

HERRING WITH POTATOES

In New York, if you want to make a living
Don't laugh at somebody who's peddling sausage
If you want to go into business, run, quickly,
Open a store, put up a sign, and start selling...

Herring with potatoes, herring with potatoes!
Don't bother with meat, steak,
Duck, sponge cake and cheese cake
Chicken is a dog compared to this, it's understood!
The best dish for the belly is - herring with potatoes!

Eat what you want, it won't annoy me.
The Hungarian eats goulash, the Galitsianer eats meat and sweets
Romanians eat corn pudding, the goyim eat crabs
The Germans eat sauerkraut. What do the Litvaks eat?

Any of you have a bad stomach and can't chew?
Any of you suffer lack of appetite and can't digest?
Don't run to a doctor, your salvation doesn't lie there
It's I who have the best cure for a bad stomach...

Late at night a thief crept into a house
He'd soon opened the door and cracked the safe
When he opened the safe he almost lost his mind.
He thought there'd be gold lying there, but instead he found:

My neighbor went to childbed, her shouts rose to the ceiling
A doctor said it positively was going to be twins

A second doctor soon swore it would be quadruplets
When she delivered, guess what she bore?

In the Yiddish theater I've already seen a lot of shows
The names are sort of the same, I'm not going to forget them
"The Swarthy Jew," "The pintele Yid," everybody knows those
Why shouldn't a writer make a show that will be called:

An election is coming as you know, don't get involved in it
Democrats, Republicans, they'll have a pillow fight
Roosevelt, Taft and Mr. Wilson, you shouldn't know from them
I hope in the next election they elect:

In New York az ir vilt do a lebn makhn
Az eyner pedelt mit kalibatn zolt ir fun im nit lakhn
Oyb ir vilt geyn in biznes, zolt ir shnel nit loyfn
Efnt uf a stor un shtelt aroys a 'sayn' un fangt on tsu farkoyfn

Hering mit pateytes, hering mit pateytes!
A kapore fleysh mit 'steak', katshke, 'sponge-cake' un 'cheesecake'!
'Chicken' iz a hund, tsu-/farglaykhendik tsu dem farshteyt es
Der bester maykhl for dem baykhl - iz hering mit pateytes.

Esn megt ir vos ir vilt, es vet mikh nit fardrisn,
'Goulash' est der Ungar, Galitsianer fleysh un zisn, [fish in 'season' siesen]
Rumaynier esn mamelige, goyim esn rakes
Daytshn esn zoyer-kroyt - vos esn di litvakes?

Hot ver fun aykh a shlekhtn mogn un er ken nit kayen
Hot ver fun aykh keyn apetit nit un ken nit fardrayen
Loyft nit tsu keyn doktor, dort ligt nit ayer yeshueh

Far a shlekhtn mogn hob ikh di beste refueh

A ganev, shpet bay nakht is in a hoyz arayngekrokhn

Di tir bald geefnt un di 'safe' ufgebrokhn

Ven her hot di 'safe' geefnt iz er shir arop fun zinen,

Gemeynt hot er dort ligt geld, tsum sof hot er gefinen:

Mayn shkheyne geyt tsu kind, di koyles geyn biz in 'siling'

A doktor zagt az zi hot shver iz pozitiv a tsviling

A tsveyter doktor hot ir bald far fir kinder geshvorn

Ven zi iz gelegn veyst ir vos zi hot geborn:

In yidishn teater hob ikh shoyng gezen a sakh 'piesn'

Di nemen zaynen di zelbe ikh vel zey nisht fargesn

Der shvartser yid, dos pintele yid, ale dos veysn

Far vos zol a shrayber nit makhn a piese zi zol heysn...

Es kumt dokh an 'elekshon' dan zolg ir zikh nit mishn

Demokratn, Repoblikaner zoln zikh shlogn kop in kishn

Ruzvelt, Teft un Mister Vilson, fun zey zolg ir nit klern

Ikh hof far nekstn elekshon vet elektet vern...

A ganev shpet bay nakht iz in a hoyz arayngekrokhn

Di tir bald geefnt un di 'safe' oyfgebrokhn

Ven er hot di 'safe' geefnt iz er shir arop fun zinen

Gemeynt hot er dort ligt geld, tsum sof hot er gefinen:

Mayn shkheyne geyt tsu kind, di koyles geyen biz in 'ceiling'

A doktor zagt az zi hot shver iz pozitiv a tsviling

A tsveyter doktor hot ir bald far fir kinder geshvoyrn

Ven zi iz gelegn veyst ir vos zi hot geboyrn

In yidishn teater hob ikh shoyn gezen a sakh piesn
Di nemen zaynen di zelbe, ikh vel zey nisht fargesn
Der shvartser yid, dos pintele yid, ale dos veysn
Far vos zol a shrayber nit makhn a piese zi zol heysn

Es kumt dokh an elekshon dan zolt ir zikh nit mishn
Demokratn, Republicaner zoln zikh shlogn kop in kishn
Ruzevelt, Teft un Mister Vilson, fun zey zolt ir nit klern
Ikh hof far nekstn elekshon vet elektet vern