

Ironing

Daniel Green

She had holes in the soles
of her flat-heeled shoes
but she sang gentle songs
of love and remorse
in Yiddish and Russian.

Her sweet voice rose
in sheer content as she
touched a wet finger
to the sole of the flat-iron
to test its heat, starched
to glide, blew water-spray
to erase wrinkles
from the pleated skirt.

So many years ago, when
I was three and sang along,
and listened at her knee.

Born in 1907, Daniel Green wrote his first poem at age 82, and has since written several thousand poems, published in four books and 350 magazines and publications. He served as an intelligence officer during the Second World War; after the war, he made a career of social work, eventually becoming the executive director of the American Red Cross in New York City.

