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Picture 1957

The floorboards creaked and groaned as I crossed
the room to sit by the window and look. The
dirty panes slid back with a squeak as the city
awoke from its sleep
but
a worker across from the house that I sit in has
already begun and is no longer tripping the
bright lights, the bright lights
of home.
He's up with the crow heaving and hauling the
meats and the grains that we need for this
morning.
A staple, a delicacy, a treat.
Imagine the chorus! Of screaming and
squawking
feathers and peppercorns trampled into the floor sacking, and all
outwith my greedy grasp. Salted hams and floury
barley. Heads of corn and swinging
salami
pour from the warehouse in strong Jewish arms. A cotton
shirt on this icy Bronx morning seems
enough
as barrels and crates spill with my
religion
onto the filthy sidewalk.
A sin to watch, probably. But my early morning tongue
quivers for a slice
cut perhaps, if I'm lucky, by this dark-haired man in our
synagogue of dark wood and spice.