

'Twas THE NIGHT BEFORE...  
HANUKKAH VERSION (a warm-up for *Kislev*)

'Twas the night before Hanukkah  
and all over the place  
There was noise, there was kvetching  
Such ah disgrace!

The *Kinderlakh*<sup>1</sup>, sleeping,  
uneasily felt  
The chocolate rush  
from the Hanukkah gelt<sup>2</sup>

And me in the easyboy,  
so stuffed with *latkes*,  
I stretched the elastic  
which held up my *gatkes*<sup>3</sup>.

When up on the roof  
(and it has a steep pitch)  
A fat *alte kakker*<sup>4</sup>  
was making a *kvitsch*<sup>5</sup>.

I jumped up real quick  
and I ran to the door,  
Was it a *bandeet*<sup>6</sup>,  
or only a *schnorrer*<sup>7</sup>?

He wasn't alone;  
he had eight *ferdelakh*<sup>8</sup>,  
And called them by name  
as he gave a *gebrakh*<sup>9</sup>:

"On Moishe, on Yankel, on Itzik, on Sam,  
On Mendel, on Shmendrik, on Feivush, on Ham;  
My kidneys are kvelling;  
do you give a damn?"

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<sup>1</sup> children

<sup>2</sup> money

<sup>3</sup> pants

<sup>4</sup> Old guy (a bit derogatory)

<sup>5</sup> fuss

<sup>6</sup> thief

<sup>7</sup> beggar

<sup>8</sup> ponies

<sup>9</sup> yell

He had a white beard  
and *payyes*<sup>10</sup> to boot,  
And to keep out the cold,  
he had such a nice suit!

A second from Peerless,  
I could tell at a glance,  
But the cut was okay,  
and so were the pants.

He was triple XL,  
a real *groisser*<sup>11</sup> goof,  
So I yelled out,  
"*Meshuggener*<sup>12</sup>! Get off from *mein*<sup>13</sup> roof!"

He jumped down and said  
as he shook hands with me,  
"Max Klaus is the name.  
You have maybe some tea?"

So I gave him a *gleisel*<sup>14</sup>,  
while he shook his white mop,  
Mutt'ring, "Always the same thing,  
They're *dreying* my *kopp*<sup>15</sup>!"

>From Vancouver to Glacier Bay,  
Outremont to Reginek,  
Every *shmo* in the world  
*hakks meir a cheinik*<sup>16</sup>!

They're screaming for presents,  
and *hallah* with *schmaltz*<sup>17</sup>,  
And from Brooklyn alone,  
the back pain, *gevalt*!"

So we sat and *yentehed*<sup>18</sup>,  
and we spun the old dreydels,  
(He took all of my money,

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<sup>10</sup> sidecurls

<sup>11</sup> big

<sup>12</sup> Crazy person

<sup>13</sup> my

<sup>14</sup> glass

<sup>15</sup> Making me nuts

<sup>16</sup> Bugs me

<sup>17</sup> Chicken fat

<sup>18</sup> gossiped

and one of my *knaidels*<sup>19</sup>)

He said, "Business is not bad,  
a living I make,  
But I'm getting too old  
for this *Hanukkah* fake;

And the cell phones, you see  
how my pacemaker dings?  
For two cents I'd quit,  
and move to Palm Springs?"

And he gave a *geshrei*<sup>20</sup>  
as he fled *mit a lakh*<sup>21</sup>t,  
"Gut Yontif<sup>22</sup>f to All,  
Vey iz Mir<sup>23</sup>, Such a *Nakht*<sup>24</sup>!"

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<sup>19</sup> Matzoh balls

<sup>20</sup> cry

<sup>21</sup> laugh

<sup>22</sup> Happy Holidays

<sup>23</sup> Woe is me

<sup>24</sup> night