

shwarmonic convergence



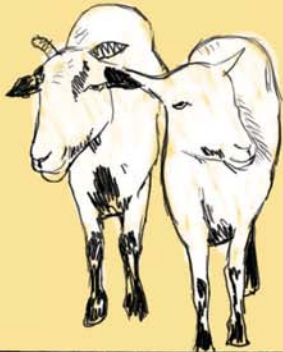
AT THE RECENT HAZON FOOD CONFERENCE: PLANTING SEEDS FOR THE NEW JEWISH FOOD MOVEMENT, A DIVERSE COMMUNITY OF JEWS CAME TOGETHER TO LEARN ABOUT THE FOOD THEY EAT, AND CELEBRATE TRADITION THROUGH PRAYER, SINGING, YOGA, WINTER HIKES, AND SHARED MEALS.

PERHAPS THE MOST PROFOUND COMMUNAL BONDING EXPERIENCE HAPPENED WHEN THREE GOATS WERE PUBLICLY SLAUGHTERED FOR SHABBOS DINNER

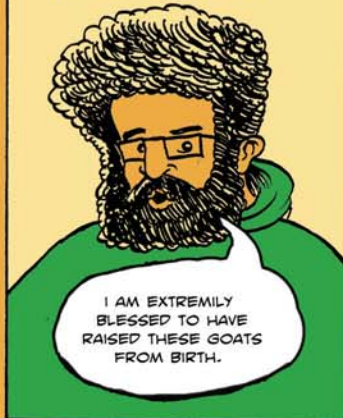
BY MATISYAHU TONTI

THE CAST OF PLAYERS WAS AS FOLLOWS:

THERE WERE THE GOATS,

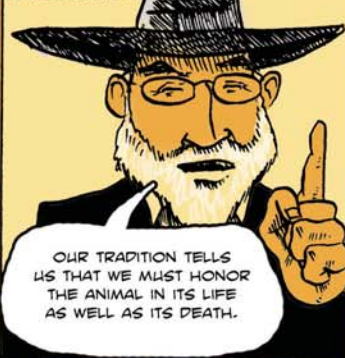


THE GOAT HERDER,



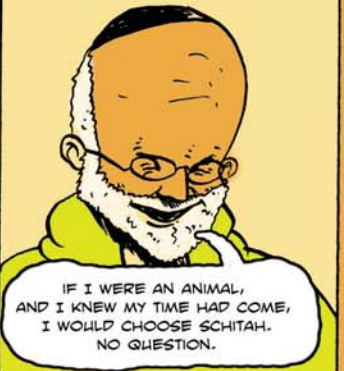
I AM EXTREMELY BLESSED TO HAVE RAISED THESE GOATS FROM BIRTH.

THE SHOCHET WHO WOULD DO THE ACTUAL SLAUGHTER,



OUR TRADITION TELLS US THAT WE MUST HONOR THE ANIMAL IN ITS LIFE AS WELL AS ITS DEATH.

THE MASHGIACH-TO MAKE SURE EVERYTHING WAS KOSHER, WITH A CAPITAL 'K',

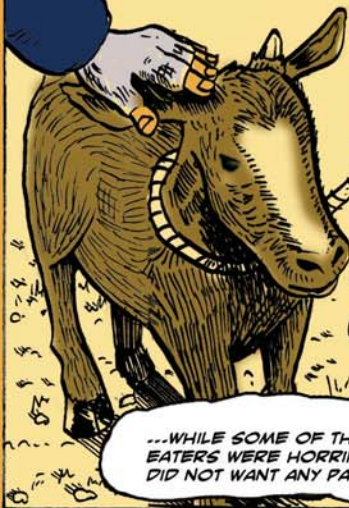


IF I WERE AN ANIMAL, AND I KNEW MY TIME HAD COME, I WOULD CHOOSE SCHITAH. NO QUESTION.

AND OF COURSE, ALL OF US YIDDIN, WHO COLLECTED OUTSIDE ON A COLD CHANNUKAH MORNING. WE WERE ALL FEELING DIFFERNT THINGS, BUT THERE WAS NO DOUBT THAT WE WERE ALL BEARING WITNESS TO SOMETHING HOLY.



LATER AT SHABBOS DINNER, SOME OF THE VEGETARIANS WHO SAW THE HUMANITY IN RITUAL SLAUGHTER ATE MEAT FOR THE FIRST TIME IN A LONG TIME...



beach

...WHILE SOME OF THE MEAT-EATERS WERE HORRIFIED AND DID NOT WANT ANY PART IN IT.

BUT BACK WHEN THE SHOCHET RAISED HIS KNIFE, WE HELD OUR COLLECTIVE BREATH AS HE, WITH THE DEEPEST INTENTION, UTTERED THE BLESSING

ברוך אתה ה' אלקינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו על השחיטה.



AND WE ALL ANSWERED: AMEN.

MAT TONTI - WWW.WANDERJEW.COM

Matisyahu Tonti strives to make art that is educational and inspirational. When not playing with art supplies, he can be found in near-perpetual bliss with his wife Julie and daughter Mayira.