



THE
FILM

BY
DAVID
ROSKIES

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TO MOSES ben AMRAM,

BECAUSE HE DIDN'T GIVE UP

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"Aaron, you can't be serious about going to America to work on a dead language. I mean what sort of an idiot are you anyways?"

"My dear Mordechai, I'm doing what I think is right. I really don't care what you think about me."

"But Aaron, those plans you have can't possibly succeed. They're fantasies, too far-fetched. You'll land flat on your face, not having accomplished anything except losing your shirt."

"You may be right Mordechai, but I still have to try. If you're afraid to fail, you're paralyzed. You can't be afraid to make a mistake. If you fall, you stand up again and start all over. I can't give up before I've started just because of my chances of failing."

"Oh damn you Aaron, you're ~~j~~ hopeless!"

The conference room was filled with smoke. The hanging lamp cast weird shadows on the floor. Aaron coughed.

"Now, you have to look for many things when you're out there scouting," he said. "First and foremost is talent. We've forwarded letters to the leaders of the included communities to arrange for auditions. Don't forget, we're looking for the younger people. Next comes money. You'll have to organize a special YIFC evening or something like that, to collect money for us. You can figure it out yourselves. Then look for technicians: camera men, lighting experts, and the like, especially those going to France. Lastly, there's historical material: guns, uniforms, photographs, books, whatever looks valuable. The hotel reservations have been made already, and you have the itineraries. Don't forget the procedure that we discussed last week. It's very important for our office work." He paused for effect. "Any questions?" "Yes Sol."

"Well what happens if we don't find anything after two weeks? Do we stick around waiting for the required time to pass, or do we return?"

"If you're certain that you've tried all the possibilities, and that nothing more can be gained by remaining, then return here immediately. We have plenty of work for you."

"Ha, you're not kidding," remarked someone ruefully.

The people at the table relaxed now, and began to talk among themselves.

"I have nothing more to say," concluded Aaron. "I wish you all the best of luck, and don't forget, the success of this project rests in your hands." He got up, his private secretary with him, and left the room.

"Bart," he heard someone say before he closed the door. "You'd better not let one of those Parisian 'femmes fatales' catch up with you"

"That's a laugh," interjected another. "I have to watch out for the man-eating Zombies of the South African jungles!"

Aaron smiled.

"This must be a big game for these kids," he thought to himself. "Well, I hope they enjoy it."

"Aaron."

"Yes Dan, what is it?"

"Umm, I was looking over the list of countries that are being visited, and I noticed that Germany isn't one of them. Now don't get mad, but I heard that they've preserved a lot in their museums on the Jewish communities and Jewish life before the war. And then there's the money."

"My dear Daniel. This film is going to be made without the help of a single German technician, and without a single cent from the Conference

on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany.

"The Germans have started to complain that they've paid enough already, and being on excellent terms with them, I don't want to create any inconvenience for them. Besides, almost every big undertaking in Yiddish such as the Great Dictionary or the Lexicon of Yiddish ~~Writers~~ Literature is subsidised by the discontented German government. It's enough, I say. We can do without their museums and historical material. Satisfied?"

"All right, it's no skin off my back. It was only a suggestion."

"By the way Dan, if you're not doing anything special on Thursday evening, come over to my place. A terrific old gentleman is coming over from Chicago. He's an expert on shtetl life and has offered to help us. He has hundreds of photos and relics—a whole museum. It should be very interesting."

"I'll try to be there."

Aaron went into his office and sat down in front of the window.

"Tomorrow morning they leave, and in two weeks the reports start coming in. I wonder what's going to happen? It means the success or failure of the film. I hope it'll work out..."

An hour later, after wading through another version of the movie script, Aaron picked up the book he was currently reading, and fell asleep over it a few minutes later. It was 1:45 A.M.

Aaron Levy was a young man in his early thirties, very ambitious, hard-working, and serious. He was the type of man who would take on any endeavour that interested him, no matter how difficult, and when this led to problems, he would just work twice as hard until they would be overcome. He had emigrated from his birthplace Lodz, Poland in 1939. He was eight years old at the time.

He and his parents settled in Palestine but they weren't happy there. They were great lovers of Yiddish and had been the directors of Lodz's biggest Jewish school in their former life. Now they were in Palestine, the Holy Land, and not only could they not teach Yiddish anymore, but there was even discrimination against their language. Things got more disquieting when the State of Israel was proclaimed. The Levys resented the pressure on all the immigrants to learn Hebrew, and even more, the scorn that the younger Sabra generation felt for "the language of the exile and of the ghetto."

Meanwhile Aaron was reading the cream of Yiddish literature in his free time, and the more he read, the more he was drawn into it. It was then that he decided that his future lay in Yiddish. He entered the Uni-

versity of Jerusalem and came out six years later with a degree in Jewish literature and history. Encouraged by his parents, he left Israel and came to the United States, the reason being that there he would have more possibilities to pursue his ambition. He immediately applied for a job at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research where he was now working. However Aaron wasn't satisfied with his work. He saw his beloved language and the warmth it represented and invoked sinking lower and lower, and decided to do something about it.

One day, while reading about the Yiddish movie "Die Griene Felder" (which had been made in the United States in the 1930s), he realized that this was the answer to his long-standing problem. The result was the Yiddish International Film Company, YIFC for short. At first he wasn't too serious about it, (not wanting to raise his hopes too high), but after he had discussed the matter with a few prominent movie officials, he saw that his plan could develop into reality. The next step was to assemble a group of disciples. To accomplish this, he advertised in the large universities and Jewish community centres;

"Anyone twenty to thirty-five years of age, wishing to work full time in the Yiddish International Film Company, please contact Mr. Aaron Levy at 37 W. 42 nd St., N.Y., or call 276-5432. This is a chance to see the world, meet people, go talent hunting or do research work. The applicant must have a college education and a thorough mastery of the Yiddish language."

This romantic and promising advertisement brought in 77 applicants from all parts of the country, forty-five of whom were hired. The biggest problem however, was financing the venture. The YIVO could not give him anything and neither could the Congress for Jewish Culture. The American Jewish Congress turned him down on the grounds that it was an impossible project. He finally managed to get a grant from the Samuel B. Goldberg Foundation in New York of \$5,000, which took care of a few things. The rest of the money he expected the talent scouts to collect.

He worked on the script himself, binding together episodes from the Yiddish literature, but ^{did} not ^e deciding on anything final, since he knew that the director would want to change parts. Then he had to work out the itineraries and plans for the "scouting expeditions" abroad. Now this was completed and the next step was to await the reports.

Aaron woke up at 7:30 A.M., still lying over his open book.

"I have to see the first scouts off in an hour," he thought. "Then I have to go to the YIVO and hand in my resignation. Too much work to do in my company now. Reports to look over and to organize. The real work is starting. Here's hoping that everything works out."

Fifteen days later the first report came in. It was from Isaac Stein in Chicago.

"Dear Aaron," it read: "I am sorry to report that I could not get much done here. You will be hearing from Jack in Philadelphia in the near future. I think he was more successful.

"The talent hunt wasn't at all fruitful, because there are only a few Yiddish schools, and pretty weak ones at that. The Workmens' Circle and the Bialystok Society were the only groups that really cooperated. They organized two meetings, one with a tea afterwards. About 250 people attended all together, and I made around \$400.00.

"I didn't find any potential actors, in fact, there weren't ~~w~~ enough people to have an audition. No one seems interested around here. They have assimilated and have blended in with the goyim. Why should they worry about a silly project in a dead language? Damn, does it ever get me mad.

"The only good result of the trip was this fellow Rosenbloom, that you interviewed a few weeks back. It seems that he is very enthusiastic about our film, and has spread it around. A large group of elderly people sent me in dozens of photos, and family relics from the old home to use as historical material. At least someone reacted!

"I'll be leaving here in two days, and will be at your office at 11:00 A.M. on Wednesday. I did my best, and hope you're not too disappointed (because I am).

Sincerely,

Isaac"

"Poor guy," thought Aaron after having finished the letter. "This certainly was a let down for him. I had better set him a more encouraging job when he returns, so that he won't lose all hope. Maybe he'll work on accommodations for the actors and crew."

Aaron put down the letter, and went over to the far wall which faced him. There he marked down on the huge chart of results that \$400.00 and historical material had been acquired in Chicago.

"Hmm, this is bad. I expected ten times more from Chicago. I hope the other results aren't as disappointing. If they, then I'm finished."

Aaron could not sleep that night. He kept thinking about the report from Chicago. When he finally fell asleep, he dreamt of his friend in Israel. Mordechai's words kept taunting him throughout the dream:

"...But Aaron, those plans you have can't possibly succeed. They're fantasies, too far-fetched. You'll land flat on ~~y~~ your face, not having accomplished anything except losing your shirt...you'll land flat on your face...flat on your face...on your face..."

"NO!" shouted Aaron from his sleep. "I won't fail! You'll see, I won't

fail!"

He woke up in a cold sweat, shaking like a leaf.

"I won't fail," he repeated once more to himself.

Aaron was in his office at 6:00 A.M. He walked back and forth for hours, waiting for the mail to arrive, thinking about Mordechai and Israel all the time.

Finally at 10:00 he heard the main door open. Knowing that this was the mailman, Aaron rushed out to meet him and almost tore the mail from his hands. He fumbled through the letters until he came to the one that he was looking for; from Miriam Ehrenburg in Buenos Aires.

"This is it!" he cried. His heart was pounding wildly as he ripped open the letter.

"Dear Aaron," it read. "This is the first of a few reports, because much is happening here, it is very difficult to organize into a ~~an~~ comprehensive report. Max and I worked on this one, and Harry's group will report separately."

Aaron heaved a sigh of relief.

"Thank God," he managed to whisper. He felt weak from the excitement and suspense. He went out into the hall for a drink of water, returned, and picked up the letter once more.

"First we arrived here at three in the afternoon, on the 23rd, and received a tremendous welcome from the community leaders and hundreds of school children. We ~~we~~ certainly were surprised! An elaborate welcoming ceremony followed with speeches and glowing promises. I can't imagine how they know so much about the YIFC only six months after its formation. That evening they made a huge reception for us. I tell you these people are more enthusiastic about the company than we are!

"I can't calculate how much money we will make, because it's still coming in. So far we have collected \$17,236.50.

"The auditions bear the most fruit. We use the large auditorium of the Peretz School, and ~~we~~ we are busy from 9:00 in the morning until 6:00 at night. The schools encourage their pupils to audition, as a result, hundreds of youngsters and teenagers show up. The time even has to be divided: from 9:00 to 2:00 for school children, and from 2:30 till 6:00 for grown-ups. I suppose the attraction of working in Italy is a very enticing one. It's like winning a free trip to Miami or Nassau. I haven't quite figured out what attracts the older people, but I suppose it's a combination of the craze for adventure and the zeal to work on a history making movie.

"Sorry, I've digressed. I'm only supposed to give the cold facts: money, actors, and personnel. Well we have auditioned at least 500 children and have chosen ~~30~~ ³⁰. Let me tell you, we have found real professional talent here.

So far we have also seen ¹⁵⁰~~250~~ grown-ups, ²⁵~~150~~ of whom were chosen.

"We have not done very much in the last category, because the movie industry here is quite small. We have found a few first class make-up men though.

"Write me if you want to know anything else or have any suggestions, since we will be around for quite a while. I've got to sign off now. I'm too ~~busy~~ busy to worry about letter writing.

Your enthusiastic disciple,

Miriam

"P.S. Don't forget that Max also helped me with this report."

Aaron began to sob from relief and joy. He knew that Miriam had exaggerated the report quite a bit, as was her habit, but despite this he felt that the results could be successful.

Two days later the third report arrived. This one was from France.

"Dear Aaron,

"To misquote Sir Winston Churchill: 'The news from France is very good.' Jack and I have found quite a few enthusiastic technicians (which you had predicted), and even a director. Strangely enough, the people who reacted are those who know no Yiddish at all, but think it a good idea to make a film in the language. The film industry here is completely dominated by the younger generation who is constantly in search of something new. A Yiddish film seems just the thing. We even have some non-Jews interested.

"Up till now we have found people who can handle photography, art direction, sound, special effects, and the music sound track—fourty people in all. The biggest find however was ~~an~~ director. His name is François Cassin, Jewish, aged 37, handsome, and very intelligent. He has already directed 42 movies including 'Black Flowers', which ^{I am told is a first class job} ~~won first prize at Cannes.~~ He's leaving Paris immediately to see you, and will arrive at Idelwilde at 4:35 P.M. on Saturday. I think you'll find him an intriguing man.

"By the way, some of the technicians mentioned above are bringing their equipment along with them.

"In the world of finances, we got something done also. We've amassed \$3,000.00 until now, and expecting a little more before we leave.

"That's all. I hope you're satisfied with our results. We'll be back home in ten days.

Sincerely,

Emmanuel."

"This presents another problem which I figured would come up," thought Aaron. "None of these technicians can speak Yiddish, and neither does the director. That means that we'll need teachers for them. We'll, ~~I~~ I'LL have to work it out.

After that, the reports started coming in two and three at a time:

"...Couldn't get much done here in Moscow because the Soviet government refuses to cooperate with us. They don't want to support a 'capitalist venture' as they call it. However we managed to borrow historical material from the Soviets after a lot of trouble..."

"...We discovered that some Sabras can speak Yiddish, and that they don't feel any special prejudice against it. The Yiddish writers really helped us out, and some of them have agreed to work as advisors to the film and script. Kibbutz Lochamai Haghettaot has lent us fantastic props and photographs..."

"...There's nothing left here in Poland. It's ghastly. They say that there are 30,000 Jews, but most of them are assimilated. The Poles are however very Jewish conscious, and have decided that it's a mitzvah to help us out. We've collected over a thousand dollars from individual and group contributions. Then their film industry decided to work with us and to lend us equipment..."

~~"...The Gentile African Jews blended in completely with their neighbors beyond any sign of recognition. The number of Jews in the area was approximately 1000."~~

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Aaron finished marking down the results of the last report on his wall chart.

"Let's see now, of twelve countries visited, five showed excellent results, five bad results, and two mediocre results. We've made 80,000.00, have almost all the technicians necessary, and have enough historical data. That's quite good. Now we have to see about the actors, teaching everyone Yiddish, and the director."

François Cassin was nervous as he sat in the Boeing jet airliner. He was afraid that he wouldn't be accepted to work on the film. His fears stemmed back many years in his life.

"Why did I have to revolt against my parents and their society? There was nothing wrong with attending the synagogue once a week for a few hours, with speaking Yiddish, with going to Sunday School. That would have made all the difference in the world. But no, I had to follow the crowd, conform, melt in with the surroundings. It wasn't entirely my fault. The Germans did overrun France, and did persecute the Jews. It wouldn't have been safe for me to show my Jewishness. On the other hand, parents still came through, even after the labour camp. I would have survived as well. Damn, I hate myself for that. Now it'll mean the difference between self-fulfillment and self-disgrace. It'll kill me if I'm not accepted. But maybe I can fool them--"

"Fasten your seat belts please," said the voice in the loadspeaker.

When François got off from the airplane, his knees were shaking. He walked slowly over to the American Custom's Office but was stopped on the way.

"Are you Mr. François Cassin?"

François' heart jumped into his throat. He attempted a smile.

"Yes I am," he managed to blurt out.

"How do you do. My name is Aaron Levy. I'm the president of the Yiddish International Film Company."

"Pleased to meet you." There was a pause, for François didn't know what to say. "Umm, should I go get my baggage checked know?"

"Good idea. You go in there, and I'll meet you at the front entrance in a dark blue car. Is that all right with you?"

"Yes fine, just fine."

François picked up his briefcase and walked into the Custom's Office, little suspecting that the man he had just met was as excited as he was nervous.

"He looks intelligent enough," thought Aaron to himself as he walked to the parking lot. "I've got to be very tactful with him, not to discourage him. God, I hope he accepts the job. I'm not likely to get many other chances like this one."

"I'm going to tell him the truth," decided the Frenchman leaving the Custom's Office with his bags. "If I'm going to get this job, I'm going to get it honestly."

"Over here," shouted Aaron.

François came over to his car, placed his bags on the back seat, and got in.

"I've got something to tell you," he said after a minute or two. "I really don't know anything about Jewish life, I can't speak Yiddish but can understand it; I haven't entered a synagogue since the war, and I only came here because I'm so disgusted with being a nothing-a vegetable, that this seemed the chance to redeem myself and to start becoming a Jew."

With that ~~off~~ off his chest, he relaxed, waiting for the judge's verdict. But all he heard in response was laughter. The car seat shook under the force of Aaron's laugh^{ing}~~ing~~ fit. After a while he calmed down and managed to explain:

"You've probably been worrying your head off about being accepted as the film's director because of your Jewishness, or rather lack of Jewishness. At the same time, I was worried that you wouldn't accept my offer because it doesn't pay very well and will take a hell of a lot of work. I'm not interested in your synagogue or Sunday School attendance, all I want is talent and the will to work."

"But this film is in Yiddish. I can neither speak the language, nor do I know the environment in which the film probably takes place."

"These are all things you can learn," continued Aaron. "All you need is talent, willpower, and a feeling for what is going on."

"Well, then I think I'm your man," said François with a laugh. "I am willing to do any amount of work required of me, at any price, and in any form. I certainly have the experience, and some of my films are considered quite good."

"So I've heard."

"Do I get the job?"

"If you plan to live up to your promises, then it's yours."

"It's a deal!"

"You can't imagine how happy I am that you turned up."

"You can't imagine how happy I am, Mister Levy, that you've accepted me."

"We should get along pretty well then. By the way, please get used to calling me Aaron."

A month later, the Yiddish International Film Company moved to a gigantic set on the outskirts of Rome, Italy. They had rented the studio for as long as they wanted. By ~~this~~ this time, François could speak Yiddish haltingly, had spent 180 hours on research for the film, and had begun arranging it to his taste.

"I have an idea," he told Aaron one morning. "The script is highly episodic, not having any lead roles. It is in effect a complicated account of the lives of five people. In Europe the style is films having many parts, like a series of related short stories. If we did that in our film, it would not only be modern and in style, but also more comprehensive to the viewer."

"That's ~~an~~ an excellent idea," said Aaron smiling. "Do you think you can do over the script to five parts?"

"It shouldn't be too hard. All I have to do is reorganize it. Do I have your permission?"

"You most certainly do."

The actors and technicians had begun pouring in by this time from all parts of the world. They brought with them not only problems of accommodation, but also linguistic difficulties. Or so it seemed to Daniel Winter when he came storming in to Aaron's new office one ~~morning~~ ^{afternoon}.

"Listen Aaron, I think you're going a little too far: forcing every last technician and errand boy to take Yiddish lessons! What are you doing, making a movie or forming the Revivalist Movement of the Yiddish Language?"

"Now take it easy Dan, there are very good reasons behind it. Firstly there are going to be at least ~~six~~ languages spoken on the set: English, French, Hebrew, Italian, Spanish, and Yiddish. How in the world are we going to get anything done, if no one can understand what the other is saying?"

"But why Yiddish? It would be a lot more practical to have English or French as the official language of the set."

"Well that's where the second reason comes in. It's the effect on the actors. The best actor in the world, is he who is so much a part of his role, that he feels it off stage as well as on. Our actors can't even attempt that, if while they're shooting a scene in Yiddish, they hear orders being shouted in every other language. Do you understand?"

"Yes, I suppose so. I'm sorry I blew up like that. I guess I wasn't thinking."

"I wonder," thought Aaron to himself after Daniel had left! "In order to understand what the other is saying, you need a common language. Yiddish as the common Jewish language..."

When the actors were partly settled in their new environment, the final auditions for major roles began. Aaron was surprised to find so much talent among the amateurs. He also discovered, to his horror that the accommodations, the feeding, clothing etc., cost a small fortune, even in Rome. Later on, when the filming would begin, even more people would be needed. That meant more money.

He was attending one of the auditions, when a certain woman caught his eye. She was trying out for a very dramatic role, and was doing an excellent job at it. He was fascinated by her long silky black hair. He watched the hair sway back and forth like the waves in a ~~system~~ storm as she ran from one end of the platform to the other, pretending that she was collecting her belongings in a hurry. He saw her eyes flash from time to time like a beacon, and he felt a shiver run down his body. She was beautiful.

"She must be from South America," he thought. "They usually have dark complexions there. I wonder who she is. Here comes Max. He'll be able to tell me.

"Max, who is the young woman trying the 'Anna' role now?"

"Not bad, isn't she?" he smiled proudly. "I chose her myself in Buenos Aires. Her name is Deborah Ran. She's 27, comes from a very prominent Argentinian cattle merchant, and was a teacher in the Sholem Aleichem School when we found her. Anything else?"

"No, that's enough. Thanks a lot.

"School teacher?" he wondered. "How ~~did~~ does a beautiful rich woman come to be a school teacher? That's strange. Well, she must be an interesting person.

"Deborah, the biblical judge. The biblical Deborah must have looked like her..."

That evening François came to his room.

"You know," he said. "I've been doing a lot of thinking lately, and I see how stupid I've been all these years. To me Judaism consisted of going to the synagogue on Saturday morning, speaking Yiddish, and learning how to read Hebrew. It never occurred to me that there was Jewish philosophy, literature, history, ethics, or laws. All I recognized were the religious customs which I didn't even understand. I only saw the exterior things such as the prayer shawl, the candles on Friday night, or kosher food, and I thought that this was Judaism. It may sound ridiculous to you, but the only Jewish history that I knew was the Dreyfus case. Of course I had learned the stories of Moses and the bullrushes, Joseph and his brothers, the Ten Commandments, but they were only stories, nothing more. The only philosophy was

Socrates and Voltaire; the only history: Caesar and Napoleon; the only literature: Hugo and Shakespeare; the only law: the Justinian Code and the Code of Napoleon, and so on. Who ever heard of Maimonides, the Talmud, the Baal Shem Tov, Herzl, Aleichem, Dubnov?

"Now that I've started to do some research, a whole new world has opened up to me; a fascinating profound world of which I never knew. It's really very exciting."

"I'm very happy for you," said Aaron, "but I'm afraid you're going to have to eliminate the five to eight hours research. We've got to start working on the casting now, and as a matter of fact, I have to discuss some changes I want to make in the script."

François groaned! "You should feel thankful, now that you've reincarnated me into a true Jew. Instead of that, you're setting me back to work again. Now is that fair?"

"Fair shmair. Sit down Joker, we've got work to do."

"Oh, all right."

"First of all, I want to eliminate the Warsaw Ghetto uprising scene."

"You're kidding! You must be kidding."

"No, I'm dead serious. Let me explain. The way I see it, there are two things wrong with the ghetto uprising. Firstly, physical rebellion isn't the symbol of Jewish strength. In biblical times, the greatest hero was he who killed the most Philistines or the most Greeks. But as Jews matured, the symbol of greatness became the holy man who died in the Sanctification of the Name, or the Maranno: the spiritual fighter. Physical resistance is a non-Jewish symbol. So if I show the ghetto life, I want to emphasize the important aspect: the underground schools, concerts and services, not the physical uprising."

"If spiritual strength is the symbol of the Jew, then why is it that no one emphasizes it anymore? You don't read about the underground schools, you read about the Jewish Fighting Organization. The Hassidic rabbis aren't the heroes of the Israeli War of Independence, but the young soldiers are!"

Aaron was quiet for a moment.

"Of course you're right," he said sadly. "I wanted to talk myself into it, but I see it's impossible. It doesn't matter though. I still want to do it my way because that's my interpretation of Jewish strength. It's been like that for hundreds of years. Is that a good enough reason to change it?"

"Yes, I suppose so. What's your second reason?"

"If we show the Ghetto uprising, then there'll have to be survivors. One of the five characters does escape. That's enough. Even though our main character in the ghetto is killed, his friends escape. That's already too much. As soon as you have a survivor it suggests hope, a chance, and that destroys the whole picture, the real picture."

"That's being a little morbid and harsh, don't you think?"

"But war is morbid and harsh. You can't soften it up. We have no right to, especially after all we've suffered."

"I don't know. I don't feel that way at all. I feel that forgiving and forgetting is important. We've got to spare the world from all the gruesome details. Survival is necessary. Oh oh, I can see you getting red in the face. I'd better shut up."

"That's what I like: a discreet movie director."

François laughed. "Also a clever one. I just thought of a way to please everybody. Why don't we have a scene of an uprising in the concentration camp? That way we'll have a physical revolt under sub-human conditions, to please the Americans and the Israelis, and we can make it so that no one survives, to please my boss. Cultural resistance is just about impossible in a concentration camp, and prisoners seldom escape. You see? The problem is solved."

"You make it sound like a game," said Aaron scornfully. "It's a good idea though. I'd better talk it over with the historical advisors."

"While we're discussing the script, I have a few changes to make also. I know you're not going to like it, but I want to bring sex into the movie."

"Ah, I knew it! I knew it. You Frenchmen always need sex."

"Come come now, let's not generalize like that. I only thought we'd put it in for realism. Even the Jews indulged in sex, you know."

Aaron laughed. "OK, do whatever you like, as long as I can censor it."

"Red tape. There's always red tape."

It was Saturday morning, and Aaron was walking alone through the busy streets of Rome. He was thinking over the happenings of the previous day.

"It's strange about Mister Raccini. When I told him that this was a movie about Jews before and during the war, his whole attitude changed. He immediately offered to give me as many Nazi uniforms, and as much Nazi war equipment as I needed. He offered himself as the technical advisor for the film, because he claimed that he knew everything about the German army and customs. He said that he had supervised the making of 78 war films in the past 15 years. How does he have all that equipment? How does he know so much about the Nazis, and why is he so proud of it? Was he a Nazi himself, or does he have a deep hatred for them? It must be the latter, because otherwise, he wouldn't brag about it to a Jew. If that's the case, then why does he hate them so much? The Italians were allies of Germany. Maybe that's the reason. Maybe it's a guilt complex. I wonder..."

As he crossed the street, he noticed Deborah, the young woman ~~x~~ who had caught his eye during the auditions, running from building to building. She looked as if she were running from something or somebody, and following this theory, Aaron looked around for the cause of her flight. Suddenly, he saw what he was looking for: a young man in tight pants and a torn stiped T-shirt was chasing her. Without thinking twice, Aaron hurried over to the rescue. As the pursuer was turning a corner, he found Aaron standing right ~~in~~ in front of him. He moved over, but Aaron moved too. He moved back, and Aaron ~~did the same~~ advanced. Seeing that his prey was escaping, the Italian swung for Aaron's chin, but it wasn't there to recieve the blow. Then the Italian recieved three well-placed blows in the stomach, which sent him down to the ground. Meanwhile Deborah stopped running, seeing that her pursuer had been downed. Aaron walked over to her and asked in Yiddish if she was all right. Deborah stared at him in amazement, and then broke out into a wide grin.

"Of course," she answered sweetly. "Thank you very much."

"You're very welcome," he said gallantly. In truth, he was surprised at his own audacity. This was the first time he had ever gotten into a fight, let alone started ^{ing} one. He still didn't believe what he had done.

"Would you like to go somewhere for a cup of coffee?"

"I'd like that very much," she answered enthusiastically.

Deborah Ran was even more surprised to discover in the café that Aaron was her boss.

"You mean the producer and president of the Yiddish International Film Company has just rescued me from a masher?"

"That's right."

"Well then this is a double surprise."

"I saw you auditioning last week. I thought you did an excellent job."

"Really? Do you think I can get the role?"

"It's very possible."

Soon the conversation went into different channels. Deborah was telling him her life story, and Aaron listened intently. He felt very comfortable speaking to this young woman. He didn't feel at all uneasy with her, in fact he was enjoying himself.

"...When I graduated from the University, I had nothing else to do. All my friends ~~were~~ were married by now, and had settled down to a nice peaceful life. But I wanted to do something useful. I could have gone into secretarial work, but I didn't need the money. So I entered the Jewish Teachers Seminary, and became a full fledged teacher in the Sholem Aleichem school a few years later. I always had an interest in dramatics though, and when your talent scouts 'discovered' me, I realized that this was my chance. And here I am."

"Think what the film would have been missing if you had not been discovered," said Aaron. He felt completely at ease with a member of the opposite sex for the first time in his life.

Deborah reddened slightly from his last remark.

"I look at it differently," she said. "Think what the Jewish world would have been missing if you had not come along."

"It's not such a great achievement. Besides, it's only in the beginning stages."

"Come on, don't be so modest." She paused for a moment. "Say, it's your turn now to tell me about yourself. I want to see what sort of man sets out on an endeavour like this. And don't you dare leave anything out, or else the analysis won't be complete."

"All right Madame psychologist, here we go..." As the story progressed, he saw Deborah's face light up more and more. She was fascinated. Her face looked radiant. Aaron was falling in love.

"Finally last year, I discovered quite by accident that my future lay in the movie business. I was reading an article in the YIVO Bleter about a Yiddish movie made in the 1930's. Suddenly it hit me, that this the best way to serve my language. The Yiddish International Film Company stationed at Rome is the result."

"My, you certainly lead an interesting life! You've been almost everywhere, and everything you do is successful."

"Successful?" The word sounded like a joke to Aaron. "Do you call this successful? We haven't even started filming yet and we've spent almost all

our money. The results from our scouts were on the whole pretty rotten. We're still very disorganized, ~~and~~ it'll be months before the filming starts, and with it dozens of new problems: weather illness, equipment, money, acting, costumes, set designs—you name it, we'll have it. We haven't even agreed upon a script yet. Oh, why am I burdening you with all this? I'm sorry. I got carried away."

"No, it's all right. I'M very interested. ~~XXI~~ I'd like to help as much as I can."

Aaron's mind started to operate. "If I give her another job, I'll be able to see her more often. Maybe I should."

"I'll take you up on that if you like," he said.

"I'd love that!"

"How would you like to work with the costumes? I'll put you on the ordering department. You will order the material and arrange it for the tailors. It may sound easy, but I assure you, it's quite a job."

"That's a fantastic idea! The part I'm trying for will be the first one finished, and it's not very large. That'll leave me plenty of time to work on the costumes. When do I start?"

"Tomorrow morning."

"It's a deal."

Aaron ~~put down the sheets of paper~~ handed back the sheets of paper to François.

"This scene is excellently done. Did you write this yourself?"

"I'm afraid not," ~~said~~ answered François. "One of the writers that we brought in from Israel-Zaltzman is his name—wrote it. It's powerful stuff isn't it?"

"You're not kidding. I don't think anyone could have done a better job. Did he live in a concentration camp?"

"No he didn't, but he worked for a year at a DP camp collecting the stories of the refugees. This is just a sample of what he can do. He has a photographic memory. I told him what we needed, and before you ~~ex~~ could say Robinsoe Crusoe, he took out three folders from his files, and put this together from them. How do you like the beginning when the women are led away to have their hair cut off? It made me shudder when I read it."

"Do you think you could take me to him now? We can finish off the whole script with him now."

"Sure, he's staying very close by."

Once outside, Aaron decided to discuss a point with his colleague that was bothering him.

"I know I told you that you could bring in sex François, but why

"I apologize. I guess it'll work out in the end. But just to show you that my heart is in the right place, I hereby invite you to come to the movies with me."

"I hereby accept with the utmost pleasure. Say, you should get depressed more often. It works out very profitably for me."

Aaron couldn't keep his mind on the movie.

"Will she mind if I put my arm around her?" he thought. "I'll try it and see."

When Deborah felt his arm around her shoulders, she turned her head to him and smiled. Then she reclined sideways in her seat, so that her head rested on Aaron's shoulder. He felt wonderful.

"She makes me feel like a prince," he thought. "I have to forget all my problems when I'm with her. She's beautiful. Oh Deborah, Deborah, I'm so lucky to have you."

"He's such a terrific guy," thought Deborah to herself. "He's so much fun to talk to also. Very intelligent, handsome, considerate. An all-around wonderful guy. He's having a lot of trouble now. I have to help him out. I'm glad I have something to keep me busy now. It's fun working on the costumes. I'm glad Aaron got it for me."

"I'm ready to start rehearsals," reported François one afternoon.

"Thank God, I was getting worried about them. You sure took a lot of time."

"My dear sir," said François more heatedly. This last remark had made him angry. "What do you want me to make, a trashy film or a good one? I can't very well pick a cast of complete strangers to fill twelve important roles in a few days and expect the results to be satisfactory."

"I'm sorry François. The film is getting on my nerves. It's taking much longer than I had expected. I thought we'd be filmed in--"

"Aha, your greenness is coming out now. Anyone can tell that this is your first film. Have a seat over here, and let me tell you about my first film. That's better. OK listen.

"Seven years ago in Paris I got together with a few of my university friends, and we decided to make a movie. It was going to be a biting satire on our unstable French government. So we assembled all the old alumni that we could find, and we ~~decided to make a movie~~ got to work. My best friend, who was working at the Ministry of Education wrote the script, and I was supposed to direct it. We pooled all our money together to buy the equipment. We rented a few apartments and used them for our indoor sets. Well we never got ~~passed~~ past the first scene.

"In this scene, the premier of France is making love to his mistress

while war is being declared. This was supposed to be the only 'hot' scene in the film, so we agreed to play it up. As you know, censorship isn't very harsh there, and you could leave a lot in. Being young and careless, we decided to find out how far we could go with this scene. Naturally we got carried away, and the girl playing the mistress got pregnant. That cost us all the money we had left to pay for her abortion, and to keep ~~her~~ her quiet. That left absolutely zero in our funds, and the rent on the apartments was already due. No one was willing to pay another franc. Result: we sold our equipment, paid the rent, divided the rest of the money between ourselves, and scrapped the whole deal. Nice story, isn't it?"

"And after that experience, you still insist on bringing sex in?" said Aaron laughingly. "Boy, you Frenchmen never give up, do you?" He felt a lot better now. He wanted to laugh at himself for being so upset over the film. He realized how stupid worrying was, because it didn't help at all."

"Say, have you spoken with the set designers yet?"

"The meeting is set for the day after tomorrow. We shouldn't meet with any difficulties. I hear we have to find a city to work in also. I was expecting as much."

"Does it make ~~any~~^{much} difference to you?"

"To tell you the truth, I'm very happy about it. Most of the work I've done has been on location. I seldom work with sets."

"Aaron, did you hear? I got the part! And rehearsals start in a week. Isn't it exciting?"

"You got it eh? That's terrific. Are you sure you still want the job working on the costumes?"

"Are you kidding? It's fascinating. You can see all the scenes building up through the costumes. You should see some of those outfits! There are different kinds of uniforms, peasant clothes, ball gowns, kapotes, shtrielach, the works. Then we have the clothes of all the professions: tanner, carpenter, butcher, vendor, student, baker, or factory worker. It's great fun. It also takes a lot of hard work. We have millions of pieces of material, and organizing them into costumes is a mammoth undertaking. Fortunately the film is in black and white, so the colours don't have to be accurate."

"It sounds like very interesting work. I hope all the other helpers and technicians are as happy with their jobs as you are. The Italian workers are certainly do make trouble. They've become spoilt from their previous employments in other companies, and think that they can get away with murder and still get paid for it. I think I'm going to fire a few of them."

The rehearsals got under way, and everything went smoothly. The first set was completed, and they were ready to start filming. Then Rome was hit by water pollution, and half the crew fell sick with diphtheria. Aaron was one of these, and when he became delirious one day from a high fever, it was reported that he had started shouting:

"I'm going to scrap this stupid movie! Mordechai was right. I'm going to lose my shirt and I won't be able to get up again. I'm quitting this movie!"

He didn't quit however, and three weeks later, everything went back to normal. It was late autumn and the filming began.

"Aaron, could I see you for a moment?"

"Certainly Rachel, come right in. Have a seat. OK shoot, what is it this time?"

"It's about the children we have. We brought over 50 from Argentina, 37 from Israel, and another 30 have arrived from North America. It's fall now, and we have to organize a school for them. Some of our Argentinian and Israeli crew used to teach, but we'll have to import English teachers for the American and Canadian children."

"Do whatever is necessary, I give you a carte blanche, but try to cut the expenses as much as possible, all right?"

"That's fine. Thanks a lot."

Aaron was going mad. "Still another problem. Boy, they never stop coming. I'd better open up a bureau to take care of the problems that Aaron Levy doesn't have time to solve. Say, it's eleven o'clock now. François told me to go to set number one to see the filming start. It should be interesting. This is the scene with the lovers. I wonder how he's going to do it."

He was walking through the studio outside.

"Wow, this certainly is a big establishment. It's a wonder we're getting it so cheaply. In spite of all their faults, I must admit that these Italians are good to me. They've lent me 17 German tanks, 46 motorcycles, hundreds of uniforms, guns, and at least a dozen bombers. He could hear François' voice in the distance:

"Don't forget," he was saying. "That when you start unbuttoning her dress, you do it very slowly and carefully. The actions have to be very relaxed."

Aaron smiled.

"Monsieur le directeur," he called out when he came closer. "I see you're regressing to your post-university habits."

"Don't worry Aaron. Everything will be all right. The scene only takes three minutes."

"I'm not worried, but don't forget that this has to go through American censorship also."

Soon a whistle blew, accompanied by an order for everyone to get to their places and to keep their voices down. There was a wide plush field with tall grass and dandelions. Aaron could see three cameras moving into position on their rolling platforms, and one attached to a mechanical crane. He approached the actors' tent and peeked in.

"Come on in Aaron," he heard François' voice call from the inside. "I want to introduce you to two of our stars." Aaron lifted the tent flap and went in. There he saw, to his surprise, Deborah sitting on a canvas chair

getting last minute make-up touches.

"This is Deborah Ran, playing Anna Zhitlovsky in the film."

"Yes we've met before," said Aaron with a smile.

"And this is Gabriel Unterman, playing the role of Joseph Bartoszek. I'd like you to meet Aaron Levy, the founder, president, producer, and official worrier of the Yiddish International Film Company."

"Pleased to meet you," said Joseph politely.

"You're not kidding about the 'official worrier,'" remarked Deborah.

"I see you know each other then," said François.

"Sure, I tell her all my problems and she tries very successfully to cheer me up."

"We're starting in two minutes," called a voice from the outside.

At this, everyone got up, and went out.

"Good luck Deborah," said Aaron. "Don't let this Joseph fellow get too fresh."

"Don't worry about me. I have sharp fingernails."

As soon as the filming started, Aaron was surprised to hear that he knew the scene by heart. He mumbled the lines to himself as the actors spoke them. He couldn't take his eyes off Deborah. As the scene progressed, he became jealous. Here was a young actor making love to his girl in the grass.

"How can they let him do it?" he thought as his eyes grew wider and wider. Joseph was unbuttoning her dress, and his hands were caressing her. The cameras were taking in everything. Aaron felt like stomping over to him and giving him a solid kick in the _____. Deborah was his girl. What right did this guy have to make love to her? Then he realized that it was only part of the script, and he felt better.

"Would I ever dare do that to her?" he thought. "Probably not," he decided. "I'm just a weak good-for-nothing when it comes to women. I'll probably be afraid to kiss her. That's a funny thing: when it comes to deciding my future, I'm not afraid of any obstacles; but when it comes to women, I'm a dead fish. How can one person be so inconsistent?"

His thoughts were interrupted by François' voice:

"Cut. That's it. OK gang, that's all for today. We'll meet again tomorrow morning to continue the rehearsals, and at X 3:00 we film at set number two."

"Well how did I look?" asked Deborah approaching Aaron. Her dress was still open, and Aaron couldn't help but stare at her exposed body. She followed his gaze, and her cheeks flushed.

"I must admit I was jealous of Joseph for a moment. In fact, I felt like beating him up for making love to you."

"Did it look that authentic? Wow, that's pretty good. You needn't feel jealous though, because any time you want to do the same, you can," she said jokingly.

"That's very generous of you. I may take you up on that sometimes. Say, how about going out on the town tonight?"

"It's a deal! I'll be ready at five thirty. Is that all right?"

"Sure. I'll pick you up then."

"OK"

The next afternoon, Aaron was walking through set number two, which was a replica of a small town in Poland before the War. [REDACTED]

"This certainly must have taken a lot of careful work," he thought. This was just the way he had always imagined it: muddy streets, old wooden houses, market place with stalls, a well in the centre of town, a synagogue, and all the typical community buildings.

"No wonder it took so long to build. They must have checked every detail. I doubt if anyone could find fault with it."

Further on there was a long building resembling an army barracks for the actors to get ready in. When he entered it, he couldn't believe what he saw. There were at least two hundred people inside, some being made up, others making them up and still others giving last minute instructions.

"This must be a major scene being filmed," thought Aaron. "Look at all those people: men and women of all ages and children. You'd think this was a scene in Whitechapel or Brooklyn at the beginning of the century, not a 'shtetl' scene. I guess they're not taking the scenes in order, because this only comes in in part four. I hope they're not going to blow it up today as well. Oh no, if they destroy it, we won't have anything for the publicity photos I'd better find François and tell him"

He approached one of the make-up men and asked him where he could find the director. He was shown to a table at the far end of the room. There he found François discussing something with his advisors, one of whom was Mister Zaltzman.

"Good afternoon gentlemen," said Aaron. "François, could I speak with you for a moment?"

"Sure, what is it?"

"I was just wondering if you intend to destroy the set today, because we still need it for publicity purposes."

"Good God Aaron, how can you be so stupid? We won't be finished with the set until after the winter. We'll wait until the last minute before we have it blown up."

This is the first of at least a hundred takes on this set. Every movement has to be worked out before hand."

"I guess my worrying was useless then."

"I wish you'd realize that about all your worrying. C'mon with me on the moveable crane. You'll help me direct the actions like an army general" Then he called his advisors, and they approached. Aaron got into the special five-sided cage with François and an elderly advisor. They were immediately lifted ~~in~~ into the air by the crane.

"We'll be up here for a few hours," warned François.

"That's all right with me," answered Aaron.

The advisor nodded. The Frenchman looked around. He could see the entire lot, ~~the entire lot~~. In the distance he noticed the skeleton outline of set number three, a concentration camp.

"I wonder where we're going to find a city for the Ghetto scenes. If worst comes to worst we'll have to build it, I suppose. That will be quite a job."

A siren sounded now, this being the signal for the actors and technicians. In ten minutes everyone was in his place. It was then that Aaron realized the extent of organization of this scene. The actors were dressed in coloured costumes like teams. The ones wearing red were at the market place, the ones wearing green were in front of the synagogue, the ones wearing blue were walking through the streets, and so on. If anyone was misplaced, he would be spotted immediately.

"I must complement you on the colour idea," said Aaron. "It's very ingenious."

"I really don't deserve any credit for that. A friend of mine who is a director thought of the idea a few years ago. It works quite well, doesn't it?"

"Yes it does, but the trouble is that it looks like a complicated football game."

The Frenchman laughed.

Aaron was enthralled by the scene before him. If not for the coloured costumes, he would have thought that he had been transported back in time to a town of the Old Country. He didn't hear his companion shouting orders once the filming started, nor did he notice the historical advisor discussing some details with the former. All he saw was the ~~past~~^{town}, and all he ~~see~~ could think of was the past.

"What a life that must have been: a simple aesthetic life. Deprivation everywhere, but honesty in the atmosphere. Everyone knew everyone else, knew his every action and crime. There was a feeling of togetherness. The

people were generous as a rule, even though they had nothing to give. A wanderer and begger always found a bed and food. On Friday night and on holidays, these travellers were taken in by the inhabitants for a meal. The poor scholar could also expect such a meal. Theirs was a real way of life; there were sayings, ~~anecdotes~~ anecdotes, and every village had its own stories as well as its idiot. There were romances, catastrophes, fairs, mysteries, special visitors and evryone was a ~~part~~ ~~of~~ part of them. In fact everything was exciting: when the dog catchers came along, there was excitement; a wedding or a bar-mitzvah was a communal festivity. And the Jewishness wasn't an act that everybody put on when Friday night came along, and was discontinued the next evening. They were Jews all the time, there were no doubts about it. Almost everyone had a Jewish education. Granted it was a heavily one-sided education, and the people were ignorant about worldly matters, but at least they appreciated their religious and cultural heritage. It was a simple but pure life. Then the pogroms started, factories started appearing, people left for America en masse, and finally the two world wars.

"There could have been the same intensely Jewish life in America. What happened to spoil it? Was it a natural Jewish tendency to assimilate? Was it the American influence which pushed to assimilation? Was it because the Jews finally became richer? That could be it. When the Jews worked in the sweat ~~shops~~ shops, they still read the Yiddish newspapers. No, that's not the answer. Maybe self preservation became too hard on them after they became richer. They no longer wanted anyone to notice them. Maybe it's a combination of them all. Maybe the Jews should have never become rich. Maybe there's no hope for them. Maybe I'm wasting my time. Maybe I'm going to fail. Maybe Yiddish is going to- ~~fail~~"

Aaron's thoughts were interrupted by his companion.

"Hey Aaron, you're not listening to me. I asked you if you thought the scene looked real."

"Real? Oh sure. It looks very real."

"Boy have you been asleep. I might as well have been talking to a brick wall."

"I'm sorry François. I was thinking about something else."

"By the look on your face, I'll bet you were thinking about your problems."

"Among other things."

"You have a one-track mind, don't you?"

"I suppose I do."

"Say, I hear you've been up to something lately, Deborah."

"That's right. I'M organizing a group to study Jewish literature, bible, history, and maybe the Talmud. We have some terrific people in the cast: teachers, professors, research students, and they're all looking for something else to do. Why don't they use this talent of theirs? If we make a study group, everybody will be doing something, either teaching or learning. Then we'll also start a folk singing group for others who want more relaxation. How does it sound?"

"If you really carry this out, then the work on this film will almost be worth it just for your student group."

"Well if you're so enthusiastic about it, how would you like to give a course on Yiddish literature?"

"I should have known you'd have something up your sleeve. However - I accept humbly and gratefully."

"Hurrah! I don't think any film company has ever had a more kind-hearted producer."

"Sure. When will the first meeting be?"

"In an hour."

"An hour?"

"Of course."

"Isn't that a little short notice?"

"Don't be silly. It's only a meeting to meet everyone else. A get-to-know-each-other meeting."

"Whew, I got scared."

"How would you like to come over to my room for an hour until the meeting starts?"

"I'd love that."

Ten minutes later Aaron was sitting in Deborah's room.

"I just thought of something," he said. "You told me that you're organizing a study group for the crew so that they can spend their time together doing constructive things. Well, have you ever noticed how many groups an ordinary middle-aged Jew belongs to. Take a married couple. The wife comes from Vilno and the husband from Bialystok. That automatically makes them a member of the Vilnor Farlag, the Vilno Society, the YIVO, the Bialystok centre. Then they'll probably be members of the Histadrut, the Farband Labour Zionist, the Keren Hatarbut, the Pioneer Women, and the Workmen's Circle. If they have children they belong to the PTA, the YM-YWHA, and probably some other school groups. Then if they're rich, they belong to a dozen concert societies and are friends of this and this university in Israel. There must be a psychology behind it. Maybe it's just a continuation of their life in the Old Country. Because they were so intimate there, and they had so many friends, they want to have the same

thing in America. Is it the same way in Argentina?"

"Oh sure. Only some of the names are different. There the schools are more important though. To belong to a school board or to a school society is the greatest status symbol. As a result, everyone belongs to one of the dozens of ~~xxxxxxx~~ Jewish schools. Then you left out the synagogues. Almost every Jew is a member of a synagogue, let it be orthodox, conservative or reform. Isn't that the way it is with you?"

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"Yes, I suppose so."

"He's so much fun to talk to," thought Deborah. "I really enjoy his company. I wish he'd come to rehearsals though, so I could see him more often. I'm doing pretty well anyways. I'll see him at our meetings, and he often visits the costume department. I can't be too selfish. He has tons of work to do. Maybe he'll let me--"

"Aaron, could I become your private secretary? I only have a few x scenes to film, and my rehearsals are almost completed. I'll be one of the first ones finished."

Aaron laughed. "You certainly are full of surprises today! I suppose you could, but it's a full time job. It means quitting the costume department and letting someone else take over the study group."

"Oh I don't know about that. I'll quit the costume department, but the study group is almost on it's own two feet. It won't need much more organizing. I'll be able to devote as much time as you want to paper work in two or three weeks. Is that all right?"

"Certainly. I'll make all the necessary arrangements to recieve you as my official secretary in three weeks. Boy, you certainly are a versatile woman!"

Winter arrived, and it became impossible to film outside. The indoor scenes in the sound stages were started, but they took time, and had to be done over numerous times until the director was satisfied. Deborah was finished until the summer, and she was now settling down in her new routine as secretary. Her study group had developed into a big undertaking in which everyone participated. Everything was normal and quiet when Deborah gave her boss a letter he had received that morning.

"I think you'll find this interesting. It's from a Rabbi Weingarten in New York. He says he's coming over here for a business trip, and wants to see the set and the people working on the movie."

"Weingarten! Why he's one of those Yiddish-Will-Be-Dead-in-Twenty-Years fellows. As a matter of fact, he is one of the biggest Yiddish haters in North America. You see, he is a German Jew. His father was a big shot in the Haskalah or Enlightenment movement there. Being a full blooded member himself, he looks down on Yiddish as a cheap German dialect. Imagine, he's a rabbi also, and in one of the largest synagogues. To me, that's the most incomprehensible thing in the world. How can he be a modern rabbi and still be a reactionary? A rabbi has to be objective. To him, the importance should lie in being a Jew, he shouldn't differentiate between a Yiddish speaking Jew or an English speaking Jew. Yiddish and its culture is a definite part of Judaism. It's not as if the language were the American Council for Judaism—a Jewish nihilist group. The Yiddish speaking Jews all have a real cultural and ~~sometimes~~ religious background. What right does he have to condemn and discourage them? A rabbi is an important man. Most members of his congregation respect his judgement. How can he do a thing like that?"

"Take it easy Aaron! This isn't a meeting of the U.N. You don't have to get so heated up."

"I'm sorry. I'm sorry. That sort of man burns me up and I begin to smoulder inside. From time to time the safety valve pops, and I automatically explode. It's strange that he should be the first to visit us, not someone who believes in what we're doing."

"Maybe we could make some sort of an excuse not to let him in. He'll only give a negative report of what we're doing."

"No, that would be too easy. We've got to put on a real show for him—the works. We'll show that prejudiced fool a thing or two. When is he planning to come?"

"He says on the 14th. That's twenty days from today"

"Fine. You write him back, and tell him that he's welcome to come whenever he wants to. I've got to talk to François, and work out something

with him."

"...so when he arrives, I want to put on a special benefit show for him."

"What do you have in mind?"

"Well you know that scene in the cheder where the children are learning Talmud? I want him to be present when you film that scene. Do you think you could have it ready for that date?"

"Oh sure. I'm just finishing a scene now. I can start rehearsing this one tomorrow. But why have you chosen this scene above the others?"

"For two reasons: First, he will be seeing Jewish children speaking Yiddish. That destroys his theory about Yiddish being dead in twenty years, because they are the third generation."

"Very clever. I hadn't thought of that."

"That's not all. Then there is the scene itself. The children are learning Gemorah in Yiddish, which shows that the language played a very important role in Jewish life. That will make him think twice, because in his eyes Yiddish is an insignificant jargon."

"OK. I'm game. I'll make it as good as I can."

That night Aaron was sitting in bed reading, when he started to think over the day's happenings.

"Who am I kidding? What difference does it make if seven Jewish children in a movie company can speak Yiddish? Those seven won't keep the language alive. It can still be dead in twenty years and Weingarten with his cronies will be right. Those seven kids can't do anything ~~xxx~~ about it. What difference does it make if ~~Yiddish~~ Gemorah was taught in Yiddish fifty years ago. It isn't any more except at the ultra orthodox establishments. (In fact hardly anyone learns Gemorah now.)

" 'Linguistic chauvinism' to use the proper term, or just plain snob-bishness, has made a wall around Yiddish, has placed it in a Ghetto. How can it get out? The same thing happened in Germany and Russia. Fredrich the Great wrote poetry in French and so did Catherine of Russia. These two countries had people who ~~xy~~ changed it. They encouraged their countrymen to use their own language and to be proud of it. But Moses Mendelssohn had to work backwards.

" 'German is the only cultured language for the Jews,' he said. 'Yiddish is the language of the fish wives and maids.' The great ~~MENDEL~~ Mendelssohn. Sure he was a great man, but great men make great mistakes. It just so happened that his mind worked negatively. It never occurred to him that if Ephraim ~~xxxx~~ Gotthold Lessing was fighting to revive German, he should fight to revive Yiddish or Hebrew.

"Then it started getting worse. For a while everything looked good for Yiddish. Everyone used it to communicate because it was the only language the immigrants had in common. Then came the war, and finally the State of Israel. I guess it isn't fair to blame Israel. They couldn't see any other way. There was only room for one language.

"How do we get out of this mess? It certainly ~~isn't~~ isn't easy. I suppose we have to use snobbishness to combat snobbishness. ~~Y~~ We make Yiddish the style. Write Yiddish--correspond with world Jewry. Speak Yiddish--understand the Yiddish art film. Ha, that's a laugh. Here am I in Rome working on a grade B film in Hollywood standard, and I'm already the emancipator of the Yiddish art film. Of Yiddish culture for that matter. Of course. When this movie is released, there will be a revolution in Jewish life. I'll be hailed as the Great Emancipator. Abraham Lincoln & II. Of course that's what's going to happen, because everybody is so interested in Yiddish, everyone is ~~is~~ so enthusiastic; everyone is dead."

Rabbi Weingarten arrived on the 14th. He looked at everything with a very critical eye, and never stopped disapproving. He started by criticizing the sign over the main entrance. The sign ~~is~~ read "The Yiddish International Film Company," and he insisted that the word "Yiddish" be changed to "Jewish". He reprimanded Aaron for not building a synagogue on the set for the orthodox workers and actors. He even ~~is~~ went so far as to suggest that the movie should be made in Hebrew. That remark set off a gale of laughter from the crew which made him redden considerably. As Aaron had foreseen, attending the filming of the cheder scene also angered the rabbi, for he walked out in the middle.

The rabbi's visit was especially important to Aaron. He was so upset over Weingarten's reaction and attitude, that it instilled a tremendous determination in him to make the film a success. The visit had a similar effect on the other members of the crew. This Aaron discovered on the morning of the 18th. While he was eating breakfast in the mess hall, Isaac Stein came over to him and sat down at his table.

"Good morning Isaac. I haven't seen you for a while. How is the publicity section working out?"

"Oh fine. We're going to have a slight set back however, when that fellow Weingarten comes out with an article in his magazine "The Jewish Beacon". It's just our luck that he had to be the first one to visit when his report means so much. I hope it won't do too much harm."

"Don't worry. When the larger newspapers start coming in, everything will straighten out."

"But the rich influential Jews read his accursed *Beacon! That'll

mean a few hundred thousand dollars less to even out our crazy budget.

At least there was one good result of his visit. I think everyone realizes all the more the importance of their job. His ridiculous criticisms made us see the light. I think our 'mission in life' has made itself ~~known~~ felt by this abnoxious rabbi."

"I see you don't think very highly of him."

"To say the least."

"Well if what you say is true, then his visit has already paid off. I know that I feel the same way myself and even more so."

"Deborah, have you seen sound stage number eleven?"

"You mean the Warsaw house scene?"

"That's the one."

"No I haven't. What does it look like?"

"It consists of five rooms which are beautifully done. It's like a Victorian palace. Instead of describing it, how about seeing the house ~~with~~ with your own two eyes? A picture is worth a thousand words and all that jazz."

"Can you get in now?"

"Sure, I have the keys."

"Boy, you're a real big wheel around here, aren't you?"

"You might say that."

Deborah laughed.

"You look so beautiful when you laugh," said Aaron.

"I have to laugh and look beautiful because you never do."

"What, look beautiful?"

"No, laugh."

"Well it's hard to laugh when there are so many problems."

"But it gets boring doing all the laughing."

"All right. I promise to laugh whenever you like."

"It's a deal."

Set number eleven fascinated them. It consisted of two bedrooms, a kitchen, a salon, and a dining room. The rooms were dark and thickly carpeted. Microphones and lighting equipment were everywhere. They spent an hour examining the pictures in the salon, and leafing through its books. They inspected the bedrooms and kitchen with equal care. Finally they sat down in the dining room. Aaron sat facing Deborah across the breadth of the table. He reached over and took her hand in his.

"I love you," he said quietly.

Deborah smiled and squeezed his hand.

"Another difficulty just came up Aaron."

"Yes, what is it now?"

"We can't decide whether to use subtitles or not. Some of us are absolutely against it."

"Let's look at it this way. This is a film for the world Jewish community. If we want them to see it, they have to understand it. On the other hand, if we use subtitles, then everyone will read them, and will miss one of the most important elements of the film—the language. So I suggest that we only make a few, in those cases where they are absolutely necessary, such as a film festival."

"That's very clever. The only trouble is that putting in subtitles costs ~~a few~~ ^{several} thousand dollars. If we only used them ~~in~~ a few cases, then it wouldn't be worth our while. Next, if we want world Jewry to understand it, we need several sets of subtitles, in French, Spanish, Hebrew, Italian, Russian, and English. That would be sheer lunacy. So what do we do?"

"For Latin America, Russia, and Israel I don't want subtitles. There the Jewish communities are important, and a film only in Yiddish would benefit them immensely. If the French or Italians think the film is good enough, they can pay for the subtitles themselves. ^{or} If we find an audience in those countries which ~~are~~ ^{is} big enough, the profit from it may pay for the price of subtitles, and we can make them on our own. North America is my pet project though, and I want to see what happens if we play the film without subtitles. If it doesn't work out, we can add them ~~at~~ any time with a little difficulty. Is that all right with you?"

"I'll talk it over with the gang, and see what they say. I think they'll agree to it."

The winter finally decided to give the Italians a rest, so it departed for Australia or some such place. By ~~this~~ this time, the Yiddish International Film Company had become a city within a city. The people working there had united into one big happy family, partly through working, eating, and spending their free time together (in the different study groups), and partly through their common language and environment.

Set three, the concentration camp, was receiving its finishing touches, and most of the indoor ~~sets~~ scenes had been completed. The two main problems to be solved were the shaky budget that was up to its neck in debt, and a place to film the Ghetto scene. These were the difficulties that tormented Aaron day and night.

"What's the matter Aaron? You look awfully tired."

"Oh Deborah, Deborah, you can't imagine how much trouble I've been having. Remember that letter I received two weeks ago from Poland? That was from our location manager. He's been going crazy trying to find a site for our Ghetto scene, and he found it in a section of Lublin. He wrote that it resembled the Ghetto site he had in mind in almost every possible detail. That would have been fine and dandy, but we can't film there. They're asking a fantastic price, and we can't meet it. Our friends there tried to bargain with the government, but they wouldn't concede. He thinks they're under orders from the Soviet Union, which is very possible. I was up all night trying to negotiate with them over the long distance telephone, but I only succeeded in wasting \$37.50."

"So what are you going to do?"

"We're simply going to keep looking."

"What happens if we don't find one?"

"François says we'll have to build it here, but if it comes to that, then I'll rewrite the script."

"And leave out the scene entirely?"

"No no, we just won't have any outdoor scenes. It will certainly look pretty cheap that way."

"Don't worry, it'll work out."

That night Aaron dreamt about Mordechai. His Israeli friend always seemed to return and haunt him when things weren't working out. The dream was always more or less the same: it was the scene in Aaron's room in Jerusalem when he had talked with Mordechai for the last time. The same words were always repeated:

"But Aaron, those plans you have can't possibly succeed. They're fantasies, too far-fetched. You'll land flat on your face, not having accomp-

lished anything except loosing your shirt."

The dream never got any further than that. Aaron awoke with a start. He discovered that his fists were tightly clenched and that he was biting his lips.

"Damn you Mordechai," he said after a while. "Why don't you leave me alone? Can't you see that it's hard enough as it is?"

The next morning François came to see him.

"We'll be starting the filming on set three today," he said.

"What about the bombing of Poland?" asked Aaron.

"We haven't recieved the airplanes yet, but as soon as we do, that scene can be done."

"Good. Give me an advance notice of their arrival. I want the reporter from the Day-Jewish Journal to witness the filming of that scene."

"Oh, the Day. That means that the good newspapers are starting to come in, or at least the ones that are on our side. That will help our publicity department. Maybe we'll even raise some money. You must have read the article that Weingarten wrote."

"I certainly did."

"It was awful, wasn't it?"

"You're not kidding."

"What other newspapers will be represented?"

"Oh I don't know. I hear that they're very excited about us in spite of Weingarten's report. Most of them should send someone to find out what's happening."

Work began to speed up now. The filming on set three went very well. Four hundred Italians were hired for the mass scenes. The German airplanes and Panzer divisions had also arrived.

Mister E.G. Cantor, a leading reporter of the Day-Jewish Journal arrived on Friday, April the 28th. While witnessing the filming of a scene in which a woman is executed for smuggling food, Mister Cantor was so moved, that Aaron feared he would faint. The special event however, was the filming of the Germans overrunning Poland. It wasn't a very elaborate scene, because part of it would be taken from a Nazi war film, but everyone was excited.

The first part was the bombing of set number one, the shtetl. François was very nervous about this, because it was the first scene of this kind that he had ever directed. This wasn't a scene that could be rehearsed very well for so many people were involved, and once the town was bombed, the scene couldn't be done over again. Fortunately, he had an American advisor who specialized in battle scenes, to help him. For the American, this was only child's play. He claimed that he had at one time directed 25,000,000 men in a superspectacle Hollywood movie. François had prepared the expres-

sions of the actors, and their ~~x~~ actions; the American directed the armed divisions and 'planes. The reporter was running around meanwhile asking a thousand questions. Finally the siren sounded, and the filming began.

The heart beats of the spectators seemed to be synchronized with the throb of the oncoming bombers. The cameras moved into position. A bomb exploded somewhere on the set. The bombers approached. François was as excited as if a real war were going on. The 'planes came closer. A signal was given and the actors in the town began to shout and run about wildly. The camera turned on them, and then on the 'planes. The airplanes swooped down over the town, and a bomb exploded in the market place. Another 'plane came down for the kill, this time with a machine gunner—ten people fell. Another bomb exploded. The town was on fire. And then it was all over. François heaved a sigh of relief. The first part had gone off smoothly.

The second part consisted of a Panzer division overrunning and destroying a farm. The filming was delayed when one of the tanks broke down and had to be repaired. The American was there again, giving last minute instructions to the tank drivers. The whole scene was supposed to use up only 90 seconds of the screen's time, but it was stopped seven times in the filming. The American later explained:

"X The first part was a bomber attack. That sort of thing is very hard to control. Once the town is bombed, nothing more can be done. The second part is easier to direct. The tanks move on the land, so they can be stopped. Only six actors take part, instead of a few hundred. So this type of scene can be made to perfection, and in order to achieve perfection, you have to start over numerous times."

That explanation suggested to François that the first part wasn't well done, although he had no complaints about it.

"Aaron, there's a long distance call for you from Vienna. IT's Samuel, the location director."

"What's he doing in Vienna?" Aaron picked up the receiver. "Hello Sam, this is Aaron speaking."

"Hi, I've finally found what we're looking for."

"In Vienna?"

"That's right. Their slum district here resembles the Ghetto scene I have in mind. It isn't as good as the one in Lüblin, but the price is reasonable."

"Well, that's not exactly where I wanted to film, but I guess we can't be too choosy at this stage of the game."

~~that~~ "I know how you feel. You'll ~~simply~~ have to consider it as a business deal. We're simply renting a plot of land from them."

"Sure, that's what it is—a business deal," said Aaron wearily.

"I'm certainly glad I found it, because I was just about ready to quit. I'll be signing the contract tomorrow."

"That's fine. I'll have François write you out a report. He can tell you when to expect us. I'll write you if anything else comes up. It's cheaper that way."

As Aaron replaced the receiver, he realized that work would have to be speeded up in order to reach Austria as soon as possible to complete the film.

"More problems," he thought. "You think it's good news, but it's only another problem in disguise. Boy this film business is getting on my nerves."

After this, everything began moving at a frantic pace. The filming went on for eight hours daily instead of five. The reporters from all the large Jewish newspapers started coming in to take a look. Advance notices of the film's opening appeared in a few cities. The publicity section was going full blast. All the necessary arrangements had been made for the migration to Vienna. The film had already exceeded three times the original budget, but no one cared anymore. Money wasn't important now, only completing the film. As the work kept piling up, Aaron kept sinking into darker depressions.

"Why don't you sign off now and get some sleep, Deborah," he said one evening. "I still have some work to do."

"And leave you here alone? Nothing doing. I'm staying until you're finished."

"All right. While you're at it, how about helping me with these bills. Just look at these things:

"28,125 lire only to pay the Italian tank drivers in a scene that takes ninety seconds.

"45,000 lire for concentration camp costumes.

"796,320 lire for a fake railroad station including tracks, an engine and ten boxcars.

"48,000 lire for another barbed wire fence.

"100,000 lire for something else. Another 100,000 for ammunition.

"Bills bills bills, when will they ever end? Won't we ever finish this damn film? How much longer can I hold out here? I feel like exploding any minute now. God, how much more can I take?"

"C'mon Aaron. Let's go. You're not going to get any work done now. Don't be so stubborn. That's better."

"Oh Deborah, I'm going to give up."

"Deborah, what's this I hear about Aaron in the hospital? Is it true?"

"That's right. Last night he had a nervous breakdown. He was taken to the Rome Central and has to stay there for two weeks."

"Oh boy, is that ever going to slow us up. He sure has been taking a beating eh?"

"You're not kidding. His stay in the hospital won't make him any happier either. If I know Aaron, he'll be back to work in five days. He'll probably have me transfer all his work to the hospital."

"Does François know about it?"

"Certainly. In fact, he's at the hospital now."

"You can only talk to him for a few minutes, Mr Cassin."

François nodded and walked down the corridor. He found Aaron's room, knocked on the door, and entered. Aaron was propped up in bed in a half sitting position. The Frenchman stared at him for a few moments, speechless. Aaron looked ten years older.

"Hello Mister Director," said Aaron feebly. "Please don't look at me with that ghastly expression on your face. You make me feel sicker than I am."

François feigned a smile.

"That's better. Have you got anything special to tell me?"

"Only that you needn't worry. We're only leaving in three weeks, so you have plenty of time to recuperate. That is, if you're not sent to a--"

"Don't worry. You won't find ME locked up in a sanatorium. I'll be starting work as soon as I'm strong enough to write."

"I see that Deborah has been taking very good care of you; slippers, bathrobe, pyjamas, magazines--everything a man could ask for."

"She's a terrific girl. I'm crazy about her."

"I don't blame you."

At this point the nurse entered and asked François to leave.

"Well, I'll be seeing you pal. Keep well, and don't develop any complications."

"I won't thanks for coming."

"François, all the study groups had a combined meeting, and we decided to buy Aaron something to show him that we're thinking about him. You've talked to him in the hospital. What do you think he needs the most?"

"Hmmm, let me see. Well he told me that as soon as he's feeling strong enough to write, he's going to start working again. I think it would be a good idea to buy him a dictaphone."

"But that's such a small thing, and we're so many people."

"That doesn't matter. If you send him that with a card that everyone signs, then you'll be doing the best possible thing."

"Okay, we'll do it."

"Good morning Aaron. How are you today?"

"As long as you're here, I'm always fine."

Deborah smiled.

"I have a little something for you. It's from the entire cast and crew." She opened the door, and a man came in carrying a gigantic plaque of a dark polished wood. On it were nailed hundreds of silver strips with names on them.

"Good Lord, what's that?"

"It's a get well card from everyone. It says: 'To our beloved hard working boss, a reminder from his crew, that we're all wishing him well.' "

"And those are the names of every single person on the company payroll?"

"That's right. This isn't all. Jack, bring in the other present please."

The man obeyed and brought in a middle sized box, wrapped in colourful paper. Deborah opened it for him carefully.

"A dictaphone!" cried Aaron. "This certainly is a usefull gift."

Deborah beamed with delight.

"François thought of it," she said.

"Boy, I never ~~ke~~ knew I had so many friends."

Aaron was released from the hospital after two weeks. As it turned out, he hadn't very much work to catch up on because of his new dictaphone. He was still very weak, but when everything and everybody began moving out, he accompanied them. In Vienna there was plenty of organizing to do; accommodations to be found, a safe place for the equipment, and arrangements for the clearance of the slums. To his delight, he discovered that he could use as many Austrians for the film as he needed, because they could take the roles of the Nazis. Work began immediately on building a brick wall around the rquired area, and demolishing a few buildings, (which would later have to be rebuilt).

The set was finally ready after a month of feverish preparation, because the deadline for the film's release had already been set, and they were being charged by the day from the municipal government. This last piece of work was a combined effort of almost everyone. Every single set designer, carpenter, mason, electrician, cameraman, casting director, painter, costume worker, make-up man and actor was on the job nine hour a day. At the same

time, work was being done in Rome on editing the thus far completed film, and an ingenious musical sound track consisting of a theme and bits and pieces of Bach, Beethoven, Mahler, Rachmaninoff, and Stravinsky was being assembled.

Eight hundred people had to be used for some of the scenes, and that meant plenty of organization work. Because of the great numbers, there were many casualties, ranging from a scraped knee to a heart attack. A helicopter was needed for the aerial views. One railway line had to be extended into the film site. This meant laying tracks and switches, as well as remodelling the freight cars to resemble those used by the Germans to transport human cargo. All the stores, restaurants and theatres in the "Ghetto" had to be covered up or changed. The inhabitants of most of the houses were allowed to remain there (Aaron had no other choice), and they presented other difficulties. Then the currency had to be changed from lire to groschens and ~~shi~~ schillings. One problem which was averted ~~by~~ because of the location was that of language. The Austrians could understand Yiddish reasonably well, if the speaker knew which words were of German origin. The Austrians were however obviously irritated by what they considered a mutilation of German. The crew, on the other hand, felt an instinctive hostility for German. The Austrians were very cooperative and friendly though, and no arguments resulted. On the whole, everything went according to schedule.

Only twice was the filming interrupted; once by Assumption Day on August 15, when no one could work, and once when an electrical storm ruined several electric installations on the set.

"Deborah, have you read what the Jewish newspapers are writing about us? This is the break they have been waiting for, and they're pinning all their hopes on us. They are very enthusiastic about it."

"All I've read is what the Buenos Aires Yiddish newspapers have written, and let me tell you, that's pretty good."

"It's really quite sad when you think about it though; that one measly film in Yiddish should be considered the saviour of the language. When you remember how rich it's cultural life was thirty years ago: the schools, scientific institutions, theatre groups, newspapers, political parties; it was a whole way of life. But maybe they're right. Our film could be the beginning of something new. A Yiddish life on a dynamic scale, on an international scale! I wonder if it could work." Aaron smiled whimsically. "Just think. This may be the beginning of a new Yiddish. A renovated Yiddish with modern touches. That would be something!"

"It sounds very possible," remarked Deborah.

"If we don't stop here. We've got to ~~continue~~ continue our work, to expand. How does 'The Society to Revive the Yiddish Theatre' sound to you?"

"Sounds great!"

"Or how about the 'Young Yiddish Literary Society'?"

"It looks like our work has only begun."

"That's right. When I was in the hospital, I thought that I would discontinue my work after the film would be finished, and return to Israel. Now I see that I won't be going back for quite some time."

"You'll need to have a private secretary though."

"I have a strange feeling that my private secretary will soon be made my official life companion, so she won't have a choice in the matter."

"Is that a proposal?"

"I suppose you might call it that."

"Aaron, I have good news for you. I'm filming the very last scene today."

"Well, that calls for a celebration. Let's see, I still have nine hours to work out something. At what time will you be finished?"

"At 4:30."

"Good. At 7:30 the whole cast is invited to the Habsburg Hotel. We're having a ~~celebration~~ party!"

At 3:15, Aaron was at the ghetto set. He went into the main office from where he could see everything clearly. The hero was bringing his frail and ill mother to the Umschalplatz, and was pushed into the waiting box-cars with hundreds of other Jews. Aaron could see the crane cameras moving over the hero and his mother. Then the hero disappeared into the car and the sliding door was locked by the guards. The camera moved back to take in the whole view. After a minute, the train started moving, and the cameras followed it until it faded from sight.

"Cut!" he heard François exclaim. "Well gang, that's it!"

A great shout of joy rose from the set. In a second, Aaron flicked on the public address system and announced:

"Listen everyone, this is Aaron speaking. Get dressed and ready as soon as possible. I have made arrangements for a gala celebration at 7:30. The place is the Habsburg Hotel. I want everybody to be there!"

The cheering grew even louder.

Aaron, Deborah, and François arrived together in a chattered limousine at 8:00. The main entrance was overflowing with people. The doorman could be seen gesticulating wildly to encourage the people to enter the hotel.

"Look who's here," cried out someone from the crowd. "The director,

producer, and the president of the study groups!"

"The Triple Entente!"shouted someone else.

The limousine stopped.The chauffeur stepped out and opened the door to the three V.I.P.s.François in a tuxedo and top hat got out and helped Deborah.She appeared in a blue satin ball gown.This sight brought forth oohs and ahs from the crowd.Finally Aaron came out in a white dinner jacket and black trousers.

The crowd made a path for them as they entered the hotel arm-in arm, Deborah between her two cavaliers.They walked through a long corridor until they came to the Grand Salon.Inside they could see dozens of tables covered with plates,flowers,cutlery,glassesand people seated a round them.When the three entered,everyone stood up and gave them an ovation.At the head table were seated the newspaper reporters,Jewish community leaders ~~th~~ who were visiting the set,and some of the big men in the film.

"Speech! Speech!"shouted the crowd.

Aaron stood up and went to the microphone.Soon the shouting died down and Aaron began:

"Now isn't the time ~~y~~ to speak,because you haven't eaten yet,and God only knows that you deserve a good meal after months of spaghetti,pasta,oily salads,and now wienerschnitzle every day.However since you asked for it,I'm going to take the liberty of saying a few words.

"Firstly,François and I have decided to make another movie next year, so if you're still interested by then,we'll be needing you."

The crowd cheered.

"Then I want to tell you that the première of our film will be on September 30th in New York.The theatre is the Rialto on Broadway,incase you have trouble finding it.I have two hundred tickets to give out to you on a first-come-first-serve basis."

"Lastly,I ~~knew~~ am sure you'll all be interested to know that engaged to be married."

The response that met this last remark almost brought the cieling down.A standing ovation followed and only ceased when Deborah and Aaron took a bow.

"They certainly are in good humout tonight,"remarked François.
But Aaron was too busy with his fiancée to hear him.

The première on September the 30th was a tremendous success. All Jewish New York was there to see it, and they were impressed. The Yiddish International Film Company received a combined grant of \$100,000 from FAR-BAND Labour Zionist, American and Canadian Jewish Congress, and the J. Cohen Foundation.

Two months after the première, the film was appearing in all the world's great Jewish communities. One day Daniel Cohen came to Aaron in his New York office.

"The film isn't working out in most of the American cities. In Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angeles, Toronto and Vancouver, for example, hardly anyone comes to see it because it has no subtitles."

"So it didn't work out, did it? I suppose that was too much to expect. The only thing that can work here is evolution, not revolution, it seems. I hope that people will at least go to see it when subtitles are put in. Maybe someday it will be possible to omit the subtitles all over the Jewish world. Okay Dan, order back all the reels in these cities, and in three months subtitles will be in."

"Aaron, there's someone here to see you. He says he's a friend of yours."

"All right, show him in."

In a few seconds a tall dark-skinned young man walked into Aaron's office.

"Mordechai! You old bum, what are you doing here?"

"I was passing through New York, and I decided to come in and congratulate you, after your tremendous success. I've seen the film, and I take back whatever I told you in Jerusalem."

Aaron stared at him for a moment, speechless. He finally realized that success had been his.

END