



During the entire time, Gołda did not rest and wished that her brother to settle down, marry and establish a home for himself. With the aid of her friend Mina, also an immigrant, Gołda saw to it that Mordche should become acquainted with the young Florence, a neighbour of Mina's, who lived in the same building as her, somewhere in the West Side, in the Sixtieth Streets, near Broadway.

Florence was two or three years older than Mordche, but looked younger than him in appearance. She was a secondary school teacher, and was considered a revered pedagogue. Mordche was fond of her, too and spoke of her with affection and hoped to marry her soon.

Mordche brought Florence as a guest and presented her to Josef and Gołda - she made the best of impressions. It seemed everything would end well.

But yet another cloud of doubts and disquiet swept into Josef's home. It turned out that Florence was connected to the local Communist Movement. Josef recognised this immediately in her talk and in her negative remarks regarding anything that was American or distinctly Jewish. Josef saw nothing good in Mordche and Florence's future life together - he being a worker, a tailor, and she a secondary school teacher. In addition, her sympathy towards Communism had a smell of danger about it. Josef feared not so much for himself, but for Mordche, who was a newly-arrived immigrant from the DP camps in Germany. He also had fears for the fate of Gołda, who was also not long in the country.

"Who knows", Josef thought to himself, "what troubles might still emerge from the match with Florence?"

The mood in Josef's house became heavier from day to day. He could not tell Mordche what he and Gołda thought and warn him - what right had he to disrupt the other's life? Josef waited to see what time would bring.

On one occasion, Mordche returned home from a visit at Florence's house. He was nervous, as if something bad had happened to him somewhere. To Gołda's inquiry, "What's wrong with you today, Mordche - why are you looking so dark?"

Mordche began telling that Florence was all worked up about the matter of "Communist teachers", whom the government was continually on the lookout for and that, any day, Florence faced being summoned to a hearing at the investigatory commission, which was seeking out Communists in the state schools.

"Oh, bitter!", Gołda cried out. "You are bringing a misfortune upon yourself, Mordche!"

“I know that, I know that”, Mordche replied, “but what can I do? I’m fond of her, after all, and I can’t just break up with her without any reason”.

Anxious and steeped in gloomy thoughts, none of the three was able to fall asleep that night. “What dismal luck follows me”, Gołda thought, as she lay in the dark on her bed. Similar thoughts also gripped Josef.

On the following day, on Saturday morning, Mordche said to his sister, “Gołda, don’t make me any breakfast. I’m going out to look for an apartment. I’m moving out of here - I can’t stay here any longer”.

Gołda had not been expecting such a “good morning”. At this point, Josef could no longer contain himself and he exclaimed angrily, “If you want to go away, good – go! We wouldn’t be opposed to your living on your own. But do you have the right to do it in such a manner? ‘Don’t make me any breakfast!’ - what is this? Nothing bad ever happened to you in our house - so why are you storming out like that? Good – go! Now, even if you wished to stay here, I wouldn’t want it”.

Mordche withdrew in silence. It was evident that he had immediately regretted his approach in moving out. Gołda burst into tears. She reproached Josef for speaking in such a manner to Mordche, her only brother and the only flesh and blood she had here in the foreign country.

In the evening, Mordche returned. He found his sister sad, with tear-stained eyes, and Josef immersed in reading. He sensed that they had been quarrelling about him. He said nothing.

It took him another couple of weeks, but Mordche eventually left the three little rooms in the Twentieth Streets, where Josef and Gołda had a soft bed and meals for him, as well as affection and concern for his life.

He pushed all that away and wished to be on his own, to ponder, once and again, his unsuccessful life and the loneliness he felt among people. Perhaps he would be able to reform his character, to change and become a bit more independent. His sister’s affection, he reflected, was possibly no good for him at all. Her loyalty made him childish and helpless. He needed to be by himself.

He found a dwelling somewhere on Broadway, in the Seventieth Streets. He would occasionally visit Josef and Gołda, but he told them nothing about himself and whether he had separated from Florence or not. They were both afraid to ask him, in case he fought with them for good and never came to see them again. They sensed, however, that another love had been dashed, and that Mordche was, once again, alone in the world.