

The DreydelMaker (excerpt)

by Daniel Passamaneck

Dov gave one of his five remaining zloty to the attendant, and took his place among three other players. The table around which they stood had a surface about a handwidth wide, surrounding a wide circular well an arm's length across and as deep as a fist, its bottom faced with polished stone that glinted in the lantern-lit barn. Each man held a dreydel, or one lay on the table before him. Dov put two more zloty into the kitty under the attendant's watchful eye, and the other men looked him over dubiously. The attendant removed the kitty from the table and turned to Dov. "New pony rides," the attendant barked, and the other men sharpened their gaze.

Dov pulled out his dreydel and gave it a desultory flick from the hip; it leapt in a graceful arc, entering the well like a living thing returning home. Around him, jaws dropped. The cast had been effortless, casual; the pony had landed square on target and spun intently, gliding across the polished surface until with a clatter it struck the wall and tumbled to the stone. Gimmel. As if ordained. Inside his chest, Dov's heart sang. His eyes, however, remained like two blue chips of ice from the millpond beyond. No reason to celebrate yet, he thought. Just let the pony run. I'll have a lifetime to cheer him on after tonight.

"Gimmel!" shouted the attendant, handing over the kitty. Dov tipped the bowl into the canvas sack tied to his waist as the others at the table looked sourly upon him. The kitty had eaten six of their zloty, and then coughed up a nice golden hairball for Dov. Beginner's luck, they wordlessly agreed, anteing again - but then kept a watchful eye on the underfed scrapman who'd just appropriated their potential winnings.

With eight zloty back in the pot, the first man pulled out his pony, a gaudy handful of painted oak, and tried to replicate the hip-flip that Dov had demonstrated. Instead, his throw went wild and wide, his pony soaring off the table altogether and landing amid the Dogesh rigs. An outcry was generally voiced as he shamefacedly recovered it. Naturally, his turn was forfeit - a rulebook Nun, and nothing gained.

The next man took no chances with his sturdy pine dreydel, spinning it from within the well; it landed solidly and ran decently till collapsing on - "Shin!" Clenching his jaws, he paid his two zloty penalty to the kitty. The third and fourth men also Shinned, and also visibly bit back curses upon doing so and paying their two-coin dues. The kitty was loaded to fourteen zloty when the throw came again to Dov, the stranger among strangers, the last winner too, and on both scores an object of suspicion. As he began to pull his mahogany pony once again from his pocket, the man beside him, florid and pockmarked, his nose running wetly into his mustaches, lodged a shrill challenge: "Pony check!"

The call brought attention Dov would have preferred not to have aroused, but it was all part of the outspinning of the evening and so he awaited the Emeszogger in something like repose. A knot of men gathered, a small crowd, with Dov at its center like the void at the center of a whirlpool, his pony resting cool and ready in the palm of his hand. Within moments the Emeszogger arrived, tall and finely-arrayed in the black and white of Yom Echad. The crowd parted. He inquired in a clear voice, quiet but easily heard: "Who challenges?"

The man next to Dov indicated himself with a small wave of his red, runny nose. The Truthteller turned to him and asked with somber gravity, "Who's challenged?" The other man shnozzpointed to Dov. Dov stepped forward and let the Emeszogger look right into his eyes, perfectly calm though the air all around them was charged

with anticipation. A corner of the Truther's mouth crept up as Dov handed over his dreydel.

Upon the pony touching the Emeszogger's palm, the tall man's eyes sparkled. He could feel it, too. He turned, still imperious, to the table, placing in the center of its well a small glass beaker, which he filled from a flask until slivovitz reached a marked level circumference. He moved the tumbler to two or three other spots, verifying the table. Satisfied, he tossed back the brandy and, still unflinching, raised up Dov's pony and released it briskly into the well.

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* * *%0A%20* * *
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%20Checks%20if%20the%20passed%20in%20class%20exists%0A%20
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* * *%20@param%20c%0A%20* * *%20@return%0A%20
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* * *
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/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsClassExists%28c%29%20%7B%0A%20%20%20return
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* * *%0A%20* * *
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%20Checks%20if%20the%20firebug%20console%20is%20available%0A%20
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* * *%20@param%20c%0A%20* * *%20@return%0A%20
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* * *
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/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsFirebugConsoleAvailable%28c%29%20%7B%0A%20%
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* * *%0A%20* * *
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%20General%20method%20used%20to%20debug%20exceptions%0A%20
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* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20location%0A%20
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* * *%20@param%20e%0A%20* * *%20@return%0A%20
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* * *
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/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsReportExeception%28location%2Ce%29%0A%7B%0A%
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* * *%0A%20* * *
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%20This%20will%20log%20a%20string%20to%20the%20firebug%20console%0A%20
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* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20str%0A%20* * *
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%20@return%0A%20* * *
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/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsDebugLog%28str%29%0A%7B%20%20%20%0A%20%
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* * *%0A%20* * *
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%20This%20will%20get%20an%20attribute%20and%20decode%20it.%0A%20
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* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20elem%0A%20* * *
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* * *
%29%22%3B%0A%09%20%20var%20regex%20%3D%20new%20RegExp%28%20rege
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20This%20allows%20to%20redirect%20the%20top%20window%20to%20the%20pas
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20url%0A%20* * *
%20@return%0A%20* * *
/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsRedirectTop%28url%29%0A%7B%0A%20%20%20try%
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20This%20will%20find%20an%20element%20by%20id%0A%20
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20elemId%0A%20
* * *%20@return%0A%20* * *
/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsFindElementById%28elemId%2Cdoc%29%0A%7B%0A
* * *%20This%20is%20the%20handling%20for%20IE%20
* * *
/%0A%09%09if%28doc.all%29%0A%09%09%7B%0A%09%09%09elem%3Ddoc.all[elem
-
%29%20%7B%0A%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%09elem%3Ddoc.all[i]%3B%0A
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20Get%20the%20location%20of%20one%20element%20relative%20to%20a%20pare
* * *%0A%20* * *%20@param%20ref%0A%20* * *
%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20the%20reference%20element%2C%20
* * *
%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20%20element%0A%20
* * *%20@param%20elem%0A%20* * *%20@return%0A%20
* * *
/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsGetLocation%28ref%2C%20elem%29%20%7B%0A%20
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20This%20is%20used%20to%20update%20the%20position%20of%20an%20element
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20iFrame%0A%20
* * *%20@param%20anchor%0A%20* * *
%20@return%0A%20* * *
/%0Afunction%20_leoHighlightsUpdatePopupPos%28iFrame%2Canchor%29%0A%7B%
* * *
%20Get%20the%20total%20dimensions%20to%20see%20what%20scroll%20bars%20
* * *

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/%0A%20%20%09%09var%20iFrameTop%3D_leoHighlightsFindElementById%28LEO_
* * *%20Figure%20out%20the%20correct%20sizes%20* * *
/%0A%20%20%09%09var%20iFrameTopSize%3DLEO_HIGHLIGHTS_IFRAME_TOP_SI
* * *
%20Refresh%20the%20iFrame%27s%20url%2C%20by%20removing%20the%20size%
* * *
/%0A%20%20%09%09leoHighlightsUpdateUrl%28iFrameTop%2Csize%2CclickId%29
* * *
%20Clear%20the%20hover%20flag%2C%20if%20the%20user%20shows%20this%20at
* * *
/%0A%20%20%20%20%20%20%20if%28size%3D%3D1%26%26_leoHighlightsPrevElem%
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20Start%20the%20popup%20a%20little%20bit%20delayed.%0A%20
* * *
%20Somehow%20IE%20needs%20some%20time%20to%20find%20the%20element%2
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20anchorId%0A%20
* * *%20@param%20size%0A%20* * *%20%0A%20* * *
%20@return%0A%20* * *
/%0Afunction%20leoHighlightsShowPopup%28anchorId%2Csize%29%0A%7B%0A%20
* * *
%20FF%20needs%20to%20find%20the%20element%20first%20
* * *
/%0A%20%20%20%20%09_leoHighlightsFindElementById%28anchorId%29%3B%0A%20
* * *%0A* * *%0A* * *
%20This%20can%20be%20used%20to%20close%20an%20iframe%0A
* * *%0A* * *%20@param%20id%0A* * *
%20@return%0A* * *
/%0Afunction%20leoHighlightsHideElem%28id%29%0A%7B%0A%09try%0A%09%7B%
* * *%20Get%20the%20appropriate%20sizes%20* * *
/%0A%20%20%09%09var%20elem%3D_leoHighlightsFindElementById%28id%29%3B
* * *
%20Clear%20the%20page%20for%20the%20next%20run%20through%20
* * *
/%0A%20%20%09%09var%20iFrame%3D_leoHighlightsFindElementById%28LEO_HI
* * *%0A* * *%0A* * *

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%20This%20can%20be%20used%20to%20close%20an%20iframe.%0A
* * *
%20Since%20the%20iFrame%20is%20reused%20the%20frame%20only%20gets%20h
* * *%0A* * *%20@return%0A* * *
/%0Afunction%20leoHighlightsIFrameClose%28%29%0A%7B%0A%20%20try%0A%20
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20This%20should%20handle%20the%20click%20events%0A%20
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20anchorId%0A%20
* * *%20@return%0A%20* * *
/%0Afunction%20leoHighlightsHandleClick%28anchorId%29%0A%7B%0A%20%20%20
* * *%20Report%20the%20click%20event%20* * *
/%0A%20%20%20%20%20%20%20leoHighlightsReportEvent%28%22clicked%22%2C%20
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20This%20should%20handle%20the%20hover%20events%0A%20
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20anchorId%0A%20
* * *%20@return%0A%20* * *
/%0Afunction%20leoHighlightsHandleHover%28anchorId%29%0A%7B%0A%20%20%20%20
* * *%20Report%20the%20hover%20event%20* * *
/%0A%20%20%20%20%20%20%20leoHighlightsReportEvent%28%22hovered%22%2C%20
* * *%0A%20* * *
%20This%20will%20handle%20the%20mouse%20over%20setup%20timers%20for%20
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20id%0A%20* * *
%20@return%0A%20* * *
/%0Afunction%20leoHighlightsHandleMouseOver%28id%29%0A%7B%0A%09try%0A%09
* * *%20Clear%20the%20end%20timer%20if%20required%20
* * *
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* * *
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* * *
/%0A%09%09if%28anchor.shown%29%0A%09%09%09return%3B%0A%09%09%0A%09
* * *%20Setup%20the%20start%20timer%20if%20required%20
* * *
/%0A%09%09anchor.startTimer%3DsetTimeout%28function%28%29%7B%0A%09%09
* * *%0A%20* * *

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%20This%20will%20handle%20the%20mouse%20over%20setup%20timers%20for%20
* * *%20%0A%20* * *%20@param%20id%0A%20* * *

