

## Captain's Log

IRA SLOTKIN

*Word spread when Noah died.  
His sons, long drifted to distant shores,  
returned aboard ships of the desert,  
moored, mourned, sat shivah in the shallows of Ararat.  
Neighbors brought solace, and comfort food: olives, lamb stew.  
Sweet wine flowed.*

*Sorting father's flotsam and jetsam  
the children discovered he'd become a pack rat after the flood,  
couldn't give anything the old heave-ho, lest a life be lost.  
Captain of a smaller lifeboat, he haunted bazaars  
along the Nile, the Euphrates, the Tigris,  
compulsively collected castaways:  
extra dove cages, spare deck mops,  
sets of salt and pepper shakers.  
Each evening Noah unloaded cargo. Then  
he'd get loaded.*

*What can you do with a drunken sailor?  
The Mrs. took him to the Shamans:  
'Survivor's Syndrome,' they assessed,  
"He never really left The Ark."  
She sought a second opinion from the Essenes,  
who recommended a forty-day desert detox, followed by  
Sacred Dance Therapy with the Dervishes.  
To no avail.*

*The garden storm cellar  
- a sunken ship's hold -  
revealed his sacred treasures:  
a faded coat of many colors, long dry oil lamps,  
papyrus plans for pyramids.  
scorched clay tablets with ten survival tips for lost tribes.  
Carefully preserved beneath it all, wrapped in  
tattered canvas: a wooden rudder  
and a ship's wheel.*

*The pyre burned hot that night,  
sparks set sail upon sea of stars.*

*Ira Slotkin is a Social Worker in Denver, Colorado, USA, working with Domestic Violence offenders & substance abuse clients. "I have a 10 year-old son and a 6 year-old daughter, both adopted from Guatemala. And a cat, Ruby, adopted here."*