

DAVENALOT

By Mitchell Bard

Long ago, in a galaxy far, far away...whoops, wrong story. Once upon a time there was a place where all the people were Jewish and if that's not enough to make a fairy tale, consider this—they were all orthodox. The men dressed as their forefathers had in long black coats, pants, and black hats. They had long beards and sidecurls. The women kept their heads covered and dressed modestly. Men and women did not mix in public. The ruler of the land was a courteous, kind, loyal...man. He was, in fact, the first Jewish Boy Scout. His name was Schleppo, distant relative of Shlomo, Groucho, Chico, Zeppo, and Harpo. Schleppo was the king of Frumdom and all the Frum people loved him. Unfortunately, there were people beyond Frumdom who saw Schleppo as an evil man enslaving Jews under the rigidity of halacha. Frumdom was perched on top of a mountain, close to God, overlooking two other realms.

Half way down the mountain was a rather conservative community without a king, governed by a committee that met every Wednesday night to decide how to raise money for the next building in town. Men and women mixed freely and dressed in the latest fashions. The people accepted the halacha, but most did not observe its prohibitions.

At the bottom of the mountain was Reformdom which was ruled by everyone on an equal basis. Being at the base of the mountain, the inhabitants were more down to earth and in touch with the changes going on around them. Not only did men and women mix freely, but Jews and non-Jews also mixed, some even married.

For many years, there had been only one community. The people of Frumdom lived on the top of the mountain in peace and harmony. Legend has it that people began to transgress the Law and God became so angry He caused a great wind to blow all but the most righteous people off the top of the mountain.

As time went by, many people returned to Frumdom, but others did not have the strength to reach the top and settled in what became the conservative settlement. Many others had neither the strength nor the desire to ascend the

mountain and stayed at the base where they founded Reformdom. Most of the people had returned to a point close enough where they could see where they had originally come from, but as the years passed, fewer and fewer people on the side and base of the mountain could remember they had once lived on the peak.

Now the time had come when King Schleppo became alarmed. Even though the people loved him, many had taken trips down the mountain and had never returned. Frumdom was shrinking and he did not know what to do. The other realms were becoming stronger and stronger and Frumdom was under constant attack. Schleppo went to his most trusted friend, Reuven the Magician, to ask for guidance.

Reuven told Schleppo to get his brightest men together and send them to fight the other communities. Schleppo went out and assembled a group of the finest scholars in all of Frumdom. There were five in all: Aur Shabbos, Aur Nagia, Aur Kashrut, Aur Mitzvot, and Aur Davenalot. They all gathered around a round table in the palace. When Reuven saw the six men seated at the table, he shouted: "This will never do!" He placed his magic pendant, a Mogen David, on the table. Suddenly, the table began to shake and the chamber filled with smoke. The men became unnerved and began to panic as they realized their helplessness. At last the smoke cleared and the men saw that the table was no longer round, it was shaped like a star, a Star of David! Each man found himself seated at one of the points of the star with King Schleppo at the top. "That's more like it," Reuven said with satisfaction. "Behold, King Schleppo and the Lights of the Star Table."

King Schleppo explained to the Lights that Frumdom was being threatened by the heretics below. He told Aur Shabbos and Aur Nagia to go to the middle of the mountain and try to convince the people there to observe the Law. Aur Kashrut and Aur Mitzvot he sent to Reformdom to "reform'em."

Aur Shabbos and Aur Nagia descended to the middle of the mountain and began to teach the halacha. Some conservatives were convinced and

decided to climb to the peak. One day Shabbos was speaking to a group of elderly conservatives and was having no success persuading them to move to Frumdom, although he did receive some contributions of silver. Meanwhile, Nagia was speaking to a group of young men. Suddenly, he saw a woman in the back of the room. He was about to order her to leave the room when he noticed she was wearing a torn shirt which was covering only one of her shoulders. He had never seen anything like it and leaped across the room towards her. The girl saw a man with a beard, sidecurls, and black coat flapping in the wind lunging toward her with a wild look in his eyes and ran for her life.

Word reached King Schleppo who quickly became depressed. There is still Aur Shabbos he thought. After a few days, however, the King received word Aur Shabbos was dead. Apparently, Aur Shabbos was walking home from shul on shabbat and saw a fire-breathing dragon. "There can be no making of fire on the Sabbath," he yelled and began throwing rocks at the dragon. Moments later, the dragon ran him over.

There was no word from Reformdom for months. The King was distressed and not even Reuven's Eddie Murphy imitation could cheer him up. "You used to love it when I did my impression of Murphy doing his impression of Gummy," Reuven said plaintively. One day, Aur Kashrut was seen in Frumdom, but he was not wearing his Frum clothes, he had cut off his beard and sidecurls. The King issued an order to have Kashrut brought to him. Aur Kashrut came in with a knapsack, wearing Birkenstocks, jeans, and a Fame t-shirt. "Hi pops," Kashrut shouted as he approached the King. "What has happened to you?" the King asked incredulously. Kashrut reached into his knapsack and pulled out a bottle of beer and a ham sandwich. He opened the beer, which exploded all over the King as he replied: "They sure know how to party down there. And the food is incredible." The King then exploded: "You are hereby banned from Frumdom forever! Take him away guards!" "Bummer," replied Kashrut.

"Wait," the King said as Kashrut was being led away. "What happened to Aur Mitzvot?" Kashrut turned to the King and said, "Oh, that old fart, he said he was going to teach the people of Reformdom to observe the Law, but he hasn't recognized any Jews yet."

King Schleppo put his head in his hands in despair. After several minutes, he rose up and looked at Aur Davenalot and said: "You are our last hope; you must save Frumdom." "I shall," replied Davenalot as he mounted his white horse and rode down the mountain to the community of the conservatives.

When he arrived, he saw Aur Nagia with his arm around the girl with the torn t-shirt covering one shoulder. "Excuse me," said Davenalot as he removed Nagia's arm from the woman's shoulders. He then threw a cape over her back covering her exposed shoulder. Nagia looked at Davenalot indignantly and shouted "What did you do that for?" Just then, a group of young men and women were walking by and stopped to stare. "Hey, where did you get that bitchin' cape? Come on guys, let's get capes like that." And off they went to the mall.

Aur Davenalot went around town explaining the Law and teaching prayer. When shabbat arrived, Davenalot saw the dragons Aur Shabbos had tried to stop. Davenalot went to all the dragon depots and told the attendants, who were all wearing overalls with their name, "Bob," on them, that the Arabs were cutting back on dragon fire supplies. The price of dragon fire shot up and there were soon fewer and fewer dragons to be seen on shabbat. His task sufficiently completed, Davenalot rode down to Reformdom.

When Davenalot reached Reformdom, he immediately sought out Aur Mitzvot who was still looking for Jews. Davenalot pointed out the Jews and Mitzvot began to teach the law.

Davenalot went to temples and explained how to pray in English and gave lessons in Hebrew. One day, Davenalot was teaching a class when he saw a woman peek in the window. Davenalot froze. The face in the window was the most beautiful he had ever seen in his life. He rushed out the door

and saw a beautiful woman dressed in a long skirt, sweater, and clogs. Her short, dark hair complemented her freckled face. She saw Davenalot and smiled so that her dimples showed, but she quickly lowered her head. "What is your name?" asked Davenalot. "Miriamivere," the woman answered shyly. "Why do you peek in the window, fair Miriamivere?" "I had heard a man had come from Frumdom and I wanted to see you. I have read a lot about the top of the mountain, but my parents will not allow me to leave," she replied. "I shall take you back with me and you will learn to be one of the Frum people." Just then, Miriamivere's mother came and grabbed her by the arm. "I told you not to come here. The streets aren't safe with the Frum people around." Miriamivere called out to Davenalot as her mother dragged her away. Davenalot stood transfixed, the memory of Miriamivere etched in his mind. More than her outer beauty, however, he could sense an inner beauty, a childlike curiosity and innocence. She was the embodiment of goodness. He had to save her.

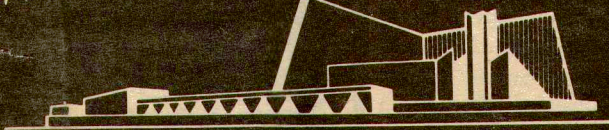
That night, Davenalot rode up to Miriamivere's condominium and called to her. She didn't hear him. He took out his violin and began to play. Miriamivere woke up, as did the rest of the neighborhood. She came to the balcony and saw Davenalot trying to balance on his horse as he played the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto. Miriamivere's parents woke up. Her mother said to her father: "It's that damn fiddler on the roof again." No, dear. The fiddler's in the street this time." Meanwhile, Miriamivere climbed down from the balcony, which was on the first floor, and hopped on the back of Davenalot's horse.

Miriamivere and Davenalot rode up the mountain. He taught her Talmud and recited the Song of Songs as they travelled. Their feelings for each other grew. Even in his Frum clothes, Miriamivere could see he was handsome and, more importantly, he was courteous, kind, loyal...Yes, he was also a Boy Scout.

When they reached the conservative community, Davenalot

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CAMELOT

Continued from page 13
could control himself no longer,
he embraced and kissed

Miriamivere. It was a feeling he
had never known. The love be-
tween them surged through
their bodies and met at their
lips. Their lips parted reluctant-
ly, then, Miriamivere began to
cry. "What's wrong?"
Davenalot asked. "I'm so happy

with you, but I'm not sure I'm
ready for Frumdom yet," she
replied. "I know, it's a big step
for you and I don't want to
force you before you are ready.
If you want, we can stay here
for awhile." Miriamivere looked
into Davenalot's eyes and could

see the love in them. "Let's
stay here for a little while," she
said.
Meanwhile, Aur Mitzvot had
returned to Frumdom and told
King Schleppo what had
transpired. Schleppo told Mitz-
vot to bring Davenalot back to

Frumdom. Mitzvot went down
the mountain and found
Davenalot and relayed the
King's message. Davenalot ex-
ploded: "I do not have to
return. I will—We will return
one day, but we are not ready
Please turn to page 15



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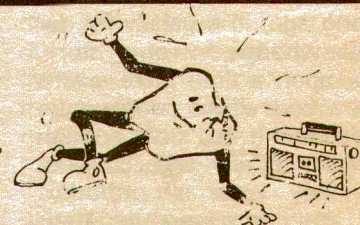
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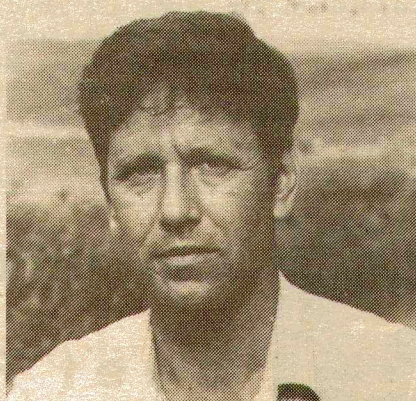
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