

## Wilderness House Literary Review 18/1

*Joyce Lazarus*  
**An Old Trunk**

I found an ancient, heavy trunk,  
worn and scratched,  
with torn leather and rusted metal locks  
in a basement room.

Inside it were many drawers  
holding treasures:  
an antique wedding dress,  
a long braid of brown hair,  
faded photos tinged with yellow,  
clothes packed for a long journey.

My mother's trunk had traveled  
across a continent  
and an ocean,  
more than a century ago.

I imagine my grandparents  
whom I never knew,  
leaving behind a world,  
escaping pogroms,  
seven children in tow,  
my mother in their arms,  
fleeing their homeland.

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The bags I carry are much lighter,  
designed for less arduous journeys.  
I don't carry the weight  
of persecution,  
of fears for survival,  
that my ancestors carried  
on their shoulders.

I pulled it open

from travels