penny. Rarely I am successful in these days because town of Harbin has lost any communication with Russia. The entire population of Harbin suffers ever since business life has gone into stagnation.

Then I want to tell that I've got, thanks G-d, three daughters: the eldest one – Yenta, 14 years of age; she studies in 4<sup>th</sup> grade of Gymnasium; the second one Etta, 8 years, we teach her at home and the third daughter – Haya, 2 yrs.

I have to raise them all and give them proper education. Sadly, I can't see ways to accomplish that, as I've got no income. I'm devastated at this prospect. In addition to all my misfortune, my mother has passed away on 5<sup>th</sup> of month Oder. She used to live with us in Harbin. Now I go to Synagogue three times a day to pray "Caddish".

Few days ago I came to Synagogue to pray to G-d for my deceased Mother; I felt very anxious because of my business wrong goings. Suddenly, I was presented with your letter posted to our Rabbi. Gladness left me speechless that my father I've not heard from for years was (thanks G-d) alive and healthy. I would not need more to make my happy.

Dear Father, please write me frequently now as I've not got any other relatives left apart from you – Dear Father. Please, let me know about my dear sister and whereabouts of uncle Azriel and his son Moissei (Moshe?). Please, write me in as much details as possible. It will entertain us here, in Harbin as we feel very lonely and we've not got any relatives.

It would be good for us to leave Harbin at all as the business is going really bad. Also, we are worried for our daughters – they witness lots of wrongdoings and promiscuities in Harbin. It's impossible to enter Russia now and we've not got money to escape elsewhere either. I just do not know what to do.

We'll take a photo of ours in vary soon and post it to you so that you'll know the entire family. Please, be well and forward my best wishes to my dear sisters, to your Spouse and to all other relatives. Please, write me letters in Hebrew.

Please, except sincere best wishes from my wife and daughters. My wife and my eldest daughter will write you the next letter.

I'm looking forward to your response.

Your son,

Reuvin Traub

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