Parsha in Poetry

By Nissi Merenstein

וַתַּבֵּט אִשְׁתּוֹ מֵאַחֲרָיו וַתְּהִי נְצִיבַת מֶלַח

"His wife peered behind him, and she became a pillar of salt."

(Bereishis 19:26)

The Angels warned Lot and his family to avoid
Looking back as Sodom was being destroyed
Yet Lot's wife looked back, despite the warning so plain
The story goes on to explain
From looking back, she did not refrain
She became a pillar of salt; her life came to an end.

This was punishment for a sin for which she bore the blame
When her husband Lot invited guests into their domain
He served a feast and matzos, despite the city's disdain
She went to her neighbors, some salt to obtain

Guests in Sodom?! Sleeping over and having them remain?!
What was in her mind? What did she hope to gain?
To let the neighbors know her husband broke the law was her aim
Sodom's wicked ways would bring destruction and pain
The city would go up in flames amid a fiery rain
Now you see why a pillar of salt she became

Why only NOW, after she looked back, was she punished for this act?
Lot was rescued when Hashem remembered Avraham, as we are shown
Now, upon leaving these wicked people to go on their own
This was their opportunity to enter a more spiritual zone
Their opportunity to have grown
By looking back, Lot's wife may have shown
That her heart was still connected to the people of Sodom

To sum this up, here's what's up!

As we go through life, the road is straight and things are looking great
But there will be times when we hit a bump and make a mistake
Use blinkers, honk at times, hit the brakes
But just as one cannot drive staring in the rearview mirror
Staying focused on the past will not turn us into a winner
Even if bad choices were made, you can always maneuver
And hope for a brighter future.

Of course, we can learn from the past
Just don't live there; get out fast
Stay on the road, look ahead, and do the best you can
Hashem willing, all will be good!

Sources: Bereishis 19:3, 19:26, 19:29; Bereishis Rabbah 51:5.

Sincerely, Nissi