
(Yiddish, traditional)

LULLABY A STORY

Once there was a story
The story wasn't feeling happy
The story started out by singing
About a Jewish king

Once there was a king
The king had a queen
The queen had a vineyard
Lullaby the vineyard

The vineyard had a tree
The tree had a branch
The branch had a nest
Lullaby the nest

The nest had a bird
The bird had a wing
The wing had a feather
Lullaby the feather

The king had to die
The queen had to fade away
The tree had a breakdown
The bird vanished from the nest

(Yiddish, 20th century)

THE EVIL EYE (THE GOOD EYE) EINEHORE

The child frets
yawns
or cringes a lot

The adult
yawns
“he just doesn’t feel good”

or
they have a cold or a flu
“a light disease”

II DIAGNOSIS

The mother or the grandmother goes and
licks out the eyes

“the child has einhore the eyes are salty”

“She takes a glass of water
and charcoal

She puts in three pieces of charcoal

If they fall down
If they sink . . .”

or
“You take a glass of water
You put three or four twigs on top of the glass
Crack an egg over the branches

If the egg sticks in them . . .”

or
“Hold a new knife at the head
If it turns black . . .”

III TREATMENT

By charm
in silence
in whispers
facing east

Schneider:

"I once asked
'Tell me what it is woman
what a good eye means
How do you cast out a good eye?'

She says
'This is a secret'

I say
'Teach me the secret I should know too'

She says
'I am only an old Jewish woman
Should I teach you to cast out a good eye?
It's nothing with nothing
One time it may succeed
and one time it may not succeed'

She teaches me

She says:

'Woe is the child
'So is the mama'

She takes the corner of her dress or apron

She chants

'Orneh borneh
dembeneh korneh
buckwheat and beans
dembeh korneh
oaks and black beans:
he who gave you the good eye
from his head his own eyes fly'

or

'In the rafters two cracks lie

in wait to catch the evil eye
Cracks in all the corners lie
in wait to catch the evil eye'

or
'No evil no terror
no wheat and no bran
May Sarah abandon
her crying and pain
Not till the ceiling crops with rye
shall she receive an evil eye' "

H.L. & BARBARA KIRSHENBLATT-GIMBLETT

(German & Hebrew, 14th century)
A POEM TO EASE CHILDBIRTH

o bear mother lie down
o you womb
o old as I am lie down
do not carry me into
the grave
to be buried inside me
lie down
there's a book called the bible
it says
o bear mother lie down
in your place
where God wills it
o holy this power of God

J.R.