

#2

Tevye, Perchick, Mordcha,  
Avram, Mendel

~~Lord, who made the lion and the lamb,~~

~~You decreed I should be what I am,~~

~~Would it spoil some vast, eternal plan --~~

~~If I were a wealthy man?~~

(As the song ends, MORDCHA, MENDEL, PERCHIK,  
AVRAM, and other TOWNSPEOPLE enter.)



man's wife,

t.  
peacock,

t.  
own on me.  
the Wise,  
Tevye,"  
eyes.

e.

ow!

ick

all,  
ed men

MORDCHA

There he is! You forgot my order for the Sabbath!

TEVYE

Reb Mordcha, I had a little accident with my horse.

MENDEL

Tevye, you didn't bring the Rabbi's order.

TEVYE

I know, Reb Mendel.

AVRAM

Tevye, you forgot my order for the Sabbath.

TEVYE

This is bigger news than the plague in Odessa.

AVRAM

(Waving the newspaper that he holds)

Talking about news, terrible news in the outside world — terrible!

MORDCHA

What is it?

MENDEL

What does it say?

AVRAM

In a village called Rajanka, all the Jews were evicted, forced to leave their homes.

(They all look at each other.)

MENDEL

For what reason?

AVRAM

It doesn't say. Maybe the Tsar wanted their land. Maybe a plague . . .

MORDCHA

May the Tsar have his own personal plague.

ALL

Amen.

MENDEL

(To AVRAM)

Why don't you ever bring us some good news?

AVRAM

I only read it. It was an edict from the authorities.

MORDCHA

May the authorities start itching in places that they can't reach.

ALL

Amen.

PERCHIK

*(Has quietly entered during above and sat down to rest.)*

Why do you curse them? What good does your cursing do? You stand around and curse and chatter and don't do anything. You'll all chatter your way into the grave.

MENDEL

Excuse me, you're not from this village.

PERCHIK

No.

MENDEL

And where are you from?

PERCHIK

Kiev. I was a student in the university there.

MORDCHA

Aha! The university. Is that where you learned to criticize your elders?

PERCHIK

That's where I learned that there is more to life than talk. You should know what's going on in the outside world.

MORDCHA

Why should I break my head about the outside world? Let them break their own heads.

TEVYE

He's right. As the Good Book says, "If you spit in the air, it lands in your face."

PERCHIK

That's nonsense. You can't close your eyes to what's happening in the world.

TEVYE

He's right.

AVRAM

He's right and he's right? How can they both be right?

TEVYE

You know, you're also right.

MORDCHA

He's right! He's still wet behind the ears! Good Sabbath, Tevye.

VILLAGERS

Good Sabbath, Tevye.

*(They take their orders and leave. MENDEL remains.)*

MENDEL

Tevye, the rabbi's order. My cheesel

TEVYE

Of course. So you're from Kiev, Reb . . .

PERCHIK

Perchik.

TEVYE

Perchik. So, you're a newcomer here. As Abraham said, "I am a stranger in a strange land."

MENDEL

Moses said that.

TEVYE

*(To MENDEL)*

Forgive me. As King David put it, "I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."

MENDEL

That was also Moses.