



#2

David Gordon - born inna '30s - 1936 - grows up inna '40s -  
onna lower east side of Manhattan -

← at 115 Ludlow Street - between Delancey'n Rivington -  
inna loving battling - claustrophobic - Jewish family - mother - father -  
2 brothers'n 1 sister - aunts'n uncles'n cousins - and - David says -  
he thinks he only has 1 grandma. He don't question.

#1

Grandma's name is Fannie - Fannie Wasserman Wunderlich. Gramma.  
Fannie lives 3<sup>rd</sup> floor front. Rosie Gordon - Fannie's oldest daughter -  
and husband Sam - and son David - and his 4 year younger brother - Richie -  
live across the hall - inna back . Sister Lois and brother Barry ain't born yet.  
Fannie's youngest - son Alfred - lives with her before he joins the Navy -

↗ and Hymie - the Wunderlich boarder -  
we call uncle Hymie - dunno his 2<sup>nd</sup> name  
- I dunno how Hymie gets there -  
because he never ain't there in my life.  
He sews - onna Singer sewing machine -  
n'stuffs our quilts'n pillows with feathers.

#2

Irene and Pauline - are married already -  
and outta the house. Aunt Yetta -  
called Auntie Tetty - still lives there -  
and Ruth Lillian - Aunt Ruthie.

Yettie is called auntie Tetty - story goes -  
because David - 1<sup>st</sup> nephew - can't say Y.  
Auntie Ruthie - who they call Pippy -  
I don't know why - secretly goes -  
to social dance clubs with girlfriends -  
big Angie'n little Angie - and meets -  
n'secretly marries - Italian uncle Allie.

#1

Ruthie takes David - 1 day - onna subway to a secret Brooklyn apartment -  
with dark green walls - velvet chairs - and - figurines.

Posturing porcelain ladies'n gents on end tables.

Fancier than how we all live on Ludlow Street.

Never - auntie Ruthie says - tell grandma.

Don't tell 'er what? The subway? The apartment?

Do I understand she's married?

Ruthie makes Dudie swear - and he does. Ya do what grown ups tell ya.



## #2

Grandma's birthday is celebrated in March. She don't know - and we don't - how old she is - we give her birthday gifts - on a made up day - of a made up month some unknown year. She don't unwrap 'em or - if she does - she rewraps 'em when we go - n'don't ever use 'em. Blouses with beaded monograms - from fancy Clinton Street - or cardigan sweater sets - or house dresses or handbags or pairsa gloves. Or pairsa nylons in original boxes - with original tissue paper. We never see 'em till she dies - we find old gifts in drawers fulla camphor. Ya remember we saved up to buy - we say. We are a story telling family - not logical - or investigative stories as preludes to further talk. No. Fannie's dire tales of warning all end in Gottfabid or weshouldliveandbewell.

## #1

← David's name David - morphs to Duvidal to Dudela to Dudie.

**Inna '50s** - David says no more Dudie please - but they say it outta habit'n apologize. Dudie - sorry they say - I mean David.

**1947** - Fannie Wunderlich says to daughter Rose - in Yiddish - I need Dudie.

David's mother - says in English - Dudie - go with grandma.

Dudie puts his book down and crosses the tenement hall - to grandma Fannie's kitchen. Ya do what grownups tell ya.

She locks her door - hands'm tweezers. She says - when I was a girl...her stories always begin - when I was a girl - or 1 time there was - amool ess g'vayn - David figures it's like once upon a time.

She pokes at her chin hairs. See dese hairs? Pull 'em out. He says why me? Ya mama ain't got time - she says.

Don't wanna hurt ya - Dudie says. Don't be a scaredy cat. She pokes - with my finger - at stiff chin hairs.

Holds a magnifying mirror. So - inna old country - we live in a cellar made wid rock. Why didya? We were Jews.

## #2

Inna old country - she says. Where Fannie comes from - is always the old country.

Or "Polish Russia". Or "Russian Poland".

## #1

Mamasheshouldrestinpeace n'cousin Ida - sheshouldrestinpeace - n'me - Fannie says - live inna cellar - and - by the ceiling is a hole - like a window - n'ya see feet walking.

I pull a stiff hair. She don't wince. So - we all gonna go in America. Ida - mama'n me.

Sem goes 1st. To be outta the army. They'da put him inna front - gramma says - they put Jews inna front - to get killed - so no. She means her brother Sam Wasserman.

Not the Sam Yettie finally marries - or my father Sam - or - the barber - Sam Schrifft →

Sam Schrifft cuts my hair in his barber shop on Rivington Street. He's Fannie's boyfriend later.

Cuts all the Wunderlich and Gordon's men's and boy's hair.

## #2

Sam is Shelley Winters uncle. The movie star. Her real name's Shirley Schrifft -

Fannie has a snapshot - stuck inna mirror frame - her and Shelley hugging'n laughing.

Pull this one - Fannie says. White thin hairs'n black coarse stubborn hairs - twang inna tweezers.

So - it's cold inna cellar - she says - so we hafta put a big rock to close up the window.

I got a skinny bed under the window but this night" - she says - I creep in wid mama - to keep warm.

Middle-a the night the rock goes right down'n falls down'n busts my bed'n gottfabid I'm in it.

Whole story in 1 sentence - no punctuation unless - she takes a breath or blows her nose.

She has big nostrils. Not wide but long.







The last immigrants  
to pass through Castle  
Garden were processed.

#1

We gonna go in America - Fannie says - n' tings fall outta my mama's hent.  
1 day a glass. A plate. Which hand? Fannie ignores me - we gonna get offa da boat -  
◀ in Kessel Gahden. Ya see da hair ova here? Fannie points. Yeah.  
So - whattaya waiting? So - off da boat I see a man coming - wid a cap'n a suit -  
n'shiny buttons - so I say quick in Yiddish to my mama - ya gotta shake his hand -  
so he don't know ya sick - or dey send us - Gottfabid back. She can't hold nothing -  
Fannie says - with her no good hand - not her pockabook - not a henkachief.  
She shakes his hand so strong - dunno how- n'they let us in t'AmericadenkGott.  
Fannie spits onna mirror - rubs it clean. Howd'ya knowta shake hands - David asks -  
whattaya mean how? Who knows? God knows. Rightaway 1-2-3 - Fannie says -  
Sem gets me a job who knows where'n I don't go in school - I beg but no.  
Gotta make money - he says. So - rightaway - she works - she says - in a factory.  
Works and sleeps in a factory for a month. Don't see mama for long'n every day -  
I gotta sit - she says - wid a boarda nails n'women's hair - and - pull da hair -  
dey say -through the nails. Get out the knots. How old are you?" Who knows?  
I'm a little nothing. My fingers is bleeding. Are there other kids?

Do they talk English? Where d'ya sleep? Whattaya eat? I don't ask. She probably won't answer - David says. She only says what she wantsya.

#2

Fannie comes home from the factory with American dollars - she says - I was crazy for an American dress but I was a stupid - she says.  
Sam takes da dollars. No new dress till I don't know when. Wotta stupid. Makes a stupid face. I'm acting - she laughs. I wanna be an actorizza.  
David never heard this before - you wanted to act? You sucha big shot artist from nowhere - Fannie says. My mama - sheshouldrestinpeace -  
is an artist inna old country - Rachel Wasserman - yaw great grandma - Fannie says - begs the grocer for burlap bags - from salt or flour.  
Washes'n dries 'em'n paints pictures onna bags. Goes inna houses of rich goyem - she says - to sell her pictures. Beautiful pictures onna walls.  
She ueta make pictures'n so do you. So - you're an artist from my mama - and also from me - when I wanna be an actorizza.



#1

Young Fannie Wasserman  
wantsa act she says - smiles -  
and she likes an actor boy.  
How does she meet an actor?  
Does she tell her mama?  
I don't tell nobody - she says -  
I go efter work - I say my name -  
Fannie - n'they gimme a book.  
Who gives ya a book?  
Actors gimme'n the boy sits -  
so quiet looking on me -  
she says - looks me up'n down -  
they say - go read what part -  
I wanna act - what should I do?

#2

I say I gotta go first inna toilet. I walk slow out - I put the book down'n run'n cry - like a baby - all the way home. I make myself 2 red eyes crying - Fannie says - inna Orchard Street hall - before I go upstairs to mama. Did ya tell your mother - David says. Nobody gotta know my business - Fannie says - I was a stupid. Who knows ya gotta read from a book to be an ectorizza? Who can read? Not me.

#1

What year does Fannie Wasserman meet Morris Wunderlich?  
A tiny Russian Pole who don't speak or read English -  
meets and marries a tall Austrian German - with sleepy eye-lids'n wandering eyes?  
David buys Victorian velvet picture frames - later - in European flea markets -  
to frame studio wedding pictures of Fannie n'Moishe in rented wedding clothes

#2

Pauline - auntie Paulie - says - he's a womanizer - a philanderer - a whoremaster - and also a bastard.  
I hated that bastard - she spits. If Fannie hears where Moishe is with 1 of his women -  
she sends Paulie'n Rosie - the 2 oldest - to get money - Rosie'n me - Pauline tells the stories -  
stand under da tenement window yelling Papa! Papa!  
Some blonde bimbo looks out'n hollers - go away - he ain't here. Papa! Papa!  
Rosie wantsa go -but I ain't budging till the bastard finally sticks his head out.  
He curses us'n throws nickels'n dimes if we're lucky.  
We crawl on our knees - picking up change outta the gutter under the cars.  
Everybody looks at us. We take money home to mama. She says was he glad ta see us?  
Sure Mama - he sent ya love. I hated that bastard - Auntie Paulie says.  
Rosie never mentions Morris - or the money.

#1

He always has other women - his daughters say - comes'n goes'n goes home to Fannie -  
if 1 of his ladies throws him out - or he tires of her? Raps at Fannie's door inna middle of the night.  
Girls who sleep with Fannie gotta get in the other bed together till he runs off again.

Last born Wunderlich is Alfred - the son. Looks like his father. Fannie finally has a son -  
after 5 living daughters and 2 miscarriages. She stops letting Moishe in. No more middle-a the night visits.

#2

Pulling human hair - at home - through boardsa nails - like inna factory when she's a kid -  
becomes Fannie's profession'n she always works - n'saves her cash inna bank - but the banks fail.  
She works'n saves cash tied widda rubberband inna toppa my stockings - she says - but -  
brother Sam goes upstairs behind her to visit mama Rachel onna 4<sup>th</sup> floor n'he looks up Fannie's skirt -  
she says - he needs her cash - he says -to get a wife - so Fannie hands it over -  
**and she works and saves cash - for the resta her life -  
inna rented safety deposit box inna vault.→**

#1

I'm 9 or 10 - David says - 1st time I ever see - or hear of my grandpa Morris - when Fannie takes me'n Richie - **bum bathing** - in Coney Island.  
To bum bathe ya gotta wear ya wet sandy swimsuit all day at the beach - and after too - under ya pants - onna subway home.  
Ya definitely hafta not pay a nickel for a bathhouse locker.







#2

So, Richie'n me - David says - hold hands with Fannie onna boardwalk ramp - and - Fannie stops - in front a tall man with fine white hair n'lets goa our hands - David says. Never - grownups say - leggo a grown-up's hand - inna street. She stands on tiptoe - she caresses n'moves his hair - gently off his forehead. He frowns and turns his head away - he smiles to his friends. Grandma says - about Richie'n me - these are Rosie's boys. Morris Wunderlich don't look at Dudie. Don't look at Richie. He don't answer Fannie. Fannie smiles'n continues animatedly in Yiddish. After a while - she takes back our hands - David says. Say g'bye ta ya grandpa. We walk away - David walks - and looks back. Morris Wunderlich lights a cigarette - and laughs with his friends.   
 ← Alla way to the trolley - alla way to the Sea Beach Express - and alla way to Delancey Street - we don't ask no questions - gramma don't say a word.   
 David don't say to Rosie - or any of the aunts - when he gets home - I think I met your father.

#1

Valda Setterfield takes the name of Fannie's mother Rachel - to make Fannie happy - David says - n'becomes a Jew - to marry him. However - Fannie says - a Jew is born - ya don't make a Jew - but she calls Valda Zeldala - gives her paper bagsa cotton flowered hankies - from a factory - where Rose & Paulie work as teenagers. More than 1 batch - more than 1 time - n'peels oranges - for Zeldala. Fannie speaks to her in Yiddish - If David translates she pinches'n punches me - she'll never learn - Fannie says. Fannie gives Zelda her 1940s monkey fur jacket - Valda still has it. Fannie comes to our wedding - at a reformed synagogue on 23<sup>rd</sup> street - and so does her husband - Morris Wunderlich.

#2

So - Rose Sylvia is 1<sup>st</sup> n'oldest of Fannie's daughters - n'David - born July 14, 1936 - is 1<sup>st</sup> n'oldest son of Rose and Sam Gordon. Sam's father is Louis - and Sam's mother - Anna - abandons her 3 young kids - n'divorces Louie - so David don't meet her - his other grandmother - and when he does meet her - he ain't allowed to call her grandma - because the family she marries into next - don't know she is married before - so my father - David says - hasta call her his aunt - and my mother hasta call her Mrs. Pockell - her married name - but we almost never do - visit.

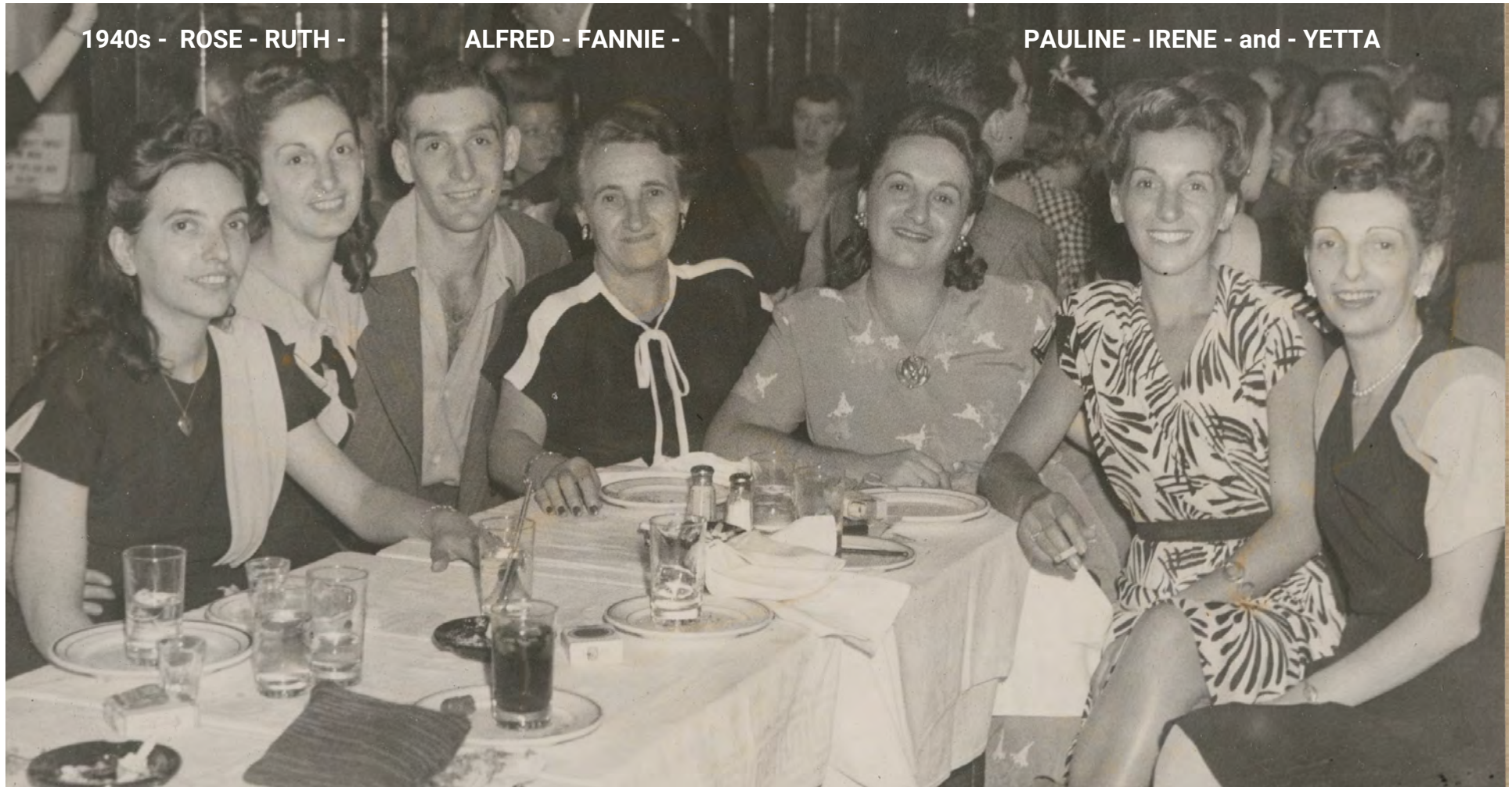
#1

David reads his library books - listens to radio - and watches the 1st 8" Teletone TV - proudly bought by father Sam - sees double features - at - the Loews Delancey onna weekends - sees - once in a while - an uptown movie'n stage show - with 1 of the aunts - but - inna '30s n'40s - David don't see - he says - a play in a theater - or a painting in a museum - never.



**1940s - ALFRED WUNDERLICH joins the Navy - ↓ - his going away party with Fannie'n Rosie - and all the sisters - at Bal Tabarin nightclub.**



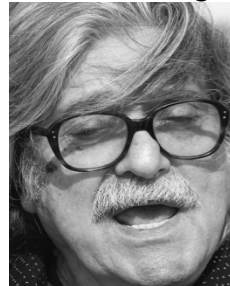
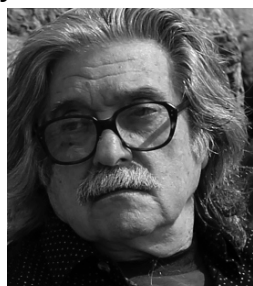
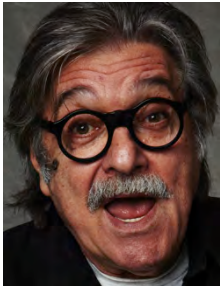
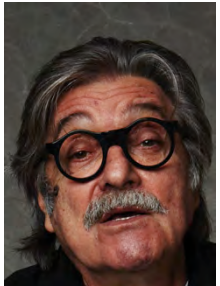


1940s - ROSE - RUTH -

ALFRED - FANNIE -

PAULINE - IRENE - and - YETTA

**2016 - my ARCHIVEOGRAPHY - David says - links'n overlaps - in'n outta order - professional - n'amateur photographic images - David says - documents n'personal correspondence - created'n collected by co-workers - friends'n family - and by David - haphazardly he admits - in an attempt - to annotate - chance meetings'n ups'n downs a 1 man's lucky career - inna arts. He has - David says - no dance training - no political or aesthetic movement vision - no personal technical axe to grind - no ambition to run a dance company - in other words - David Gordon says - no reason to imagine he's gonna do what he's gonna do - ↓ - fa the resta his life.**





#1

Getting born inna '30s - Bastille Day - growing up inna tenement next doorta my grandma Fannie n'aunts Ruthie'n Yettie'n uncle Alfred - all not yet married - on Ludlow Street n'don't forget lifetime boarder Hymie - David says - musta set the stage for story telling? Ya wanna hear? **Once upon a time - November 3, 1936 - FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT - ↓ - is elected for 2<sup>nd</sup> term - and same year they elect Adolf Hitler.**



**July 14, 1936 - Tuesday -**

David Gordon is born - goes home to ↑ Orchard Street.

↖ September 23, 1936 *Dodsworth* - directed by William Wyler -

with Walter Huston - Ruth Chatterton - Mary Astor.

March 29, 1936 ↑ German Parliamentary elections - single-question referendum asks voters if they approve of military occupation of Rhineland and single party list for new Reichstag - **composed exclusively of Nazis.**

↙ August 1, 1936 - German Olympics.



↙ July 14, 1936 - Bastille Day celebrations along Champs-Élysées are marred by right wing demonstrations and riots.

July 1, 1936 - British government announces plans to mass-produce gas masks - 1 for every citizen. Masks to be stockpiled in centers around the country and issued free of charge when government deems it necessary.

**April 15, 1936 - Arab revolt in Palestine is nationalist uprising by Palestinian Arabs - against British colonial rule - demand for independence.**

**June 11, 1936 - Salvador Dalí ↘**

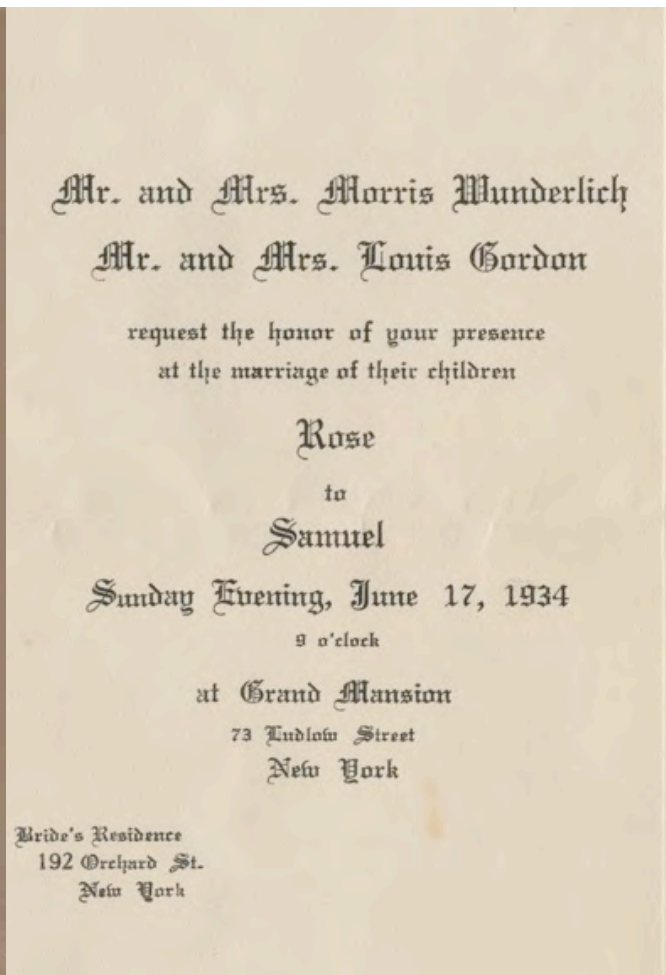
lectures at London International Surrealist Exhibition titled "Authentic Paranoiac Fantasies".

He wears a deep-sea diving suit to symbolize descending to depths of subconscious - but nearly suffocates before his friends free him. Audience believes it's part of the act.

**1936 - is a leap year.**

**June 17, 1934 - ↓ - Rose Sylvia Wunderlich marries Samuel Gordon.**





#2

**What I know** - David says - **n'what I don't know** -

← Rose's wedding gown and veil - are rented.

Renting wedding gowns is common - among poor folk in those days - and we're poor folk.

Rented sometimes - for actual wedding - and sometimes - for wedding photo only.

Don't really know which this is -

Sam's tux is rented -

but that's ordinary fa men ain't it?

#1

← Invitation reads-

Mr. and Mrs. Morris Wunderlich

Mr. and Mrs. Louis Gordon

request the honor of your presence at the marriage of their children

Rose to Samuel.

#2

1<sup>st</sup> of all Mr. n'Mrs. Wunderlich don't live together - Moishe stops by - remember - middle of the night - if he runs outta girlfriends - makes another baby - with Fannie - 6 in all - before he gallops off - or she finally locks him out.

Is he at Rose'n Sam's wedding?

Somebody - probably Aunt Irene - gets him to -

Rose'n Sam's 25<sup>th</sup>. He's also at Valda's n'my wedding.Irene bribes or kidnaps him. 3<sup>rd</sup> time I see him in my whole life - and the last.

#1

Also - Mr. and Mrs. Gordon - must mean 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> Mrs. Gordon -

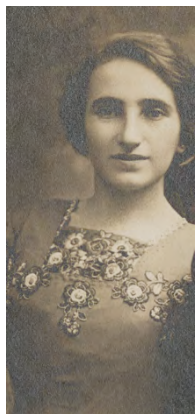
if any Mrs. Gordon is there at all. Anna - my father Sam Gordon's mother -

1st wifa my father's father Louis Gordon - has 3 kids before she's 20 - bolts - and abandons husband'n kids.

#2

Louis puts the youngest - Sam n'his brother Morris - Moishe - in an orphanage - which is - I am told - kinda thing done in those days - n'keeps 5 year old Adelaide - called Mickey - I don't ask why Adelaide is Mickey - keeps 5 year old Mickey - at home to keep house - Sam says - till my his father - Sam says - my grandpa Louis - David says - marries wife number 2. By the way - 1<sup>st</sup> Mrs. Gordon - before she goes - convinces Mr. Gordon - Louie - to change his name - legally in court - from Yagoda to Gordon or this mighta been the archiveography of David Yagoda.

Morris



Fannie



Anna



Louis





#1

**What do Rose and Sam have in common?**

Rose's father Morris - Moishe - has 5 daughters - and 1 son with Fannie - but he don't live with 'em' - or take care of 'em - n'Sam's mother Anna has 3 kids - with his father Louie - 2 boys and a girl - but she don't live with 'em - or take care of 'em.

**So - Sammie grows up without a mother - n'Rosie ain't got no father.**

#2

**David discovers "archive-o-graphically" - he produces - 1 long semi-auto-biographical series - for 50 some odd years - of dance theater steps - and texts - and images - and characters - and personal memories of a life lived making art - making friends - and 1 marriage - and 1 son - and - making a living.**

#1.

Louis Gordon's wife number 2 is named - Ethel? Ethel has grown sonsa her own - n'grandpa gets Morris n'Sam outta the orphanage. My stepbrothers - Sam says - have jobs n'make money - so they eat meat fa supper. Sam gets soup'n a little chicken he says - if he's lucky.

My father age 12 - David says - walks away from school 1 day - he says - n'gets a job so he can eat meat - David says Sam says. All Ethel's sons move out when their mother Ethel dies giving birth - to Sam's new half sister? Stepsister? Widower Louis marries wife number 3 - Fannie. Another Fannie - a large woman with a limp - she raises Ethel's daughter Jeannie -

← Auntie Jeannie - and Jeannie calls her Fannie mama.

Sammie at 17 - hitches to California - where the stepbrothers go - he says - n'backta New York - n'persuades Louis to sign so underage Sam joins the Marines. Louie signs'n Sam enlists n'goes to a party in Brooklyn - the story goes - in new Marine blue uniform - n'meets Rose Wunderlich - Fannie's Hunter College student librarian daughter - who - don't tell mother Fannie - she's gonna go with a girlfriend - to a party in Brooklyn - n'borrows a black crepe dress - with beads onna sleeves - from younger sister Pauline - Pauline tells me years later - puts her hair up - takes off her glasses - auntie Paulie says - men don't make passes - at girls who wear glasses - Pauline says it's what they say in those days.

#2

Sam - the Marine hasta go - to Nicaragua. Writes to Rose n'sends money - for her to save for an engagement ring - he says.

Changes his mind - Paulie says - n'writes to Rose - to ask fa money back - if she didn't - he says - already put it down - on a ring - Pauline says he says - n'Rosie cries - and Sam finishes his Marine hitch - and sails home - to New York - but Rosie sees inna newspaper - the name of his ship n'tells Fannie - n'borrows my dress with the beads onna sleeves again - Pauline says - so he should recognize her - n'Sam's ship sails into New York harbor - Fannie'n Rosie are there - they ask to see the officer in charge. Please.

Wanna take Rose's "fiance" - Fannie says - for a home cooked meal. Wouldya like to come too? He would. Fannie cooks and feeds everybody - and Sammie's captured. I never hear this story from my mother - or father. Paulie tells the story - after Rosie'n Sammie are both dead - Irene yesses alla it.

They say my father tries 1 more run out - back to California - where his stepbrothers are - but - David says both aunts say - no luck. Sam settles down and pretty soon I am born.





#1

Wunderlich/Gordon family credo - especially if ya gonna have a baby - **NOBODY GOTTA KNOW YA BUSINESS - opposite of ARCHIVEOGRAPHY.** We never talk - they say - like they do inna movies - fa rinstance - about whether to paint the nursery pink or blue - or yellow.

Who never talks? Who's "we"? Rose Gordon? Sam Gordon? Fannie Wunderlich? All Jews?

Who - anyway - onna lower east side - David says - has an extra room for a nursery? He says it - to himself - mostly who he talks to.



#2

David discovers - in his '30s - he's almost not the 1<sup>st</sup> son. Nobody mentions miscarried baby #1. Dintcha know - auntie Paulie says. No. **1935** - Rose and Sam Gordon don't take no chances with 2<sup>nd</sup> baby. They borrow money to pay for a private doctor and hospital. Buying on time - a routine routine to be continued - layaway living room suite - layaway kids spring coats - layaway kids.





#1

Before baby's born - nobody buys baby bottles - diapers - clothes or blankets -. No crib. No fancy maternity clothes. A jumper or a gamp. Nouns nobody uses anymore. Navy blue sleeveless gabardine gamp. Or maroon - or forest green. Rebutton buttons to make it bigger. Wear it daily - weekly - monthly - with a washable blouse. 2 washable blouses. 1 on - 1 drying.

#2

**1936** - Rosie ties red ribbons to her brassiere. Fannie ties 'em to everything. Gotta ward off evil eyes - of baby enviers. Pooh pooh kennahurra. Baby comes n'ya hafta count fingers'n toes. Thank God if everything's where it's supposeta be. Don't - Godforbid - let "strangers" know ya proud. Or happy. Don't - Godforbid - say ya baby's beautiful or "healthy" - or "gained a coupla pounds". Godforbid ya take a healthy baby fa granted. Fannie's'n Rosie's God don't like "fa granted." Wunderlich women's Gods demands doubt and fear.

#1

We were scared - Rosie says - right Sammie? It was the middle of the night. MiddleofthenightohmyGod - Sammie grins. Her water broke. They love to tell the story. Middleofthenight. Hafta use a payphone inna street - to call emergency. G'bye private doctor. G'bye private hospital. Police come with an ambulance - from Gouverneur Hospital on Madison Street. Gouverneur - Sam says - like a goddamn charity patient. Sam is still angry. Shame fa da neighbors. The looka poverty.

**1990** - David writes the scene - into - *The Mysteries and What's So Funny?* (see '90s ARCHIVEOGRAPHY - Part 1)

He weighed 10 pounds - right Rose? 10 pounds - 10 fingers - 10 toes. Rose'n Sam count fingers'n toes. THANK GOD IT'S A BOY - AND HE HAS ENOUGH EVERYTHING.



#1

New father Sam Gordon decides he hasta work all day -  
every day - the resta his life. A man's job is to have 2 or more jobs - he says.  
Go to work before anybody wakes up. Come home in time for bed.  
He wants you to have better than he had - Rosie says Sammie says.

#2

Ya crib is in our bedroom nexta my side of the bed - David says Sam says -  
n'ya don't go to sleep - he says - if I don't reach through the bars.  
Right Rosie?

For you - Rosie says to David - to hold his finger.  
She finishes Sam's sentence. He finishes hers.  
The bursitis is in his left shoulder - Sam says.  
It's your fault - Rosie says.  
Your fault - Sam repeats and grins.

#1

Rose and Sam take baby David home from the hospital -  
but the baby gets sick - and he don't get better fast enough.  
Sam is frightened - Rosie says.  
Remember they lost the 1<sup>st</sup> baby.  
The way Sam tells it - and tells it -  
dozens of doctors are lined up on Ludlow Street.

#2

Onna street - inna snow - Sam says - to get a look at David.  
Doctors useta come to ya house - Rosie says - however many flightsa stairs.  
Sam makes Fannie - the aunts'n alla doctors wash their hands'n wear a mask.  
Rosie giggles - before we can go near you - she says.

#1

How soon after mid-July birth is baby David sick?  
If Sam is to be believed - it's snowing?  
All the doctors lined up in the snow?  
David must be about 4 or 5 months old? Or a year and 4 or 5 months?

#2

In fairy tales if the prince is sick the King calls the wise men for a cure.  
Who wins gets to look after the young prince forever.  
Dr. Lew saves your life - Rosie says - "he" was a doctor!

#1

Sam says - ya can say that again. He does.  
Dr. Lew diagnoses 1-2-3. Mastoid something.  
Turn him side to side - Dr. Lew says. Pour warm oil in each ear. They baste David every 20 minutes - like a turkey - till he gets well.  
Dr. Lew becomes "the" family doctor - forever.







#1

**1940s** - World War 2 - every American child? NY child?

☛ wears a round plastic tab -

with his name - address and birth date -

on a string under his shirt -

In case the Nazis drop a bomb -

on your public school.

David goes to PS 160 on Suffolk Street - ↓

with a school yard on Norfolk Street .

**(2016 - Suffolk Street photo)**

#2

David's plastic tab is erroneously dated - July 15, 1936 - day after he's born. David also has camphor'n garlic -

in a drawstring muslin bag onna string unda his shirt. Or Alfred's or Hymie's hand me down shirt. Rosie sews the muslin bag'n Fannie ties the string. Garlic'n camphor ward off the evil eye - Fannie says - and the polio virus.

Teachers and students sniff sniff. They cross their eyes. Something smells in here - they giggle.

Actually they say stinks. David sniffs too. Pretends it's not him.

Like with the fire sale pajamas Rosie buys when he goes - that 1 summer inna '40s - to the Knights of Pythias camp.

#1

**Inna '40s** Auntie Paulie's husband Maxie - the taxi driver - gets Dudie inna Knights of Pythias summer camp. Rosie buys him 2 pairsa fire sale pajamas with long pants. 1 bland blue'n 1 institutional green. David pullsa polo over the drawstring toppa the smelly fire sale ankle length pajama bottom when he getsta camp.

2 things he wants - wantsa hide his name is Dudie - and he wantsa hide he ain't got real long pants.

Counselor and campers sniff sniff - something's burning? Sniff sniff. David sniffs too. Pretends it's not him.

#2

David don't get good at any kinda sports - ball play - not even hit the penny. Catch this - a kid says'n throws a ball. Forget it. Tries but never learns to ice or roller skate. Sits his ass onna stoop at 115 Ludlow Street - buckles on brand new roller skates.

Tries to stand - but still squatting - rolls from the sidewalk into the gutter.

Oncoming car screeches to a halt.

Driver yells as David crawls to the stoop. Whatthehellayadoin kid?

Whattaya outtaya fuckinmind?





#1

**1940 David Gordon stops being an only son - only grandson - only nephew. Brother Richard is born August 22, 1940.**

#2

They grow up sharing a bedroom'n bunk beds inna Manhattan tenement. A 5 room "railroad" apartment - inna back.

#1

Rice Krispies or Cheerios for breakfast - at the kitchen table.  
Milk and a cookie after school at the kitchen table.  
Homework at the table. Supper at the table.

#2

Sundays sometimes - a double feature at the Loew's Delancey. Sometimes Sam says to Rose - ya wanna get "Chinx" at the Pageant? David dunno not to say "chinx" till he's in public school with Allen Chin. Pageant's at the corna of Essex'n Delancey uppa lotta steps. Sam reads the menu'n takes off his glasses and orders.

#1

Wonton soup, chicken chow mein - pork fried rice - egg rolls. 2 orders of roast pork sliced very thin. Always.

#2

Always. If Fannie's with 'em he also orders shrimp in lobster sauce. Fannie likes shrimp. Rosie don't eat 'em. Dudie don't ask why. They never use the sauce - onna table - inna bottle. David says Rosie says - "they" use it - "we" don't. Why don't we - ma? It's pigeon blood Rose says. David don't know about soy sauce till the '50s.

**Inna '50s** David eats with artists James Waring - Nick Cernovitch - and - Remy Charlip - 1<sup>st</sup> time In a Chinese Restaurant without Sam. They ask what'll ya have? Dudie readsa menu he never read before. Uh - wanton soup - chow mein - pork fried rice - egg roll'n roast pork. Sliced very thin - he says. Remy takes the menu away. They order for him.

#1

In bad weather - or if someone's sick - Sam gets Chinese to go - leaves \$5 deposit at the Pageant for dishes. Why can we eat Chinese food - but it can't touch anything in Rose's kosher kitchen? David don't ask. Rosie covers the kitchen table - and sink - with newspaper. She washes the dishes in the newspaper-lined kitchen sink. Clean dishes get returned to the Pageant - get \$5 deposit.

#2

If Fannie crosses the Ludlow Street hall to join Rose - Sam - David'n Richie - for Chinese takeout at the kitchen table - they hafta use table top extensions. Sam stops eating. Knock - knock. Sam's jaw muscles flex. He slams his knife'n fork onna table. Sam stands. They all stand up. Get ready to push chairs to make room to open the kitchen door. Sam yells - who is it? Uncle Morris yells - it's Moish.

The doora the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor walk-up opens from the hall into the kitchen. With table extensions open ya can't open the kitchen door. Uh oh - footsteps onna stairs. Sam stops eating. Knock - knock. Sam's jaw muscles flex. He slams his knife'n fork onna table. Sam stands. They all stand up. Get ready to push chairs to make room to open the kitchen door.



#1

Uncle Morris - Sam's older brother. Twice married - once widowed with 1 daughter - once divorced with 2 sons. Uncle Morris sells Mars Bars inna streets - and Hersheys in cartons - and makes rude sound effects'n jokes - for kids'n customers. Uses words like "botchagaloup" - n'calls police - to report cops - smoking on duty. Cops useta not be allowed - don't like being reported. Cart him off to Bellevue - Sam hasta get brother Morris outta the crazy house again.



#2

Uncle Morris stands grinning inna hall. Brought some candy - he says - holding a carton. Ya eating supper? It's suppertime - Morris - Sam growls. Eat with us. Take off ya coat'n siddown. Uncle Moishe always drops by when kitchen table extensions'n chairs block the kitchen door. I ain't hungry - Morris says - I ate. He always already ate. I gotta new diet - he says. He always has a new diet. Reaches in his pocket - pulls outta wadda paper. Everybody stays standing. He searches for the new diet. Foods gonna get cold - Sam says - persuades Morris to come in. Everybody must side step - and - move chairs and side step - side step. Circle dance arounda kitchen table. Push a chair'n move. Push a chair'n move - till Morris arrives inna living room doorway'n we're all back in place. Kitchen door is shut. Everyone sits but Morris - still in his coat - with papers in 1 hand. Candy carton is still in the other hand.

#1

Sam's jaw muscles flex in'n out. Why don't you take off your coat - Moish - Rose says sweetly and I'll get another plate. Sammie - she says - get Morris a chair. No Rosie - thanks - I was by Ratners so - I swear ta God - I already ate. Anyway - I gotta special diet. I'll show ya. Morris falls to the floor writhing and kicking. Sam yells get me a spoon. He has to stop Morris from biting or swallowing his tongue. Once - David says - Sam don't get a spoon fast enough - he shoves his leather wallet between Morris's teeth till epileptic spasms lessen and stop. It's a recurring event. Footsteps inna hall - wait - mid-mouthful. Knock knock. Who is it? Aunt Ruth or Uncle Alfred. Or grandma. It's never a stranger. Or it's Uncle Moishe. Ya know what's gonna happen. Maybe not always - but almost always - nobody ever says nothing about it after. Never says anything about what happens - before it happens - or after it's over. David never says - what's wrong with Uncle Moish? Never mind - Rosie'll say - didya finish ya homework? Never says to a kid in school - does anybody fall down in ya house? D'ya hafta put a spoon in their mouth? David only knowsta get information from what he hears grown ups say - in Yiddish or in secret'n keep an eye out - fa what he ain't supposeta hear or know. In between songs'n dances in Hollywood musicals he tunes into living room behavior - into living room chemistry. Inna books he reads - he pays attention to what a character says - n'when what he says don't match up with what he does - n'figures out what's gonna happen. Everybody's inna living room. Nobody in David's young life does sports - exercises or goes outta the house except to work - shop - or visit some other relative. They sit together where they sit. Drink seltzer or coffee and talk and smoke a cigarette till it's time to go - and go home n'sit back down - or go to bed. Turn onna radio - read the *Daily News*'n smoke another cigarette. They all smoke another cigarette. David goes in his room'n reads another book.

How many books does David take outta Seward Park Library inna '40s? (see '30s/40s ARCHIVEOGRAPHY - Part 2)