

[It was a hard life]

Beliefs and Customs - Folkstuff

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Remarks

I'll give you a way

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“It was a hard life that time with the boarders, with the living. And you know? But still, between people, between workers and boss was more “mentslukeit” then it is today. I was working in a place for over a couple years. They used to force up the “green” machines, learning the trade. The boss 3 8157

would say to the greena. “What's going to be the purpose tachlus? Why don't you work up for yourself?” Already is beginning the union. The bosses wanted greenas. So the boss would come up to a greenhorn and tell him. “I'll give you a way. The same as I did. You take up a couple of girls, you'll make a living.” As I told you, it was an unwritten law. Ten dollars and work two weeks for nothing. They used to give you the two girls to learn them. And the ten dollars he used to take. OR THE FOREMAN. After you learned them for a short time, they used to take them away from you and then they give you other ones. If you want to do it, alright. Otherwise you had to leave the place. I had a girl. I don't know. She was a “nahr” (simpleton). We used to call her “the horse.” She knew one thing to make. I thought she's alright, so I don't watch what she's doing. All of a sudden I hear in that shop a noise! Terrible! I don't know he's the boss. The boss never used to come into the shop. The foreman comes over to me. “This is the boss, Mr. Simon.” I didn't even know the man. “Look at your work” he says to me. I look. It was something terrible. Instead of answering, I was smiling. “What are you laughing,” he says. “What can I do? I didn't make. The girl made it.” “Go home right away.” He sends me away. And then he truns turns right back to the forelady. “Lena, is that man married or single?” I said. “Next year I'm marrying.” “Lena,” he says, “give him back his job.” That's what I mean. “Mentaluckeit.” Not like today.”
