

2 MOBS, 1 CLOWN
Written by Machon & Nivonim
Camp Ramah New England

CHARACTERS

Moishe Mobowitz

Revve Mobowitz (“Revve Mob”)

Chesus

Kenny

Narrator

Goons

Circus Ensemble

SCENE ONE

Outside a Shipping Depot

1932 - Chicago

(The NARRATOR enters. Behind him the Jewish Orthodox and Reform Mobs gather in their respective spaces on either side of the stage.)

SONG #1: DOING HASHEM’S WORK

NARRATOR

DOWNTOWN CHICAGO

NINETEEN-THIRTY-TWO

PROHIBITION’S ON

BATTLING JEWS

FIGHTING FOR TURF

DON’T CARE WHO GETS HURT

SLUMMING IN THE DIRT

ALL

DOING HASHEM’S WORK

ORTHODOX MAFIA

WE ARE THE ORTHODOX

LED BY REVVE MOB

WE RUN THIS TOWN
YEAH, WE GET THE JOB DONE

WHEN THE NIGHT FALLS
AND IT'S DARK OUTSIDE
WE MAKE OUR DOUGH
SNEAKING IN KOSHER WINE

WE'RE DOING HASHEM'S WORK
DOING HASHEM'S WORK
WE'RE DOING HASHEM'S WORK
DOING HASHEM'S WORK

REFORM MOB

WE ARE THE REFORM
WE PLAY IT FAST AND LOOSE
WE'RE IN AND OUT QUICK
DON'T GOT TIME FOR KASHRUT

WE'RE HERE TO TAKE THEIR WINE
AND MAKE A NICE PROFIT
THEY'LL DRINK GRAPE JUICE ON SHABBOS
CAUSE THERE'S NO WAY THEY CAN STOP IT

WE'RE DOING HASHEM'S WORK
DOING HASHEM'S WORK
WE'RE DOING HASHEM'S WORK
DOING HASHEM'S WORK

*(CHESUS of the Reform Mob approaches the box of illegal Manischewitz wine.
MOISHE from the Orthodox Mob steps in to stop CHESUS.)*

MOISHE

Chesus, you know this is our shipment. Stop cutting in on our turf.

CHESUS

Moishe, moishie – such a good boy. Always doing his daddy's bidding.

MOISHE

Don't talk about the Revve that way.

CHESUS

Hand over the Manischewitz. I don't wanna hurt you.

REVVE MOB

You silly Reform pischer! Get out of here or you'll sleep with the duggim by Shabbos.

CHESUS

Oooo big words.

MOISHE

My papa doesn't joke.

CHESUS

Neither do I.

(Two GOONS from the Reform Mafia appear and stand behind CHESUS giving him support.)

MOISHE

Don't worry Papa, I can take them.

REVVE MOB

No, they outnumber you. Know when you're beat, son. Let's give them the wine.

MOISHE

No, I can do it.

(The MOBS circle MOISHE and CHESUS as they get ready to fight.)

MOBS

DOING HASHEM'S WORK

DOING HASHEM'S WORK

DOING HASHEM'S WORK

DOING HASHEM'S WORK

MOISHE

I can do it.

CHESUS

No, you can't.

(CHESUS pulls out a gun and shoots MOISHE. MOISHE falls to the floor and dies.)

REVVE MOB

Moishe!

(REVVE MOB runs to MOISHE. Police sirens start to wail.)

GOONS

The cops. Time to go.

(CHESUS grabs the wines and flees with his GOONS. KENNETH enters and runs to REVVE MOB.)

KENNETH

Boss, the law is coming. We can't stay.

REVVE MOB

My son!

(KENNETH grabs REVVE MOB and leads him offstage. MOISHE lies alone on stage. Then, the NARRATOR enters.)

NARRATOR

Let me take you back to how this all started. Let's rewind to one week earlier.

SCENE TWO

Revve Mob's Office

One Week Earlier

(REVVE MOB sits at his big desk. KENNETH enters and approaches.)

REVVE MOB

Did you take care of the problem Kenneth?

KENNETH

Ken – let's just say they won't be finding the afikoman anytime soon.

REVVE MOB

You crack me up. Now, go bring me my son. Bring me Moishe.

KENNETH

Ken.

(KENNETH exits. After a few seconds, MOISHE enters.)

MOISHE

Papa, you wanted to see me?

SONG #2: I WANT TO JOIN THE CIRCUS

REVVE MOB

HELLO SON

TAKE A SEAT

RELAX, TAKE OFF YOUR HAT

DON'T BE NERVOUS

HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT

IT'S TIME WE HAD THIS CHAT

As you know...

WE RUN A DEADLY BUSINESS

WE STRIVE FOR JEWISH GREATNESS

BUT IN EVERY OCCUPATION

ONE MUST RISE TO THE OCCASION

TO BECOME THE LEADER

OF THIS GREAT CRIME FAMILY

AND AS IT SAYS IN THE TORAH

AND AS IT'S WRITTEN IN THE PSALMS

CHAI TIMES FOUR

WORK NO MORE

A RULE I MUST OBEY

I'M SEVENTY-ONE

ALMOST DONE

VERY SOON IT WILL BE YOUR DAY

MOISHE

For what?

REVVE MOB

To run this show?

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

MOISHE

But...

REVVE MOB

YOU WILL CONTROL THE MOB

MOISHE

But...

REVVE MOB

THE GREATEST OF THEM ALL

MOISHE

But...

REVVE MOB

HAVE ALL THE MONEY YOU WANT

MOISHE

BUT THIS IS NOT WHAT I WANT

REVVE MOB

What do you want my son?

MOISHE

I WANT TO JOIN THE CIRCUS
BE A GREAT YIDDISH CLOWN
JUGGLE AND RIDE A UNICYCLE
TRAPEZE UPSIDE DOWN

I WANT TO PUT A SMILE ON EVERYONE'S FACE
NOT BE A PERSON PEOPLE FEAR TO EMBRACE

SPOTLIGHT ON ME CENTER STAGE
MOISHE THE CLOWN, THAT'S MY NAME

LOVED BY PEOPLE OF EVERY AGE
A STAR OF GREAT ACCLAIM

REVVE MOB

This is meshuguna Moishe!

MOISHE

I WANT TO JOIN THE CIRCUS
YES, I'LL TRAVEL NEAR AND FAR
WHERE GOOFNUTS LIKE ME FLOURISH
ALWAYS REACHING FOR MY STAR

I WANT TO PUT A SMILE ON EVERYONE'S FACE
NOT BE A PERSON PEOPLE FEAR TO EMBRACE

SPOTLIGHT ON ME CENTER STAGE
MOISHE THE CLOWN, THAT'S MY NAME
LOVED BY PEOPLE OF EVERY AGE
A STAR OF GREAT ACCLAIM

REVVE MOB

WHAT ABOUT MY LEGACY?

MOISHE

WHAT ABOUT THE DREAMS I WON'T GET TO SEE

REVVE MOB

YOU MUST LEAD THIS GROUP

MOISHE

I'D RATHER JUGGLE BATS AND HULA HOOP

(CIRCUS PERFORMERS enter and do tricks. MOISHE joins in.)

CIRCUS PERFORMERS / MOISHE

SPOTLIGHT ON HIM/ME CENTER STAGE
MOISHE THE CLOWN, THAT'S HIS/MY NAME
LOVED BY PEOPLE OF EVERY AGE
A STAR OF GREAT A...

(REVVE MOB cuts off the music and the CIRCUS PERFORMERS magically disappear. We are back in reality.)

REVVE MOB

If you do this, you are out of the mishpacha?

MOISHE

Really?

REVVE MOB

Yes son.

MOISHE

OK PAPA, I'LL OBEY

MOISHE THE MOBSTER'S MY NAME

FEARED BY PEOPLE OF EVERY AGE

I'LL PUT MY DREAM AWAY

REVVE MOB

Good boy.

SCENE THREE

A Bar in Chicago

The Next Night

(MOISHE enters in a dress. He hangs out by the bar looking out for someone. CHESUS enters, also in a dress. MOISHE subtly calls him over, trying not to call attention.)

MOISHE

Did anyone follow you Chesus?

CHESUS

No, I checked.

MOISHE

Good.

CHESUS

So Moishe, why did you call this meeting? Why did you tell me to wear a dress? And why are we meeting in a gay bar? It's 1932. This won't be socially acceptable until the mid-90s.

MOISHE

Exactly. No one would suspect it. You know we can't be seen together. Our groups are mortal enemies.

CHESUS

And yet we were in the same Torah Tots class.

MOISHE

Let's not focus on that. We gotta talk about my father. He wants me to take over. To be the next Revve Mob. It's not what I want.

CHESUS

Oh no. You told him about the circus didn't you?

MOISHE

I couldn't hold it in any longer.

CHESUS

How did he take it?

MOISHE

Well, he said if I do it, I'm out of the mishpacha.

CHESUS

Could've been worse.

MOISHE

How!?

CHESUS

He's a mob boss. Think about it. But you're his son. He loves you.

MOISHE

Are you so sure about that?

CHESUS

What are you gonna do?

MOISHE

If it were up to me I'd run away. But my father would send Ken and the goons to track me down. I need your help.

CHESUS

I have an idea. But you're not gonna like it.

(CHESUS starts whispering in MOISHE's ear as they exit.)

SCENE FOUR

Outside a Shipping Depot

NARRATOR

And we're back where we began.

(The MOBS circle MOISHE and CHESUS as they get ready to fight.)

SONG #3: DOING HASHEM'S WORK (REPRISE)

MOBS

DOING HASHEM'S WORK
DOING HASHEM'S WORK
DOING HASHEM'S WORK
DOING HASHEM'S WORK

MOISHE

I can do it.

CHESUS

No, you can't.

(CHESUS pulls out a gun and shoots MOISHE. MOISHE falls to the floor and dies.)

REVVE MOB

Moishe!

(REVVE MOB runs to MOISHE. Police sirens start to wail.)

GOONS

The cops.

(CHESUS grabs the wines and flees with his GOONS. KENNETH enters and runs to REVVE MOB.)

KENNETH

Boss, the law is coming.

REVVE MOB

My son!

(KENNETH grabs REVVE MOB and leads him offstage. MOISHE lies alone on the empty stage. After a few seconds, CHESUS walks in. He goes over to MOISHE and helps him up. He's alive!)

MOISHE

Did they buy it?

CHESUS

Well the ketchup blood had a hecksher.

MOISHE

Haha. Thank you.

CHESUS

You're finally free my friend. Go join the circus.

MOISHE

I love you brother.

CHESUS

Shalom.

(They hug and run off in separate directions.)

SCENE FIVE

Backstage at the Circus / Revve Mob's Office

(MOISHE is backstage sitting in front of a mirror. He is applying his make-up as he gets ready to go onstage. The NARRATOR enters as the Stage Manager.)

NARRATOR (as stage manager)

Five minutes 'til you're on Moishe.

MOISHE

Thank you.

NARRATOR (as stage manager)

Are you ok? You don't look like your typical happy self today.

MOISHE

Just in my thoughts, that's all.

NARRATOR (as stage manager)

Well, have a great show.

(The NARRATOR exits.)

SONG #4: THERE'S A HOLE IN MY HEART

MOISHE

I GOT ALL I WANTED
THE TRAPEZE, THE LAUGHS, AND MORE
YET MY FATHER SITS THEIR SULKING
OF THAT I AM SURE

WHY CAN'T HE JUST BE PROUD?
WHY CAN'T HE JUST SEE?
FINALLY THE INSIDE MATCHES
THE OUTSIDE OF ME

THERE'S A WHOLE IN MY HEART
THAT I CAN NEVER MEND
HE HAD DREAMS THAT I
STILL CAN'T UNDERSTAND

IS THIS HOW IT ENDS?

(Lights up on REVVE MOB on the other side of the stage, sitting at his desk.)

REVVE MOB

SOME DAYS I WONDER
COULD I HAVE BEEN MORE ACCEPTING?
NOW IT'S TOO LATE
MY LIFE'S SO DEPRESSING

MOISHE HAS PASSED
AND NOTHING IS THE SAME
I'VE COME TO REALIZE
WHO IS TO BLAME

THERE'S A WHOLE IN MY HEART
THAT I CAN NEVER MEND
HE HAD DREAMS THAT I
STILL CAN'T UNDERSTAND
IS THIS HOW IT ENDS?

REVVE MOB

WHY DID I PUSH SO HARD?
I'M THE REASON HE'S GONE
HE'S GONE

MOISHE

WHY DID HE PUSH SO HARD?
I WAS FORCED TO MOVE ON
MOVE ON

BOTH

THERE'S A WHOLE IN MY HEART
THAT I CAN NEVER MEND
HE HAD DREAMS THAT I
STILL CAN'T UNDERSTAND

REVVE MOB

IS THIS HOW...

MOISHE

IS THIS HOW...

BOTH

IS THIS HOW IT ENDS?

SCENE SIX

Revve Mob's Office

NARRATOR

7 months later...

KENNETH

It's time Revve. Come lead the seder.

REVVE MOB

I can't do it this year. Not without my son.

KENNETH

Everyone is waiting. We must carry on.

REVVE MOB

Lo, Ken. You're in charge of the group now.

KENNETH

Ok. I'll take the lead. But you must at least sit at the table.

REVVE MOB

Ken, Ken.

(They move into the dining room to join everyone at the Seder table.)

KENNETH

Now it's time to open the door for Eliyahu.

ALL

ELIYAHU HA'NAVI

ELIYAHU HA'TISHBI

ELIYAHU, ELIYAHU

ELIYAHU HA'GILADI

KENNETH

Wait, I hear footsteps.

REVVE MOB

Eliyahu is coming!

(A clown walks through the door. It's MOISHE all dressed up. He locks eyes with his father REVVE MOB. Blackout.)

THE END