“One must never forget his fellow man, regardless of race, creed, or color.”
— General Maurice Hirsch

hosted a weekly open house in his River Oaks home, sweetheart rose in the lapel of his vested suit. (One of the first to buy, having married a non-Jew.)

In college Hirsch writes in his journal:
“You can’t misunderstand a surface.”

On the one hand, his foresight. On the other, our hindsight.

He was a Harvard man, he fought the Nazis, he opened up River Oaks. If I offer up this man.

And The Jewish Mothers Hall of Fame.

My furrier great-grandfather catching a robber at Yankee Stadium, during the seventh inning stretch.

The orange index card: Josh’s favorite, parenthetical, after arlene’s apple pie.

A brief explanation of the artist’s context, what is called didactic text:
Where and when the artist was born. The title of the art. Materials used. (Tombstones.)

A sentiment is ironized.

Making art is doing self-criticism.
Calling it art allows it to be dismissed.

If I offer up my childhood nicknames:
Spike, Tank, Spiketank, Bearclaw, the Vanilla Knish.

And that there is no commandment to be funny.

If I am offered up, as a joke. What father has no understudy?
Meet the Teachers Night

Our synagogue’s security service is employed by the father of a current student, the rabbi joked, “so they protect the kids as if they are their own.” After pre-school the children hide where bushes clarify a dark metal fence, take turns looking for each other. When it’s nice out the all-day kids come press their faces to the bars.

“I hate that it’s fenced in,” Jordan says, “When I was 10 my mother came home from teaching here to tell me about swastikas on the walls, swings and monkey bars and the merry-go-round burned down.”

I am learning old news is passed along like this, if at all, after a procession of subordinate clauses, watching so the other parents won’t hear.

I search “temple emanu el houston defaced by swastikas”
About 9 results (0.49 seconds)
most: Missing: defaced swastikas

I find

I search “temple emanu el houston playground burned down”
About 2,980,000 results (0.75 seconds)
most: Missing: playground burned down

chronology: jewish communal security - JCRC-NY,”

bomb threats to Owen’s pre-school 68 pages in.
Once I ran into the garage to stop a little girl who bolted when her mother looked the other way. I was just quick,

we'd all have done it.
I ask around about the arson.
No one else knows, not even rumor and lore.

I don’t want to scare anyone.

A friend who works here tells me not to worry. “We have more to fear from a random shooting.”

| The doors of Congregation Brith Shalom in Bellaire and Houston’s Congregation Emanu El were scratched with swastikas and with the words “Jews Die” and “Aliens.” | Molotov cocktails were thrown at the main building of the Jewish Community Council in Corpus Christi, Texas; Congregation Emanu El in Houston, and Temple Beth David in Snellville, Ga. |
New prayer book

Owen’s religious school sends us a gift for New Year’s: a prayer book under a letter topped with honey sticks: ancient teachers smeared pages of the Talmud with honey so children would know study was sweet.

Unearthed letter mentions Shalom Mirchin:
For instance, he never resented going to his store daily with his batch of books he intended reading there. He kept the door locked, for fear a customer would come in.
And when he did make a transaction, it was not always profitable financially.
One time, when mom asked him why he sold a few yards of material to a woman at 7 cents a yard, when it cost him 10 cents, he replied, “She needed it.”

I'm greediest on the basketball court, for assists

At any rate, after 5 lessons, papa decided I was now ready to give piano lessons myself. So a large sign was put up in one of our front windows, “Piano lessons—25 cents an hour. PRACTICING FREE!”
(The come-on.) And they came alright (for them, not for me) ragged, barefooted often, young and old; and I tried to teach them more than I knew myself: I practiced and gave lessons in our bare living room. But very soon, this was rented out to a boarder: a violinist who gave violin lessons. So my piano was moved into our adjoining dining room. And when my adult pupils came in evenings, for their free practicing, there were invariably the visitors and the snackers at the dining room table, shouting, as was the custom.

I had torn the yellow envelope open until my hand was sticky:
One of the honeys had been crushed.
I suspect the tube burst in transit, or under piles of undelivered mail, but I prefer to imagine our rabbi broke it with his thumb, before licking the envelope closed.