

חווה לאפין לזכר



In memory of Chava Lapin z"l

Trip to Yiddishland, Aug. 15 2023

A few words about Khave

A por verter vegn Khave, Z"l

Sheva Zucker

The Yiddish World will remember Dr. Khave Petrushka Lapin as a pioneer of the study of Yiddish on the university level; an unofficial advisor on Yiddish language and Jewish way of life to several generations of Yiddish students, teachers and artists, and Yiddish expert extraordinaire.

These are the simple facts of her life: Khave Lapin was born in Montreal in 1933 in a traditional Jewish and Yiddish-speaking home. Her uncle Simkhe Petrushka translated the whole *Mishnah* into Yiddish and was the author of *The Yiddish Folk Encyclopedia*.

She attended a Yiddish *folkshul* (supplementary elementary school) for seven years. In a time when there were strict quotas on Jews in higher education she graduated from McGill University with a doctorate in biochemistry. In 1957 she did a postdoc at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in New York City. Her husband Shmuel Lapin was the executive director of the YIVO from 1966 until his untimely death in 1973. After that she had to raise and support their three sons herself .

In 1973 she began her “second career” as a Yiddish teacher on an academic level _ — at the time, a completely new field — at Queens College and Columbia University, and in 1974 in the Weinreich Summer Program at Columbia/YIVO where she was, as she used to say, “a piece of furniture,” in other words, a permanent part of the program, almost until the last years of her life.

For more than ten years she served as the director of culture and education at the Workmen's Circle and was on the board of the YIVO. She was the proud and loving grandmother of four grandchildren — all boys, although she once confided to me that “Now and again I would love to be able to tie a ribbon.”

But all these very impressive facts still don't get at the essence of the person named “Khavé Lapin” — the treasure that was embodied in her, and the magnitude of our current loss.

Khavé Lapin's Yiddish was probably the richest and most delicious *Mame-loshn* that I have ever heard in my life. It combined the folksiness of expression of a market woman, the erudition of a scholar, and the refinement of an elegant prose master.

It's true, Khave didn't invent expressions like, "*Oy vey iz mir nisht*" (untranslatable), "a mouth on screws," and "big deal — she has a grandmother in the Land of Israel!" but I heard them first from her.

And because of this richness, this juiciness, and her profound Jewish knowledge, the League for Yiddish, for whom I served at the time as executive director, was thrilled when we managed to lure Khave onto the editorial board of the *Comprehensive English-Yiddish Dictionary* that was published in 2016. And somehow she worked on this *magnum opus* without a computer and without email. Why? Suffice it to say, Khave marched to her own drumbeat.

In a time when most women of her generation could only dream of becoming secretaries or schoolteachers Khave became a researcher in neurochemistry and authored many articles. She could tell someone off, and didn't spare harsh words when she felt that they were necessary. Yet because she didn't spare criticism a good word from her really meant something and both encouraged and inspired the recipient.

Of her role on the YIVO executive board she claimed that sometimes she was “a bone in their gullet” because she always demanded that YIVO remain true to its principles as an institution that must support and defend Jews, Yiddish, and the cultural heritage of Eastern European Jewry, while others — in her opinion — wanted to lead it down different paths.

And since these things were important and precious to her she was always ready to help people with their questions about language and *shteyger* (Jewish way of life).

When we Jews encounter a difficult question or problem that can't be answered or solved, we say *Teyku* (The Tishbite will come and solve questions and problems), which means more or less that Elijah the Prophet, the precursor to the Messiah, will answer all questions when he comes. In our little Yiddish world we had another response, especially when it came to questions related to Yiddish and Jewish tradition. We didn't say *Teyku*, but rather, "Go ask Khave Lapin." And if she couldn't answer, that was a sign that perhaps we WOULD have to wait until the Messiah comes.

Once in the YIVO Summer Program, before she had met Khave in class, a student asked me,, “Who is this Khave Lapin? Is she a real person or a legend?” I knew her and worked with her for over forty years and I can bear witness to the fact that Khave was both, a *mentsh* in all senses of the word, and a legend.

We Are Greeting

We are greeting loud and clear:
Happy New Year, a good year!

We are greeting and we wish
All the kids, loud and clear,

Be inscribed for the New Year,
Happy New Year, happy New
Year!

Music: Chana Moltek
Lyrics: Shmuel Tsesler,



Performed by Dinah Slepovitch

Mir bagrisn

*Mir bagrisn hoykh un klor,
Leshono toyvo a gut yor.*

*Mir bagrisn un mir vintshn
Ale kinder hoykh un klor:*

*Leshono toyvo tikoseyvu:
A gut yor a gut yor!*

Dear parents, sisters, brothers,
Family, friends, entire
generation,

Happy New Year to the Jewish
people,
Happy New Year, happy New
Year!



*Tates-mames, shvester, brider,
Kroyvim, fraynt, dem gantsn dor,*

*Leshono toyvo kol Yisroel,
A gut yor, a gut yor!*



Performed by Zisl Slepovitch

**OY, OVER THERE, OVER THERE
OY, DORTN DORTN**

Far away across the water,
far away across the bridge,
I have been away to the far-off
land,
and I am crying my heart out for
you alone.

Help me, God, Great God in
Heaven, help me!

*Oy, dortn, dortn ibern vaserl,
Oy, dortn, dortn ibern brik
Fartribn hostu mikh in di vaytene
lender,
Un benken benk ikh nokh dir tsurik.*

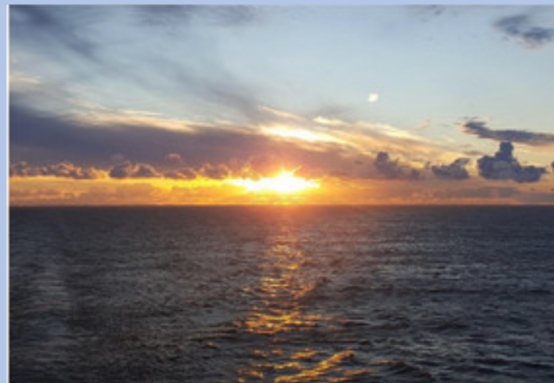
*Oy helf mir, Gotenyu, oy Got in himl,
Oy helf mir Gotenyu, s'iz mir nit git,*

We've been playing at love for three years,
And we are still at it,
And there's no end to it.

Your eyes are like black cherries.
Your lips are like pink paper.
Your fingers are like ink and quill.
Write to me often...

*Shoyn zayt dray yorelekh vi mir shpiln a libe,
Un oysshpiln di libe konen mir nit.*

*Oy dayne eygelekh, vi di shvartse karshелеkh,
Un dayne lipelekh, vi rozeve papir.
Un dayne fingerlekh, vi tint un feder,
Un shraybn zolstu ofte briv tsu mir.*



Read by Kolya Borodulin

God of Israel Got fun Yisroel
Aaron Leyeles

The God of Israel is not rich.
I saw the Sistine Chapel,
Notre-Dame, the Cathedral of Cologne-
you can feast your eyes on them, you can enjoy

The God of Israel is stingy.
He won't fill his museum with statues,
Paintings, altars, thrones,
Purple gowns, three-tiered crowns,
He does not wish to live in a Palais.
The Jewish museum has a modest display.



A Chanukah-lamp, a curtain, a scroll,
A spice-box, tefillin, a pointing Hand
A menorah, a Torah Crown, tools for
circumcision,
And an old, ancient manuscript.
And another manuscript and another manuscript
Entangled, bound, locked together.
Letters in love with letters.

What does the God of Israel ask?
What does the God of Israel demand ?
The God of Israel is a just demander .
The God of Israel is a strict demander.
The God of Israel is a stingy demander:
Search by yourself, research by yourself, suffer
yourself-
For your own and for my honor.



In a gray-gray once-upon-a-time,
From a mountain-top into a valley,
He dropped two handfuls of letters,
Scattered them over the roads of the earth.
They sparkled with speech, blazed with sayings,
And since then-
For thousands of years we seek them,
For thousands of years we save them,
For thousands of years we explain them,
And there is no solution on earth
For the letters, the sayings, the words.
Another manuscript, and another manuscript,
Entangled, bound, locked together-
Letters in love with letters.



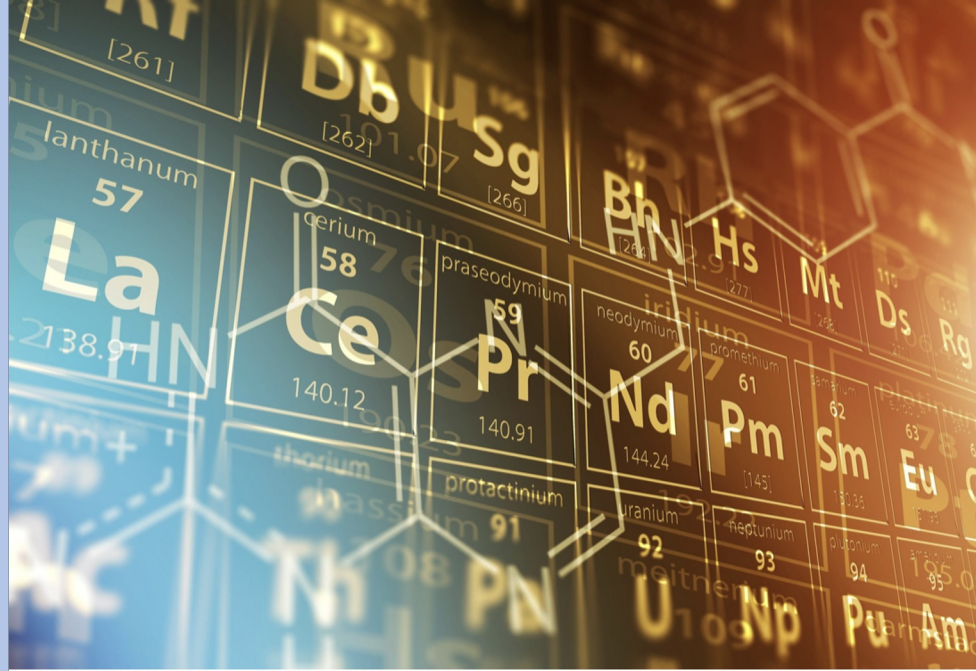
The Elements - Di Elementn

A Tom Lehrer Original
Translated and performed by by Mikhl
Yashinsky

There's antimony, arsenic,
aluminum, selenium,
And hydrogen and oxygen
and nitrogen and rhenium,
And nickel, neodymium,
neptunium, germanium,
And iron, americium,
ruthenium, uranium,



S'iz do antimonye, arshenik,
aluminum, selényum,
Un vásershtof un zóyershtof un
shtikshtof un renyum,
Un niki, neodimyum, neptunyum,
germanyum,
Un ayzn, amerikyum, rutenyum,
uranyum,



Europium, zirconium, lutetium,
vanadium,
And lanthanum and osmium and
astatine and radium,
And gold, protactinium and
indium and gallium,
And iodine, you silly, and thorium
and thulium and thallium.

Eyropyum, tsirkonyum,
lutetsyum, vanadyum,
Lantanum un osmyum, astatín
un radyum,
Un gold, protatktinyum un
indyum un galyum,
Un yod, du yold, un toryum un
tulyum un talyum.

H	He	Li	Be	B	C	N	O	F	Ne	Na	Mg	Al	Si	P
S	Cl	Ar	K	Ca	Sc	Ti	V	Cr	Mn	Fe	Co	Ni	Cu	Zn
Ga	Ge	As	Se	Br	Kr	Rb	Sr	Y	Zr	Nb	Mo	Tc	Ru	Rh
Pd	Ag	Cd	In	Sn	Sb	Te	I	Xe	Cs	Ba	Hf	Ta	W	Re
Os	Ir	Pt	Au	Hg	Tl	Pb	Bi	Po	At	Rn	Fr	Ra	Rf	Db
Sg	Bh	Hs	Mt	Ds	Rg	Uub	Uut	Uuq	Uup	Uuh	Uus	Uuo	La	Ce
Pr	Nd	Pm	Sm	Eu	Gd	Tb	Dy	Ho	Er	Tm	Yb	Lu	Ac	Th
Pa	U	Np	Pu	Am	Cm	Bk	Cf	Es	Fm	Md	No	Lr		

You know yttrium, ytterbium,
actinium, rubidium,
And boron, gadolinium, niobium,
iridium,
Listen, strontium and silicon and
silver and samarium,
And bismuth, bromine, lithium,
beryllium, and barium.

Kenst itryum, iterbyum,
aktinyum, rubidyum,
Un bor un gadolinyum un
nyobyum, iridyum,
Her, strontsyum, silitsyum,
zilber un samaryum,
Un vizmut, brom, un lityum,
berilyum, un baryum.



You know holmium and helium and
hafnium and erbium,
And phosphorus and francium,
fluorine also, and terbium,
Manganese is there, and mercury,
molybdenum — what else! —
magnesium,
Dysprosium and scandium and
cerium and cesium.

Kenst holmyum un helyum un
hafnyum un erbyum,
Un fosfor un frantsyum, fluor
oykh un terbyum,
Mangán farán, kvékzilber,
molibdén vodén! — magnezyum,
Disprosyum un skandyum un
tseryum un tsezyum,



And lead, praseodymium, platinum's in
there, plutonium,
Palladium, promethium, potassium,
polonium,
And tantalum, technetium, titanium's
there, tellurium,
And cadmium and calcium and
chromium — bim-bom! —
and curium.

Un blay, prazeodimyum, platin
derin, plutonyum,
Paladyum, prometyum,
kalyum, polonyum,
Un tantalum, tekhnetsyum,
titán farán, teluryum,
Un kadmyum un kaltsyum un
khrom — bim-bom! —
un kiryum,

Listen, sulfur, californium and
fermium, berkelium,
And also mendelevium, einsteinium,
nobelium,
And argon, krypton, neon, radon,
xenon, zinc and rhodium,
And chlorine, carbon, cobalt, copper,
tin, tungsten and sodium.

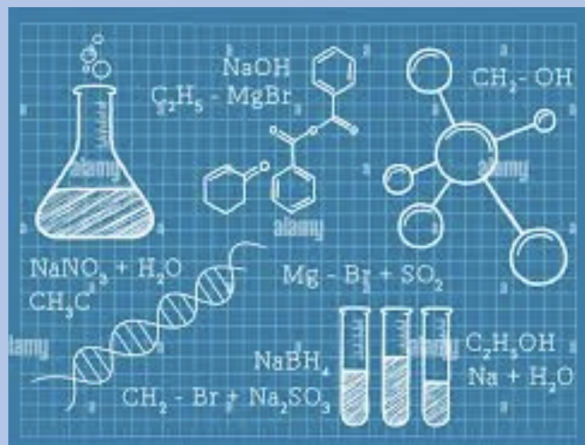
Her, shvebl, kalifornyum, un
fermyum, berkelyum,
Un oykh mendelevyum,
áynshteynyum, nobelyum,
Argón, kriptón, neon, radón, ksenón,
tsink, un rodyum,
Koylnshtof, khlor, kobalt, kuper, tsin,
volfrám, un natryum.





These are the only ones of which the news has come to Harvard,
And there may be many others but they haven't been discovered

Dos zenen di elementn vos me veyst fun zey ba haverd, Kenen zayn farán fil andere nor m'iz nokh nit mit zey farkhavert.



*Performed by Deborah Strauss &
Cantor Jeff Warschauer*

**Redele fun kiselgof/U'vkheyn
(fun di yomim norayim)**

The righteous [...] will rejoice,
The upright will be glad,
The pious will celebrate with
song [...]

*U'vekheyn tsadikim yiru veyismokhu
Vishorim yaalozu
Vakhasidim berino yogilu*

Translation from Mahzor Lev Shalem

**Original recording from the
Vernadsky Library archive.**

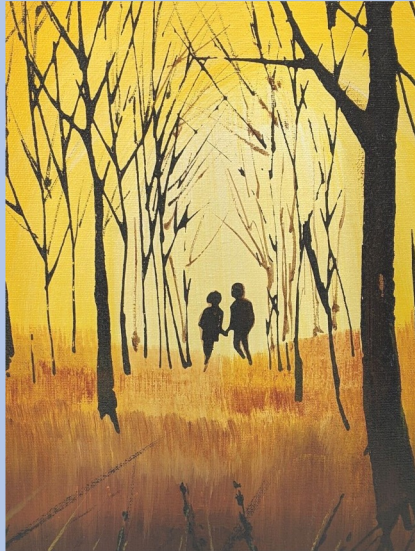
**A variant of this melody is
sometimes used for the High
Holiday text U'vekheyn
Tsadikim**



Kol BaYaar (Der Shpoler Zeyde's Nign)

*Performed by
Sruli Dresdner and Lisa Mayer*

**A cry, a scream and a racket
A Father in the woods
Looks for his children**



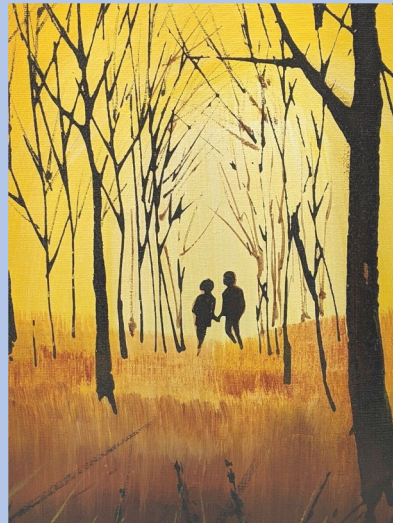
**“Children, children
Where could you have been
That you have so
Forgotten me?”**

*A Geshrey un A Gevald, un a
Gepilder,
A Foter In Vald, Zukht Zayne
Kinder*

*Kinder, Kinder,
Vu zayt Ir Gevezn,
Vos Oyf Mir, Hot Ihr Azoy Fargesn*

**“Children, children
Return to me at home
For it’s hard for Me
To sit all alone”**

**“Father, Father
How can we go back to you
While the guards are
Surrounding the door”**



***Kinder, Kinder, kumt tsu mir
Aheym,
Vayl es iz mir umetik, tsu zitsn
Aleyn***

***Foter, foter,
vi kenen mir geyn tsu dir,
Az der shoymer shteyt dokh
bay der tir***



Rozhinkes mit mandlen Abraham Goldfaden

Performed by Elisa Rokhl

In the Temple, in a corner of the room,
A widow, a daughter of Zion, sits alone.
She is rocking her only son, Yidele, ceaselessly
and singing him to sleep with a lovely little
song:

*In dem beys-hamikdesh, in a vinkl
kheyder,
Zitst di almone, Bas-Tsiyon aleyh.
Ir ben-yokhidl Yidelen vigt zi keseyder
Un zingt im tsum shlofn a lidele sheyn:*



Rozhinkes mit mandlen Abraham Goldfaden

Lull-a-bye...

Under Yidele's cradle
is a snow-white little kid,
the kid is going off to trade,
this will be his calling:
raisins and almonds;
sleep, Yidele, go ahead and sleep.

Ay-lyu-lyu-lyu. . .

*Unter Yideles vigele
Shteyt a klor-vays tsigele,
Dos tsigele iz geforn handlen, –
Dos vet zayn dayn baruf:
Rozhinkes mit mandlen;
Shlof zhe, Yidele, shlof.*



There will come an era of railroads
they will cover half the earth.
You will go the length of the iron rails
and, when you do, you will earn a lot of
money.

*Es vet kumen a tsayt fun ayznbanen,
Zey veln farfleytsn a halbe velt;
Ayzerne vegn vestu oysshpanen
Un vest in dem oykh fardinen fil gelt.*

And when you become rich, Yidele,
Remember this little song:
Raisins and almonds!
This will be your calling.
Yidele will trade in everything,
Sleep, Yidele, go ahead and sleep.

*Un az du vest vern raykh, Yidele
Zolstu zikh dermonen in dem lidele;
Rozhinkes mit mandlen!
Dos vet zayn dayn baruf
Yidele vet alts handlen,
Shlof zhe. Yidele, shlof.*



The Fiddle Rose
Avrom Sutskever

Read by Miriam Issacs



From resurrecting warm rain
she begins slowly to blossom, to grow-
(Together with the childhood of
my aged memory)
-the fiddle rose in her earth-black
coffin.

The fiddle rose doesn't need a fiddler,
there's no one left to praise or curse
her.

She plays without a player, with
joy and faith
in honor of a reborn string.
In honor of a string, in honor of
its vibration,
in honor of a bee whose honey is
bitter
but whose sting is sweet, so juicy
and flowerlike-in honor of a
reborn pain.



I want to take off my shoes - Kh'vel oyston di shikh

Performed by Cindy Paley

Lyrics Itzik Manger. Music: Chava Alperstein

I'll take take off my shoes and my
sorrow

And make my way back to you,
Since I no longer have a
tomorrow,

I'll put myself into your view.

My God, my Lord, my Creator,
Purify me in your light.

I lie on a cloud here before you,
Rock me to sleep for the night.

*Kh'vel oyston di shikh un dem troyer,
Un kumen tsu dir tsurik
Ot azoy vi ikh bin a farshpilter,
Un shteln zikh far dayn blik.*

*Mayn got, mayn har, mayn bashafer,
Layter mikh oys in dayn shayn
Ot lig ikh far dir oyf a volkn,
Farvig mikh un shlefer mikh ayn.*

And tell me that I am your
child,
Tell me some other nice
things.
Give me a kiss on the
forehead,
Kiss away the signs of my sins.

I have carried out your
mission,
Borne your godly song, indeed.
Is it really my fault, if by error
“Yid” happens to rhyme with
“lid?”

*Un red tsu mir gute verter,
un zog mir az ikh bin “dayn kind.”
Un kush mir arop funem shtern,
Di tseykhns fun mayne zind.*

*Ikh hob dokh geton dayn shelikhes,
Un getrogn dayn getlekh lid.
Tsi bin ikh den shuldik vos s’gramt
zikh,
Al-pi toes “yid” mit “lid.”*

Is it really my fault if by error
“Sheyn” happens to rhyme with
“geveyn?”

That longing, genuine longing
Is always alone with its pain?

My God, my Lord, my Creator,
Purify me in your light.
I lie on a cloud here before you,
Rock me to sleep for the night.

*Tsi bin ikh den shuldik vos s'gramt zikh,
Al-pi toes "sheyn" mit "geveyn."
Un di benkshaft, di emese benkshaft,
Voglt keseyder aleydn?*

*Mayn got, mayn har, mayn bashafer,
Layter mikh oys in dayn shayn
Ot lig ikh far dir oyf a volkn,
Farvig mikh un shlefer mikh ayn.*

And tell me that I am your child,
Tell me some other nice things.
Give me a kiss on the forehead,
Kiss away the signs of my sins

Is it really, Giver of Light, my fault,
If I'm tired and not too cheery?
If I lay at your feet before you,
This song so very weary?

*Un red tsu mir gute verter,
un zog mir az ikh bin "dayn kind."
Un kush mir arop funem shtern,
Di tseykhns fun mayne zind.*

*Tsi bin ikh den shuldik, derloykhter,
Vos kh'bin itst dershlogn un mid,
Un leyg dir avek tsufusns
Dos dozike mide lid?*

As Long as You're Happy -Abi Gezunt

Music: Abe Ellstein; Lyrics: Molly Picon

Performed by Judy Bressler

A little sun a little ran,
A quiet place to rest your head,
As long as you're healthy, you can be happy.

A shoe, a sock, a dress without patches
In your pocket three or four coins,
As long as you're healthy, you can be happy.

The air is free,
Free for everyone,
The sun shines for everyone,
Poor or rich.

A bisl zun, a bisl regn,
A ruik ort dem kop tzu leygn,
Abi gezunt, ken men gliklekh zayn.

A shukh, a zok, a kleyd on lates,
In keshene a dray, fir zloten,
Abi gezunt, ken men gliklekh zayn.

Di luft iz fray
Far yedn glaykh,
Di zun zi shaynt far yedn eynem
Orem oder raykh.

A little joy, a little laughter,
From time to time, a drink with friends,
As long as you're healthy, you can be happy.

Some seek wealth, others might
To conquer the entire world.
Some think that all happiness
Depends only on money.

Let 'em search
Let 'em crawl,
'Cause I know what I think,
I need those things like a hole in the head
Because happiness stands at my door.

**A bisl freyd, a bisl lakhn,
A mol mit fraynt a shnepsl makhn,
Abi gezunt ken men gliklekh zayn.**

**Eyner zukht ashires, eyner zukht gevires,
Aynemen di gantse velt,
Eyner meynt dos gantse glik
Hengt nor op in gelt.**

**Zoln ale zukhn,
Zoln ale krikhn,
Nor ikh trakht bay mir,
Ikh darf dos oyf kapores vayl
Dos glik shteyt bay mayn tir.**

Let the Sabbath Linger Zol Nokh Zayn Shabes

**Words H. Roisenblatt; music
Sholom Secunda**

Performed by Annie Cohen

Oh, grandmother, don't recite yet "God of
Abraham."
What's your hurry today?
The sun has not yet set in the west.
Oh, grandmother, wait still a bit.
Do not disturb the peace of the holy Sabbath
The quiet, holy rest.

*Oy, bobenyu, zog nokh nit "Got fun
Avrom",
Vos iz dos mit dir haynt der ayl?
In mayrev-zayt iz nokh di zun nit
fargangen,
Oy, bobenyu, vart nokh a vayl.
Tseshter nit dem fridn fun heylikn
shabes,
Di shtile, di heylike ru;*

No stars can be seen yet in the sky.
Oh, wait still another moment.
“God of Abraham” — it pulls us back into the heavy
daily yoke
To bear the Exile, the kheder, the teacher,
The burden and cares of the week.
The grandmother stands frozen at the window.
She is deaf to my pleas.
“Oh, God of Abraham,” —
and a tear rolls down on the dark window pane.

*Men zet nokh nit shaynen in himl
keyn shtern,
Oy, vart nokh a regele tsu.
Der “Got fun Avrom”, er shpant undz
tsurik ayn
In shvern tog-teglekhn yokh, —
Tsu trogn dem goles, dem kheyder,
dem rebn,
Dem ol un di dayges fun vokh.
Dokh blaybt vi farshteynert di bobbe
baym fentster
Zi iz tsu mayn betn vi toyb;
“Oy, Got fun Avrom” —
un es kayklt arop zikh A trer
oyf der tunkeler shoyb.*