

DER DISHVASHER

(The Dishwasher)

Composer: Herman Yablokoff

In a restaurant I saw
an old man standing in the kitchen;
there's commotion swirling around him; he says not a word.
He stands and washes the dishes there,
and with much feeling
he sings softly to himself:

"I wash with my weak hands.
I wash and wash, for a few pennies,
from early till late for a stale piece of bread.
I wash and wish for my own death.

"Once I was somebody.
I had a home, I was rich.
My father was good to me.
Now I am old; no one has any use for me.
And in the tumult
I stand and wash.

"I have four children, all well educated.
My sons- and daughters-in-law toss me out.
My daughter argues with me that I should go to my son.
He just screams: 'There's nothing I can do.'
And in the tumult
I stand and wash...."

*in a restoran—hob ikh gezen
an altn man—in kitchen shteyn,
arum im rasht—er red keyn vort.
er shteyt un vasht—di dishes dort.
un mit gefil
brumt er shtil:*

*"ikh vash mit mayne shvakhe hent.
ikh vash un vash, fardin ikh a por cent,
fun fri biz shpet far a trukn shtikl broyt.
ikh vash un bet af zikh aleyen dem toyt.*

*"a mol geven—mit mentshn glaykh.
gehat a heym—gevezn raykh,
geven iz dan—der tate gut.
itst bin ikh alt—keyner darf mikh nit.
un in dem rash
shtey ikh un vash:*

*"kh'hob kinder fir—gebildet groys.
di eydems, shnir—varfn mikh aroys.
mayn tokhter fight—ikh zol geyn tsum zun.
mayn zun er shrayt—ikh ken gornit ton.
un in dem rash,
shtey ikh un vash...."*