

**DER ALTER TSIGAYNER**

(The Old Gypsy)

Composer: Abraham Ellstein    Lyrics: Jacob Jacobs  
from *bublitshki* (Little Bagels)

Yonder, on a hill, under the free, open skies—  
far from the noise of the city's tumult,  
stands a little hut all by itself.  
An old Gypsy lives in it.

*dort af a bergele unter dem frayen himl,  
vayt fun dem rashikn shtots geriml,  
shteyt zikh a khatkele aley n af an ort.  
an alter tsigayner voynt dort.*

Yonder sounds such sweet tones,  
that sob in minor,  
when the old Gypsy takes up his fiddle,  
with all his fire and ardor,  
as only a Gypsy can.

*dort hern zikh tener zeyer zise,  
vos veynen in minor,  
ven af zayn fidl fargeyt zikh  
der alter tsigayner,  
mit zayn gantsn fayer un bren,  
nor vi a tsigayner ken.*

A Gypsy melody is so beautiful.  
Once you hear it, you never forget it,  
for it is warm, heartfelt, full of charm.  
A strange power, it fills you with love as well as  
with suffering.  
You hear it but once  
and it gives you no rest.  
The melody enchants you.

*a tsigayner melodie iz azoy sheyn.  
hert ir es, fargest ir es nit, neyn,  
vayl zi iz varem, hartsik, ful mit khey n,  
a modne kraft.  
zi git aykh libe un oykh laydnshaft.  
hert ir es nor eyn mol, git es keyn ru.  
s'farkisheft aykh di melodie.*

When you first hear it,  
it sounds simply naïve,  
and you have no idea of  
how deeply it moves the soul.  
From every side it infuses you  
with passion and joy.  
You want to hold on forever to these—  
to these sounds of the melody.

*ven ir hert es, dakht zikh aykh,  
s'iz prost naiv,  
un ir hot dan gornit keyn bagrif,  
vi es rirt on di neshome tif.  
fun yeder zayt zi filt aykh on  
mit lust un freylekhkayt.  
onhalt n vilt ir eybik ot a di  
di klangen fun di melodie.*

When the Gypsy plays his fiddle,  
it burns the heart.  
The sound of his fiddle  
awakens your soul's desire.  
Your passions are aroused  
when his bow strikes the fiddle's strings.  
It's like floating to heaven,  
all you want is life,  
And life becomes so sweet....  
That is the old Gypsy's song.

*ven der tsigayner shpilt zikh zayn lidl,  
in harts git a bri.  
fun zayn fidl der klang  
dervekt dayn neshomes farlang.  
dayn blut es kokht un es tsit,  
zayn fidl dem boygn er tsit.  
nemt in di himlen shvebn,  
es glust zikh nor tsum lebn  
dos lebn vert dan azoy gut...  
dos iz dem altn tsigayners lid.*