

Family Album
Amos Neufeld

My father stands in the picture
with his parents, brothers and sisters.
(The gas and sealed cattle-cars
are still two years away.) They smile
not knowing this is the last time
they will be gathered happily together,
that nothing guards their world,
that sky will be all that remains.

Their eyes rest peacefully
on one another and on the camera
while tomorrow winds its arms
and twists tighter around their necks.
Yes it is still too early
to see the black boots coming:
smoke gloats carelessly from a cigarette
and children go to summer camp.

We see them—not yet lost,
standing on the precipice of wind and fire,
their image of vanished innocence,
captured and in our memory engraved.
Still they stand, unsuspecting,
composed, like any other happy family,
while their black and white world rushes toward...
is already on their final page.