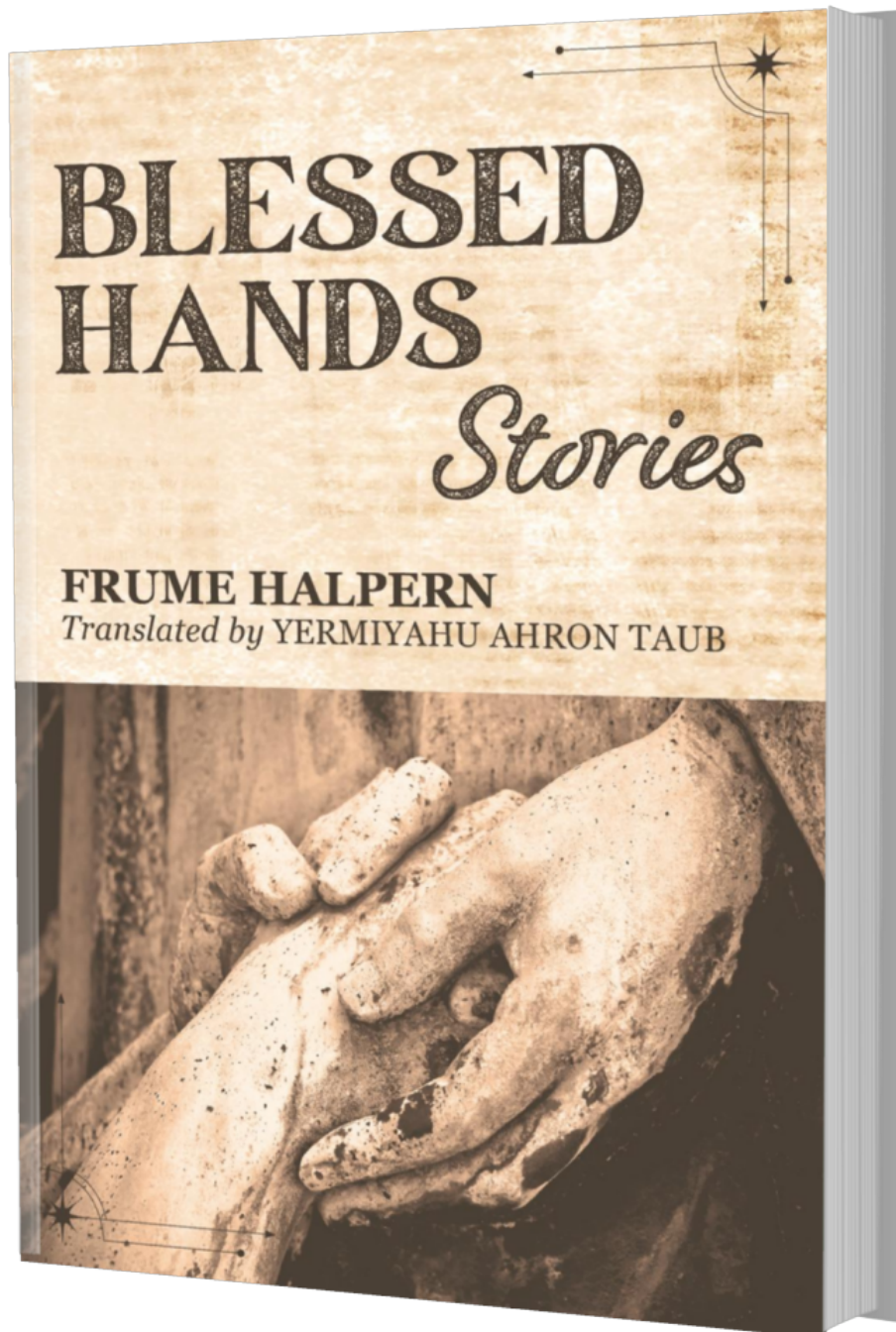


Stories by Frume Halpern Now Available in English Language Translation

"Blessed Hands is an engaging short story collection that's filled with glimpses into the lives of those whose voices are not often heard."--Foreword Reviews



Philadelphia, Pennsylvania Oct 17, 2023 ([IssueWire.com](https://www.IssueWire.com)) - Frayed Edge Press is pleased to announce the publication of *Blessed Hands: Stories* by Frume Halpern. These psychologically insightful and emotionally complex stories present the lives of protagonists who are working-class poor, social outcasts, and those experiencing illness, disability, and racism. First published in Yiddish-language

newspapers in mid-20th century New York, this collection of stories is now available to English-language readers for the first time, thanks to the efforts of translator Yermiyahu Ahron Taub.

Frume Halpern (188? -1965) immigrated to the United States in 1904 from Bialystok (then the Russian Empire, now Poland), and became a naturalized citizen in 1914. She worked as a massage therapist in the Bronx Hospital and wrote stories that appeared in Yiddish-language publications such as *Morgn frayhayt* (*Morning Freedom*) and the *Zamlungen* (*Collections*). *Gebenshte hent* (*Blessed Hands*), a collection of these stories, was published in 1963 and is her only book.

Halpern presents various "slice of life" stories in this short story collection, generally focusing on characters on the fringes of American society: immigrants, Jews, African Americans, and the disabled, the sick, and the poor. A plain factory worker who hides herself from life finds new possibilities opening up when a co-worker invites her to a political lecture. A humble shoemaker gains confidence and pride in his work after a yeshiva student introduces him to the philosophy of Spinoza. An unhappy housewife has new emotions stirred in her by an intellectual boarder. An African American man works his entire life standing, only to find himself unable to walk in retirement. A Jewish family waits in sorrow and anger as their loved ones' fates are played out on the national news.

The volume also includes a translation of the original foreword by Isaac Elchanan Ronch and an afterword by translator Yermiyahu Ahron Taub, which provides more biographical information about Halpern and the context of the work. Taub is a poet, writer, and Yiddish literary translator, based in Washington, D.C., who is the author of two books of fiction, six volumes of poetry, and various translations.

Amelia Glaser, Endowed Chair in Judaic Studies at the University of California, San Diego, states that "Left-wing writers like Frume Halpern constituted an important part of American Yiddish literature in the 20th century. But until recently, many have been absent from the English-language library. Yermiyahu Ahron Taub has helped to correct this lacuna, offering lucid translations that capture the spirit and idiom of Halpern's aesthetics and social consciousness. From an unlikely friendship between Jewish and Black women to a synagogue whose elderly congregants are slowly dying, Halpern's moving soliloquies describe everyday struggles with economic, racial, and gender disparities in mid-century America."

Rhea Tregebov, author of *Rue des Rosiers*, remarks that "Halpern's radical compassion, her powerful commitment to those whose social position, or physical limitations, leaves them outcast from the promised land of America makes for compelling, unforgettable fiction." Irena Klepfisz, author of *Her Birth and Later Years: New and Collected Poems, 1971-2021* comments that "*With Blessed Hands*, Taub has further expanded and enriched the burgeoning body of Yiddish literature in English translation."

Blessed Hands: Stories officially launches October 17, 2023, and may be purchased directly through our [distribution partner](#) at Parlew Distribution. The book is also available through major online booksellers, including [Amazon](#) and [Barnes & Noble](#) and most library book jobbers, including Ingram and Baker & Taylor.

Frayed Edge Press is a small independent press located in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, which specializes in publishing marginalized voices, overlooked literature in translation, and works that wrestle with important questions impacting contemporary society. For more information about the press, visit our website at: <https://www.frayededgepress.com/>

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Translator: Yermiyahu Ahron Taub

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