The Chutzpatina by Moran Kornberg

I learned to roll the words
on my tongue, as any woman
who ever needed an excuse to name
the insolence or audacity of a child
spitting on the pavements of Tel Aviv,
the only place I now call home.

For thirteen years, I still recall the home
that taught me how to write words,
not in the language of Tel Aviv,
but in the tongue of the woman
who gave birth to me, the child
once responding to a different name.

I could add an "i" and change that name
like a coat of paint on an old home,
like an oil painting of a child
built by layers and layers of words
slowly drying into the figure of a woman
in the foreground of Tel Aviv.

I didn't want to love Tel Aviv,
or memorize another street name
but the Bauhaus buildings illuminated the woman
who ripened in her old/new home
and learned to recite the words
as she left behind the child.

I am now like any child,
born in the city of Tel Aviv,
brazenly shouting Chutzpah! like the other words
reserved to name
the people and their manners and their home.
I learned to love the woman,

who will one day see her daughter as a woman
of letters bearing child.
I forgive her for bringing me home
to the squares of Tel Aviv,
whose people now respond to my real name.
It was here I learned to love words.

We are: child and woman and Tel Aviv,
the white city that knows my name,
and has given me milim.