

Postville

by  
David Kassin Fried

Based on the play by  
Don Fried

Which was based on the book by  
Stephen Bloom

Which was based on a true story.

Oy vey.

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Postville is a fictional work based on the dramatic stage play Postville written by Don Fried, which was inspired by the book, Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America, written by Stephen G. Bloom and first published by Harcourt, Inc. in 2000.

FADE IN:

EXT. MOSKOWITZ MEATS - DAY

A busy street in Crown Heights. HASADIC JEWS, wearing black fedoras and overcoats, scurry down the sidewalk.

INSERT TITLE: Brooklyn, New York

FEISTY OLD WOMAN (O.S.)  
It's too high.

AVRAM (O.S.)  
It's not too high.

FEISTY OLD WOMAN (O.S.)  
It's thirty cents a pound more than  
last week.

INT. MOSKOWITZ MEATS - CONTINUOUS

A butcher shop. AVRAM (55) is a Hasidic butcher. Though his face is stoic, his eyes betray his delight at haggling with the FEISTY OLD WOMAN (80) over the counter. Other CUSTOMERS -- all Hasidic or Orthodox Jews -- stand in line behind her.

AVRAM  
Whaddaya want me to do? They charge  
me more, I should eat my costs?

FEISTY OLD WOMAN  
I can't pay this.

[Note: Yiddish idioms appear in italics, followed by the translation in brackets]

AVRAM  
Ah, *Vais ich vos!* [Nonsense!]

FEISTY OLD WOMAN  
It's not! You're charging me more,  
Ruben's doing the same, talking  
about his yeast and his flour--

AVRAM  
And I bet Saul's kvetching about  
the price of wax. The butcher, the  
baker, and the candlestick maker--

FEISTY OLD WOMAN  
Hey! *Hob derech erets!* [Have some  
respect!]

AVRAM

You want the meat or not? These people would like to get home before shabbas.

FEISTY OLD WOMAN

It's Wednesday.

AVRAM

*Nu? [So?]*

Avram and the old woman stare each other down. She loses.

FEISTY OLD WOMAN

Alright, I'll buy a pound and a half o' the rib eye. But no more than a pound and a half. My husband's getting fat anyway.

AVRAM

*Zaier gut. [Okay.]*

EXT. MOSKOWITZ MEATS - NIGHT

Avram, now dressed in black hat and coat, locks up his store and hustles through the streets of Brooklyn, reaching--

EXT. AVRAM'S NEW YORK BROWNSTONE - CONTINUOUS

He opens the door and steps inside.

INT. AVRAM'S NEW YORK BROWNSTONE - CONTINUOUS

What seem like a thousand children run chaotically through the home, oblivious to his presence.

AVRAM

Don't mind me! I just spent all day cutting sirloin, go ahead, treat me like a piece of meat.

A LITTLE GIRL (4) runs toward him and raises her arms to be picked up.

LITTLE GIRL

Aba!

He scoops her up and blows a raspberry on her belly. She giggles wildly.

LITTLE GIRL (CONT'D)

You're so happy to see me!

AVRAM

I'm so happy to see you!

LEAH (50), Avram's wife, demure, but smiling seductively, has appeared--

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
And you, my beautiful lady?

--and gives Avram a kiss on the cheek.

LEAH  
I went to the mikvah today.

Avram returns the seductive smile.

AVRAM  
I'm so happy to see you.

LEAH  
Dinner's ready. Go wash up, Elaina.

Avram sets the girl on the floor and she runs off.

LEAH (CONT'D)  
Good day today?

AVRAM  
Oy. All the kvetching. I don't  
wanna talk about it.

INT. AVRAM'S KITCHEN - NIGHT

Leah, Avram, and seven BOYS AND GIRLS between the ages of 4 and 16 all sit around the dining room table, eating.

AVRAM  
Rib eye, eight-forty-two a pound.  
Sirloin, six-twelve. Ground beef,  
three-seventeen. How do I make a  
profit on that?

LEAH  
Pesach's in two weeks. The prices  
always go up before the holidays.

AVRAM  
Not like this. And it's getting  
worse. The unions are playing  
hardball, so labor's going up.

LEAH  
Have you tried another supplier?

AVRAM  
They're all the same! Ron's Best in  
Philadelphia, Peschy in Maryland.  
(MORE)

AVRAM (CONT'D)

And Kocher out on the West coast is even more.

(resigned)

If I thought I could make a profit, I'd start my own. Moskowitz Meatpacking.

LEAH

That's got a ring to it.

AVRAM

Find a quiet place out in the Midwest. With no unions, no taxes, no... laws.

LEAH

Somewhere with more cows than people.

AVRAM

*Halevei... [If only...]*

LEAH

Why don't you do it?

Avram waves her off.

AVRAM

What am I, *meshuggah*? All that paperwork, government bureaucracy. Ari's in his senior year, Itzik is bar mitzvah--

The DOORBELL RINGS. Avram gets up to answer it.

LEAH

Oh, we can sort out those things. We can sort out most things. That's one of the advantages to being the Chosen People.

THE FRONT DOOR

Avram opens the door.

AVRAM

Dad! What are you--

AVRAM'S FATHER, a generation older but otherwise identical to Avram in every way, bursts past him.

AVRAM'S FATHER

I've been looking at the numbers on the shop. *Genug iz genug!*  
(MORE)

AVRAM'S FATHER (CONT'D)  
*[Enough is enough!]* We're gonna  
 lose half our business if we charge  
 prices like that.

AVRAM  
 Whaddaya want me to--

AVRAM'S FATHER  
 Oh, I know. They charge us more,  
 you can't just eat the costs. But I  
 had an idea. I'll send Yossi over  
 to manage the shop for a while. And  
 you go somewhere we can open our  
 own meat packing plant!

He looks at Avram expectantly.

AVRAM'S FATHER (CONT'D)  
 Eh? Find a quiet place out in the  
 country, with no unions, no taxes,  
 no laws.

AVRAM  
 Somewhere with more cows than  
 people?

AVRAM'S FATHER  
*Zaier shain gezogt! [Well said!]*  
 Instead of Moskowitz Meats,  
 Moskowitz Meatpacking!

AVRAM  
 In the Midwest?

AVRAM'S FATHER  
 Hey, that's got a ring to it! *Nu?*  
 Whaddaya think?

AVRAM  
 I don't know. Ari's in his senior  
 year, Itzik is bar mitzvah--

AVRAM'S FATHER  
 Ah--

AVRAM  
 There's all the licensing and  
 permits to sort out--

AVRAM'S FATHER  
 We can sort out all those things.  
 We can sort out most things. It's  
 one of the advantages of being the  
 Chosen People.

Silence as Avram looks over the faces of his family.

AVRAM

Yeah, but where would we go?

EXT. POSTVILLE - DAY

The town has seen better days. The bank is boarded up. The paint on City Hall is crumbling. "For Sale" signs everywhere. Grass and weeds grow over the TRAIN TRACKS next to an old, shuttered FACTORY. Beyond, miles and miles of farmland.

INSERT TITLE: Postville, Iowa

TITLE: Population: 612

TITLE: Pig Population: 3,656

TITLE: Cow Population: Regrettably, zero

GABE (65), kind face but a worn demeanor, tramps along the closest thing Postville has to a main street, passing the office of

HOPE YODER, REALTOR/POSTVILLE LEDGER,

which we'll see again in a moment.

INT. DORINDA'S MANAGER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

DORINDA (50), small town waitress whose big dreams never got past Des Moines, hunches over her financial ledger. She scribbles some numbers, punches them into a calculator, and then stares at the total: -482.46.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

A hometown cafe in a rundown shack. A swinging sign reads TODAY'S SPECIAL: MEATLOAF. In a rocking chair is RAY (70), a hulk of a man in denim overalls and a John Deere ballcap.

Gabe steps onto the porch and sits down next to him. They both rock for a moment in silence.

In the distance, THUNDER rumbles faintly.

GABE

Mornin' Ray.

Beat.

RAY

Mornin' Gabe.

Beat.

GABE  
You're early.

RAY  
Gonna storm.

GABE  
At least it'll be rain.

RAY  
Melt the last of the snow. Seemed  
like this winter was gonna hold on  
forever.

Dorinda emerges from the restaurant, a pot of coffee and a  
mug in her hand.

DORINDA  
Mornin', Gabe.

GABE  
Mornin' Dorinda.

She pours.

DORINDA  
Saw the *Ledger* today.

GABE  
Hmm?

Ray holds up for Gabe not so much a paper but a community  
newsletter. He takes it and reads the headline.

GABE (CONT'D)  
"Bankruptcy Our Easter Salvation."  
Trust Hope to put a positive spin  
on things.

DORINDA  
I'm sorry, Gabe.

GABE  
It's not over yet. Just cause the  
City Council voted on something  
doesn't mean that we can't find  
some other way.

RAY  
Gabe, you've been fighting this for  
a year.



GABE

We also talked about calling the State again to get tax incentives for the Spurli Plant.

RAY

And?

Gabe doesn't answer.

RAY (CONT'D)

Look, Gabe, Lord knows I could use a buyer closer than two-hundred miles so I can sell my hogs for more than fifty-five counterweight. But that's not going to happen, and as far as the town's concerned, bankruptcy makes perfect sense.

HOPE (50), the town gossip, bursts out of the Realtor/Postville Leger building next door.

HOPE

Hey folks, I've got news! I just got an email from a Realtor in New York City. He's got some clients who may be interested in... guess what... the Spurli Plant!

GABE

(smugly, to Ray)  
Oh, really?

HOPE

Looks like you might finally get some local buyers for your hogs, Ray.

(to Dorinda)

See last night we voted to file for bankruptcy--

GABE

When are they coming?

HOPE

-- but we also figure if we get the State to get tax incentives for the Spurli Plant--

GABE

Hope?

HOPE

We could get that to re-open--

GABE

Hope?

HOPE

--then maybe the town wouldn't--

GABE

**Hope?!**

She stops and turns to Gabe.

GABE (CONT'D)

When are they coming?

HOPE

They're flying out here today.

GABE

Today?

HOPE

Yes, indeed. He said they should be here this morning.

GABE

Well what's your plan for getting them to buy?

HOPE

My plan?

She stares at him blankly.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Well, I guess same thing I always do. I show it to them, take them on a tour of the town. I'd buy them lunch, but I don't really have the budget...

She looks expectantly at Dorinda.

GABE

The City Council will pay for lunch.

RAY

Really? Can the City Council buy me lunch, too?

They all look at Ray like he just pissed in their pool.

RAY (CONT'D)

What? Oh, come on, you've shown that plant a hundred times since it closed down. What's different about today?

GABE

Don't talk like that, Ray.

RAY

Like what? Realistic? I'm all for optimism, but that building oughta be condemned. Just like every other run down boarded up shack in this godforsaken town. And the state doesn't give a crap about us. Face it, Gabe, Postville is dead. And I'm sorry it happened on your watch, but that's just how it is.

EXT. POSTVILLE - DAY

A sign reads:

WELCOME TO POSTVILLE  
HOMETOWN TO THE WORLD

A tiny rental car whizzes past.

INT. RENTAL CAR (MOVING) - CONTINUOUS

Avram is in the passenger seat. Driving is MOISHE (28), also a Hasidic Jew, his young beard failing miserably in its attempt to make him look like more of an adult.

AVRAM

Ah, never thought I'd be so happy to be nowhere. See, Moishe, your mother told you you'd go nowhere in life if you didn't become a doctor. Haha, she was right!

Avram looks down at the GPS on his cell phone.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Up here on the right.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Same scene as before.

HOPE

Well, I don't care what you or anyone else says, Ray. My name is Hope, and I'm holding onto it.

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

You talk to the State, Gabe, and  
I'll show these people the plant.

Moishe climbs out of the car and stretches his legs, while  
Avram stays inside, collecting some papers.

HOPE (CONT'D)

And I'll give 'em such a good old  
fashioned Postville welcome,  
they'll be beatin' down a door to  
move here!

RAY

What the heck is that?

HOPE

What?

Everyone turns and stares.

DORINDA

Amish?

GABE

I think Jewish.

RAY

What the heck is he doing here?

HOPE

Do you suppose he's lost?

Everyone shrugs their shoulders. Gabe smiles at Moishe, who  
turns away to avoid eye contact.

RAY

Go talk to him.

GABE

Me? Why me?

RAY

You're the mayor.

GABE

So I have to introduce myself to  
everyone who comes to town?

Hope sighs briskly, and then turns on her heels and bustles  
over to Moishe.

HOPE

Hello.

Moishe starts, looks at her for an instant, gives a small nod, and then lowers his eyes. Hope speaks very slowly and clearly, and a little loud.

HOPE (CONT'D)  
Do you speak English?

MOISHE  
Yes.

HOPE  
What country are you from?

MOISHE  
Brooklyn.

HOPE  
Oh. Is that in Europe?

Moishe looks up at her. Is she for real?

HOPE (CONT'D)  
Are you lost? Do you need directions?

MOISHE  
No.

HOPE  
Can I help you find something? Or somebody?

MOISHE  
Is everybody here this... friendly?

HOPE  
Yeah, pretty much.

Moishe nods toward the Realtor's office.

MOISHE  
We're here to see Miss Yoder.

HOPE  
You're... Oh! I'm Hope Yoder.  
Mister...?

MOISHE  
Moishe.

HOPE  
Well, welcome to Postville, Mister  
Moishe.

She reaches out her hand to shake his, but he ignores it.

MOISHE

I'm sorry, I can't. It's... nothing personal. We're not allowed.

HOPE

Oh, I didn't know.

(beat)

You can't shake anybody's hand unless they're Jewish?

MOISHE

No, just women. Except family. Or if you're married, of course.

HOPE

Must make for a low incidence of STDs.

MOISHE

Pardon?

HOPE

Sexually transmitted--

LIGHTNING, THUNDER, and they both look up at the sky as it starts to pour. Avram gets out of the car and rushes under the awning.

MOISHE

Avram, this is Ms. Yoder.

Hope turns and reaches out her hand--

HOPE

How do you do?

--and then she yanks her hand back, embarrassed.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Sorry. Habit! It's nice to meet you, Avram. I was just talking to Mister Moishe.

AVRAM

Just Moishe.

HOPE

Huh?

AVRAM

It's not Mister Moishe. Moishe's his first name.

HOPE

Oh. Well, it's great to meet you both.

AVRAM

(to Moishe)

Is everyone here so friendly?

MOISHE

Apparently.

HOPE

Well, I must say, I'm a little surprised to see folks of... your persuasion. It's just... it wasn't a Jewish packing plant.

AVRAM

Thanks for telling us.

HOPE

And doesn't it--?

AVRAM

We'll take care of it. We can take care of most things. That's one of the advantages of being the Chosen People.

Another flash of lightning and a peal of thunder.

MOISHE

Avram!

AVRAM

(looking up at the sky)

What? Everyone else can say it but I can't?

INT. PLANT - DAY

LIGHTNING flashes through the otherwise dark meat packing plant, highlighting the sterile tile and barren walls. RAIN can be heard outside; DRIPPING WATER inside.

The murmur of VOICES and CRUNCHING GRAVEL approach in the distance. As they get closer, we make out that the voice is Hope, blathering on about nothing in particular.

The echo of a KEY IN A LOCK, a CHAIN being pulled out of the door handle. Then, a FLOOD OF LIGHT as the doors slide open and Avram, Moishe, and Hope walk in, carrying flashlights.

HOPE

Well, this is it. The front half is all newer... when they started processing pork as well as beef.

Avram stops and turns to her.

AVRAM

Pork?

HOPE

Yes.

AVRAM

That wasn't in the documentation. Moishe, can we even use a place that processed pork?

MOISHE

Y--

AVRAM

You'll have to check it in the Midrash. Make a note of that.

Moishe hesitates, then fishes inside his coat for something to write on.

MOISHE

Okay...

AVRAM

Continue.

HOPE

Um. In 1984, with labor costs and tightened immigration laws, they just couldn't afford to--

AVRAM

Shh. Do you hear that?

They are silent for a moment. They hear a droplet of water.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

A leak. Which means repairing the roof. Note it down, Moishe.

Moishe scribbles the note. Avram inspects a meat hook.

HOPE

As you can see, the place has plenty of room, and still even has some of its old equipment.



AVRAM

Look at that. Blood still on the  
meat hooks. We'll have to throw all  
of those away and start again.  
Write it down, Moishe.

HOPE

And--

AVRAM

And this grinder looks like it's  
older than Adam.

MOISHE

Adam Levy?

AVRAM

No, Adam from the Garden of Eden.  
(beat)  
They're asking one and a half  
million for this? It's a dump. For  
that money I could buy one twice  
the size without leaving Queens.

EXT. PLANT - LATER

The rain has stopped. As the three step outside, Hope fiddles  
with the lock and Avram grabs Moishe by the arm, ushering him  
away from the door.

AVRAM

(loud)

Honestly, I'm just disappointed,  
Miss Yoder. Terribly disappointed.  
We flew in for this, and we're just  
out the money. Terrible.

MOISHE

(in Yiddish)

What do you think? Is this the  
place?

AVRAM

(in Yiddish)

We'd be fools to pass it up. Did  
you see how big it is? And all the  
equipment that's still there! And  
the real estate in town! I could  
buy each of my kids their own house  
for the cost of a subway ticket.

Hope approaches.

HOPE

Well, I'm sorry it wasn't quite what you expected.

AVRAM

Very disappointed.

(pause)

Since we flew all the way out here, we might as well look at some houses.

MOISHE

And a location for a mikvah.

AVRAM

Oh, yes. Do you have any rivers in Postville?

HOPE

Um, no rivers. But we do have a few large ponds!

Avram and Moishe look at each other.

AVRAM

Tsk tsk tsk.

INT. YODER REALTY - LATER

Worn and outdated furniture decorates the decrepit office. Hope pours herself a cup of cheap generic coffee.

HOPE

I'm sorry it wasn't what you expected -- coffee?

Avram and Moishe shake their heads.

HOPE (CONT'D)

But that plant's been on the market for over twenty years. I'm sure if you made an offer, they'd at least consider it.

AVRAM

Oh, I don't know, we couldn't.

HOPE

And we're also talking about appealing to the state to give tax incentives to the new owners.

AVRAM

Meh.

Hope stares at Avram, her eyes pleading.

HOPE

Please. Just throw a number out.

Avram shrugs.

AVRAM

I don't know. Half.

HOPE

Half?

AVRAM

Yeah. Half. You said throw a number out, I threw a number out. You want a better number, ask someone else. Moishe, come on. Let's give a number to that plant in Nebraska.

They stand quickly, but Hope interrupts.

HOPE

Wait. No. I'll take it to Mister Spurli. See what he says.

AVRAM

Okay, good.

HOPE

Now is there anything else you wanted to see while you're here?

AVRAM

No, the hour long tour of the town -- all four blocks of it -- was more than enough.

HOPE

Are you hungry? Let me buy you lunch at Dorinda's next door.

AVRAM

Thank you, no.

HOPE

Okay. You know how to get out of here?

AVRAM

The front door?

HOPE

No, I mean out of town! You're funny.

(MORE)

HOPE (CONT'D)

You just take eighteen that way for about a hundred miles, and then south on thirty-five, and that'll take you all the way to Des Moines.

AVRAM

Oh, you mean like the way we came but in the other direction.

Beat.

HOPE

Yes.

They turn toward the door. Just before reaching it, Avram stops and turns around.

AVRAM

Can I ask you a question?

HOPE

Of course.

AVRAM

So far you've been very...

HOPE

Friendly?

AVRAM

Yes.

(beat)

Do you think you could stop?

EXT. CITY HALL - DAY

Hanging over the front of the decrepit City Hall building a large hand-painted banner reads WELCOME JEWS. In front of it, a podium faces a hundred folding chairs.

Two dozen HASIDIM all huddle together staring up at the sign. Among them: Avram, Leah, all of their children, Moishe, CHANAH (24, quiet but ambitious), and their 1-year-old daughter SARAH.

AVRAM

"Welcome Jews"?

LEAH

That's nice.

AVRAM

Oh, yeah, a heartfelt expression of love.

LEAH  
 And what would your sign say if a  
 bunch of Lutheran ministers from  
 Iowa moved into Crown Heights to  
 process pork?

Avram considers.

AVRAM  
 "Goyim Go Home."

LEAH  
 See? This isn't so bad.

On the other side of the aisle 50 or 60 LOCALS (including  
 Hope and Gabe) chat with each other excitedly.

GABE  
 (to Hope)  
 I think they like the sign!

He heads toward the Hasidim.

AVRAM  
 (to Moishe)  
 How long do you think this is going  
 to--?

GABE  
 Avram! Moishe!

They turn to see Gabe's broad, smiling face. Gabe excitedly  
 shakes Avram's hand, and then Moishe's.

GABE (CONT'D)  
 And this must be...?

MOISHE  
 This is my wife, Chanah, and  
 Avram's wife, Leah.

GABE  
 Hi, Leah.

He goes to shake her hand -- then, seeing her take a step  
 back, pulls it back.

GABE (CONT'D)  
 Sorry. Habit.

LEAH  
 It's fine.

GABE  
 Hi, Kannah.

AVRAM

Chanah.

GABE

Kannah.

AVRAM

Chanah.

CHANA

Hannah is fine. It's a pleasure to meet you... Mr. Mayor?

GABE

(embarrassed)

Oh. Yes. Just Gabe.

CHANA

Gabe.

GABE

Well, let's start then, shall we?

They all take their seats -- the Hasidim clustering as close to each other as possible. Gabe approaches the podium.

GABE (CONT'D)

First, on behalf of all the folks of Postville I'd like to thank you for choosing to invest in our town. Postville has a long history of welcoming newcomers, and I'm sure you'll be surprised at how quickly you'll feel at home -- first as our neighbors, but soon as our friends. Before you know it, you'll be completely absorbed into town, and it will be impossible to tell who used to belong to which group.

The Jews look at each other uneasily. Glancing between them and his notes, Gabe nervously presses on.

GABE (CONT'D)

Ever since it was official that you would be coming, we've been working hard to prepare for your arrival. We'll be assigning each of your schoolchildren a "buddy" from the school they'll be going to in the fall. For the high-schoolers, we've organized a "Raffle Mixer" next Friday. That's a dance where the girls put their names in a hat --

Avram backhands Moishe across the knee.

MOISHE

Ow.

GABE

-- and each boy pulls a name and dances the next two dances with the girl whose name he's picked. Does the restriction on touching apply to--

All the Jews nod, almost in unison.

GABE (CONT'D)

Oh. Well, I guess they'll all be fast dances -- there's no touching in those, is there? Anyway, the whole thing is strictly chaperoned, so don't worry about....

(moving on)

Um, Maggie Snitker and the Postville Womens' Club want to invite all the women to attend the organizational meeting for the annual Christmas bazaar.

More headshaking from the Jews. This isn't going well.

GABE (CONT'D)

All the proceeds go to the Shepherd of the Mount Lutheran Relief Fund. Even though it's only June, this is the biggest event of the year, and Maggie assures me six months of preparation is the absolute minimum.

Gabe looks down at his notes, which go on for a few pages, but seeing the reactions, decides better of it.

GABE (CONT'D)

There's lots more, but I just wanted to give an idea of the types of things we've been working on. I believe you'll find that we're people of few words around here, and we let our actions do our talking for us. So I'll stop now, other than to say once again, "Welcome to Postville."

Everyone claps, and Gabe takes a step back from the podium. After a long pause, staring at Avram and Moishe, he nods in the direction of the podium, indicating it's their turn.

Another awkward pause.

GABE (CONT'D)

Perhaps, you'd like to say a few words?

AVRAM

Oh. Uh, would you give us a moment?  
(aside to Moishe)  
You talk to them.

MOISHE

Me? Why me?

AVRAM

You're a lawyer, talking is what you do.

MOISHE

No, most of the time I write contracts. When I'm not doing that I read contracts. And when I do get to talk, it's usually to argue with other lawyers.

AVRAM

Fine. Don't do it because you're a lawyer, do it because I'm paying you.

MOISHE

What am I supposed to say?

AVRAM

If I knew that, I'd do it myself.

Chanah stands.

CHANA

I'll do it!

Avram glares at Moishe.

AVRAM

Aren't you ashamed?

MOISHE

Alright, already. Sit, Chanah.

She obeys. He rises and walks to the podium.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

Uh, Mister Mayor. Ladies and Gentlemen of Postville. On behalf of all of us at Moskowitz Meats--



AVRAM  
Meatpacking!

MOISHE  
--Meatpacking... and our families,  
I'd like to thank you for making us  
feel so welcome. A few minutes ago,  
Mayor Fergessen referred to  
Postville's long history of  
greeting newcomers. Certainly, the  
welcomes haven't always been quite  
as warm as this one. We hope to be  
here for a long time to come. Thank  
you once again, and--

AVRAM  
Pssst!

Moishe looks down at Avram, who cups his mouth and whispers loudly to Moishe.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
Tell them about the schools.

MOISHE  
What?

AVRAM  
The schools.

MOISHE  
Now? Here?

Avram nods fervently. Moishe hesitates. Then--

MOISHE (CONT'D)  
I should probably mention about the  
schools. None of our children will  
be attending the public schools.  
That's just not something we do.  
We'll be starting a religious  
school, and that's where they'll  
go. So the buddy system -- really  
very thoughtful of you -- that  
won't be necessary. Um--

AVRAM  
The dances.

MOISHE  
Huh? Oh. Uh... and perhaps you  
shouldn't count on too many of our  
young men and women attending that  
dance.... The Raffle Mixer? By not  
too many, I mean none.  
(MORE)

MOISHE (CONT'D)

There's just no outside dating in our group. Or inside dating, for that matter. When they're ready to marry, our young men and women meet each other through -- well -- introduction. And of course some marriages are still arranged. But the Raffle Mixer sounds like a great idea, and we wish you all the best with it. So I guess, that's--

AVRAM

The Christmas Bazaar.

MOISHE

The... Why don't you do this yourself?

Avram and Moishe stare each other down. Moishe loses.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

The Christmas Bazaar. It's just that all of our women are going to be so busy -- working for Jewish charities. And before Avram reminds me, I suppose I should tell you that we have no intention of... how did you word it? Being absorbed? No. If we're lucky enough that in ten, or twenty, or, God willing, a hundred years we're still here, we'll be just as easy to recognize. Let me see, is that everything?

He looks at Avram for confirmation, and he nods his head.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

But we really do appreciate all you've done to make our move to Postville as painless as possible.

Moishe drags himself back to his seat, deflated. Gabe, equally deflated, returns to the podium.

GABE

Thank you. Well, you can't say we didn't try. But at least one thing is certain. We've all got to eat. So please head on back there for the wonderful meal Dorinda's made just for the occasion: spare ribs!

As the locals clap, Dorinda removes the lids from warming trays on a buffet table. The Hasidim shake their heads.

Avram nudges Moishe, who slinks back to the podium.

MOISHE

There may be one other thing I  
should mention.

INT. YODER REALTY - DAY

Avram, Moishe, Hope, and the SELLER all sit around a  
conference table with stacks of paper.

AVRAM

I will not buy it.

SELLER

But, we already agreed--

AVRAM

I don't care. I know when I'm  
getting ripped off.

HOPE

Avram, you're not getting ripped--

AVRAM

I can take my money to Wisconsin,  
Wyoming, Kansas. All those places  
made me very generous offers. Two  
of them even offered to pay me to  
open the plant there.

HOPE

You've already--

AVRAM

Do you want me to sign?

HOPE

Of course--

AVRAM

I'm asking you. Do you, or do you  
not want me to sign?

HOPE

Of course I want you to sign.

AVRAM

Because I thought you wanted me to  
sign.

HOPE

I want you to sign.

AVRAM

I'm trying to run a business here.  
I'm investing my own savings, I  
have a dozen investors trusting me  
with their money, it'll take months  
of renovations before I even make a  
dime. What am I going to do? You  
want I should lose my shirt here?

Avram stares at Hope, who looks into the lobby where several  
Hasidim wait patiently. She turns to Avram and sighs.

HOPE

What do you want?

AVRAM

Closing costs.

SELLER

You want me to pay your closing  
costs?

Avram shrugs.

AVRAM

It wouldn't hurt.

Hope hesitates and starts to turn red in the face.

HOPE

But ... you can't do this!

AVRAM

I can't?

HOPE

It's just ... I understand it's  
different where you're from, but if  
you want to fit in here in  
Postville you've got to be ...

AVRAM

What?

MOISHE

Friendly?

HOPE

Yes!

Avram clears his throat and leans forward.

AVRAM

Listen. Moishe's a *balbatish* little *mentsch*, so maybe he didn't make this quite clear at that ... thing this afternoon. But fitting in ... not really what we do. We're here to run our business and be left alone. We can either do that in Postville or somewhere else.

He leans back and crosses his arms.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Your call.

Hope looks behind him and sees Gabe walking by the window. Gabe waves excitedly. She sighs.

INT. HASIDIC CENTER - NIGHT

Shot glasses. Crown Royal. And lots of it. With chaotic disorder, the Hasidim clink their glasses--

HASIDIM

(variously)

To America's best kosher meat!  
L'chaim!

They take their shots, refill, and toast someone else.

INT. HASIDIC CENTER - LATER

Everyone chats, snacking on sandwiches and soda, as some Hasidic music plays in the background.

Avram introduces his son, BAR MITZVAH BOY (ITZIK), to a group of HASIDIM.

AVRAM

My fourth oldest, Itzik. He's bar mitzvah the end of this year.

HASIDIC WOMAN

*Azoy gich? [So soon?]*

Bar Mitzvah Boy nods politely.

HASIDIC WOMAN (CONT'D)

What's your Torah portion?

ACROSS THE ROOM

Chanah and Leah are in conversation.

LEAH

Chanah, these sandwiches! *Me ken lecken di finger!* [*They're delicious!*]

CHANAHA

*Todah rabah.* [*Thanks very much.*]

LEAH

Did you bring this pastrami from New York? Avram brought so much home from his shop last week, we almost had to buy a meat truck just to ship it down here.

CHANAHA

Actually, there's a supermarket in Des Moines with kosher cold cuts.

Leah stares at her, blankly.

LEAH

Excuse me while I go beat my husband with a side of beef.

Chanah laughs, and Leah joins her. Moishe approaches.

MOISHE

What are you two ladies *kibitzing* about?

LEAH

I was just telling Chanah how amazing her sandwiches are.

MOISHE

Oh, I know, better than Katz's. I'm a lucky man to have them all to myself.

LEAH

Seems a shame not to share them with the world.

CHANAHA

*Bubbe's* recipe. I'm sworn to secrecy.

LEAH

Who's talking about sharing the recipe? Cheap real estate in town. A supplier within walking distance. There've been worse conditions for opening a deli.

Moishe looks at her sternly for half a beat. Then--

MOISHE

Your husband was looking for you a moment ago.

LEAH

Of course. *Zei gezunt.* [*Be well.*]

She walks off.

CHANAH

That's a good idea.

MOISHE

I don't think so.

CHANAH

Why not?

MOISHE

What are you going to do? Raise Sarah and run a deli at the same time?

CHANAH

People do both.

MOISHE

Maybe when she's older. I don't think now's the right time.

Chanah nods subserviently.

EXT. HASIDIC CENTER - CONTINUOUS

The festivities continue. They're in the building next to Dorinda's -- where there had been a sign that said "For sale or rent" is now one that says "Hasidic Center of Postville."

EXT. PLANT - DAY

Work trucks fill the yard around the plant. Several WORKERS are on top of the roof, repairing it.

INT. PLANT - DAY

As the interior of the plant is being renovated, a Hasidic PLANT WORKER and FOREMAN wear hard hats and gloves. In front of them is a large vat over a flame.

PLANT WORKER

(in Yiddish)

Yosef! It's boiling!

The Foreman presses a button, and several bare meathooks lower into the vat.

EXT. PLANT - DAY

A pick-up truck with two dozen HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS in the back pulls to a stop in front of the plant.

AVRAM (O.S.)  
Well, if that's your attitude, I'll  
just go talk to the folks at A&B  
and see what price they'll give me.

INT. AVRAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

A glass window overlooks the floor of the packing plant. Avram sits at his desk, phone pressed to his ear.

AVRAM  
Oh, we both know that's not true,  
they're the same machine, and you  
want me to pay two thousand for  
yours when they're charging me  
eighteen hundred for theirs. What  
am I, *meshuggah*?

The Foreman pops his head in the door.

FOREMAN  
Avram. They're here.

Avram waves his hand dismissively and swivels his chair, turning his back.

AVRAM  
I'm trying to run a business here!  
Well *Ich hob dir in drerd!* [*Go to  
hell!*]

He slams the phone down and looks up at the Foreman grinning.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
Ah, nothing like a good negotiation.  
Let's go meet our workers.

All smiles, he stands up and heads for the door.

EXT. PLANT - MOMENTS LATER

Avram and the Foreman walk outside. The Hispanic immigrants are getting off the pick-up truck.



AVRAM

Welcome to Moskowitz Meatpacking!  
We're on a tight schedule, so let's  
put you right to work. This is  
Yosef, he's the foreman, he'll give  
you the grand tour, and get you  
started, so just follow him.

Everyone stares blankly.

FOREMAN (YOSEF)

I don't think they speak English.

AVRAM

Oh.

(in Yiddish)

How about Yiddish?

EXT. GABE'S HOME - DAY

Gabe and GABE'S WIFE (60s) come outside, carrying a baking  
dish. They almost skip next door.

EXT. RAY'S HOME - DAY

Ray pushes a lawnmower, finishing the last strip and then  
killing the engine. As he wipes his brow, he looks over to  
see the four-weeks growth on Avram's lawn next door.

He hikes across the lawn.

EXT. MOISHE'S HOME - DAY

Gabe and his wife knock on the door.

EXT. AVRAM'S HOME - DAY

Ray knocks on the door.

EXT. MOISHE'S HOME - DAY

Moishe answers.

GABE

Good morning!

GABE'S WIFE

Morning!

Moishe nods. Gabe's wife shoves the baking dish into his  
hands.

GABE

Welcome to the neighborhood.

He stands there, looking at it, uncomfortably.

EXT. AVRAM'S HOME - DAY

And knocks. Avram answers.

RAY  
Morning. Gorgeous day, huh?

Avram just stares.

EXT. MOISHE'S HOME - DAY

GABE'S WIFE  
It's a chocolate cream pie.

GABE  
Best in the world. She had to fight  
me off so I didn't eat it myself!

EXT. AVRAM'S HOME - DAY

RAY  
I know you just moved in, probably  
don't have a lawnmower yet. I  
wouldn't mind taking care of it  
this one time if you like.

EXT. MOISHE'S HOME - DAY

MOISHE  
Oh. I don't want to take food out  
of your mouth. Here.

He hands it back and starts closing the door.

EXT. AVRAM'S HOME - DAY

AVRAM  
It's Shabbas.

RAY  
Oh. Okay.

EXT. MOISHE'S HOME - DAY

GABE  
No, no. That was ... just a joke.  
It's for you. To welcome you.

MOISHE  
I'm sorry, I can't.

GABE  
Oh.

EXT. AVRAM'S HOME - DAY

RAY  
So that's a no?

AVRAM  
Yes.

An uncomfortable silence.

EXT. MOISHE'S HOME - DAY

GABE  
Well, dinner, tonight then?

MOISHE  
No.

EXT. AVRAM'S HOME - DAY

RAY  
Okay, well, Cavender's is having a  
welcome sale this week. So it's a  
good time to buy, if you need one.

AVRAM  
I'll keep that in mind.

EXT. MOISHE'S HOME - DAY

MOISHE  
If you'll excuse me.

GABE  
Tomorrow night?

Moishe closes the door, leaving Gabe and his wife, stunned.

EXT. AVRAM'S HOME - DAY

AVRAM  
Anything else?

RAY  
No.

The door closes in Ray's face.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - DAY

Ray, Gabe, Gabe's wife, and Dorinda all sit on the front  
patio, eating chocolate cream pie directly out of the baking  
dish.

Hope pulls up in a brand new luxury Chrysler, parking in front of the shop. She gets out, beaming. Gabe whistles.

RAY  
(under his breath)  
For the devil will come bathed in  
light.

GABE  
Nice car.

HOPE  
Traded it in just this morning!  
Heated seats, that stability system  
that keeps you from skidding on ice--

RAY  
That'll come in handy when the rain  
of cash coming your way starts to  
freeze.

GABE  
Oh, quiet Ray.

He holds the baking dish out for Hope.

GABE (CONT'D)  
Chocolate cream pie?

HOPE  
Ooh, don't mind if I do!

She starts to dig in. A HASID leaves the Hasidic Center and hurries down the street.

HOPE (CONT'D)  
Morning.

GABE  
Mornin'.

The man ignores them. He walks on.

RAY  
Why do they just ignore us like  
that?

HOPE  
It's just a different culture is  
all. I was a little put off at  
first, but I'm getting used to it.

RAY  
I'll bet you are.

DORINDA

I expected at least some new business. Guess that was just wishful thinking.

The four nod their heads silently, as a group of four HISPANIC IMMIGRANTS walks past them and into Dorinda's Cafe.

DORINDA (CONT'D)

Excuse me.

She goes inside.

INT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Dorinda grabs four menus and brings them to the table.

DORINDA

Hi, folks. Our special today is fried chicken and gravy. What can I getcha to drink?

They look up at her blankly.

DORINDA (CONT'D)

Um. Agua? Coke? Sprite?

IMMIGRANT 1

Coca.

IMMIGRANT 2

Si. Coca.

The other two immigrants nod.

DORINDA

Okay. Four Coca-Colas. Quatro. Coca-Colas.

IMMIGRANT 1

Gracias.

She walks back toward the kitchen.

INT. DES MOINES GROCERY STORE - DAY

Chanah and Leah, with children, push shopping carts through a big grocery store. They get to the kosher cold cuts.

CHANA

How much do we need?

LEAH

Enough for three weeks. So, what, fifty pounds?

CHANAH  
*Oy gevalt!*

Leah laughs.

LEAH  
 Twelve mouths to feed. It adds up.  
 Let's just take all of it.

They start loading up the carts.

CHANAH  
 Leah did you ever want to do  
 something else?

LEAH  
 Like what?

CHANAH  
 Like a career?

LEAH  
 I've got ten children. Eleven if  
 you count Avram. That's enough of a  
 career. Don't run too far, Elaina!

CHANAH  
 But don't you want more than  
 chasing after kids all day?

LEAH  
 I married a brilliant man. He's  
 provided for all of us. What more  
 could I want?

CHANAH  
 Achievement? Equality?

Leah looks at her for a moment, and then starts laughing.

LEAH  
 Chanah, if Moishe doesn't want you  
 to open a deli, that's his problem.  
 But don't give me that *drek* about  
 women not being equals. It's the  
 twenty-first century, you can do  
 what you want.  
 (beat)  
 I'll have Avram talk to him.

CHANAH  
 What? No.

LEAH

It'll be fine. He'll be very tactful.

CHANAH

Leah, no... I can talk to him. I will.

LEAH

Good.

They finish loading the carts and push them on. Chanah's baby, Sarah, babbles happily.

A TRAIN WHISTLE blows.

EXT. PLANT - DAY

The train makes its final squeals as it crawls to a stop. Dozens of HISPANIC WORKERS and a few HASIDIC JEWS move massive GATES into place, forming a funnel from the train to a HOLDING PEN two hundred yards away. A metal RAMP is pulled out from underneath the cattle car.

Someone lifts the gate on the cattle car and starts smacking the cattle with prodding poles. HUNDREDS OF COWS pile out, down the ramp, and into the holding pen.

The animals are led through a funnel into a single file line, which winds back and forth in a labyrinth toward a door.

INT. PLANT (KILLFLOOR) - CONTINUOUS

Three large turntables, each barely large enough for an individual cow, their heads forced through small gaps.

Three SHOCHETIM -- the Hasidic kosher slaughterers -- in knee high rubber boots, plastic smocks, and head and beard coverings, stand with their backs to the cattle.

The turntables kick into gear, turning each cow helplessly UPSIDE DOWN. A Shochet moves toward the cow, hiding a FIFTEEN-INCH BLADE from the cow's view until the very last second.

In one smooth motion he SLICES the cow across the throat. Blood spurts out of the cow's neck in an arc. For a moment the flow increases, and then slows five, eight, ten seconds later to a trickle, the animal kicking one last time.

An immigrant wraps a heavy CHAIN around the animal's rear ankle. The turntable releases the cow so it hangs by the chain, as the Shochet goes back to his original position.

The cow's body moves down a ceiling track to the next room, while the turntable returns to its original upright position, and another animal is loaded in.

Blood flows into the drain.

INT. PLANT (CHICKEN KILLFLOOR) - CONTINUOUS

Thousands of birds come down conveyer belts, hanging upside down. Four more SHOCHETIM, wearing white coats and goggles, hold small razor blades and slice the throats of the chickens at a blazing speed, one per second.

INT. PLANT (PROCESSING FLOOR) - CONTINUOUS

Carcasses move down the ceiling track. IMMIGRANTS bundled in blood-proof clothing each make a specific cut. One separates the skin from around the neck, leaving the head dangling by a thread. Another removes the head completely. Another attaches a machine that pulls the entire skin off.

An immigrant uses a circular saw to cut down the midsection. Another immigrant reaches in through the midsection and pulls out the guts, cutting ligaments.

A SHOCHET inspects the guts. He nods, and an immigrant splits the carcass into two sides while the Shochet piles the guts on a conveyor belt. The sides move down the ceiling track.

The Shochet inspects another set of guts. This time he finds a lesion on a lung. He shows it to the immigrant, who shoves the carcass -- and the guts -- down a different track.

An IMMIGRANT sprays SALTWATER at the meat with what looks like a firehose. A SHOCHET rubs salt into every crevice. An immigrant attaches a label with the date and moves the meat into a staging area.

Another immigrant moves a side of beef (labeled with an earlier date) from the staging area and down the track. More immigrants make more cuts.

Immigrants place smaller sections of meat into plastic wrap, which they vacuum seal and place into a large box.

EXT. PLANT - CONTINUOUS

A door opens. Out of it comes a FORKLIFT carrying a pallet of perfectly lined up boxes tightly wrapped and sealed. Condensation immediately forms on the packaging. The door to a refrigerated train car opens.

Cows continue to be prodded toward the holding pen.



Avram and Moishe stand away from the action, Avram looking proudly over the empire he's built.

MOISHE  
Avram, we should talk again about incorporating.

AVRAM  
Enough with that.

MOISHE  
We should have done it months ago.  
To limit our liability.

AVRAM  
We've got workers comp.

MOISHE  
Different kind of liability. It's a couple hundred dollars, but it'll save your *tuchus* if--

AVRAM  
No board of directors is going to tell me what to do. If you hadn't noticed I like being in charge.

MOISHE  
Are you sure? You really--

AVRAM  
*Sheket!* [*Be quiet!*] Yep. Definitely like being in charge.

He walks away, leaving Moishe standing impotently.

INT. DORINDA'S CAFE - NIGHT

Chairs are on top of tables, and most of the lights are off. Dorinda and TERESA (32) sit at a table together. Teresa speaks hesitantly, with a thick South American accent.

TERESA  
What ...?

DORINDA  
(loudly, slowly)  
How long have you been in America?

TERESA  
How.... To work.

DORINDA  
No -- uh, okay.

TERESA

In Honduras mmm, I make seven dollars in day. Not okay. In plant, seven dollars in hour.

DORINDA

Oh, so you're working at the plant?

TERESA

At plant, jes.

DORINDA

And you want to work here, too?

TERESA

Jes. I make lots of money.

DORINDA

Are you sure the hours are going to work for you?

TERESA

The hours work for me?

DORINDA

No, I mean what hours are you working at the plant?

TERESA

I work at night. I go there now.

DORINDA

That's going to be sixteen hours a day!

TERESA

No. Eight hours, nine hours.

DORINDA

Eight hours there and eight hours here is sixteen hours.

TERESA

Si! Lots of money.

Dorinda smiles, bemused.

DORINDA

Now, when can you start?

TERESA

Now? Not now. I go to plant now.

DORINDA

I know.

(slowly and clearly)

Can you start tomorrow morning? At six o'clock?

TERESA

Tomorrow. Six o'clock. Joo be here?

DORINDA

Jew--? Oh, yes, I'll be here. I work all day and all night, too.

TERESA

Joo make lots of money.

DORINDA

Let's hope.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Dorinda lets Teresa out, and then locks the door again behind her. Leaning against the brick wall next to the cafe is Teresa's daughter, EVA (14). Teresa takes her by the hand.

TERESA

Vamosos.

INT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Dorinda goes to the cash register and opens the drawer. She begins taking out all the cash.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - LATER

Dorinda locks the door behind her and walks down the street.

STREET CORNER

A tiny TACO SHACK. Loitering nearby are four SUSPICIOUS-LOOKING IMMIGRANTS. They stare at her as she walks past.

She hugs her purse a little closer and keeps walking.

INT. CHERYL'S SHOES - DAY

Half a dozen HASIDIC JEWS inside the shoe store. No locals. Moishe holds a shopping bag and Chanah holds their child as they head toward the door.

HASID AT SHOE STORE

I'll give you thirty for these.

SHOE STORE CHERYL

The price is on the sticker.

HASID AT SHOE STORE  
Come on. Look at all I'm buying.

SHOE STORE CHERYL  
The price on the sticker is the  
price you pay.

HASID AT SHOE STORE  
(in Yiddish)  
Ah, you're ripping me off.

Moishe opens the door for Chanah as they walk out--

EXT. CHERYL'S SHOES - CONTINUOUS

--and turn to walk down Postville's main street.

CHANAHA  
Looks like they're learning.

MOISHE  
Mmm.

CHANAHA  
The mikvah is nice.

MOISHE  
Oh? They did a good job with it?

CHANAHA  
You did. You're a part of this. I'm  
very proud of you.

They walk past the Hasidic Center and turn the corner.

CHANAHA (CONT'D)  
I must say, when we stood before  
the rabbi I never pictured us here.

MOISHE  
Me neither.

CHANAHA  
*A mentsh tracht und Gott lacht. [A  
man plans and God laughs.]*  
(beat)  
I want to open the deli.

MOISHE  
Chanah--

CHANAHA  
Stop.

MOISHE  
You really think now's the time?

CHANA  
If not now, when?

MOISHE  
When Sarah's older.

CHANA  
How older? In school older? Bat  
mitzvah older? Or until she gets  
married?

Moishe waves her off.

CHANA (CONT'D)  
Or maybe when she's got six sisters  
and brothers, will that be better?

MOISHE  
*Vos zogt ir?* [What are you saying?]  
You don't want babies?

CHANA  
Of course I want babies, that's not  
what I'm saying.

MOISHE  
What are you saying? Please, tell  
me!

CHANA  
I'm saying that I want more.

MOISHE  
More?

CHANA  
If you're worried about things at  
home, don't. Your dinner will still  
be ready after work every night.

Moishe sighs deeply.

MOISHE  
Fine. You think this will make you  
happy, okay.

They continue on down the street in silence. Slowly, a smile  
creeps across Moishe's face.

MOISHE (CONT'D)  
So you went to the mikvah today,  
huh?

EXT. POSTVILLE (MOVING) - DAY

Autumn. Red, orange, and yellow leaves ornament the ground.

We follow a PICKUP TRUCK, its bed filled with IMMIGRANTS, through the town, seeing a clear dichotomy between the houses of locals -- neatly manicured and raked of all their leaves -- and those of the Jews -- overgrown and unkempt. The truck goes past--

RAY'S HOME

Ray is outside, raking his leaves. There's a clear line of demarkation where his lawn ends and his neighbor's begins.

ACROSS THE STREET

Hope shows a house to a HASIDIC FAMILY.

RAY'S HOME

A GUST OF WIND blows leaves from his neighbor's lawn onto his own. Ray growls and tramps over to re-rake the area.

EXT. PLANT - DAY

The pick-up truck parks outside the plant, and the immigrants begin to pile out of the bed.

Avram comes out to greet them, accompanied by a TRANSLATOR.

AVRAM

Welcome!

TRANSLATOR

Bienvenidos!

EXT. CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - DAY

A simple sign reads CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN. Another sign underneath: OPENING SOON.

INT. DORINDA'S CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Chanah enters. Teresa and Dorinda are both busy serving the dozens of (mostly brown) customers in the store. Teresa's daughter sits in the corner doing homework.

Chanah approaches Dorinda.

CHANAH

Dorinda, I have a favor to ask you. Our delivery of sodas never came last night. Do you have an extra case or two I could buy from you?

Dorinda hesitates, surprised.

DORINDA

Oh. Of course. I'll go into the back and get them.

CHANAHA

Thank you so much.

As Dorinda disappears into the back, Chanah turns to hear Hope and Teresa talking.

HOPE

How do you like Postville so far, Teresa?

TERESA

(her English improved)

Is very nice.

HOPE

Dorinda tells me you came here all the way from Honduras, right?

TERESA

Yes, from Honduras.

HOPE

And that's your daughter over there?

TERESA

Yes.

HOPE

Well don't be shy, introduce us!

Teresa hesitates, then calls to her daughter.

TERESA

Eva! Vete aqui!

Eva puts down her pen and walks over.

HOPE

How do you do, Eva, I'm Hope.

EVA

Nice to meet you.

HOPE

I'm the editor of the Postville Ledger, so naturally I have to know everyone in town.

She giggles.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Do you have any other family back  
in Honduras?

Eva looks down embarrassed.

TERESA

Sorry, she's very shy. Her brother  
is still there, and my brothers and  
sisters.

HOPE

How old is her brother?

TERESA

Eleven.

The "friendly" falls from Hope's face.

HOPE

You brought her here and left your  
eleven-year-old there?

TERESA

(defensively)

We no have money! But we work hard  
now to bring everyone else.

CHANAHA

Maybe I can help.

Hope, Teresa, and Eva all turn to Chanah.

CHANAHA (CONT'D)

I'll need some help watching Sarah  
while the deli is open.

(to Eva)

Do you babysit?

Eva looks down embarrassed. Teresa says something inaudible  
to her, and they whisper back and forth for a moment.

TERESA

She worries she do something wrong  
because she doesn't know your...  
um... how you do things.

CHANAHA

Oh, we can take care of that. We  
can take care of most things.  
That's one of the benefits of being  
the Chosen People.



As Teresa tries to understand what Chanah just said, Dorinda comes out with a dolly of soda.

INT. CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - MOMENTS LATER

Chanah wheels the sodas into the main entrance.

MOISHE  
She said yes?

CHANAH  
Yep. I found us a babysitter, too.

MOISHE  
A baby-- what do we need a  
babysitter for?

CHANAH  
I'll need someone with Sarah at  
least part of the time.

MOISHE  
I-- Chanah, you said--

CHANAH  
(impatient)  
Moishe. It'll be fine.

Beat.

MOISHE  
Who?

CHANAH  
The daughter of that Latin American  
waitress next door.

Moishe hands the baby to Chanah.

MOISHE  
Here. I need to go into work.

CHANAH  
Moishe!

MOISHE  
Avram's leaving early today. He's  
meeting with the rabbi about the  
bar mitzvah, so I need to be there.

CHANAH  
Okay. Okay.

MOISHE

I told him his brother could stay  
at our place, so make up the spare  
bed when you get home.

He leaves without another word. After a resigned sigh, Chanah  
walks outside--

EXT. CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - CONTINUOUS

--and replaces the OPENING SOON sign with one that says NOW  
OPEN.

LEAH

Excuse me, madam, do you sell  
knishes?

Chanah smiles.

CHANAH

Hey, Leah.

LEAH

Seriously, I need to feed a hundred  
people this weekend. Help me!

INT. HASIDIC CENTER - DAY

The Hasidic Center is packed with an impossibly large number  
of people, men on one side of the screen, women on the other.

Up front, Bar Mitzvah Boy, the RABBI, and several other  
HASIDIM crowd around the torah on the altar.

BAR MITZVAH BOY

--*asher bachar banu mikol ha'amim  
v'natan lanu et Torato. Baruch atah  
Adonai, notein hatorah.*

CONGREGATION

Amen.

BAR MITZVAH BOY

(singing, from Genesis  
11:1-2)

*Ayehi khol-ha'arets safa ekhat  
udvarim akhadim. Vayehi bnas'am  
mikedem vayyimtse'u vik'a b'erets  
Shin'ar vayyeshvu sham.*

INT. HASIDIC CENTER - LATER

The chairs have been put away, and a (very crowded) banquet  
spread has been set up.

Bar Mitzvah Boy, Leah and Avram at the front of the room. On the table in front of them is a sheet cake with 13 candles, a few already lit.

LEAH

--this is not the easiest place to get to, and it means so much to us that so many of you would come all the way out here. So to light the next candle, please welcome Uncle Saul, who flew in all the way from Israel. Uncle Saul!

People applaud. UNCLE SAUL comes up, hugs and kisses Bar Mitzvah Boy, and then Avram. Leah hands him an already lit candle, which he holds as he turns to speak.

UNCLE SAUL

Itzik, the last time I saw you, you were eight days old and crying your head off because the Mohel had just snipped your *petseleh*.

Everyone laughs.

UNCLE SAUL (CONT'D)

I'm a man of few words, so I'll keep this brief.

As he yammers on, Moishe, sitting next to Avram's father, leans over and begins whispering to him.

MOISHE

Hey. Sorry to bring this up at a *simchah* like this, but I need to get through and Avram isn't listening. We need to set up as a corporation.

AVRAM'S FATHER

Corporation? Why?

MOISHE

To limit our liability.

AVRAM'S FATHER

We don't have workers comp?

MOISHE

Different kind of liability.

AVRAM'S FATHER

Yeah, but then we'd have a board of directors telling us what to do.

(MORE)

AVRAM'S FATHER (CONT'D)

Can't have that. Moskowitzs like  
being in charge.

MOISHE

Yeah, but--

AVRAM'S FATHER

Sheket!

From the front of the room, Uncle Saul raises a glass.

UNCLE SAUL

May you live to be as old as Reu  
and Serug, and may you have as many  
sons and daughters. *L'chaim.*

HASIDIM

*L'chaim.*

Uncle Saul lights a candle.

INT. HASIDIC CENTER - LATER

The cake has been cut, and a dance floor cleared out. Leah  
and Bar Mitzvah Boy dance to the final few bars of "Sunrise  
Sunset" from *Fiddler on the Roof*.

As the song ends, everyone applauds. Then "Siman Tov" begins  
playing.

HASID

(chanting)

*Mazel tov and siman tov and siman  
tov and mazel tov.*

More people join in.

HASIDIM

(chanting)

*Mazel tov and siman tov and siman  
tov and mazel tov.*

More people join in, and the chanting becomes singing, which  
turns more and more festive as they dance, the men in one  
circle, the women in another.

A few men sit Bar Mitzvah Boy into a CHAIR and begin hoisting  
him up and down in the air.

The music becomes faster and more boisterous. Then--

EXT. HASIDIC CENTER - CONTINUOUS

A car SCREECHES.

VOICE (O.S.)  
 Dirty Jews!

A brick flies from the car toward the shop and SMASHES through the window.

INT. HASIDIC CENTER - CONTINUOUS

Everyone dives to avoid the flying brick and the shattered glass. The ones hoisting the Bar Mitzvah Boy almost drop him, but manage to catch the chair and set him down.

The initial shock having worn off, Moishe and a few other Hasidim go to the window briefly, and then run to the door and outside.

Leah and Avram run over to their son.

AVRAM  
 Are you okay?

Bar Mitzvah Boy nods.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
 Are you sure? No one--

BAR MITZVAH BOY  
 I'm fine, dad.

Avram runs to the door--

AVRAM  
 Someone call 9-1-1!

EXT. HASIDIC CENTER - CONTINUOUS

--and joins the other Hasidim standing out there. They stare down the street at a pair of tail lights in the distance.

AVRAM  
 Did you see them?

MOISHE  
 No.

AVRAM  
 Did you see the car?

He shakes his head.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
 Come on. My car's right there,  
 let's go--

MOISHE

Avram--

AVRAM

Come on!

The others stand there.

AVRAM'S FATHER

Avram. They're gone.

Avram stares down the road contemptuously.

INT. SHERIFF'S OFFICE - NIGHT

Avram and Moishe sit a desk, the SHERIFF at the other end.

SHERIFF

We'll have a patrol car watch the center for a few days.

AVRAM

What? That's it?

SHERIFF

What do you want me to do?

AVRAM

I want you to ask people if they saw anything. I want you to check the street for tire marks.

SHERIFF

We're not the FBI.

AVRAM

I want you to track down and filet these bastards!

MOISHE

Avram.

AVRAM

What?!

He glares at Moishe, then at the sheriff.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

*Shemen zich in dein veiten haldz.  
[You should be ashamed to the  
bottom of your throat.]*

He storms out.

EXT. RAY'S HOME - DAY

Snow. Christmas lights line the home.

INT. RAY'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

Ray has a phone pressed to his ear.

RAY

Fifty-three? I need sixty at least.  
But ... I can't even ... Well at  
least meet me half way. Fifty-  
seven. How am I supposed to ...

(beat)

Alright, fine.

He shakes his head and hangs up the phone. He hears the loud RUMBLING OF A CAR, driving past. He looks out the window to see--

EXT. RAY'S HOME - DAY

--the CAR bumps up ON THE SIDEWALK in front of Avram's house, clattering to a stop. Avram gets out and goes up to the door.

Ray growls, goes back to the phone and picks it up.

EXT. RAY'S HOME - LATER

A TOW TRUCK has hitched up the clunker in front of the neighbor's house. Ray stands on his own porch, arms folded, watching the action. The TOW TRUCK DRIVER gets into his cab.

Avram runs out of the house.

AVRAM

Hey! Hey!

But he's too late. The truck is already pulling away, the car clanging on the ground as the wheels come off the curb.

Avram turns back toward his house, catching Ray.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Did you do this?

RAY

City ordinance.

They stare each other down for a moment.

RAY (CONT'D)

Now that I think about it, your grass has to be shorter than six inches, too. Might keep that in mind when spring comes.

AVRAM

*A finstere cholem auf dein kopf und auf dein hent und fiss! [A nightmare on your head, hands and feet!]*

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - NIGHT

Christmas lights line the store. The swinging sign on Dorinda's porch reads: TRY OUR NEW KOSHER MENU ITEMS.

Hope sits in one of the rocking chairs. Through the window next door HASIDIM pray, men on one side of a folded screen and women on the other. They chant and rock back and forth.

Gabe and Ray approach, deep in conversation. The Hasidim continue to chant next door.

GABE

It's just ... bad politics, Ray.

RAY

Yeah, what should I do instead?

GABE

Talk to them. Have a conversation.

RAY

Oh sure. They won't even say hello, but they'll be all smiles when I knock on their doors and tell them what a bunch of assholes they are. "Hey, I'm Ray, your next door neighbor. I understand working in the yard is beneath you, so could you pay one of them Mexicans minimum wage to cut your grass?"

A pickup truck playing loud Tejano music drives by, the DRIVER just a little too happy to be completely sober.

GABE

Ray, I don't want to hear that kind of talk. This town would be dead if not for the money and the jobs they brought in.



RAY

Oh yeah. I'm sure there are lots of new jobs where they're actually shopping: in Decorah and LaCrosse.

GABE

Decorah and LaCrosse, just like the rest of us.

RAY

Go ahead and justify everything.

GABE

I'm not justifying. I'm just being fair. So they're a little... different.

RAY

Strange.

GABE

Okay, strange.

Next door the Hasidim have risen and the chanting gets louder. Ray, Gabe, and Hope rock in unison.

RAY

Sure is weird the way they all dress alike.

GABE

Mmm hmmm.

HOPE

Mmm hmmm.

RAY (CONT'D)

It's like a uniform.

GABE

Mmm hmmm.

HOPE

Mmm hmmm.

HOPE

And they're always wearing those silly hats.

Ray and Gabe absently touch their hats.

RAY

Mmm hmmm.

GABE

Mmm hmmm.

RAY

And have you ever watched them pray?

GABE

Mmm hmmm.

HOPE

Mmm hmmm.

RAY (CONT'D)  
The way they rock back and forth?

HOPE  
And those humming noises!

RAY  
Mmm hmmm.

GABE  
Mmm hmmm.

They continue to rock back and forth, when the Hasidic Center lets out and people start to leave.

RAY  
Oh, here they come. I'm going.

GABE  
Ray, don't do that.

RAY  
I need to get to the hardware store. A rainy fall means a snowy winter, and my equipment's already been working overtime.

They watch him go.

HOPE  
Maybe we should try to talk to them.

Moishe and Chanah come out of the Hasidic Center. Gabe and Hope walk over to them.

GABE  
Excuse me, Moishe.

Moishe turns, nods, and turns away.

GABE (CONT'D)  
I wondered if we might be able to have a few words with you.

MOISHE  
Now? It's--

GABE  
Oh, I didn't mean now. I know it's shabbas.

Moishe looks him up and down, acknowledging Gabe's effort.

MOISHE  
What's this about, anyway?

GABE

Oh, nothing serious. We just want to make sure we're all being good neighbors, that's all.

MOISHE

You're being very good neighbors. Very... friendly.

(beat)

How about tomorrow at 8 pm here?

GABE

Okay. Thank you.

CHANA

While we have you.

Avram comes out of the Center.

CHANA (CONT'D)

Hope, I made up an ad for the deli, and I was wondering if you'd take a look and tell me what you think.

HOPE

Oh. Sure.

CHANA

You have to let me pay you.

HOPE

Oh, don't be silly.

CHANA

I won't let you help me if you don't.

HOPE

How about you treat me to one of those pastrami sandwiches I keep hearing about.

CHANA

Okay, but only if you'll let me throw in a side of cole-slaw and a piece of danish.

HOPE

It's a deal.

Avram nods his head toward the swinging blackboard in front of Dorinda's Cafe:

AVRAM  
 You know, that's nice, but she  
 can't really do that.

GABE  
 What?

AVRAM  
 "Try our new kosher menu items."  
 Keeping kosher... you need to  
 prepare the meat a certain way,  
 separate it from the milk. And I  
 doubt she's doing that.

GABE  
 Oh. Okay. I'll let Dorinda know.  
 Tomorrow at eight then?

MOISHE  
 Yes. See you then.

They part awkwardly. As they leave, Avram turns to Chanah.

AVRAM  
 She shouldn't have given in that  
 easily. I would've held out for two  
 sandwiches and gotten you to  
 upgrade the danish to a piece of  
 strudel.

CHANAH  
 And I would have been happy to give  
 it.

AVRAM  
 And some matzoh ball soup.

CHANAH  
 You drive a hard bargain.

AVRAM  
 And a glass of tea.

CHANAH  
 Don't push it, Avram!

AVRAM  
 Okay, no tea. What's tomorrow at  
 eight?

INT. CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - DAY

The hustle and bustle of a busy restaurant. Among the many  
 HASIDIC PATRONS is Avram, and in the corner, Eva (with Sarah)  
 and Teresa speak in hushed tones.

Hope is in the corner, huddled over a piece of paper and a danish.

Eva and Teresa approach Avram. Eva holds Sarah in her arms.

TERESA  
Mister Avram?

Avram looks at them, guarded.

AVRAM  
Yes.

TERESA  
I am Teresa, I work--

AVRAM  
Cleaning crew. I know who you are.

TERESA  
And this is--

AVRAM  
Eva, your daughter. And Sarah,  
Moishe and Chanah's daughter.

She nods, smiling.

TERESA  
Yes.

Eva looks down, embarrassed.

TERESA (CONT'D)  
My daughter, she turn fifteen this  
summer and we have a celebration--

Avram goes back to his table.

AVRAM  
I'm sorry, I don't do parties.

They continue to stand there, until he looks up again.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
What?

TERESA  
Is traditional at quinceanera to  
dance first dance with your father.  
But her father is in Honduras, so I  
wonder... I mean, you are so good  
to us here--

AVRAM

Oh, you want me to bring her father here? Why didn't you say so? Go talk to Yosef before your shift tomorrow--

Teresa looks away embarrassed.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

What?

TERESA

He is in prison. The government there is very...

(to Eva, in Spanish)

How do you say corrupt?

AVRAM

Corrupt?

EVA

Corrupt.

Eva and Avram look at each other, and a faint smile passes between them. But the moment turns awkward.

TERESA (CONT'D)

We would like you to dance first dance.

AVRAM

Oh. Oh!

TERESA

Is usually Saturday but we change to Sunday so you can come.

AVRAM

Wow. I--

TERESA

Please, Mister Avram, it would mean so much--

AVRAM

I don't even know... I mean, I know you, but I don't even... I can't...

TERESA

Please, Mister Avram, it would be a great honor.

AVRAM

I couldn't touch her. Not even holding hands.

TERESA

Oh.

She nods sullenly.

AVRAM

But ... we can work something out.  
We can work out most things. That's  
one of the advantages of--

Teresa looks at him expectantly. Avram looks at Eva, who nods shyly.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Yeah. Okay.

TERESA

Oh, gracias Mister Avram. Thank  
you. You have until June to  
prepare. Is a walls.

AVRAM

What?

TERESA

The first dance. Is a walls.

AVRAM

A waltz? Like Strauss?

TERESA

Si! Like Strauss! You can pick the  
song if you like.

AVRAM

Well that's a relief. Let me think.  
(trying to chant in 3/4)  
Hava nagila, hava na--  
(stopping suddenly)  
No, that'll never work.

At the other end of the store, Hope approaches Chanah.

HOPE

This ad is terrific! Where'd you  
learn to write like this?  
(gasps)  
I just had the most wonderful idea!  
I've been concerned that we don't  
have anything about... um...

In the background, Avram exits.

CHANA

Postville's Jewish Community?

HOPE

Yes. Would you write a column for the *Ledger*? Once a week? It wouldn't pay anything, but it'd be a community service.

CHANAHA

I'm flattered by the offer, but I have to turn it down.

HOPE

But why?

CHANAHA

Moishe's unhappy enough now with the time I'm away.

HOPE

He's not the boss of you!

Chanah shrugs.

HOPE (CONT'D)

You could even do it as a trade! I'll give you your ad for free!

CHANAHA

You're making it very hard for me to say no.

HOPE

Good. That's what I'm trying to do.

Chanah nods.

CHANAHA

Well, Moishe won't like it, but that may just be too bad for him.

INT. HASIDIC CENTER - NIGHT

Avram is waiting. A sheet of particle board covers the window where the brick came through.

Moishe enters, visibly frustrated.

MOISHE

Do you think Baal Shem Tov ever had to wait for a babysitter to show up?

AVRAM

You think you've got problems. I have to learn how to waltz. Why'd you want me here early?



MOISHE

I thought we could talk alone first. So you don't... we don't say anything we regret.

AVRAM

Oh, I get it. Well, I won't say a word.

Avram sits, arms folded--

MOISHE

I think--

--and immediately stands again.

AVRAM

You know I'm not happy about all this.

MOISHE

Just a conversation.

AVRAM

Yeah, with who? Koenig, Kruger and Kaiser, the German KKK. You think there's going to be a lot of love professed here tonight?

MOISHE

I'd settle for a little peace and quiet.

AVRAM

Maybe a little gratitude. Look at the mess they were making of this place before we came.

MOISHE

See, these are the things we don't want to say...

Gabe opens the door for Hope and Ray, who stand in the doorway.

AVRAM

So now you're telling me what I'm allowed to say?

MOISHE

I'm not telling you anything. I'm just giving you my opinion.

AVRAM

When I want your opinion, I'll tell  
you what it is.

Gabe clears his throat, and Avram and Moishe turn to see the  
three of them in the door.

GABE

Are we interrupting?

AVRAM

Yes.

MOISHE

No.

GABE (CONT'D)

Do you want us to give you a  
minute?

AVRAM

No.

MOISHE

Yes.

MOISHE

I mean no. You don't have to leave.

AVRAM

We're just doing what we do best.

The three step inside.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Moishe, tell them that joke about  
Shmuel and the Shema.

MOISHE

(haltingly)

Oh. A man goes to a new synagogue.  
Half the people say the Shema  
sitting down, and half the people  
say it standing up. An argument  
breaks out over which is the right  
way. The newcomer convinces  
everyone that they should do it the  
way it was done when the temple was  
founded, sixty years before. So  
they find Shmuel, 90 years old, and  
they ask him, "What did they used  
to do here sixty years ago?" Shmuel  
answers, "Exactly what you're  
doing." "What?" they say. "Sitting?  
Standing?" "No," he says.  
"Arguing."

Avram bursts into laughter. No one else does. They look  
around at each other awkwardly, as Avram keeps laughing.

AVRAM  
One of my favorites!

He keeps laughing.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
It reminds me of one my father used  
to tell me. "Life's like a bowl of  
tunafish."

He waits, baiting Moishe to ask him ...

MOISHE  
Okay, why's life like a bowl of  
tunafish?

AVRAM  
How should I know? I'm a butcher,  
not a fishmonger!

He howls with laughter at his own joke. He's the only one,  
and the laughter fades to an awkward silence.

MOISHE  
Would you like to have a seat?

All sit except Ray. Gabe and Rhonda stare at him, and he sits  
reluctantly.

AVRAM  
He's right to be careful, you know.  
The last non-Jew who sat in that  
chair woke up the next morning with  
an uncontrollable urge to drink the  
blood of Christian babies.

Everyone stares at him, appalled.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
It's a good thing we had the  
antidote handy. Drinking a gallon  
of matzoh ball soup nearly killed  
him, but he's fine now.

MOISHE  
It's a joke... a joke.

All except Ray laugh nervously.

MOISHE (CONT'D)  
Not a lot of people know this, but  
Jews don't try to convert non-Jews.  
In fact, we actively discourage it.

RAY  
(under his breath)  
Not good enough for you, huh?

Another awkward silence.

HOPE  
Gabe?

GABE  
I, um, guess we'll get started.  
I've heard complaints -- nothing  
official, mind you -- about the  
state of the... uh... Jewish lawns.

MOISHE  
Okay.

RAY  
And Jewish cars.

GABE  
And Jewish cars.

AVRAM  
Jewish lawns? Jewish cars? I can  
see how it would be easy for a lawn  
to keep kosher, but how do you  
circumcise a car?

RAY  
I've got an International Harvester  
that might do the trick.

MOISHE  
None of us ever had to take care of  
a yard before. If there was any  
grass in Crown Heights, the super  
took care of it.

RAY  
And the cars?

MOISHE  
None of us ever owned a car before,  
either. Some of us didn't even know  
how to drive before we came here.

RAY  
Some of you still don't.

GABE

Yes, well... and while we're talking about it, you should probably stop offering the sheriff money when he pulls you over.

MOISHE

Mmm.

GABE

But look, we didn't come here to talk about laws. We came to appeal to you as neighbors. We're very grateful for your being here--

RAY

We are?

GABE

I mean, you've already done so much--

RAY

Hang on, Gabe. What exactly have they done other than increase the crime rate?

GABE

Take it easy, Ray.

RAY

No, goddamit, I will not take it easy. What have they done? Sure, they've given us jobs. Dirty, dangerous, minimum wage jobs that you're sure as hell not gonna do, and I'm not going to either. So they've given us people to work those jobs, people who don't pay taxes and who stand around in gangs so the rest of us are afraid to walk down the street after dark.

GABE

That's not fair.

RAY

Oh, that's right, not all of them stand on street-corners. Some of them shoot tequila all night before driving home drunk.

GABE

Ray, that's enough!

AVRAM

You were happy enough when you heard we were buying the plant. Now that everything hasn't turned into Eden, you blame it all on us.

MOISHE

Avram--

RAY

Well, we haven't seen one lick of improvement to our town! And because the plant's outside the city limits, we don't even get any tax revenue.

AVRAM

You're blaming us for that, too?

RAY

No, but it's mighty convenient, isn't it? You save all that money in taxes, the pollution control's nowhere near as strict, and nobody from the State looks too closely at the books. In fact, I'd be mighty curious to know just how many of your immigrant workers are legal.

GABE

Ray, cut it out! The plant is right where it's always been. They're not going to move it so they can pay more taxes.

AVRAM

Or to satisfy your curiosity.

RAY

No, but we could move the town.

A pregnant pause.

RAY (CONT'D)

All we'd have to do is move the city line a couple hundred yards. Isn't that right, Gabe?

GABE

It's a little more complicated than that. And we'd need a referendum. But in principle--

RAY

Then what's to stop us?

Avram sneers.

AVRAM

Unbelievable. You know in Russia for over four hundred years, whenever a Jew accumulated any wealth, the government passed a law that it was his patriotic duty to "donate" it to the Czar. And if he didn't, they put him in jail and took it anyway.

GABE

That's not what we're--

AVRAM

They'd also do things like break our windows so we'd have to buy new glass--

Ray jumps up, fuming.

RAY

I had nothing to do with that!

AVRAM

No, I'm sure it's all just a coincidence!

MOISHE

Avram, this is America, not Czarist--

AVRAM

Good, and in America we have rights. Which make it a lot easier to pack up and move somewhere else.

RAY

We wish. It'd cost you a fortune to move somewhere else.

AVRAM

Maybe. What was it that Clint Eastwood kept saying in those Westerns? "Are you feeling lucky, punk? Go ahead. Make my day."

HOPE

They were cop movies. *Dirty Harry*.

AVRAM

Eh, I don't see movies like that anyway, I just read about them on the Internet.

(MORE)

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Mostly I mind my own business, and I advise you to do the same.

GABE

Avram, this isn't what we meant to happen at this meeting.

AVRAM

Yes it is. You may pretend, but this is where it always ends up. A bunch of anti-Semites threatening us because we've succeeded where you've failed. Well, pardon my Yiddish, but *Ich hob dir in drerd!*  
*[Go to hell!]*

GABE

Please, Avram.

AVRAM

Now, if there's nothing else, I have to go to work in the morning.

He grabs his coat.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Some of us are actually doing something to stimulate the economy in this town! I'll see you tomorrow, Moishe.

Avram exits, leaving the door open. Some snow blows in.

GABE

Avram!

Gabe grabs his coat and starts to run out. Ray grabs his coat. Gabe and Ray exit, shouting at each other.

RAY

If you run after him, so help me I'll tackle you.

GABE

Dammit, Ray.

Ray slams the door, leaving Moishe and Hope alone. They pause, take a breath. Moishe sighs.

MOISHE

That went well.

HOPE

You okay? Is everything okay at home?



Moishe looks up, shocked at the question. But then--

MOISHE

No, not really. What's happening here, Hope?

She shrugs.

HOPE

I wish I knew. Is there anything I can do?

Moishe shakes his head. Hope stands up to go.

MOISHE

Actually... Would you close the blinds while I straighten up the chairs?

Hope turns, smiles, and goes to the blinds.

MONTAGE - RAY RUNS FOR CITY COUNCIL - DAY

1. Local's Home: A knock on a door, which swings opens to reveal Ray, wearing his work overalls and a hat that says Ray Koenig for City Council.

2. Another door swings open, revealing the same.

3. And a third, this time wearing pressed jeans and a flannel shirt.

RAY

Hi, Melvin.

VOICE 1 (O.S.)

Hey, Ray.

RAY

I was wondering if I could count on--

4. Same scene, different house.

RAY (CONT'D)

--your support for City Council.

VOICE 2 (O.S.)

City Council?

5. Same scene, different house.

VOICE 3 (O.S.)

City Council?

6. He's now wearing khakis and a pressed shirt.

VOICE 4 (O.S.)  
You? Running for City Council?

RAY  
Yessir.

7. Handing the voice a flyer--

RAY (CONT'D)  
I wanna protect the tax base.

8. Handing the voice a flyer--

RAY (CONT'D)  
Annex the Moskowitz Plant--

9. He now wears slacks, a tie, and a pin that reads Koenig for Council. Handing the voice a flyer--

RAY (CONT'D)  
The increase in revenue will be one hundred and twenty thousand dollars in the first twelve months alone.

10. Same scene, different house.

RAY (CONT'D)  
We could put three more police officers on the streets.

11. And another.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Renovate the school.

12. And another.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Provide tax breaks to all the local businesses.

13. The door swings open.

VOICE 5 (O.S.)  
Ray Koenig! I heard you were running for City Council!

14. Close-up of a checkbook open on a table. A hand writes a check for \$50.

15. A hand writes a check for \$100.

16. A hand writes a check for \$25.

17. A hand writes a check for \$150.

18. A LOCAL hammers in a yard sign that says "Protect the Tax Base. Ray Koenig for City Council."

19. Another LOCAL hammers in a yard sign.

20. Another LOCAL puts up a large sign in the grass, on a populated street corner.

21. Another LOCAL hangs a sign on a fence.

END MONTAGE

INT. DRESS STORE - DAY

Teresa and Eva browse through Victorian-style ball gowns.

TERESA  
(in Spanish)  
How about this one?

Eva looks down at the price tag. Shows it to her mom.

TERESA (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish)  
Don't worry about that.

EVA  
(in Spanish)  
All this money! Why aren't we  
bringing Ernesto over from--

TERESA  
(in Spanish)  
Quiet. You don't mess with  
tradition. Try it on.

Eva takes the dress and nods sullenly.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - DAY

The swinging sign reads:

NOW SERVING  
Home-Made Pastries - Glatt Kosher  
Breakfast Tacos  
Ask about our Southwestern Specials

INT. CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - DAY

Chanah is there with Moishe. She has the phone pressed to her ear. In the back, the baby can be heard crying.

CHANAH  
Sure, I'll bring them right over.

She hangs up.

MOISHE  
Let's talk about this later.

CHANA  
No, we'll talk about it now.

She takes a box and a pair of tongs and begins putting pastries into the box.

MOISHE  
I'm already late.

CHANA  
Eva!

Eva comes in carrying the crying baby.

CHANA (CONT'D)  
Moishe. Wait.  
(to Dorinda)  
I'll take Sarah. Can you take this  
over to Dorinda's?

EVA  
Okay.

Chanah finishes filling the box, closes it, and then takes the crying baby from Eva, trying to shoosh it.

Chanah and Moishe glare at each other until Teresa has left with the box. Then--

MOISHE  
We shouldn't have this little girl  
raising our child so you can run a  
business. It's not right.

CHANA  
Of course it's not right. Unless it  
involves my uterus, nothing I do is  
going to be right.

MOISHE  
I didn't say that.

CHANA  
You don't have to anymore.

MOISHE  
It's just... We don't need this.

Chanah takes the baby into the back room.

CHANA

I'm sorry, Moishe, I tried, but staying at home all day, cleaning and cooking and waiting for you to come home just wasn't enough.

He follows her, then seeing she's unbuttoning her shirt, turns away.

MOISHE

So instead you're cooking and cleaning here. And that's enough?

CHANA

Just ...

She tries to feed the baby, but it's not interested. The cry becomes a wail.

MOISHE

It's been enough for generations--

CHANA

Maybe. Maybe it wasn't, and we just never hear about it. Or maybe the world has changed in the last two hundred years--

Moishe shakes his head, looking at his watch.

MOISHE

I've got to go now.

CHANA

Don't you walk out that door, Moishe.

MOISHE

Avram is waiting for me!

CHANA

Let him wait!

MOISHE

No! You don't get to tell me what to do. That's enough. Now either you stop this foolish behavior or you find another husband, but I won't tolerate it!

(pause)

I'm sorry.

CHANA

Don't. Just leave.

He hesitates, then heads to the door, opening it for Eva to walk in, and then leaving.

EVA  
Everything okay?

Chanah looks up at Eva, and wipes away a tear.

CHANAHA  
Ready for your big day?

Eva nods sullenly.

CHANAHA (CONT'D)  
What?

EVA  
All this money. And our rent's going up. But you don't mess with tradition, mom says.

CHANAHA  
I hear you. We have that apartment above the shop. I could let you guys live up there. Rent free.

EVA  
Really?

CHANAHA  
I'll talk to your mom, we'll work it out. It'll be nice to have the company --  
(voice cracking)  
I mean, I think I'll be staying there for a few weeks.

EVA  
Are you okay?

She reaches her hand out tentatively to touch Chanah's shoulder. Chanah takes Eva's hand and brings it to her cheek.

INT. AVRAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Avram at his desk. Moishe appears in the doorway.

AVRAM  
Moishe. Come. Sit.

Moishe enters and sits.

The phone rings. Avram hits the "Do not disturb" button, silencing the phone.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

How are you?

MOISHE

I've had better.

AVRAM

That's good. How's Chanah and Sarah?

MOISHE

Don't ask.

AVRAM

Okay. Listen, I need a favor. I need you to run for City Council.

MOISHE

What? Why me?

AVRAM

Why not you?

MOISHE

Because I don't want to.

AVRAM

You're a lawyer. Making up laws is what you do.

MOISHE

No, mostly I make up contracts. And when I'm not doing that I read contracts. And when I'm not doing that... Haven't we been through this?

AVRAM

Fine. Don't do it because you're a lawyer. Do it because I'm paying you.

MOISHE

Why don't you run for office?

AVRAM

People don't like me.

MOISHE

Sure they do.

(off Avram's look)

You're a perfectly... likeable guy.

(beat)

Okay, fine, but I can't win an election against Koenig. Have you seen--

AVRAM

What am I, *meshuggah*? I don't want you to run against him. I want you to run against that other guy. Whatsisname.

MOISHE

Whatsisname?

AVRAM

Yeah, him. I don't know if *Eloheinu* himself could win an election against Ray Koenig right now, but that other *yutz* is such a *shmegegi* that you shouldn't have a problem. And then we'll have at least one friendly voice on the City Council.

Moishe hesitates.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Don't worry I'll pay for your whole campaign.

Moishe gives a resigned sigh.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Yes! You won't regret it...  
Councilman. Now go. I'm trying to start a bidding war on our *treifot*.

Moishe stands and slinks out of the office as Avram picks up the phone and dials.

MONTAGE - MOISHE RUNS FOR CITY COUNCIL - DAY

1. A Hasid's Home: A knock on a door, which swings opens to reveal Moishe with a few flyers.

MOISHE

Shalom!

2. Another door swings open, revealing the same.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

Shalom!

3. And another.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

Shalom!

VOICE 1 (O.S.)

Hello, Moishe.



MOISHE

I don't know if you heard, but I'm  
running--

4. Same scene, different house.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

--for City Council.

VOICE 2 (O.S.)

I heard. Mazel tov.

5. Same scene, different house.

VOICE 3 (O.S.)

Mazel tov.

6. A local's house. Moishe is now wearing a pin that says  
"Moishe Potok: The Person for Postville."

VOICE 4 (O.S.)

You? Running for City Council?

MOISHE

I was a little surprised myself.

7. Another local's house.

VOICE 5 (O.S.)

Well, I think it's great to see you  
getting involved.

8. And another's.

VOICE 6 (O.S.)

Oh, that's exciting.

(calling into the house)

Hey, Melvin! One o' them Jews is  
runnin' for City Council!

(to Moishe)

You're not runnin' against Ray  
Koenig are you?

9. Outside, a HASID hammers in a yard sign that says "Moishe  
Potok: The Person for Postville."

10. Another HASID hammers in a yard sign.

11. A LOCAL hammers in a yard sign next to the sign for  
Koenig.

12. On the well-populated street, a LOCAL puts up a large  
sign next to the one for Koenig.

13. And another.

INT. CITY HALL - NIGHT

Hope, Ray, Moishe, and Avram. The tension is palpable, Avram staring venomously at Ray.

RAY  
Will you stop that?

AVRAM  
Fix my window and we'll talk.

RAY  
I didn't--

Hope puts her hand on Ray's knee, and Moishe does the same to Avram, interrupting the argument.

An ELECTION OFFICIAL walks out of a room with a sheet of paper. Hope stands and takes it, looking down at the result.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Well?

Hope looks up.

HOPE  
Congratulations, fellas. You're both in.

Ray and Avram raise their hands in triumph.

INT. CITY HALL - DAY

Inside the chambers, Gabe bangs a gavel. He sits in the center, with 6 COUNCILMEN, 3 on either side, facing the rest of the room. One of those councilmen is Ray, who sitting proud and erect. Opposite him is Moishe, uneasy in his chair.

In the body of the room, every chair is full, with the Hasidim (including Avram) filling a large pocket, and locals (including Hope) taking up most of the rest.

GABE  
Morning, gentlemen, and hello to this great crowd. I think this is our first sold out crowd at a City Council meeting. We should celebrate! I'll have Dorinda make her famous spare ribs!

Scattered chuckles. Moishe smiles. Avram does not.

GABE (CONT'D)

Before we get started on the formal part of the agenda I'd like to welcome Councilmen Koenig and Potok as our newest members. We look forward to your contribution for the next two years, and beyond.

A smattering of applause from the crowd.

GABE (CONT'D)

You've all got in front of you the minutes from last month's meeting--

RAY

Gabe, if I may. I think there's one reason we're all here, and if no one objects, I'd like to skip over the formal part of the agenda and go straight to that.

Beat.

GABE

The floor is yours, Ray.

RAY

There's no denying the growth that Postville has seen recently. In the last year our small town's population has increased almost forty percent. But the position of the Moskowitz packing plant outside the town means that Postville has no jurisdiction over this staple of our economy. Now I think it's time for the people of Postville to choose.

He looks out over the faces in the crowd -- locals, Jews, and a smattering of Hispanics.

RAY (CONT'D)

And I don't just mean the people who've been here for a hundred years. I mean all the people in Postville -- the ones who moved here from New York, and the ones who moved here from Mexico -- to decide whether they want to be a part of this town or not.

He hands a stack of reports to a COURT CLERK, who begins to distribute them to the other councilmen.

RAY (CONT'D)

I've been working with the Secretary of State's office to draw up plans for the annexation. It's pretty complicated, but the basic idea is that the border gets redrawn, and then our city services extend out to these areas. Trash, wastewater, police and so on.

AVRAM

(to himself)

Police? Whoopee.

RAY

After two years we'll have an extra hundred grand a year added to the city budget.

A murmur of approval from some of the locals in the crowd.

RAY (CONT'D)

So without further ado, I move to submit these plans to referendum and annex the town.

COUNCILMAN

I second.

GABE

We have a motion and a second. Any discussion?

Moishe looks out toward Avram who nods him on, urgently.

MOISHE

Yes. I um...

GABE

Go ahead, Mr. Potok.

MOISHE

There's a dish Jewish people make called *cholent*. It's a kind of stew. We sometimes use that word to describe places like this where lots of different people or cultures come together. So here we are. A *cholent* in the Midwest.

He looks out at the crowd, suddenly realizing that all eyes are on him.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

When we came here to Postville, it wasn't because of the town, or the people. And while it's true we like to stick to ourselves, and we don't eat Dorinda's spare ribs -- though I'm sure they're delicious -- we've brought prosperity in a way this town hasn't known in decades.

Looking into the crowd, he calls out some of the people he recognizes.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

Dorinda hired a second waitress for the first time in thirty years. Cheryl's Shoe Store, every time I'm in there, there are three of us to every non-Jew we see. And did you see the new car that Hope bought? And this is just the beginning.

He looks back at Ray.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

You've seen how Moskowitz has grown. The new people coming into the town, buying more property and opening more stores. This is the American dream, right here. As a Councilman, my job is to represent the interests of the town now, not just my employer. But here I think they're the same.

He holds up the report that Ray just distributed.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

Look at the budget numbers in here. After fourteen consecutive quarters in the red, we've now had four quarters in a row with a budget surplus. And that's without Moskowitz's business taxes. I'm afraid that by voting for annexation we'd be killing the goose that lays the golden egg.

He looks at Avram, who nods his approval.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

I don't want to move. But if we scare off Moskowitz Meatpacking, I may have to. And then we lose everything we've built here.

(MORE)

MOISHE (CONT'D)

In dust storms and drought and  
recession. And now prosperity.  
So... I think that's about it.

He leans back, relieved to be done talking. Avram gives him a thumbs up.

EXT. POSTVILLE STREET CORNER - DAY

Two people put up a large sign that reads: "IT'S FAIR. IT'S EQUAL. IT'S TIME. VOTE YES".

EXT. PLANT - DAY

Outside the plant, a massive sign reads: "DON'T KILL THE GOOSE THAT LAYS THE GOLDEN EGGS. VOTE 'NO' ON AUGUST 5TH".

EXT. MOISHE & CHANAH'S HOME - DAY

Moishe mows the last of his lawn, his jacket and hat off, sweating through his shirt in the summer heat.

Ray walks toward his home, carrying an armful of "Vote Yes" yard signs. He nods in Moishe's direction. Moishe waves. They're not smiling, but almost.

Moishe kills the engine and pushes his lawnmower toward the back of the house.

INT. MOISHE & CHANAH'S KITCHEN - MOMENTS LATER

Moishe walks into his backdoor. The house is a mess -- TV dinner boxes everywhere, dishes stacked in the sink. He looks around and sighs.

INT. CITY HALL BALLROOM - DAY

Eva sits, her hair elaborately curled, as Teresa does her makeup -- extensive, but tasteful. A knock at the door.

TERESA  
(in Spanish)  
Come in!

AVRAM (O.S.)  
It's Avram.

TERESA  
Oh, Mister Avram!

She puts the makeup brush down and runs to the door, opening it to greet Avram.

AVRAM  
How do I look?

He does a slow spin, while she looks him up and down. He looks exactly the same as he always does.

TERESA

Very handsome.

They stand there, awkwardly. He pulls a greeting card out of his inside breast pocket and hands it to Teresa.

AVRAM

I just wanted to give you this.

It's for her.

(beat)

Well, I'll see you out there.

He leaves, and Teresa closes the door. She gives the envelope to Eva, who opens it. When she sees the check inside her eyes widen and she looks up at her mother.

INT. CATHOLIC CHURCH - DAY

A small church. A PRIEST stands at the altar, as does Eva, now wearing long gloves and an elaborate ball gown that looks like a pastel pink Victorian wedding dress.

PRIEST

Please stand.

Everyone stands, holding prayer books. Avram, Leah, and Chanah (with Sarah) participate respectfully.

The priest places a tiara on her head.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

We give you a tiara to show that you are a princess before God, and always will be. And this scepter--

He hands her a scepter.

PRIEST (CONT'D)

--represents authority, and the responsibility you take for your life, as a young woman.

INT. CITY HALL BALLROOM - NIGHT

The ballroom's decorations are simple but elegant. Large candles are on pedestals in a 3 x 5 grid throughout the room.

Avram and Eva walk in. Everyone turns. All attention on them.

AVRAM

(under his breath)

(MORE)

AVRAM (CONT'D)

It's not bad enough I have to  
waltz, but they give me an obstacle  
course, too? Why don't you  
blindfold me as well?

Eva smiles at him. He softens. He takes two handkerchiefs out of his pocket, and holding one in each hand, offers the other ends to Eva.

The music begins playing -- "Sunrise Sunset." A waltz.

She takes the other end of the handkerchiefs. Halting at first, they get better and better as the music, their movement, and Eva's smile fill the room.

INT. CITY HALL BALLROOM - LATER

Several candles are now lit. A HISPANIC MAN holds a smaller candle in his hand, walking it back to Eva at the front of the room. He hands it to her and kisses her on the cheek.

Eva speaks into a microphone.

EVA

This next candle is for Hannah. My  
boss.

She laughs, shyly.

EVA (CONT'D)

Thank you for giving me a job and  
making me feel like part of your  
family and for letting me spend so  
much time with your wonderful  
daughter.

She laughs again. Chanah stands, walks over to Eva and take the candle from her, using it to light another candle.

INT. CITY HALL BALLROOM - LATER

Boaty music plays. Eva and the younger crowd dance.

Avram, Leah, and Chanah (with Sarah) at a table.

AVRAM

Where's Moishe?

Leah and Chanah exchange a look.

LEAH

You don't know?

AVRAM

What?



LEAH

He works for you, Avram. Don't you talk to your employees?

He throws his eyes to the ballroom.

AVRAM

Never. I'm too busy dancing with their daughters.

CHANAH

Moishe and I aren't on the best of terms right now.

AVRAM

Best of terms. Charles Dickens, right? It was the best of terms, it was the worst of terms?

LEAH

They've been *broygis* for two months, Avram. Chanah moved into the apartment over her shop.

Teresa interrupts them.

TERESA

Mister Avram.

AVRAM

Hey.

TERESA

I want to thank you so much for the card and the... money that was inside. That was very generous of you. Very generous.

Avram looks at the others at the table, embarrassed.

AVRAM

Oh. It was nothing, really.

TERESA

And that song, is so beautiful.

AVRAM

It's a favorite at Jewish weddings. I got lucky.

Someone in the distance calls, and Teresa runs toward them.

CHANAH

So the tin man has a heart.

AVRAM

Don't tell anyone. It'd ruin my reputation.

CHANA

How much did you give her?

AVRAM

(shrugging)  
Fifteen *chai*.

CHANA

Hm. Me too.

LEAH

(in Yiddish)  
One man's gift is another's gold.

EXT. PLANT - DAY

VOICE (O.S.)

Attention everyone. We are closing the plant at five PM today to give everyone time to vote. You will be paid for a full day. Thank you for all your hard work.

The announcement repeats in Spanish.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - DAY

A "Vote Yes" sign on the front of the shop. Ray hands out flyers to the passersby.

RAY

Don't forget to vote.

Moishe walks past. Ray hands him a flyer, absently.

RAY (CONT'D)

Don't forget to-- Hello, Moishe.

MOISHE

Oh. Hello.

RAY

You... probably won't be needing that.

Moishe looks down at the flyer and hands it back to Ray.

RAY (CONT'D)

I want you to know that whichever way the vote turns out... I hope we'll be able to work together.

(MORE)

RAY (CONT'D)

And I'm sorry that we didn't start off on the right foot.

MOISHE

Thank you, I appreciate that.

Chanah comes out of Dorinda's. She sees him then stops.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

Shalom, Chanah.

CHANA

Shalom.

MOISHE

I... was just on my way to see you.

(beat)

I've been reading your articles in the *Ledger*.

CHANA

Oh?

MOISHE

You're good. That one last week...  
If I didn't know better I wouldn't know which way you were voting.

CHANA

You might be surprised.

MOISHE

I miss her. I miss you. What can I do to get you to come back?

CHANA

I don't know, Moishe. You didn't do anything wrong, really, we just don't have anything in common.

MOISHE

Nothing in common? Look at me. Look at you. Look at where we come from.

CHANA

Look at where we are.

MOISHE

All I need is you and Sarah.

CHANA

You're certain of that?

MOISHE

Yes.

CHANA

I envy you, your faith.

She starts to leave. The sound of a helicopter can be heard very faintly in the background.

MOISHE

I'll do anything. I'll change.

CHANA

Would you? Can you?

(beat)

Look, I've got to get back to the deli. It's a busy day, and I'm practically a single mom now.

She walks on, leaving Moishe behind. The sound of the helicopter becomes noticeably louder.

RAY

I hope everyone from the plant'll get to vote today.

MOISHE

It'd take an act of God to keep them away.

RAY

Good. I do want a fair--

The helicopter flies over them. They look up, squinting.

RAY (CONT'D)

KDMI. Is that a news chopper?

Dozens of vans and buses speed down the otherwise quiet street. A few people turn their heads to look, and watch where the vehicles are going: toward the plant.

Ray looks to see what the vans are: I.C.E. -- Immigration & Customs Enforcement.

RAY (CONT'D)

What? No! Not now!

EXT. PLANT - DAY

As the vans reach the plant, they turn, alternating to the left and to the right, like a river being split by an islet.

A WORKER looks at the vehicles. His eyes widen. He runs inside.

INT. PLANT (PROCESSING FLOOR) - CONTINUOUS

WORKER  
(in Spanish)  
Immigration! They're raiding the  
plant!

His voice is barely audible over the sound of the machinery. He runs to his fellow workers and starts shouting to them one at a time.

WORKER (CONT'D)  
(in Spanish)  
They're raiding the plant! They're  
raiding the plant! Get out!

The word begins to spread. Like dominoes, the workers drop their knives and begin running toward the back of the plant.

INT. AVRAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Avram on the phone.

AVRAM  
What am I, *meshuggah*? I can't even  
get it down the street for that  
price, much less to Florida! Make a  
real offer and--

He notices the pandemonium on the plant floor, below him.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
... I'll consider it. I'm gonna  
have to call you back.

He hangs up the phone and stands, watching as the immigrants form a bottleneck at the back door.

EXT. PLANT - CONTINUOUS

The I.C.E. vans have met up at the back of the plant, forming a closed loop that surrounds the building. As the workers run outside, they see this, and then turn to run back inside.

The news chopper circles overhead.

Dozens of agents, heavily armed like a S.W.A.T. team, file out of the vans in single file.

INT. AVRAM'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Avram watches as the workers begin to push back against each other -- those that are trying to head out meet with an upstream force.

The Foreman, bursts in through Avram's (closed) door.

FOREMAN  
(in Yiddish)  
Immigration! It's a raid!

Avram visibly begins to boil. Then, suddenly, grabs something on his desk and throws it across the room.

IMMIGRATION (O.S.)  
(in Spanish)  
Everyone remain calm. You are surrounded. Don't make any sudden movements. Come out slowly, with your hands above your heads.

Avram sits down in his chair, his head in his hands.

AVRAM  
(in Yiddish)  
Go. I'll take care of it.

The Foreman turns, closes the door behind him.

Avram thinks a minute, and then picks up the phone and dials.

AUTOMATED VOICE (O.S.)  
City and state, please.

AVRAM  
Postville, Iowa.

411 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
And how may I help you in Postville?

AVRAM  
I wanna talk to my Senator.

411 OPERATOR (O.S.)  
U.S. Senators in Iowa, would you like Chuck Grassley or Tom Harkin?

Avram thinks.

AVRAM  
Is one of them Jewish?

INT. DORINDA'S CAFE - DAY

The television shows the raid, broadcast from the helicopter. Teresa and other IMMIGRANTS look up at the TV in horror.

TERESA  
Oh, Dios mio!

Some people begin to get up and leave -- a few immigrants, looking suspicious as they do so, and a few locals who just want to see the action.

EXT. PLANT - DAY

A growing crowd, fenced off by yellow police tape. A hundred I.C.E. AGENTS, each in various stages of arresting a Hispanic immigrant: frisking, handcuffing, leading them into buses.

Hope, Gabe, and other spectators begin to arrive. Ray runs through the crowd, under the yellow tape, to AGENT #1.

RAY  
Hey, who's in charge here?

AGENT #1  
Sir, back up.

RAY  
Tell me who's in charge.

The agent points. Ray runs to the place he points.

RAY (CONT'D)  
You've gotta stop.

I.C.E. LIEUTENANT  
What?

Hope appears behind him.

RAY  
You've gotta stop. We don't... need this now.

I.C.E. LIEUTENANT  
Get behind the tape, sir.

HOPE  
Ray, what are you doing?

Ray turns. He opens his mouth and closes it again, unsure what to say. Hope SLAPS Ray across the face.

HOPE (CONT'D)  
You bastard!

INT. AVRAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Avram sits in his chair, phone pressed to his ear.

AVRAM  
Yes, they're here. Right now.

A KNOCK at the door.

I.C.E. AGENT (O.S.)  
Avram?! Avram Moskowitz?!

AVRAM  
They just knocked on my door.

The door opens, and four I.C.E. AGENTS with guns stand in the door, in ready position.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
Can't you see I'm on the phone?

AGENT #2  
I have a warrant for your arrest.

AVRAM  
On what charge?

AGENT #2  
Three hundred eighty-nine counts of  
immigration labor violations.

AVRAM  
Oh, good. I thought this was about  
that parking ticket I got in  
Brooklyn.

INT. DES MOINES JAIL - DAY

Avram stands in a jail cell, stripped of his coat and his hat. He's been allowed to keep his kippah.

Packed in like sardines around him are fifty HISPANIC MEN.

A young OFFICER (22) approaches.

OFFICER  
Avram Moskowitz?

Avram looks at the officer. The officer looks up and stares through the bars, scanning the faces -- dozens of Hispanics, and one Hasidic Jew.

OFFICER (CONT'D)  
Which one of you is Avram  
Moskowitz?

Avram looks back at the other people in the cell.

AVRAM  
Really? This one's a mystery?



OFFICER  
Are you Moskowitz?

AVRAM  
Are you really the future of our  
country?

OFFICER  
Answer the question.

AVRAM  
(under his breath)  
*A shtik fleish mit tzvei eigen. [A  
piece of meat with two eyes.]*

OFFICER  
Sir?

AVRAM  
Yes. I am Avram Moskowitz.

OFFICER  
Put your arms through the slot.

Avram obeys. The officer puts on handcuffs.

INT. INTERROGATION ROOM - DAY

Moishe stands in the interrogation room. A loud BUZZ, and the officer leads Avram into the room, removing the handcuffs and then stepping out.

AVRAM  
(in Yiddish)  
Well haven't we gotten our beards  
in a twist?

MOISHE  
(in Yiddish)  
Are you okay?

AVRAM  
(in Yiddish)  
Armed guards arresting a successful  
Jew. Nothing I haven't seen before.  
How long to get me out?

MOISHE  
The arraignment is in two hours.  
The judge sets bail, we have you  
out by the end of the night.

AVRAM  
Then what?

MOISHE

Then we try to figure out a way to keep you out of prison.

AVRAM

Oh, I'm not worried about that. We need to keep the plant running. You organize the night shift.

MOISHE

What night shift? It's a ghost town out there.

AVRAM

They got everyone?

MOISHE

The ones they didn't have all skipped town.

Beat. Avram considers his options.

AVRAM

Here's what we do. Find some low income communities nearby and start bussing people in. We may have to pay more than immigrant wages, but at least we stay in business till we get this mess sorted out.

MOISHE

I don't know how to tell you this, Avram, but this "mess" is going to take years to sort out. And millions of dollars.

AVRAM

All the more reason to make sure we don't go belly up. So where do we go to get poor people? Chicago? Saint Louis? Ooh, maybe Detroit? Has General Motors gone out of business while I've been in here?

INT. MOISHE'S CAR (MOVING) - NIGHT

Moishe drives Avram, who continues talking with the same train of thought. They're both silent.

AVRAM

You've been quiet. What's bothering you?

MOISHE

Me? Our lives turned upside down today.

AVRAM

You've been sulking for weeks.  
(beat)  
How's Chanah?

MOISHE

I don't want to talk about it.

A pause, while Avram tries his level best not to stick his nose in where it doesn't belong. He fails.

AVRAM

Moishe, I know you're *ba'al teshuvah*, but even the most *Hosid* Jews don't have the *chutzpah* to tell their wives they have to stay home.

MOISHE

Easy for you to say.

AVRAM

Careful. Leah chose that path. But if she had wanted to be a doctor or a lawyer who am I to tell her no?  
(beat)  
Apologize for being a sexist *chazzer*. She's a good woman, she'll take you back.

They drive on in silence.

INT. CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - NIGHT

Chanah and Leah sit at a table. Leah in tears. Chanah trying her best to console her.

The bell DINGS as the front door opens, and Chanah looks up to see Moishe and Avram in the door.

Leah looks up, runs to Avram and throws her arms around him, sobbing. Moishe steps out of the way. Avram holds her close.

AVRAM

(in Yiddish)  
We'll be fine.  
(to Moishe)  
Come in early tomorrow. Seven o'clock. We can start calling folks on the East coast--

MOISHE

No.

AVRAM

What?

MOISHE

I'm not coming in early tomorrow.  
I'm spending tonight with my wife.  
I'll see you at nine.

Avram narrows his eyes, and then accedes.

AVRAM

Okay. Come on.

Avram and Leah leave, leaving Moishe and Chanah alone.  
There's an awkward silence.

MOISHE

Where's Sarah?

CHANAH

At Avram & Leah's.

Moishe nods. A beat.

MOISHE

I'm sorry about... the way I  
behaved. It's just that so much was  
changing so fast. I didn't expect  
it. And I didn't know what to do.

Chanah nods.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

My mother never had a business. My  
grandmother.

CHANAH

Mine neither. What's going to  
happen? To Postville? To us?

MOISHE

I don't know.

A pause, and Moishe begins to walk out.

CHANAH

Moishe?

MOISHE

Yes?

CHANA

Do you think I could come home with you? Maybe... leave Sarah at Leah's for the night?

Moishe smiles.

MOISHE

What am I, *meshuggah*?

EXT. RAY'S HOME - DAY

The front door. A moment of stillness, though a faint MURMUR OF VOICES can be heard.

The door opens, Ray on his way out, and there's suddenly pandemonium: The voices and cameras of 50 REPORTERS, all shoving cameras and voice recorders in Ray's face.

REPORTERS

(variously)

Ray? Ray Koenig? Is it true you called the INS? What do you think of all those arrests at the plant yesterday? Etc.

Ray stares at them for a moment, stunned, and then retreats back into his home.

EXT. POSTVILLE - DAY

The town is eerily quiet. The clock on City Hall strikes noon, but there are no cars out, no people on the streets--

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

--Gabe is the only person sitting outside Dorinda's--

INT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

--and not a single person sits inside.

INT. DORINDA'S MANAGER'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Dorinda looks through her financial ledger, which lists ever growing profits week after week, until the final three weeks where the numbers drop basically to zero.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - MOMENTS LATER

Dorinda walks out and sits down next to Gabe, rocking silently.

Hope walks over and sits, rocking silently.

Then Chanah, with Sarah, sits and rocks.

A large bus drives past. Then another. Then a third.

HOPE  
There they are.

DORINDA  
Yup.

CHANAH  
Yes.

GABE  
This'll help, right?

DORINDA  
Hopefully.

CHANAH  
God willing.

A beat, as they all nod absently.

DORINDA  
I just feel sorry for them, you know? The ones who got arrested. We'll be alright, but...

HOPE  
Yeah.

CHANAH  
Yes.

DORINDA (CONT'D)  
I just wish there was something we could do, you know?

They all nod.

CHANAH  
Maybe get Maggie Snitker to run her Christmas bazaar on Labor Day.

They all nod. Then, slowly, they stop nodding and look up, cock their heads to the side, look at each other, etc. as they consider the idea.

INT. AVRAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Avram looks out over the factory floor. It looks barren and lifeless.

His phone buzzes and a voice comes over the intercom.

FOREMAN (O.S.)  
Avram, they're here.

EXT. PLANT - DAY

Avram and his foreman step out of the plant to greet three charter buses. The doors to the buses open, as URBAN WORKERS - the ratty, disheveled dregs of urban society -- step off.

AVRAM

Welcome! Thank you for making the long trip out here. This is Yosef, your foreman, he'll take you through and give you a tour, and then we'll take you to your apartments so you can get settled.

INT. PLANT (PROCESSING FLOOR) - DAY

The factory is working again, but barely. An URBAN WORKER makes a repeated cut on sides of beef, looking less than enthusiastic about what he's doing. The foreman approaches.

FOREMAN

Hold on. You see how the way you're cutting it, you're losing all this bit over here? This is the best cut of meat, so we don't want to lose any more than necessary. Here.

He demonstrates the cut.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Now you try.

The worker takes the knife and does it wrong again.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

No, look.

The Foreman takes the knife and demonstrates the cut again.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

You see--

URBAN WORKER

Man, gimme a break.

FOREMAN

No, look.

And he demonstrates it again. The workers sighs, tries again, but still wrong. The foreman shakes his head.

FOREMAN (CONT'D)

Ack.

URBAN WORKER

Come on, man!

The foreman reaches for the knife--

FOREMAN

*Ungerissen beheiman. [Stupid animal.]*

--but the worker pulls away from him.

URBAN WORKER

Hey, what was that?! What did you just say to me?

The foreman looks at him like a deer in headlights, the worker brandishing an extremely sharp knife. Heads turn toward in their direction.

URBAN WORKER (CONT'D)

What'd you just say to me, you fuckin' kike? You wanna say it again in English?

No answer from the terrified foreman.

URBAN WORKER (CONT'D)

Yeah, that's what I thought.

The worker stabs the knife into a side of beef and storms off, throwing his smock to the ground.

INT. RAY'S HOME - DAY

The curtains are drawn. Ray sits in front of the TV, watching the Weather Channel and eating a bowl of cereal. On the answering machine, the LED flashes 15 new messages.

EXT. RAY'S HOME - DAY

The first fall of scattered leaves litter the lawn.

Hope gets out of her car and brushes past the lone remaining REPORTER, marching straight up to the house. She POUNDS on the front door.

INT. RAY'S HOME - DAY

Ray ignores the pounding on the door.

HOPE (O.S.)

Ray!

Registering Hope's voice, he stops eating mid-bite.

HOPE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Ray! I know you're in there!

But he chooses to ignore her, too, and puts another spoonful of cereal into his mouth.



HOPE (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Ray!

EXT. RAY'S HOME - CONTINUOUS

HOPE

Alright fine, we'll do this the  
hard way!

She marches to a weathervane several yards away from the house, tips it over and withdraws a key from underneath.

INT. RAY'S HOME - MOMENTS LATER

The sound of the KEY in the lock, and then the door opening, as Hope comes through.

RAY

Dammit, Hope! You have to know  
everything in this stupid town?

HOPE

You planning on showing your face  
again?

RAY

Maybe when the temperature in Hell  
drops below zero.

HOPE

Oh, Ray, it's not all that bad. At  
least you won the referendum.

RAY

Great. The only person in history  
who managed to annex a plant and  
shut it down on the same day.

HOPE

Oh, it's not shut down.

RAY

What?

HOPE

Haven't you been reading the  
Ledger?

Ray shakes his head.

HOPE (CONT'D)

Or watching TV?

He shakes his head again.

HOPE (CONT'D)

What have you been doing in here  
all this time?

RAY

Netflix.

HOPE

Oh, you know, I thought about  
getting a subscription to that  
myself. It seems like such a great  
thing!

RAY

Hope?

HOPE

But I don't know, I feel like I'd  
be--

RAY

Hope. The plant?

HOPE

Oh, right. It's still going. These  
are a determined bunch. I  
interviewed Avram the other day,  
and he said "Jews can overcome  
anything. It's one of the  
advantages of being the Chosen  
People."

Ray stares at her for a moment.

HOPE (CONT'D)

What? You don't believe me, go see  
for yourself.

Ray brushes past her and bursts through the front door.

EXT. PLANT - DAY

A train is at the station, and the cattle -- albeit fewer  
than before -- are being unloaded.

In the parking lot, several urban workers walk away, passing  
Ray who stands by his old American-made pickup truck,  
surveying the scene. Hands in his pockets, Ray walks toward  
the business entrance.

INT. AVRAM'S OFFICE - DAY

Avram is on the phone.

AVRAM  
 Alright, I'll be in touch.

He hangs up, looking down at some papers. A faint knock.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
 (without looking up)  
 Come in.

A pause, and then he looks up, his face turning sour.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
 What are you doing here?

Ray stands in the doorway.

RAY  
 I wanted to apologize for--

AVRAM  
 Get out.

RAY  
 If you'll just--

AVRAM  
GET OUT!

Ray turns and slinks away. A moment later, Moishe walks in and sits.

MOISHE  
 Okay, I just got off the phone with  
 the AG's office. They're offering  
 you a plea deal. You admit to  
 twenty counts of--

AVRAM  
 No.

Beat.

MOISHE  
 You don't even know the offer yet.

AVRAM  
 Okay, what is it?

MOISHE  
 Four million dollars in fines. You  
 sell the plant, and serve ten years  
 probation.

AVRAM  
 Is that it?

MOISHE

Yes.

AVRAM

No.

He picks up the phone and begins to dial.

MOISHE

Avram, this is a very good deal. I don't think--

AVRAM

You're right, you don't think. Now if you don't mind--

MOISHE

Avram--

AVRAM

I don't care what they offer! *Ich vel der regirung geben kadoches!*  
[I'll give the government nothing!]

He slams the phone down on the receiver.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

You know what the government is doing right now? They're paying three hundred people fifty dollars a week to sit on their asses and wait to testify at my trial! For what? Because I gave them a job? Paying them ten times that? I danced with their daughters!

Moishe sits in silence while Avram collects himself.

AVRAM (CONT'D)

Governments do unspeakable things, Moishe. My father was nine years old when the Gestapo knocked down his door in the middle of the night. You know what they did? To him? To his family? And the governments that our workers are going back to are just like that right now. So no, I'm not going to pay for them to send people back to a living hell. I'll let them take all the time they need. With any luck it'll be a hundred years.

MOISHE

And you'll drag your family into bankruptcy for that? Cripple this town? Spend the rest of your life in jail?

AVRAM

Eh. I'll be on my best behavior. Get out in ten.

MOISHE

No, you won't, Avram.

AVRAM

I'll negotiate. I'm good at that--

Moishe stands, fuming.

MOISHE

Will you stop joking for five minutes?! This isn't just immigration they're charging you with, they've got you on identity theft, too.

AVRAM

Identity theft? For what?

MOISHE

Social security numbers, driver's licenses.

AVRAM

I didn't have anything to do with that.

MOISHE

It doesn't matter. You wanted to be in charge, you got it. They're making an example out of you, Avram. And it's not because you're Jewish, it's not because you succeeded and they're jealous, it's because they can. You're an individual, not a corporation, so they can point the finger at you.

Moishe turns, calmer, and walks toward the door. Before he leaves, he stops and turns.

MOISHE (CONT'D)

If you play ball, you might actually be able to keep some of them here. Negotiate that.

He leaves Avram in contemplation.

EXT. APARTMENT OVER CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - DAY

Avram knocks on the door. It opens, and Teresa stands on the other side.

TERESA  
Mister Avram!

She looks as though she's going to throw her arms around him, but he holds up his hands and they both draw back awkwardly.

INT. APARTMENT OVER CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - MOMENTS LATER

The apartment is sparsely decorated. Avram sits on the couch, and Teresa brings him a tray with tea.

AVRAM  
I like the jewelry.

TERESA  
(confused)  
Hmm?

He nods his head in the direction of her ankle. She wears an electronic ankle bracelet, its LED flashing periodically.

TERESA (CONT'D)  
Oh.

AVRAM  
At least your legs will get stronger.

TERESA  
Yes. Well, one of them.

He takes a sip.

AVRAM  
Thank you. I want to ask you about your husband. Why's he in jail?

TERESA  
They say he was a socialist.

AVRAM  
He's in jail for being a socialist?

TERESA  
He worked for the government. And a few years ago, there was a revolution, the president Manuel Zelaya, he was...

AVRAM  
Overthrown?

TERESA  
Overthrown. They say Zelaya was a socialist, so they arrest people. And my husband.

AVRAM  
What would it take to get him out?

TERESA  
In Honduras... you offer money to the guard.

AVRAM  
A bribe?

TERESA  
*Si*. A bribe. And then he have to leave or he get arrested again.

Beat.

AVRAM  
How much?

INT. DEPOSITION ROOM - DAY

A small conference table in a deposition room. A Federal JUDGE and I.C.E. ATTORNEY sit at the table. Avram and Moishe walk in, Moishe's right arm extended to shake hands.

MOISHE  
Hello, your honor.

AVRAM  
Green cards.

Avram sits.

Moishe's arm is left hanging. He awkwardly drops it back to his side and sits down.

AVRAM (CONT'D)  
We want green cards.

I.C.E. ATTORNEY  
(to Moishe)  
He doesn't waste any time, does he?

MOISHE  
No.

AVRAM

Give us two hundred and fifty green cards and I'll--

I.C.E. ATTORNEY

Don't you understand? You're not going to be involved with--

AVRAM

We'll pass them on to the next owners.

I.C.E. ATTORNEY

It's not going to happen.

AVRAM

Okay. Come on Moishe, let's go.

He stands and heads to the door.

I.C.E. ATTORNEY

Don't do this Mister--

AVRAM

Do you think I'm a fool? I could drag this out for six years with all the appeals. It'll cost you, what, two million? Instead of gaining four with the stroke of a pen? You think that'll look good in your bid for State AG?

Beat.

I.C.E. ATTORNEY

You are one smug bastard, you know that? You think you can get away with anything don't you?

Avram considers.

AVRAM

I think I can get away with most things. It's one of the advantages of--

MOISHE

How about two hundred?

I.C.E. ATTORNEY

I can probably get you thirty or forty.



AVRAM  
 Thirty or forty?  
 (indicating Moishe)  
 I can have this nebbish call the  
 State Department tomorrow and get  
 thirty or forty.

MOISHE  
 Thanks.

AVRAM  
 You're welcome.

I.C.E. ATTORNEY  
 I won't be able to get you more  
 than that. Not with all the charges  
 you've got stacked up against you.

Moishe and Avram exchange glances.

AVRAM  
 Alright, we'll be in touch.

Moishe stands. Avram is already out the door.

EXT. POSTVILLE STREET CORNER - DAY

A street fair with dozens of booths and tables manned by  
 LOCALS, HASIDIM, and HISPANICS alike. Some sell food, many  
 sell clothing, trinkets, or other personal belongings.

The street is bustling with people of all shapes, sizes, and  
 colors.

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Outside Dorinda's, the blackboard reads "Today Only: All  
 Profits Go to Displaced Workers." The restaurant is packed.

Teresa -- no longer wearing her ankle bracelet -- brings a  
 tray of food out and serves it to some RESTAURANT PATRONS.

Next door, in front of the Hasidic Center, Avram and Leah  
 stand behind a table. A STREET FAIR SHOPPER holds a trinket.

STREET FAIR SHOPPER  
 Will you take four for this?

AVRAM  
 What am I, *meshuggah*? It's worth  
 eight dollars at least!

STREET FAIR SHOPPER  
 (sheepishly)  
 Okay...

He gives the money to Avram.

AVRAM

You're not from around here, are you?

STREET FAIR SHOPPER

No... I drove here from Decorah.

AVRAM

Ah.

INT. CHANAH'S DELICATESSEN - DAY

The deli is packed with more out-of-town Iowans, Moishe and Chanah busy serving them all. Hope is next in line.

CHANAH

Hope!

HOPE

I hear congratulations are in order.

Chanah pats her belly.

CHANAH

Wow. Nothing gets past you, does it?

HOPE

Not in this town.

CHANAH

Moishe and I were talking. It's too early to tell yet, but if it's a girl, we were thinking of naming her Tikva.

HOPE

That's a pretty name.

CHANAH

It's Hebrew for "Hope".

HOPE

Oh.

Hope smiles, then nods. For the first time in her life she's speechless.

EXT. POSTVILLE STREET CORNER - DAY

Avram looks over and notices Ray standing there next to him. They stare at each other for a moment.

RAY

Hey.

AVRAM

Hello.

Another awkward pause.

RAY

Do you have a few minutes? Maybe I  
could buy you a cup of coffee?

A beat. Avram looks at Leah.

LEAH

Go. We've got this.

He nods. He walks next door, Ray following him silently to--

EXT. DORINDA'S CAFE - CONTINUOUS

Avram gets to the patio and stands there, not sure what to  
do. Ray sits down in a rocking chair.

Dorinda appears and sees the two.

RAY

Two coffees, please, Dorinda.

Dorinda looks at Avram.

AVRAM

A Coke for me. In the--

DORINDA

--in the can. Unopened.

AVRAM

Thanks.

Dorinda leaves, and Avram continues to stand there.

RAY

Do you want to sit?

After a slight hesitation he sits next to Ray.

RAY (CONT'D)

You're right to be careful, you  
know. The last Jew that sat there  
woke with an uncontrollable urge to  
drink the blood of Jewish babies.

Avram turns toward him, deadpan.

RAY (CONT'D)  
Fortunately, we had the antidote  
handy. Eating five pounds of pork  
tenderloin almost killed him, but  
he's fine now.

Ray turns, and they match each other's gazes. Then the two  
burst into laughter.

Gradually, the laughter fades and they rock silently for a  
moment, watching the street.

RAY (CONT'D)  
I'm sorry how things turned out.

AVRAM  
*Azoy gait es. [That's how it goes.]*  
It was bound to happen sooner or  
later.

RAY  
And the window ... it really wasn't  
me.

AVRAM  
I know.

Ray takes a baseball cap marked "Postville: A Cholent in the  
Midwest" out of his pocket.

RAY  
I was wondering if I could give you  
a present. You don't have to wear  
it, but I'd like you to have it. To  
know I'd given it to you.

Avram takes the hat and looks at it for a moment. Then,  
visibly making up his mind, he takes his fedora off and puts  
on the cap.

He leans back and starts to rock, looking out at the street.

AVRAM  
Do you think it'll rain?

Ray looks up at the sky.

RAY  
Nah. Those clouds'll blow over.

They rock in silence for a moment.

FADE OUT.