

**Der Yokh** (*The Yoke*)

Catalan song (L'Estaca / *The Stake*) by Lluís Llach

Yiddish: Yuri Vedenyapin

We were standing in two  
MIR ZAYNEN GESHTANEN IN TSVEYEN,  
It had yet not dawned  
ES HOT NOKH NISHT GETOGT  
A horse passes by and a wagon  
A FERDL FARBAY UN A VOGN,  
And I had my grandfather told  
UN 'KH'HOB DEM ZEYDN GEZOGT:  
Do you see on our backs  
TSI ZESTU AF UNDZERE RUKNS  
The heavy iron yoke  
DEM SHVERN AYZERNEM YOKH,  
Can one not walk not fly  
KEN MEN NISHT GEYN, NISHT FLIEN,  
Receives one a bite and a sting  
KRIGT MEN A BIS UN A SHTOKH.

Together can we out  
TSUZAMEN KENEN MIR AROYS,  
Let be a hour a day a week  
ZOL ZAYN A SHO, A TOG, A VOKH,  
It will already fall fall fall  
ER VET SHOYN FALN, FALN, FALN,  
The rotten old yoke  
DER TSEFOYLTER ALTER YOKH.  
If I should pull in the middle  
AZ IKH ZOL TSIEN IN DER MIT,  
And you should pull in the side  
UN DO ZOLST TSIEN IN DER ZAYT,  
It will already fall fall fall  
ER VET SHOYN FALN, FALN, FALN,  
Then become we liberated  
DEMOLT VERN MIR BAFRAYT.

Already long years stand we  
SHOYN LANGE YORN SHTEYEN MIR  
Beaten down by the calamity  
AROPGEDRIKT FUN DEM BROKH.  
It reduces itself my strength  
ES MINERT ZIKH MAYN KOYEKH,  
It becomes all heavier the yoke  
ES VERT ALTS SHVERER DER YOKH.  
Because although rotten and rusty  
VAYL KHOTSH TSEFOYLT UN FARZHAVERT,  
Yet holds it like a tongs  
DOKH HALT ER VI A TSVANG,  
Just when I begin already to fall  
NOR VEN IKH HALT SHOYN BAYM FALN,  
Hear I my grandfather's song  
HER IKH DEM ZEYDNS GEZANG:

Together....  
TSUZAMEN ...

My grandfather is already long away  
DER ZEYDE IZ SHOYN LANG AVEK,  
One hears already not his voice  
ME' HERT SHOYN NISHT ZAYN KOL,  
It has him carried away a wind  
ES HOT IM AVEKGETROGN A VINT,  
But I stand her as past  
NOR IKH SHTEY DO VI AMOL.  
It pass new boys by  
ES GEYEN NAYE YINGLEKH FARBAY,  
Extend I to them my arms  
SHTREK IKH TSU ZEY DI HENT  
And sing for them my grandfather's song  
UN ZING FAR ZEY DEM ZEYDNS LID,  
That he had me taught  
VOS ER HOT MIKH GELERNT.

We stood together, it was not yet day,  
A horse and wagon passed by,  
And I spoke with my grandfather:  
Can you not see on our backs that heavy iron yoke?  
We can't go, can't fly, we get a bite and a sting.

Together we escape, be it an hour, a day, a week,  
Soon it will fall, fall, fall - that rotten old yoke.  
If I pull from the middle, and you pull from the side,  
Soon it will fall, fall, fall and we will all be free.

We've stood by for many years, beaten down by the calamity.  
My strength is reduced, the yoke becomes all the more heavy.  
Although it's rotten and rusty, it grips us like tongs,  
Just when I'm ready to fall, I hear my grandfather's song.

Together....

My grandfather is long gone, his voice can no longer be heard.  
He was carried away by the wind, and I remain here as before.  
As new youngsters pass by, I reach out my hand to them,  
And sing for them my grandfather's song, the same one he taught me.

Together....