

THE FINEST EDGE

CARMEL FERN KELLY

MASTER OF ARTS IN WRITING

FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

2001

CERTIFICATE OF AUTHORSHIP/ORIGINALITY

I certify that this thesis has not previously been submitted for a degree nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree except as fully acknowledged within the text.

I also certify that the thesis has been written by me. Any help that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Carmel F. Kelly

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Jan Hutchinson, for her invaluable editorial advice, and not least for her expertise, insightful commentary and support.

I would also like to express my gratitude to Associate Professor Glenda Adams, for recommending important structural changes, and to Mr Graham Williams for his perspicacious Progress Report.

My thanks go also to my fellow students for their good company and wise counsel along the way in the various workshops that we all attended: Pat, Anezka, Angela, Damien, Marygai, Dennis, Geraldine and Kimberly, among others. Pat Skinner not only gave much needed encouragement, but also proofread the text.

Special thanks must go to my dear friend and mentor, Sari Hosie, Senior Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of Melbourne, who suggested several references dealing with women and trauma for the bibliography.

And finally, much gratitude to my dear brother, who took hold of a tortured Works manuscript and made it into a workable document in Word.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A TALE OF FOUR CITIES: FREMANTLE, TEL AVIV, JERUSALEM, HAIFA	1
Fremantle	2
Tel Aviv	11
Jerusalem	20
Haifa	28
THE FINEST EDGE	38
Esther	39
Arn	71
Monique	84
Esther	96
Arn	126
Monique	137
SECRETS	140
Miss Martine	141
Renée	147
Elaine	152

Maya	155
Phillip	158
BURIED TRUTH (Essay)	161
FILMOGRAPHY AND BIBLIOGRAPHY	178

ABSTRACT

In the stories 'A Tale of Four Cities – Fremantle, Tel Aviv, Jerusalem, Haifa', 'Secrets' and the novella *The Finest Edge*, I have attempted to come to terms with my experience as a child of a family involved in the Holocaust.

'A Tale of Four Cities' introduces my cousin, the writer Simon Louvish, and how our first meeting in Perth celebrated a reunion with Simon, his wife, my brother and myself while attending a Jewish Writer's Conference. 'Tel Aviv' examines my meeting in Israel with Ya'akov Ariel, my mother's nephew, and his family. 'Jerusalem' takes me to the home of my mother's first cousin, Misha Louvish. 'Haifa', brings me to the city and mountain, Mt. Carmel, after which I was named.

Family history unravels in these four sections as I make my first trip to Israel. Memories link the story's parts – my mother's memories of her village and family, my own memory of growing up with her.

In the novella, three characters – Esther, Arn and Monique – meet and encounter each other in a private clinic dealing with drug related problems. The theme of Holocaust enters again in a fictional setting through the reminiscence of the character Esther, who is portrayed as a child of Holocaust survivors. She views her own past and identity in the light of this historical event. The characters take turns addressing each other in a series of dramatic monologues.

The story 'Secrets' examines the manner in which five people attempt to come to terms with their Jewish background and the difficulties they face in an Australian setting.

The writer Aharon Appelfeld, said of his own oblique approach in writing about the Holocaust, 'one does not look directly at the sun'. I have used both ficto-memoir and fiction to describe the space where history and memory merge.