

A Gilgul fun a Nign tells a tale of musical migration.

**[The Master]**

A violinist by the name of Reb Chaiml is hired to play at a wedding, on the condition that he commission and perform a new requiem by the great composer, Pedotser .

**[The Street]**

Unable to meet Pedotser in person, he resorts instead to stealing one of the composer's freylekhs, which he hears by chance in the street.

**[The Dirge]**

Reb Chaiml turns the joyous dance into a mournful dirge.

**[The Rich Guests]**

The dirge finds its way to a rich wedding in Kiev, and is reconfigured as a maniacal dance by the groom's drunken family.

**[The Opera]**

Now the melody finds its way into the Yiddish theater in Warsaw, where it is reborn as light opera.

**[The Organ Grinder]**

The next time we hear Reb Chaiml's piece, it has become an organ grinder's tune, cranked out by a trio of Warsaw street performers.

**[The Beggar]**

One of them, a girl who was abducted from her parents and is soon stricken blind with typhoid, eventually adopts it as a beggar's lament.

**[The Scholar]**

In that form, the melody finds its way into the ear of a Torah scholar.

**[The Rabbi]**

The scholar's master, Reb Dovid, hears it and considers it to be filled with "the essence of Torah and Shabbes holiness."

**[The Disciples]**

The Rabbi directs his followers to sing the holy song. And the mournful beggar girl? She turns out to have been the daughter of the couple at whose wedding Reb Chaiml first played his requiem. The girl's father brings the tune with him to America, where it is recast as a bouncy swing-era ditty, and scatted over to a jazz-band accompaniment.