

2012

# Being Jewish in a Small Town

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### Recommended Citation

Lifshin, Lyn (2012) "Being Jewish in a Small Town," *Studio One*: Vol. 37, 22-23.

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## Being Jewish in a Small Town

someone writes kike on  
the blackboard and the  
“k’s” pull thru the  
chalk, stick in my

Plump pale thighs.  
Even after the high  
school burns down the  
word is written in

the ashes. My under  
pants’ elastic snaps  
on Main St because  
I can’t go to

Pilgrim Fellowship.  
I’m the one Jewish girl  
in town but the 4  
Cohen brothers

want blond hair  
blowing from their  
car. They don’t know  
my black braids

smell of almond.  
I wear my clothes  
loose so no one  
dreams who I am,

will never know  
Hebrew, keep a  
Christmas tree in  
my drawer. In

the dark, my fingers  
could be the menorah  
that pulls you toward  
honey in the snow

*Lyn Lifshin*  
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