



Story:

**Everything Will Be Fine**by Doron Caloספור : **בסדר גמור**מאת דורון קאלו, אוגוסט 1997

שנמצאה במכונית ההרוסה. כל אלה היו שייכים לחיים אחרים, קודמים: חיים של אפילה ופחד, של חוסר וודאות וחוסר אונים משתק. עתה הוא החל את חייו החדשים יחד עם בנו, אותו יגדל באהבה ובמסירות כדי שיגדל ויהיה מאושר כמו אביו.

ויום אחד, חמש שנים מאוחר יותר, גיון הוריד את בנו ליד השער של גן הילדים ונסע משם לעבודה במסלול שונה מעט מהרגיל, כזה שהביא אותו קרוב לבית הקברות. הוא עצר את המכונית ויצא ממנה, נכנס בשער הדרומי וצעד במהירות לכיוון הקבר בחלקה 23. הוא עמד מול המצבה בשקט גמור במשך שעה ארוכה, מביט באותיות שעיצבו הצהרה בלתי הגיונית בתכלית. לבסוף התעשת ותפס שהוא מאחר לעבודה. הוא פנה והלך משם, מקפיד שלא לחזור על עקבותיו, ויצא לבסוף מהשער הצפוני של בית הקברות. את קברו הצנוע של גיון בארקר, 1964-1996, מעולם לא חזר לבקר.

גיון בארקר התעורר בבית החולים, אחוז כאבי תופת. הוא שכב על אלונקה מזנקת במעלה מסדרון, מתחת למרוץ מטורף של אורות ניאון לבנים. אנשים רצו ליד האלונקה, צועקים הוראות ומנסים להרגיע אותו בעת ובעונה אחת. מדבריהם הבין שהתאונה הותירה אותו עם כמה חבלות קלות בלבד ושריטה שטחית בזרוע הימנית. הם אמרו לו להחזיק מעמד. הכל הולך להיות בסדר גמור.

בנו של גיון נולד בניתוח קיסרי מוצלח כתינוק בריא, שמנמן ומצווח. גיון הושיט יד וליטף אותו, חש בפעימות ליבו הזעיר של הרך הנולד, חש את נשימותיו הראשונות, הביט מוקסם באצבעות הקטנות המגששות באוויר וחוקרות את העולם החדש שסביבו בפליאה תמימה וטהורה. הוא חיבק את בנו והרשה לעצמו סוף סוף להירגע. הרבה יותר מדי דברים קרו בשעות האחרונות.

גיון לא חזר מעולם לזירת התאונה. מעולם גם לא ביקש לראות את שרידי הגופה המחוצה והמעוותת

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תומה בטרם יחלפו מאתיים שנה, נרתעה מפני המוות השואג ומשכה עמה את גיון בארקר – למעלה, אחורה, דרך חשכה תהומית וקור עז שלא היה אמור לחוש, ואז למטה ופנימה, לתוך מקום חמים ומוכר ועם זאת זר לחלוטין. הוא נתקף כאב נורא, שמעולם לא היה אמור לסבול, ופקח את עיניו. וסגר אותן מיד אחר-כך. שאגה מחרידה של מתכת נקרעת פגעה באוזניו. הוא ישב מאובן וחיכה למוות – משהו נחבט בו, וחפץ חד שרט את זרועו הימנית. טלטלה הרעידה את כל גופו וחגורת הבטיחות לחצה בכוח על בטנו התפוחה לאין שיעור. הכרתו אבדה.

הכרתו חזרה לבסוף ומצאה אותו שוכב על אלונקה מתגלגלת במעלה מסדרון המוביל לחדר הניתוח. הרופאים שרצו ליד האלונקה ליטפו את שערו הבלונדי השפוף על הכר והרגיעו אותו. הרגעי, גברת בארקר, הם אמרו לו. הייתה לך תאונה, וניצלת ממנה בנס. רק כמה שריטות וחבורות קלות. ומה עם התינוק? הוא שאל בבהלה. התינוק שלך הולך להיות בסדר גמור, הם אמרו. הכל הולך להיות בסדר גמור.

הפורד דהרה לכיוון הצומת במהירות מטורפת. הפחד וההיסטריה ערפלו את מוחו של גיון בארקר, שישב אותה שעה ליד ההגה וניסה להביא את אשתו הכורעת ללדת אל בית החולים במהירות האפשרית. הכביש קפץ בתזזיתיות מול עיניו, מכוניות צפרו, אורות הרחוב נמרחו לעיסה מטושטשת על רשתיות עיניו. הצומת התקרבה עוד ועוד, וכך גם האור האדום שניסה לשווא ללכוד את תשומת-ליבו. הוא פרץ לתוך הצומת ההומה ומשהו משך לבסוף את תשומת-ליבו: מכונית אחרת, לשמאלו, שועטת הישר אליו. הנהג ודאי לחץ מזימן על הבלמים, וכך גם גיון, אינסטינקטיבית, אבל היה מאוחר מדי והוא ידע זאת. בתוך שבריר שניה יחדור הפגוש הקדמי של המכונית האחרת את דלת הנהג וכמות בלתי מתקבלת על הדעת של מתכת ופלסטיק תמחץ את גופו השברירי, ושום חגורת בטיחות שבעולם – אפילו אם היה זוכר לחגור אותה – לא תועיל לו. לועו הפעור של המוות משך אליו את גיון בארקר, והוא ידע שאין לו ברירה אלא להיכנע. אזור מסוים במוחו חשב אחרת. אותה פיסת רקמה של תאים אפורים, שלא תמופה ותיחקר עד

**The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy**Gefen Lecture (in Hebrew): **Thursday, March 15 (20:00 as usual)**anel: **“אבריינים ופגרטיקים”**Gefen Lectures are held in **Beit Ariela, 25 Shaul HaMelech, Tel Aviv at 8 p.m.**

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## Letters to the Editor

**Aharon,**

I recently received the December 2000 issue of *CyberCozen*, and there are a couple of items I would like to comment on. The first is in regard to the mentioning of the author, Alfred Bester. I am not familiar with that author, but the name seemed familiar to me. Then I realized that is the name of the CyberCop character in *Babylon 5* played by Walter Koenig. Incidentally, you probably remember that Walter Koenig played the part of Chekov in *StarTrek:TOS*.

The second item concerns observing Sputnik. It seems to me I stood on my lawn in Los Angeles and saw a small object flash across the sky. I had thought that was *Sputnik*, but, perhaps it was *Echo I* as was suggested by Emanuel Lottem. It has been a long time.

**Ted Henderson**

**Aharon,**

Regarding your essay "Truth is Stranger than (Science) Fiction" in the January 2001 *CyberCozen*:

The over eating by Camille does seem to correlate with elevated glucose levels but the over- drinking appears to be the contrary. One would think that over-drinking would DILUTE the glucose concentration when it needs to be increased. A possible solution to the dilemma is that over-drinking (one? two gallons?) certainly increased Camille's body volume, thus changing the volume to surface ratio. This will slow the rate of freezing and might better enable her body to concentrate glucose where it's needed most; i.e., heart and brain, which, presumably, did not increase in volume.

Also, if I understood correctly, Camille is one of several genetically modified people. So, an additional explanation for her revival is the presence of an anti-freeze protein (such as that of arctic fish) which was engineered into her.

**Gal Haimovich**



## The Present as Predicted in the Past

Eli Eshed reviews

*Israel in the Year 2000 (ישראל בשנת 2000)* by S. Goldflus (1951)

(A longer version of this review appeared in the Literary Supplement of *HaAretz*, July 27, 2000.)

The year 2000 is over and the State of Israel finds itself at the end of a period filled with social, technological and security changes whose future is unpredictable. For that reason it is especially interesting to see how a science fiction writer in 1951 predicted the appearance of Israel in the year 2000. How was he wrong, and how was he right?

The book is called *Israel in the Year 2000 (ישראל בשנת 2000)* and was written by S. Goldflus. It is a strange combination of

astoundingly accurate predictions with some ideas that look to us today extremely strange.

Israel in 2000, according to Goldflus, is a country with no more firearms since the last war between the great powers in 1955. That world war brought about the disarmament of all "atomic shells, freeze bombs, and death rays" of all nations. As a direct result Israel in 2000 has no army but has instead not very effective units of "security service" scattered throughout the country.

### The Animals' Rebellion

In 2000 Israel is struck by a crisis which at first glance seems completely absurd: As a result of a very serious drought (here it seems the Goldflus predicted the world warming which we are so aware of today), and the spreading of urban land at the expense of rural land and pasture, animals are suffering from unprecedented hunger and thirst. Enormous herds of animals turn against human beings, attack and eat them. (This is reminiscent of various 1970s Hollywood movies in which nature, in the form of animals, turns against man.) In as much as the human beings have no

available firearms, they are forced to defend themselves with axes, bows and arrows, and other "cold" weapons in fierce battles. The book has a description of a savage battle between humans and animals next to the **HaBima Theatre** in Tel Aviv, during which the theater is destroyed. Goldflus describes with enthusiasm the destruction of well-known sites in the Tel Aviv of his day by rampaging animals.

But the reader need not fear for the future of the state in 2000, for it all ends well: the herds of animals are defeated by a new weapon, liquid gas bombs, developed by a

scientist from the Weizmann Institute. (The heroic scientist, however, is killed in battle, but a monument is erected in his memory.)

On the face of it the idea of a rebellion of animals seems absurd until we notice that in the entire book the word "Arab" never appears. At this point the reader begins to suspect that when Goldflus speaks of a rebellion of "animals", he is actually referring to something else entirely.... These suspicions are strengthened when Goldflus describes the

In the course of his story Goldflus describes political events quite familiar to us in the real year 2000, such as contempt and scorn toward government officials who no longer receive the admiration that they enjoyed in 1951, but instead ridicule and vilification. He describes attempts by extremist Orthodox

### **The Urban Environment**

After finishing the story of the animals' "intifada", Goldflus turns to a more detailed description of the country in the years 2000 and after, and it is worth noting that he has some accurate predictions. City areas grow at the expense of fields and orchards. Tel Aviv has become an enormous city composed of

Goldflus describes various technological inventions such as television which is connected to a special "sense communication" device which can receive not only pictures but also such senses as touch and smell. (Israeli and other companies are working on such a device today.)

In the sea next to Tel Aviv there is a large artificial island, which has been built so that people of the city will have a comfortable bathing beach at some distance from the city....

Over Tel Aviv floats another artificial island called "Aeolia", connected to the city by giant cables, to which people can go using four huge elevators. On this island there is an airport and hotels. This is the favorite recreation center

### **Social and Sexual Customs**

Goldflus also describes social and sexual customs, and here he seems to us ridiculous. In his opinion couples will no longer hug in public, or walk hand in hand, since people of this period reject such "vulgarity".

On the other hand, marriage is made official only after a year of living together, in order for the couple to test their compatibility to each other, and only when both sides declare their desire to stay together.

reactions of the countries of the world, and the foreign media, which support the animals' rebellion as a just response to the degrading and contemptuous attitude of the Israeli humans. Goldflus also speaks of partially humorous suggestions to calm the situation via giving citizenship to the animals, and giving them voting rights to the Knesset. But there is the fear that they will then be in the majority and will take over the country democratically.

### **Politics**

religious groups to receive more and more benefits. The religious parties in Goldflus' 2000 are not less demanding than those of the real 2000. On the other hand he describes how the animals' rebellion brings about temporary fraternity between the embroiled sectors of Israeli society in the year 2000.

neighborhoods that were once separate cities, such as Ramat Gan and Holon. But at the end of the book Goldflus gives us a tour of various Tel Aviv streets and describes how they look, a description quite unlike their actual appearance today, as there are flowering parks everywhere.

### **Technology**

of the Tel Avivians, who far prefer it to the city itself. From the description it appears that this is a sort of floating shopping mall.

In order to increase the areas available for gardens in the small country, they are built hanging in the air as in ancient Babylon. There will be intensive use of solar energy, which will be stored using a variety of devices. Goldflus describes attempts to bring about climate changes via changes in the direction of the axis of the earth.

Medical care is free, and medicine attempts to immunize people against diseases.

Tel Aviv of the year 2000 has a subway! (Unfortunately, in this matter Goldflus was too optimistic.)

Dress has become shorter and sportier. Women continue to use makeup but do not use lipstick as they have come to the conclusion that it just makes the woman's face ugly. Similarly, earrings are no longer worn.

There are no longer physically unattractive people because everyone uses plastic surgery. Goldflus foresaw the obsession with physical beauty of the real year 2000.

People no longer smoke, nor drink alcoholic beverages.

Goldflus tried to predict the state of culture in the year 2000.

He predicts that major changes will take place in books, and that printed book will be replaced by the audio book, which he calls "Librophone", which "readers" listen to. (The invention exists today under a different name, as anyone knows who listens to "Talking Books" which one can find in one's local Steimatzky bookstore.) The only books in print will be scientific books and textbooks. In this matter Goldflus seems on the mark with respect to the coming years.

He also describes literary genres that will still be popular in the year 2000: Science

Goldflus was astoundingly right about certain things. But like most science fiction books, it seems that while he was right about many technical inventions, he was way off in his attempt to guess what society would be like in the year 2000.

Nevertheless the reader in the real year 2000 comes away with the feeling that he has gone in a time machine to a parallel world, a world similar and yet different from the world in which he lives. The expectations of a person from 1951 with respect to 2000 have partly come true and partly do not exist at all.

Goldflus correctly foresaw the continuing conflict between the religious and the

**Culture**

fiction will be very popular! Historical romances will also be very popular. (*Salambo* by Gustave Flaubert will still be a best seller in the year 2000.) Also travel books. On the other hand, he says that detective and crime fiction will no longer be of interest, as in the year 2000 there will no longer be criminals....

He describes a new art form, flower arranging, brought from Japan. Sculpture will be based on the Classical Greek style. Theater will become more cinema-like in order to compete with movies.

**Conclusion**

non-religious, conflicts whose roots were in his time. On the other hand he did not think of things which are so relevant to us today, such as computers (which already existed in his time), which have brought about drastic changes in society and in the work environment in the real 2000. If Goldflus were to come in a time machine to the real 2000, a world of Internet communities, start-up companies which rise and fall, multi-national corporations, communication devices which go with us everywhere, and more, he would find it far more futuristic than the world he described in his book.

**Note about the book:** Published in 1951, it was translated from German to Hebrew by S. Skulski. Apparently Goldflus was an immigrant journalist (from Germany?) who did not know Hebrew well.



Short Book Review by **Aharon Sheer**  
*Everybody has Somebody in Heaven*  
*Essential Jewish Tales of the Spirit*

by **Avram Davidson**, edited by Jack Dann and Grania Davidson Davis (2000), 285 pages.

A remarkably diversified author, **Avram Davidson** (1923 – 1993) wrote science fiction, fantasy and mystery stories, most in a humorous vein, and won prizes in all these fields. He received awards for short stories from **Science Fiction Writers of America**, from **Mystery Writers of America**, **World Fantasy Awards** and a **Hugo Award**. He received the **World Fantasy Award for Life Achievement** in 1986. Are there any other writers who wrote so well in all three of these fields? Despite these achievements, like many writers, he lived and died in poverty.

This book, however, contains only writings with Jewish content. Several of his short sf/fantasy stories are reprinted, including

what may be his most famous Jewish short story, *The Golem*, which was published in *The Magazine of Science Fiction and Fantasy* in 1955.

For the first half of his life he was an Orthodox Jew, and after he had abandoned Orthodoxy in the 70s (adopting a Japanese faith called Tenrikyo, which he felt helped him to deal with his bouts of depression) he remained vigorously Jewish. Among his stubbornness was a flat refusal to allow any of his works to be published in Germany, even when he desperately needed the money.

One of the two introductions to this book is written by Jack Dann, who throws in a variety of gratuitous expressions in Yiddish.

Dann follows his introduction with a glossary explaining the Yiddish terms, but the tenor is obvious: This book is intended for English-speaking Jews who know some Yiddish and something about Jewish religious practice. Most of the early items in this book were published in a publication called *Orthodox Jewish Life*, and contain numerous Yiddish and other Jewish religious terms that are not explained. Others appeared in a Jewish magazine called *Commentary*, whose audience was not primarily orthodox; there the terms are sometimes explained, apparently by the author himself. I think many readers would have liked a glossary, which is not included.

Several items are vignettes from Avram's two years in Israel, two long stays between 1948-1952, which are fascinating. Life was different here in those days, kiddies, and certainly not better. Here is an example, describing his time in Jerusalem, where he worked as a medic in a hospital: (p. 88)

"I had no money to speak of; Sabbaths I fed upon the bounty of the most generous of friends; weekdays I ate – when I was on duty, at the hospital where I was employed – when not on duty, in a tiny restaurant on Rechov Meah Shearim: *The Street of the Hundred Gates*, and was glad to have the bread and margarine and sardines the menu afforded. (Once, on a day when I was affluent and asked if there was anything

else to eat, the proprietress called me *feinschmecker*.)"

Would it help the reader to know what *feinschmecker* means? I think so; the editors did not.

The second half of the book contains several fantasy stories. Not being a fantasy fan, I found them less to my taste. His fantasy is satirical.

There are also several stories which present a satirical or ironic view of the tension in America between Orthodox Jews and the non-Orthodox. One of these stories, "The Metaphysical Force", I found quite moving. These were apparently all written when he was still Orthodox. I liked them (naturally).

Most of the items included are short, interesting, humorous, easy to read, and worth reading. A few have never before been published, as their Jewish content made it difficult to find a receptive market. With one exception, every item is less than fifteen pages, and most are much shorter. They are mostly in chronological order, starting in 1947, so they show not only Avram's life as it developed, but also his remarkable development as a writer. There is nothing here written after the mid-1970s (he died in 1993).

The book also contains a fine short biography by Eileen Gunn, and some very short personal reminiscences by others in the sf and fantasy fields.

### The Israeli Society for Science Fiction and Fantasy

Six meetings in Hebrew: "**Blade Runner – Do Androids Dream of Electronic Sheep?**"

- "Know Where You are Coming and Where You are Going?" – Shmuel Hasfari
- "With the Coming of the End Only the Pictures Remain" – Alex Epstein
- "Man and Super Man in Postmodernism" – Nissim Diane
- "Vangelis – Music for the Film Noir" – Yosi Mar-Haim
- "Blade Runner – The Story of Creation in a Cybernetic Outfit" – Prof. Haim Bereshit
- "Philip K. Dick – The Man Who Dreamt of Electronic Sheep" – Dr. Emanuel Lottem
- "מותר האדם מן המכונה" – Artificial Intelligence" – Yoci Memrod
- "The Future in the Age of Uncertainty" – Iri Rikin
- "Slaves in Megalopolis: City of the Future" – Michal Peleg
- The Moral Aspect of *Blade Runner*" – Dr. David Gurevitz

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For mail delivery of *CyberCozen*, please donate 30 shekels per YEAR; For airmail to US \$15; If Aharon Sheer can hand-deliver it, 15 shekels.

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