HOW THE GRINCH STOLE THE LATKES
by Rabbi Ed Feinstein, adapted for Canada by Rabbi Dan Moskovitz

Oh the Jews of old Jewville, just loved holidays,
And kept them religiously, in all of their ways.
On Rosh Hashana, they ate apples and honey
Then came to the Temple, all dressed in Armani.
On holy Yom Kippur, they prayed and they fasted
Through rabbis' long sermons,
they kvetched but they lasted;
Till Neila was over, and checking their clocks,
They went home to break fast, on bagels and lox.

They sat and they feasted, in glorious Sukkos,
And on Simchat Torah, they danced off their tuchas.
Come Purim they brought to the shul, their noisemakers,
While dressed up in costumes, like the great Don Cherry.
On Pesach they asked the Hagadda's Four Questions,
And ate so much matza, which is bad for digestion.

But of all of the holidays, that we Jews remember
The most special in Jewville, was the one in December.
With tales of brave Judah, with latkes and dreidels
Hannuka thrilled Jewville's boychiks and maidels.
Hannuka brought all their families together,
To sing and to celebrate, no matter how cold the weather!

But there was one among them
Who got no joy and no nachas
From candles and latkes, and dreidels and brachas.
In fact, though his home was so close to the sewer,
It made him quite nauseous to hear Maoz Tzur.

Hannuka made him so angry and blue-ish
You'd hardly have guessed that he was born Jewish.

Since his Bar Mitzvah, he grew not an inch.
He was surly and hairy, and they called him the Grinch.

He lived on a mountaintop, far above town,
When Hannuka came, he's declare with a frown,
"I hate all your holidays, it's all hocus pocus
When I tell the story, I'm for Antiochos!
Because miracles – they are all made up and fake!
Anyone who believes them, makes a mistake.
Maybe Macabees found some oil in the Temple
But soon it burned out, that's the truth, just that simple.
And so my dear children, here's the cold hard dark fact,
If you're looking for oil, it's under Iraq."

"They're polishing menorahs," he snarled with a sneer,
"Tomorrow is Hannuka, it's practically here."
Then he growled
with his Grinch fingers nervously drumming,
"I must find a way to stop Hannuka from coming."

So the night before Hannukah,
when the town smelled of latkes,
The Grinch donned his hat and zipped up his *gatkes*,
He snuck through the town,
and while latkes were cooking,
He sprinkled his poison, while no one was looking.

No one got sick, and no one got flu-ish
But Grinch's bad latkes changed everyone Jewish.
The Grinch, he was clever, with a great sense of humor,
'Cause his evil poison, turned kids into consumers.
And when families told tales of wise Mattathias,
All kids could say was: What did you buy us?
We want Play Station, X-Box, or we'll make a fuss,

We want Barbies and Legos, because, Toys R Us!

The parents, they fretted, “Should we light the Menorah?
Our children have turned into Sodom and Gemorah!”
What will happen to us when the poison effects us,
To keep ourselves happy, we’ll have to buy a new Lexus?

Soon all of Jewville was crazy with shopping,
To a hundred and eight stores they went without stopping.
No one sat home to sing Mi Yemallel,
‘Cause the best things in life were at Dollarama.
They forgot Judah’s fight against gods who were foreign,
What mattered to them was J.Crew and Ralph Lauren.
They stopped making latkes with their special aroma,
Unless they could find ‘em at Williams Sonoma.
A people who once died but their God would not switch,
Bowed down to an idol called Abercrombie and Fitch.

As the dark fell on a Hannuka, bereft of its light,
The Grinch cackled loudly into the night.
“I knew it! Their miracles are empty and false,
Just give them some credit cards and bring them to malls.
They’ll soon forget all it means to be Jews,
When there’s such nice things on sale
at Holt-Renfrew.”

But there was still one in Jewville
who was immune to his potion,
For her, Hannuka meant dedication -- devotion.
Susie L’Jew was a Jew oh so loyal,
But no latkes for her, she’s allergic to oil.
So while all Jewville went crazy with materialism,
Susie stayed rooted in true Judaism.

She knew it was her task, like old Mattathias,
To break down the idols that bind and that tie us,
To gods that are false and ideals so untrue,
And remind us the real meaning of being a Jew.
“But how, I’m just one, in all of this madness,
How? I’m a kid,” she cried in her sadness.

Then she had an idea, it filled her with elation.
It’s what the great Rabbis might call a revelation
She knew what to do, it was clear as can be,
So she picked herself up, like a new Macabee.
There was Judah and Levi and Estee too,
Jonah, Yael, and now, Susie L’Jew.

She gathered her candles and Hannukiah,
And in case she got hungry, a Sufganiah.
Then she marched to the mall, with courage, no fears,
She went to do battle between The Bay and Sears.
She stood in the food court, and climbed up on a table,
She held up her menorah as high as she’s able.
And called out her message in a voice loud and free:
“Who is on God’s side, come forth! Come to me!”

Everyone froze and looked on in distress,
They looked out from London Drug and out from Canadian Tire,
At the little girl zealot with her great Jewish ire,
They heard her at Nike’s and even the Gap!
A moment of silence, then a sigh of emotion,
As everyone woke up from the Grinch’s bad potion.
“What are we doing here, with all of this stuff?
We don’t need all this merchandise, we have enough!”
So they dropped all their shopping bags,
all they purchased with plastic,

They all ran right home, it was fantastic!
For those capitalistic, it was disaster,
The sale figures came in ten percent below last year.
But for those faithful to God, it was a moment to see,
Just like the first Hannuka in 166 BCE.

They all went right home and lit up the bright Shamas,
They sat with their families and recited God's promise:
"Not by might or by power, but by spirit and soul,
Not by power or might, shall the world be made whole."

While they all sat at home, and they sang Sevivon,
Only Susie remained at the mall all alone.
But she wasn't alone, she could smell his bad stench,
He stepped out of the darkness, uh oh, it's the Grinch.

He was mad beyond words, you could say he was furious,
But truth to be told, he was even more curious.
"How did you do that, my plan you just foiled,
Do you know what it took to poison their oil?
I thought it was brilliant, this potion can't fail
To lure them from Costco to buying retail."

Susie set down, her lit up menorah,
And answered the Grinch from her knowledge of Torah.
"Don't you know, didn't you learn, at school or at home?
In Pirke Avot, chapter four, taught Ben Zoma --
To get all that you want, will just make you sick,
To want what you've got, is life's greatest trick.
"Tonight, Mr Grinch, the world's dark, the world's cold,
So tonight, Mr Grinch, the story is told,
How Judah the warrior set down his sword,
And proceeded to light up the House of the Lord.

He needed pure oil to light the menorah,
He needed eight-day's worth according to Torah,
But they found just one jar in the Temple's vast towers,
They found just enough for twenty-four hours.

"Judah, he lit it, because with all of his might,
He believed in each person is a spark of God's light.
And if all of that light, we combine and we share,
In the night's cold cold darkness, we'll know God is there.
It's not the stuff, Mr Grinch, that we crave so hysterical,
But sharing our light, is the Hannuka miracle."

The Grinch stood transfixed, he lost all his fight,
The Grinch stood there mystified,
he knew Susie was right.
The Grinch was transformed that Hannuka night,
For in Susie's menorah he saw God's true light.

Since then he's done a miraculous t'shuva,
He comes to the minyan, he's a shaker and mov'a
He sings with the choir, he knows every song,
And it's said he does Hannuka all the year long.

That is our story, dear boychiks and maidels,
So when you sit down to play with your dreidels.
Remember brave Susie, who made friend of a foe,
That's why it's said: Nes Gadol Haya Po!