

Songs
Lyrics and music by the inhabitants of the Vilna Ghetto
translated and arranged by Jeremy Sans

Song Number One

UNTER DAINE VAISSÉ SHTEREN

In the sky the stars all glisten,
Here below I am lost in pain.
When I pray does no-one listen?
Is my weeping all in vain?
As I warch, the stars all darken,
All alone I stand and stare.
Let the empty heavens harken
To my broken-hearted prayer.
Let the empty heavens harken
To my humble prayer.

Take my prayers and take my yearning
These are everything I own.
In my head a fire is burning
But my heart has turned to stone.
Cellars seethe with hell and fire
Streets are paved with black despair.
To the rooftops, climbing, higher,
Father let me find you there.
To the rooftops, ever higher
Let me find you there.

Silent screams are deafening
And moaning ghosts are everywhere.
I am like a broken string
But still I sing my broken prayer.
In the sky the stars still glisten
Lilies in a field of white.

How I pray that God will listen
To my lonely song tonight.
How I pray that He will listen
To my song tonight . . .

Song Number Two

HOT ZICH MIR DI SHICH ZERISSN

Someone stole my overcoat
So how will I keep warm?
Who will hide me from this biting cold
Or shield me from the storm?

So dance with me, and keep the cold away
If you've got your papers you can marry me today.

Every week they change the papers

Red or green or blue.

Every blessed week a different colour

What am I to do?

So dance with me . . . (etc.)

Ask for wood you get a splinter
Ask for bread, a stone.
Ah, this bitter wind, this cruel winter
Chills me to the bone.

So dance with me . . . (etc.)

Song Number Three

VEI ZU DI TEG

(Recit.)

Ah my children, my children . . . such times we live in
A curse on the day . . . a curse on the night.

(Song)

It's a time of steel and concrete
A time of murder and machines.
Every night we hear the railways
Won't you tell us what it means?
Just say what you're thinking.

Don't be afraid to tell us what is wrong.
You walk round bewildered

Be silent if you must – but be strong.
Now nothing is right – there's nothing to say

A curse on the night – a curse on the day.

Song Number Four

'Swanee' by George Gershwin. Available from International
Music Publications, Unit 15, Woodford Trading Estate,
Southend Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8HN.

Song Number Five

SHFTILER, SHFTILER

Go to sleep my little flower don't let them hear you cry,
Graves are growing hour by hour 'til they fill the sky.
Since your father went away the world is wearing black,
Many roads lead to Ponar but none of them lead back.
Hush-a-bye my little treasure – time to go to sleep;
It would only give them pleasure if they heard you weep.
Every prison has a door
And every wave breaks on the shore,
But pain for you and I will never die.

Spring is blooming here today and all the world is bright.
All we see is winter's grey, a cold and endless night.
Even when the flames of autumn flicker from afar
Still the mothers are the orphans – children in Ponar.
Still the river is in chains, still yearning to be free.
It grinds its way through Lithuania 'til it finds the sea,
Let the darkness fade away
And let us see the light of day.
Father come again and end our pain.

Pain is growing slowly here with sorrow all around,
 'Til our jailors disappear you may not make a sound.
 Do not smit uawl tomorrow, do not cry today.

You must not betray our sorrow 'til it's died away.
 Sorrow's wider than a river, deeper than a well.

Soon your father will deliver you and I from Hell.
 Soon the world will loose its chains

And all the flowers will bloom again
 And heaven's golden grace will fill your face . . .

Song Number Six

ULLABY

Hush my child, the winds are blowing
 Sleep and don't despair.
 They took away your father from us
 God alone knows where.

Song Number Seven

VIDISHE BRIGADES

Forget the sun - forget the flowers
 Forget the rain that's going to fall.
 This golden time - it isn't ours
 We have the right to work, that's all.

VIDISHE BRIGADE

Working ever harder.
 Our wages are blood and sweat.
 Vidishe Brigade (etc.)

We do not ask for your compassion
 A man is proud to be a slave
 But all the songs we sing against you
 Will carry on beyond the grave
 Vidishe Brigade (etc.).

We live like beasts inside the Ghetto
 You only lead us out to Death
 But we will sing and we will curse you
 Until we draw our final breath.

Vidishe Brigade

Working ever harder
 Our wages are blood and sweat
 But we are not defeated yet

Vidishe Brigade

Working ever harder
 We're marching hand in hand
 Until we reach the promised land

Song Number Eight

ISRULIK

(*Refrain*)

I'm Isrulik - the orphan of the Ghetto,
 I'm Isrulik - the boy the world forgot.
 Of all my family there's me remaining.
 I'm not complaining, I'm happy with my lot.

Your life is worth a farthing,
 Your work's worth even less
 So business gets tougher every day.
 No wonder we're all starving,
 No wonder life's a mess.

You've got to find a way to make it pay.

(*Refrain*)

I'll flog you golden earrings,
 I'll flog you cigarettes,
 Or saccharin or bread or currant jam.
 If anyone starts jeering,
 If anyone forgets,
 I'll make sure they remember who I am.

(Refrain)

My mother I've forgotten,
 I wouldn't know her face.
 They took away my parents long ago.
 I'm stuck here in this rotten
 And God-forsaken place
 It's better if you stick with what you know . . .

(Refrain)

I'm Istrik and if you watch me closely
 You might see me try to wipe my eye
 We all have sorrows – so why regret them
 You'd best forget them.
 They'll only make you cry . . .

(Refrain)

Song Number Nine

FRILING

I walk through the Ghetto alone and forsaken,
 There's no-one to care for me now.
 And how can you live when your love has been taken,
 Will somebody please show me how?
 I know that it's springtime, and birdsong, and sunshine,
 All nature seems happy and free,
 But locked in the Ghetto I stand like a beggar,
 I beg for some sunshine for me.

(Refrain)

Springtime, what good is springtime,
 What good is sunshine, when he is away?
 Springtime, you shine upon my sorrow, but still tomorrow
 Is as bleak as today.

The house that we lived in is now barricaded,

The windows are broken and bare.
 The sun is so fierce that the flowers have faded,
 They wilt in the winterly air.
 Each morning, each evening I have to walk past it,
 Hiding my eyes from the sight
 The place where you loved me the place where you kissed
 me,
 The place where you held me so tight.

(Refrain)

How thoughtful, how kind of the heavenly powers
 To send spring so early this year.
 Why thank you for coming, I see you brought flowers
 You want me to welcome you here?
 They say that the Ghetto is golden and glowing
 But sunlight and tears make me blind.
 You see, my beloved, how soon they start flowing
 I can't get you out of my mind.

(Refrain)

Song Number Ten

JE T'AIME – C'EST FOU
 (lyrics by Joshua Sobol
 music by Jeremy Sams)

Je suis peut être mal foutue
 Je suis peut être pas normale
 Mais j'aime l'amour que me tue
 Oui j'aime l'amour qui m'fait mal.

Quand je te vois, ma bête
 Je perds ma tête
 C'est pas chouette
 Mais c'est comme ça

Quand tu me tiens
 Mon animal
 Je ne sens sale
 Quand tu me fais mal
 Mais c'est comme ça.

Embrasse moi
Tout doux, c'est bon
Embrasse moi
Mon doux amour.

Je t'aime mon choux
Mon beau Teuton
Je t'aime: c'est fou
Comme j'aime ma mort.

Quand tu me caresses
De ton regard
Je suis ta maîtresse
N'est pas bizarre -
Que quand je te vois dans mes rêves
C'est drôle, mais je te vois qui crève.
Quand je te vois ma bête
Je perds la tête.
C'est pas chouette
Mais c'est comme ça.

Quand tu me tiens
Mon animal
Je me sens sale
Quand tu m'fais mal
Mais c'est comme ça.

Embrasse moi
Tout doux, c'est bon
Embrasse moi
Mon doux amour

Je rêve des nuits
Je rêve des jours
Ou je serais ta veuve
Je la serais toujours, toujours, toujours

Song Number Eleven

MIR LEBN EIBIK

We'll live for ever - year after year.
We'll live for ever, for we are here.
And if they try to drag our names through the mud,

We will rewrite them in our enemy's blood.
We'll live forever - beyond the flames
And you will never forget our names.
So we will fight and we will strive, to carry on, to stay alive.
We'll live forever. We will survive.

Song Number Twelve

DREMLEN FEIGL

Birds are dreaming in the treetops,
Stars are in the sky.
Who's the stranger by your bedside
Singing you a lullaby?
Liu, liu . . .

All our love lies cradled with you,
Shielding you from pain;
For your mother, your poor mother
Won't be coming back again . . .
Liu liu . . .

And I saw your father running
In a hail of stones
All our God-forsaken country
Echoes to his moans
Liu hu. . .

Song Number Thirteen

MAYDAY SONG

We've dragged through the mud
And we're swimming in 'blood
Our bodies can't take any more
So stand and unite - move into the light
You see how our people betray us.
Don't waste your despair

On weeping and prayer.
 The heavens are empty there's nobody there.
 So stand and unite
 Move into the light.
 You see how our people betray us
 So fight!

Song Number Fourteen

ZOG NIT KEINMOL.

Never say the final journey is at hand
 Never say we will not reach the promised land.
 Never doubt the day of reckoning is near.
 There's a drumming in the land - and we are here.
 From the land of palm-trees to the land of snow.
 We are marching we are singing as we go
 And each and every drop of Jewish blood to fall
 Will be tribute to the courage of us all.
 Our tomorrows will be bathed in golden light
 And our enemies will vanish with the night,
 And we know that perfect morning won't be long,
 When every generation sings this song
 It's a song that's from the fields and from the flood.
 It's a song that's tipped in steel and dipped in blood.
 It's a song that's of our people and our land.
 It's a song that has a sickle in its hand.
 Do not falter . . . (etc.)

Song Number Fifteen

PAK ZICH AIN

Move along, move along,
 Every Jew knows this song.
 Every year they sing it for us.
 All the world joins in the chorus,
 Move along, move along.

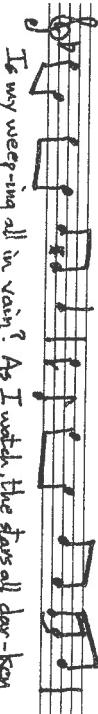
Move along, move along,
 Pack your bags, join the throng.
 Come on, change your life, resettle,
 Leave your wife, leave the shtetl,
 Move along, move along.

Move along, move along,
 Earthly life won't last long
 But even faced with Heaven's glory,
 It will be the same old story
 Move along, move along.

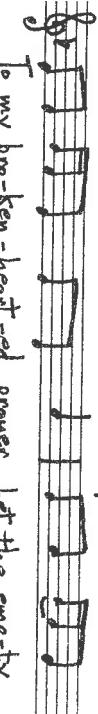
Moderato



In the sky the stars all glisten Here be-low I am
lost in pain When I pray does no-one listen?



Is my weeping all in vain? As I watch the stars all down-kon
All a-lone I stand and stare Let the empty hea-vens har-ken



To my broken-heart-ed prayer Let the empty
hea-vens har-ken To my hum-be prayer.



Some-one stole my over-coat So how will I keep
warm who will hide me from this bit-ing cold Or



shield me from the storm So dance with me, and
keep the cold a-way If you've got your

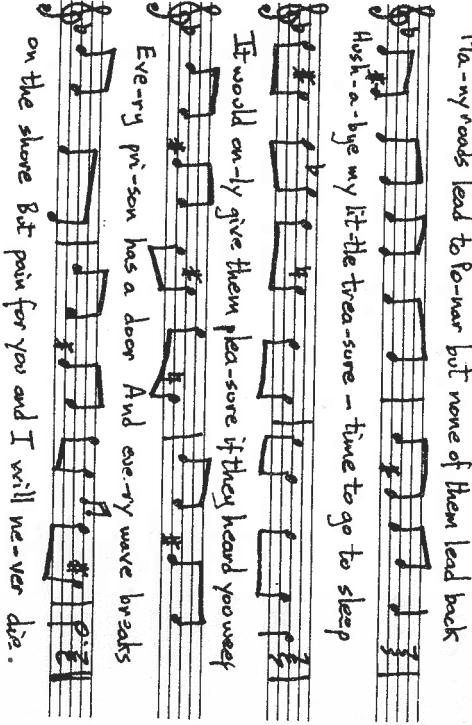
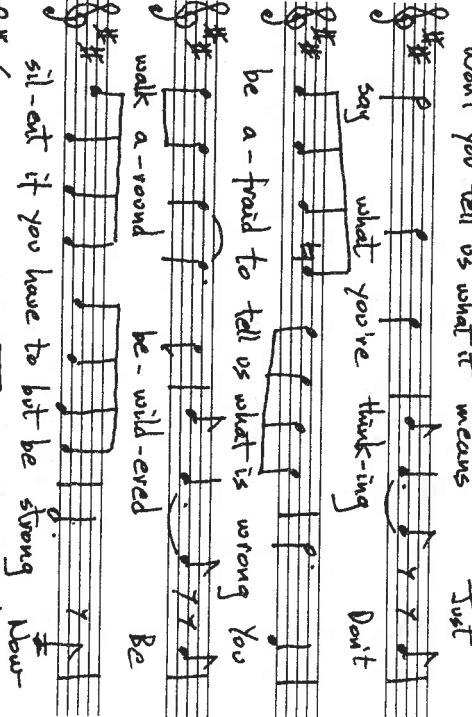
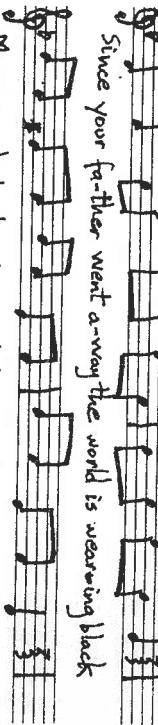
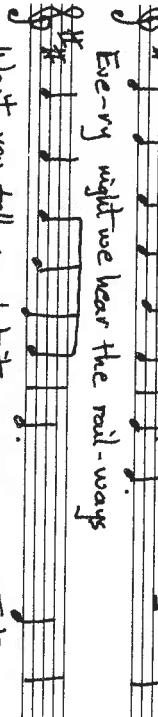
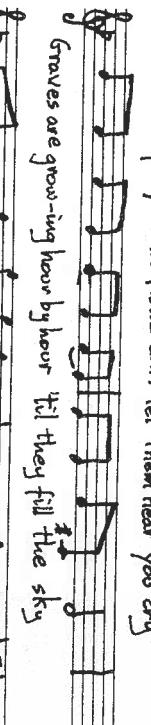
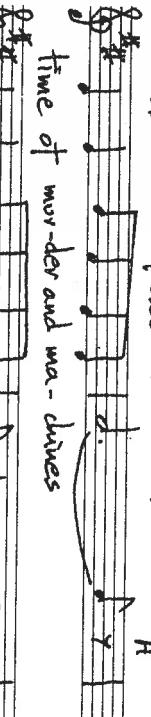


pa-pers you can mar-my me to-day So
dance with me and keep the cold a-



way If you've got your pa-pers you can
mar-my me to-day

Andante



LULLABY

Mod.

*Hush my child, the winds are blow-ing
Forget the sun - for-get the flowers forget the*

*Sleep and don't des-pair. They
rain that's going to fall. This golden*

*Took a-way your fath-er from us
time - it isn't ours we have the*

God a-lone knows where. ad lib

right to work, that's all

Yid - di-she Bri-gade

Work - - ing ev-er hard - er. Our

wa-gees are blood and sweat. But we are

not de-feat-ed yet.

Yid - di-she Bri-gade

Work - - ing ev-er hard - er. Our

Allegretto

Forget the sun - for-get the flowers forget the

rain that's going to fall. This golden

time - it isn't ours we have the

right to work, that's all

Yid - di-she Bri-gade

Work - - ing ev-er hard - er. Our

wa-gees are blood and sweat. But we are

not de-feat-ed yet.

Yid - di-she Bri-gade

Work - - ing ev-er hard - er. Our

Con Moto

wa-ges over blood and sweat. but we are
not de-feat-ed yet.

Con Moto

I'm Is-nok-lit the or-ph'an of the Ghett-to.
I'm Is-no-lit the boy the world for-got of
all my fami-ly there's me re-main-ing I'm
not com-plain-ing, I'm happy with my lot.
Your life is worth a far-thing Your
work's worth ev-en less So bus-i-ness gets
tougher eve-ry day No won-der we're all
star-v-ing No won-der life's a mess You've
got to find a way to make it pay.

I walk through the Ghetto alone and forsaken There's
 no-one to care for me now Ah
 how can you live when your love has been taken Well
 some-body please show me how? I
 know that it's spring-time, and bird-song and sun-shine All
 na-ture seems happy and free But
 locked in the Ghet-to I stand like a beggar I
 beg for some sun-shine for me Spring-time,
 what good is spring-time what good is

JE TAIME - C'EST FOU
 (lyrics by Joshua Sobol
 music by Jeremy Sams)

Je suis pein- et - re mal pour.
 Je suis pein et.

re pas nor. male Mais

bon Em - bras - e moi Mon
 doux a - mour Je t'aime mon
 choux mon beau Tea - ton Je
 t'aime: c'est fou - comme
 j'ai - me ma mort

Quand tu me cer -
 rras du ton re - gard je

suis ta mai - tresse n'est pas bi - zare

Que quand je te vais dans mes
 rêves — C'est drôle, mais je

te vois qui crève —

Quand je te vais ma bê - te

fais mal Mais c'est comme ça
 brass - e mai Tout doux c'est

j'aime l'amour qui me tue
 Où j'ai - me l'amour qui m'a fait

mal

vois mes bê - tie Je perds ma
 tête c'est pas chou - elle Mais c'est comme ça

mal

Quand tu me tiens Mon an - i.

mal

Je me sens sale Quand tu me

mal

bon Em - bras - e moi Mon
 doux a - mour Je t'aime mon
 choux mon beau Tea - ton Je
 t'aime: c'est fou - comme
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Que quand je te vais dans mes
 rêves — C'est drôle, mais je

te vois qui crève —

Quand je te vais ma bê - te

*je�udis la tue C'est pas chouette mais il est comme
tiens mon an-i-mal je mes sens
sûre que mal les mifus mal mais c'est comme ça*

*Qand tu me
Em-bras-se moi tout
doux c'est bon Em-bras-se
moi mon doux-a-mour Je
rêve des nuits je rêve des
jours on-jou-rais ta veau-
ve Je le serais tou-jours
tou-jours tou-jours*

*We'll live for ev-er year af-ter year. We'll live for
ev-er, for we are here And if they try to
drag our names through the mud we will re-*

*write them in our en-e-my's blood We'll live for
ever be-yond the flames And you will ne-ver
for-get our names And we will fight and we will*

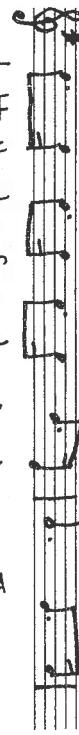
*strive to car-ry on, to stay a-live We'll live for
ev-er we will sur-vive.*

Con spirito

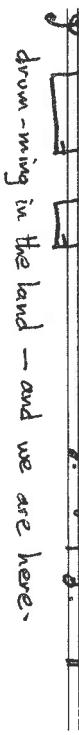
Never say the final jour-ney is at hand Ne-ver



say we will not reach the prom-ised land, Ne-ver



doubt the day of rec-ken-ing is near There's a



drum-ming in the land — and we are here.

PAK ZICH AIN



Have a - long, move a - long Every



year they sing it for us



All the world joins in the cho-rus Have a - long,



move a - long