At Beth David

Arlene L. Mandell
Santa Rosa, CA

Beneath a mound of earth not yet blanketed with violets, my mother rests at last beside my father covered in dusty yews, who died a quarter century ago.

On the narrow marble ledge I place a smooth pebble. One by one family members follow till his headstone holds a respectable row of remembrance.

Last comes Derek, great-grandson he never met, serious at seven in his small blue blazer.

I see Daddy’s gap-toothed smile know he’d rather have a handball and an egg cream, feel a playful tug on my blonde pigtails.
Bessie’s Legacy

_Arlene L. Mandell_
Santa Rosa, CA

A century ago she came
in steerage to America

fleeing Cossacks
shattered glass
the stifling shetl.

In my mirror Grandma’s
gray-green eyes

clouded with cataracts
stare back at me:

So, madeleh, life for you
is good in California?