

# BAD BOY OF MUSIC

by  
GEORGE ANTHEIL

---

THE NATIONAL BOOK ASSOCIATION  
HUTCHINSON & CO. (Publishers) LTD  
4-7 RED LION COURT, FLEET ST., LONDON E.C.4

*First Published August 1947*  
NATIONAL BOOK ASSOCIATION EDITION  
*April 1949*

*Printed in Great Britain at  
The Fleet Street Press  
East Harding St., E.C.4*

Considering that I am a person who lacks no possible human failing, I have been constantly amazed by Copland's generosity. Encountering a particular example of it one day, I said to him in wonder and curiosity:

"Weren't you ever jealous of anyone?"

His reply was, "When I first went to Paris I was jealous of Antheil's piano playing—it was so brilliant; he could demonstrate so well what he wanted to do."

*From Oscar Levant's "A Smattering of Ignorance."*

## CONTENTS

### I. *BERLIN*

<i>Chapter I</i>	Concert Pianist	<i>Page 9</i>
II	Donaueschingen	13
III	Berlin	27
IV	Igor Stravinsky	30
V	Preliminary Studies in Life	38
VI	The Girl from the Dream	43
VII	Music Critics	52
VIII	Standard-Equipment Concert	57
IX	Christmas in Poland	62
X	Preparation for Paris	75

### II. *PARIS*

XI	First Evening	80
XII	12, Rue de l'Odéon	89
XIII	Salons de Paris	95
XIV	The Music of Precision	107
XV	James Joyce and Others	116
XVI	La Vie de la Bohème	126
XVII	Venus Returns to Tunisia	132
XVIII	Parisian Apex	139
XIX	Carnegie Hall of Unsacred Memory	150
XX	New Start: Grand Opera for Germany	158



### III. VIENNA

<i>Chapter</i> XXI	Vienna in the Spring	<i>Page</i> 170
XXII	Idea at Twilight, or Rocks of the Sirens	175
XXIII	Final Waltzes in the Prater	184
XXIV	Two Grand Operas Premiered	191
XXV	The Dissolving Fish of Europe	201

### IV. NEW YORK

XXVI	New York is not Paris	211
------	-----------------------	-----

### V. HOLLYWOOD

XXVII	New York is not America	219
XXVIII	King of the Surrealists under an Umbrella	226
XXIX	Peter Enters Family—and Consequences	237
XXX	I Am Not a Business Man	244
XXXI	My Brother's Untimely Death	253
XXXII	Hedy Lamarr and I Invent and Patent a Radio Torpedo	254
XXXIII	Turkey Talk by Boski into Symphony Number Four	259
XXXIV	Symphony Performance Again!	265
XXXV	Mother Knows Best	269
XXXVI	I've Learned . . . a Little	275
XXXVII	Yesterday and To-day and To-morrow	280
	Index	287

## PART ONE

### BERLIN

#### CHAPTER I

### CONCERT PIANIST

THE sweat—great slithering streams of it—pours down you. It runs down your legs, down the leg that is pedalling the sostenuto pedal, down the other leg. It oozes out all over your chest, flows down the binding around your middle where your full-dress pants soak it up. It flows everywhere, down your arms, down your hands.

You become afraid lest too much perspiration will wet your hands too much, make them slide on the black keys, which are too narrow; you are playing at about a hundred miles a minute. But somehow they don't. As long as they don't you know you're all right. You're going good, well-oiled like an engine. Not too much sweat, not too little.

It's only when you suddenly stop perspiring that your forearms go dull.

This is the one thing that every concert pianist dreads, has nightmares about. You never can tell when it's going to happen; it happens once in a hundred concerts, but it happens. When it happens it starts with a stiffness in the upper forearm. Then it travels down the forearm to your wrist, your hand, your fingers. The Bach fugue or the Chopin sonata beneath those fingers commences developing faults—little ones, then big ones. You feel the sudden surprise of the audience, its unfavourable reaction. The sweat all over your body, inside of that heavy woollen black suit with a stiff shirt and collar beneath it, freezes.

You crawl over the onrushing piano passages in slow motion. Your fingers are in ten little steel strait-jackets. . . .

But to-night, thank God, you are sweating, sweating "like a hog." As you turn the corner on the Bach fugue and near the home stretch, you think, "What a way to make a living!" Later, when the piece is finished and you've gotten up and bowed and sat down again and mopped up your brow and your all-important hands, you think, "I wish I were a prize-fighter. This next round with the Steinway would be a lot more comfortable in fighting trunks. . . ."

In the intermission, between group one and group two, you go to your dressing-room and change every stitch you have on you: underwear, shirt, tie, socks, pants and tails. Your other clothes are soaking wet.

You are twenty-two years old, trained down to the last pound like

a boxer. You do not over-eat, smoke or drink and you work six to eight hours a day at a piano with a special keyboard in which the keys are so hard to press down that when you come to your concert grand at night you seem, literally, to be riding a fleecy cloud, so easy is its keyboard action. Before each concert, of course, you eat nothing at all.

Your pianos travel with you. So does your manager. You have no time for girls. Your manager sees to it that no young predatory females get very far.

You are a concert pianist. This was my life when I was twenty-two years old.

When I went to Europe it was not very long after the 1914-18 war. I gave my first European concert in Wigmore Hall, London on June 22, 1922. Soon after I began the concert I noticed that an elderly lady sat in the front row. I kept seeing her very distinctly. She had an enormous ear trumpet in her ear and she was smiling.

I was playing Chopin. The Chopin was going into her ear trumpet and making her smile. I played a Mozart sonata. That made her smile too.

Then I played some Schönberg and some pieces of my own. She looked mystified, shook the ear trumpet. Then she put it up to her ear again, listened, and looked very sour. She shook the ear trumpet again, this time but good. She listened again. No good. She shrugged her shoulders, put her enormous ear trumpet in her bag and went out. Obviously, something was wrong with her ear trumpet.

Further concerts in Europe were to depend upon the success of the London concert. It was a success. So my manager—a man who looked and talked so much like the film actor Sidney Greenstreet that from now on you can imagine him playing that role—booked me for Germany and points south-east.

A few years earlier I had joined the United States aviation to become a fighting flyer in World War I. The war stopped before I got over, but it had been my original intention to shoot down as many Germans as possible and, given the opportunity, to capture Kaiser Wilhelm and Crown Prince Wilhelm during some spectacular feat in the last days of the war. Now I was about to go over into former enemy country and, what was worse, to concertize in it. In all of my publicity from that time onwards I carefully omitted the fact that I had at one time been accepted for combat duty in the budding United States aviation (then attached to the Signal Corps), and it still does not appear in any encyclopædia of music or musical dictionary.

Moreover, I bought a small thirty-two automatic, and when I arrived in Berlin I went to a tailor with a sketch for a silken holster

which was to fit neatly under my arm. (I had read about Chicago gangsters wearing their guns in this fashion.) Arching a brow, my Berlin tailor made the holster, which was comfortably padded. From then on my thirty-two automatic accompanied me everywhere, especially to concerts.

Quite a number of observers have commented on my coolness during various riotous concerts which I performed at during those first tumultuous years of the armistice between World War I and World War II. The reason is very simple: I was armed.

In early 1923 I once played a return engagement in Budapest which years later earned me the highly valued friendship of Ben Hecht. Several weeks earlier I had played a concert at the Philharmonie in Budapest and the audience had rioted. That did not disturb me so much as the fact that because of this bedlam they had heard none of the music. So, at my second appearance, I walked out on the concert platform, bowed and spoke up:

"Attendants, will you please close and lock the doors?"

After this was done I reached in under my left armpit in approved American gangster fashion and produced my ugly little automatic. Without a further word I placed it on the front desk of my Steinway and proceeded with my concert. Every note was heard and, in a sense, I suppose I opened up the way in Hungary for modern music of a non-Bartók-Kodaly variety.

Years later, when I returned to America, Ben Hecht offered me the job of music director of the Hecht-MacArthur Productions after Oscar Levant had left it in despair. Ben says that when Oscar left him he suddenly recalled reading about the Budapest incident, investigated it, found it to be true and, as a result, decided that I alone was capable of filling any job abandoned by the immortal Oscar. I got the job and kept it. . . . But that was in 1934, and we are still in 1923, when Hitler & Co. were cooking up their first shenanigans in Munich and were known to the concert-agency trade purely and simply as a bunch of hoodlums. . . .

The Hitler crowd were a stinking little bunch of hoodlums. Nothing but a crowd of narrow two-by-four punks would have tried to do what they tried to do. They threatened, anonymously to bomb my first Munich concert because (1) I was a young American concert pianist and (2) because I programmed a series of American and French composers.

When I arrived in Munich on that day in March 1922, the local concert agency handling the concert were very concerned. They called me into the inner office of the agency and brought the anonymous letter out of the safe. It read: "If the American pianist attempts to play French works in a Munich concert hall the place will be bombed."

Should we go on with the concert? I wanted to know who the concert agency thought might have written the letter. They were in no doubt. "A bunch of local hoodlums known as the National Socialist party, led by an Austrian maniac, Adolf Hitler." I was so mad that I said sure, I'd play the concert.

However, and before the concert began, I drank half a bottle of red wine, an unprecedented happening. This caused me to wake up in the middle of the opening number, the Bach *Fugue in E Minor*. Perhaps the strangest time and place in the world to wake up in is the middle of the Bach *Fugue in E Minor* in a concert hall in Munich before an audience of which every tenth person was a uniformed German policeman. . . .

The next day the Munich critics said that I played the first number on my programme with astonishing coldness and lack of feeling, but that the rest of the programme had been all right. Nothing untoward happened and the concert was a success. Never again did I drink anything *before* a concert.

Riots came rather to be the order of the day at my concerts because I was one of the few pianists of that period *always* to end a concert with a modern group, preferably of the most "ultra" order. In fact, I invariably closed with a piece or two of my own, the *Mechanisms*, the *Jazz Sonata*, *Fireworks* and the *Profane Waltzers*, *Sonata Sauvage*, or something equally cacophonous. I also played works of Stravinsky, Schönberg, Milhaud, Auric, Honegger, Ornstein.

On 4th October, 1923, I played in Paris for the first time, almost exactly a year behind my first scheduled appearance for Paris. My little group of piano pieces, the *Mechanisms*, the *Airplane Sonata*, and the *Sonata Sauvage* were to go on as a prelude to the opening of the brilliant *Ballets Suédois* (Swedish Ballets) which Rolf de Mare was bringing to Paris this season for the first time. The theatre, the famous Champs Elysées Theatre, was crowded with the most famous personages of the day, among others Picasso, Stravinsky, Auric, Milhaud, James Joyce, Erik Satie, Man Ray, Diaghileff, Miro, Artur Rubinstein, Ford Maddox Ford and unnumbered others. They had not come to hear me, but to see the opening of the ballets.

My piano was wheeled out on the front of the stage, before the huge Leger cubist curtain and I commenced playing. Rioting broke out almost immediately. I remember Man Ray punching somebody in the nose in the front row. Marcel Duchamps was arguing loudly with somebody else in the second row. In a box near by Erik Satie was shouting, "What precision! What precision!" and applauding. The spotlight was turned on the audience by some wag upstairs. It struck James Joyce full in the face, hurting his sensitive eyes. A big

burly poet got up in one of the boxes and yelled, "You are all pigs!" In the gallery the police came in and arrested the surrealists who, liking the music, were punching everybody who objected.

It was a full twenty minutes later, when I had finished playing, that order was finally restored and the curtain raised on the first of the ballets. But from 4th October, 1923, everybody in Paris knew who I was. I represented the anti-expressive, anti-romantic, coldly mechanistic aesthetic of the early twenties. Shortly thereafter I wrote some music to a film by Fernand Leger called *Ballet Mécanique*, a film that had been inspired by my *Mechanisms*. Leger and a whole group of similar-minded Parisians, Russians, Frenchmen and others came to be my friends and supporters. Honegger did me the favour of writing a locomotive piece for orchestra, *Pacific 239*, and Prokofieff wrote a mechanistic ballet, *Age of Steel*, performed a year later at this same *Ballets Suédois*. Erik Satie, the elegant arbiter of Paris, endorsed me.

Without knowing it I had, unconsciously, changed the entire future course of my life. I lost interest in the concert field, year by year becoming more and more a composer until composing alone would no longer support me.

## CHAPTER II

### DONAUESCHINGEN

I HAD not come over to Europe to be a concert pianist. That was merest coincidence. I had come over to find a girl by the name of Anne Williams.

I met Anne in Germantown, Philadelphia, in late autumn 1921. She was sixteen, the blonde daughter of a well-known eye specialist. I was twenty-one, a subsidized pupil at the Curtis Institute. Soon after we had met we fell in love, planned to be married. Thereupon Anne's mother, discovering all this, made inquiries about me, learned that although I possessed a misleadingly meek appearance I was a young man of firm determination and that therefore in all probability I would carry out my plans.

So Anne quickly disappeared. So did her mother.

Her father wouldn't tell me where they had gone.

Some friends told me that they had gone together to Europe—to either Italy or Germany, probably the latter.

I was by this time really desperately in love. Anne was a well-edited version of Lana Turner and Betty Grable combined. I would go to Europe. I didn't know how; I couldn't swim, cook or serve at table. I had an idea to stow away, but abandoned it in favour of a better idea.

I would go to Europe as a concert pianist. This, for me at least, would be the easiest way. It would also enable me to travel all over Europe, investigate every probable hideaway. I now tackled the proposition in all seriousness. I had some natural talent for the piano, plus some very splendid basic training from my old teacher, Constantine von Sternberg, who had once been a pupil of the great Liszt himself.

Also, in spite of my innocent visage (I had been called "Angel Face" at school), I had a tremendous amount of sheer, unadulterated brass. . . .

However, before being able to go to Europe as a concert pianist I would first have to find myself a concert manager. Most persons would have regarded this as an insurmountable barrier, but I have always tackled life's problems from the other way around: I presuppose that all of life's problems are fairly easy, once you are willing to take your courage in hand.

I watched the musical trade papers. One day in middle February 1922 I saw that the well-known New York impresario Martin H. Hanson was going to Europe in late May. In another part of the journal it stated that the young pianist Leo Ornstein was leaving the concert management of M. H. Hanson. The two items meant nothing separately: together they meant that M. H. Hanson had lost one of his main drawing cards and was going to Europe to find another.

He was in the market for a young pianist, of the fiery ultra-modern Leo Ornstein variety.

I immediately went back to Trenton, New Jersey, to my parents' home. I bought two huge fish bowls. I filled them with water and placed one on each side of my piano chair on low tables. Then I practised for one full month, sixteen to twenty hours a day. Whenever one of my hands became swollen or bloody I merely placed it into one of the handy bowls of water. In this way I gained a technique which, when a month later I played for Hanson, took him off his feet.

Why he did not throw me out when I first knocked on his door, however, I shall never know. But when I did get in he looked at me in that Sidney Greenstreet way of his and decided to listen.

I must have looked as determined as a bandit, although people nowadays tell me I probably resembled Peter Lorre more, as I am supposed to look like him. Hanson took me over to Steinway's on Fifty-seventh Street and we went into a studio with a very fine piano. If there is anything I love it is a fine piano. The piano was so fine I would have blushed to play badly on it—in fact it almost played itself.

In looking back at this episode, I must admit it sounds incredible. Moreover, I guess I never got to understand M. H. Hanson, even remotely. But he must have had considerable talent to understand me,

for he not only gave me a hearing that day but some weeks later he even took me to Europe with him, gave me a fine premiere as an artist and, later, even built me up to the grade of a "Steinway artist," which, in those days, meant you were classified in the Steinway philosophy with Gieseking and Iturbi. Sidney Greenstreet and young Peter Lorre in Europe as worldly cosmopolitan manager and wild young concert pianist!

It was one of the great painful episodes of his life when, at last, I decided to abandon concertizing.

Martin Hanson was Danish-born but had spent most of his life in London and New York. He was between fifty and sixty. Somewhere in his background there was a thorough English schooling, for he spoke English somewhat like an Englishman. Also, he had at least a speaking acquaintance with practically everything cultural, plus a fondness for the writings of Machiavelli.

He was, to the tip of his well-manicured fingernails, the classical urbane disciplined concert manager.

After he had heard me play he came to a rapid decision.

"I'll take you to London," he said, "and arrange one concert at Wigmore Hall. If it is successful, you'll go on to Berlin to polish up your Beethoven with Schnabel. If it isn't, you'll come back home to America and forget it. If you manage to get past Wigmore Hall and Artur Schnabel I'll arrange a whole series of concerts for you in Germany, Austria, Italy."

We sailed on the *Empress of Scotland* in early May 1922. As the ship moved out of the St. Lawrence River and the North American continent disappeared in the background, I knew that some day I should see Anne Williams again.

Hanson, reclining in his deck-chair and comfortably smoking his pipe, didn't know that this was the main purpose of my trip abroad.

But it was not my idea to find Anne to marry her. I stopped wanting to marry Anne from the day she had disappeared without leaving me a clue. I did not blame her mother. I *did* blame her. She had trifled with my love.

Therefore, naturally, I had now to travel to the ends of the earth to look her in the eyes once more, silently reproach her. This done (as I imagined it then), I would sadly turn on my heel and go away. She would understand. . . .

En route to Berlin, Hanson suddenly changed his mind about starting my Beethoven lessons with Schnabel. We went to a place in southern Germany called Donaueschingen instead.

The reason: During our last day in London he had received an



invitation from the Prince of Fürstenburg to attend the "First International Festival of Modern Music"—this to take place in mid-July at the prince's Donaueschingen estate. And, because Hanson believed that practically every important musician of Europe would attend this festival and thereby give us a chance to get in our Machiavellian dirty work of introducing an absolutely unknown young American pianist-composer upon them all at one fell swoop, we accepted the prince's generous all-expense-included invitation.

I remember the train ride down there as if it were yesterday. Those fields, cities and forests of southern Germany were, to my young mind at least, *still the territory of the enemy!* Those factories, those bridges, those very people I might have bombed myself not so very many months before. But it was midsummer, July 1922.

All was very peaceful. Flaxen-haired girls and boys worked bare-foot in the fields. The smokestacks of the great factory cities gave forth no smoke but stood like ghosts built of brick against a flowery, feathery summer sky.

The forests looked as forests have always looked, with not a leaf out of place.

Hanson was in one of his most pompous lecturing moods.

"You must remember, George," he said now, "that although this festival will undoubtedly be very charming—for the Fürst of Fürstenburg has always been celebrated for his elaborate parties—this is for us a strictly business affair. I want you to meet the conductors; they will all be there. We'll present you to them as a composer first, a pianist second. Show them your symphony and the new piano concerto. . . ."

(I had brought with me the score of my First Symphony, composed when I was a pupil of Ernest Bloch, and my still more recent piano concerto.)

"We'll be shooting at them," he continued, "with a blunderbuss. Conductors from all over Europe—France, England, Italy, Spain, Austria—will be present. Out of this collection we'll certainly manage to interest a few. They'll look at your score if for no other reason than to please me."

(Hanson was here referring to the fact that he was a well-known concert manager able, should the time seem opportune, to arrange an American tour for at least several of them!)

"But," he emphasized, "leave the lesser-known composers alone. If Stravinsky turns up, try to get him to give you a new piece for a first performance. If Schönberg, Bartók or Ravel are present, ditto. That will draw audiences to your piano concerts. Thus Stravinsky, Schönberg, Bartók or Ravel will be doing *you* a favour. But the piano works of the lesser-known composers will drive audiences away. If you insist upon playing them at your concerts, you will be doing *them* a favour."

Hanson talked on. I began, slowly, to comprehend that a concert pianist's life was one of not only the most rigorous physical self-discipline but moral discipline as well. Important people must be kotosed to. People not yet arrived at a sufficient state of eminence must be avoided. One did not write a symphony because one wished to express something new and beautiful but in order to impress conductors with one's piano concerto, which one would show them immediately after. One did not play one's piano concerto in public merely *per se*, one played it in order to get another engagement with the same orchestra but as the protagonist of some larger and important concerto such as the Tchaikovsky *B Flat Minor*, or the Schumann *A Major*.

I sat back and began to wonder whether or not I was going to like this method of finding Anne so much after all.

As, at this moment, I was about to plunge Hanson and myself into one of the most intrigue-laden atmospheres of post-war Europe, it might not be out of place to sketch out lightly the character and appearance of the twenty-two-year-old American boy who, with his Sidney Greenstreet manager, now approached the princely seat of one of the great music patrons of Europe.

I had been born in Trenton, New Jersey, across the street from a very noisy machine shop; thus, in all probability, giving (but without any scientific justification) ammunition into the hands of those who claim there is such a thing as prenatal influence. A year later my parents moved several blocks away to across the street from an infinitely more silent but also infinitely more ominous structure, the Trenton State Penitentiary.

One of my first memories in life is of looking out of our front window to a brown wall and guard tower right across the street.

My first memory of music is also connected with this view.

One day, right next door, there moved in two old maids and their piano. To the intense indignation of my parents, these old maids then proceeded to play this piano day and night.

They played *The Midnight Fire Alarm*, by E. T. Paul, *The Maiden's Prayer*, *Star of the Sea* (over two million copies sold, the frontispiece said), and practically every other piece in an album which I was afterwards able to identify as "Five Hundred Favourite Salon Melodies." They also played in shifts and, if my parents had been concerned less with the noise in the house than in the cellar, they might have been able to detect a faint grating, crunching sound and so prevented one of the most sensational prison breaks in the history of Trenton Penitentiary.

For suddenly one night the two old maids stopped playing. The next morning both of them had disappeared. So had sixteen desperate men

in the prison across the street. The incessant piano playing, of course, had been a cover for the noise of digging an underground tunnels from the cellar of the house next door to the prison yard.

In any case, and by whatever means, my love for music—and especially for piano playing—had been gained, and it has never departed. Uncle Will, Dad's younger brother, wanted to become a member of a travelling minstrel show, so he tried out all his songs on me: *I've Got a Girl in Baltimore*, *Pony Boy*, *My Pretty Redwing* and all the Stephen Foster songs, carrying me about on his shoulders all the while.

I caught glimpses of the outer world from the front windows—and from the back windows too; saw a large factory district, huge open sand-pits, vistas of distant smoke-stacks. I thought the world was very beautiful indeed.

I was still too young to know that factory districts, broken machinery, sand-pits, smoke-stacks and all that sort of thing, could not possibly be beautiful. Chirico the painter never knew it either, but then, as everybody knows, Chirico the painter is mad. . . .

My youth was singularly sane. We moved away from the prison district when I was five. The new district of Trenton to which we now moved was bright and new, and all of the houses in our long street were exactly alike; I could only think of "home" as "the second house on the right-hand side"—7 McKinley Avenue. When I was eight years old a lot of the kids in our neighbourhood formed a club which had its headquarters in an unused garage in the back yard of one of the kids. We continued this club under many names until I was thirteen: "Easy Going Club," "The Seneca Detective Agency," "101 Ranch." On the outside, so to speak, I commenced the study of the violin, then the piano. None of the kids thought any the worse of me for it. Most of them had to learn how to play one instrument or another too. The only difference between them and me was that I enjoyed practising. They didn't know this until, one day, I invited them all into our front parlour and played for them a new piano "sonata" which I had written.

It was called *The Sinking of the Titanic*.

It was a very stormy piece, with great rolling chords in the bass and a touching version of *Nearer My God to Thee* as a grand finale. It was also an unqualified success, being greeted with cheers and whoops.

I became the club's official composer. Thereafter, in quick succession, I turned out three other "sonatas," one dedicated to Buffalo Bill, one on the subject of Ayesha (heroine of a Rider Haggard novel) and one on "The Dying Gladiator."

All these, in my own private circle, were huge successes.

Outside of this one musical variation, my early youth did not differ

an iota from that of the average kid in our neighbourhood, which means most of the neighbourhoods in America. It was essentially Penrodian. It had its ups and downs. One year I was not going to graduate from fifth to sixth grade. The next year I worked all summer in a shoe store while a friend of mine, a boy soprano by the name of Alexander Crooks, worked as a helper to an iceman. When we could we kids went camping, fishing, swimming, played baseball, football. There were plenty of back lots around McKinley Avenue at that time. One of these back lots secretly contained a cave in which was hidden an altar to the goddess Aphrodite—but of her I shall speak later.

At nineteen, out of aviation and with the war over, I commenced composing in earnest. Alex went to New York to sing for Walter Damrosch, who discovered that he had one of the finest tenor voices in America and, accordingly, advised him to change his name to "Richard Crooks" because "A. Crooks" would look so funny on the billboards of Carnegie Hall. Many a time since I was to think of Alex's rueful explanation of this switch when, as I toured Europe, I caught sight of my fellow club member's name pasted all over the kiosks of Europe, often alongside my own.

At twenty, with a severe course of music theory behind me, I attempted my first symphony.

This symphony, my "First Symphony," was later to be premiered in Berlin, Germany—although it very nearly was premiered in Philadelphia instead.

Because of the circumstances surrounding this proposed premiere, I believe that, although I did leave America in May 1922 in order to find Anne Williams in Europe, I nevertheless probably left America for some deeper inner reason having more to do with my musical career than my love life.

It needs a little explaining, and even then it doesn't sound too credible. It deals with two strange dreams, one about music, which I had during a single night some months before I embarked for Europe, and before the upset with Anne and her mother.

Properly this story goes back to 1919:

Up till 1919 I had studied for many years with Constantine von Sternberg, a well-known Philadelphia teacher who had been a pupil of Franz Liszt. He had given me a severe theoretical training, including one solid year of writing fugues upon the same theme—he explained that Richard Wagner had gone through the same ordeal. I was quite smart with counterpoint and musical form, and it is a matter of record that during this time I wrote a piano sonata very much *à la* Medtner, with a huge fugue in the last movement, which Josef Hofmann considered playing quite a long time before, eventually, he decided against it. I was only eighteen then, and I mention this only to satisfy those who

still often believe that my musical background has been very sketchy. It was not: I have had a very "severe" background.

In 1919 old Sternberg (he was quite old, and his studio was always terribly overheated) called me into his inner sanctum and told me that he could teach me no more. He advised me to continue my studies in New York, under the man I most admired, Ernest Bloch. I followed his advice, went to New York to beard the then greatest teacher of composition living in America.

But Bloch didn't like my academic compositions. He called them empty, pretentious and refused to accept me as a pupil.

I still remember the train ride home to Trenton as one of my most desperate hours. All these years of study and then to be told by the man whom I admired most that he thought nothing of my talent!

I went home to Trenton, took long bicycle rides into the country, tried to think what I would do next. One day, however, I picked up some poems of Adelaide Crapsey, and as I read them I seemed to hear a strange music accompanying them. I sat down and tried to compose this music. I failed. I tried again. I failed again.

After three weeks of trying I finally came somewhere near the music I had heard originally. Five new songs were completed. I sat down and wrote a begging letter to Ernest Bloch, asking him to please hear me just once more. If he were not pleased now, I would never again trouble him.

He consented. I went to New York, played for him.

He immediately accepted me as a pupil.

Because of my really quite excellent technical background I now progressed quite rapidly. I wanted to write a symphony. I wanted this symphony to express that part of America which I saw around me: Trenton, the Delaware River, the people I knew, the sounds and emotions I felt—just as in the songs. This sounds trite to-day, but in 1920 I did not know how to be trite, I merely felt. Concord or discords did not exist for me; I used one or the other with perhaps more brutality than people were then accustomed to, but I never used them, one or the other, unless I needed just them, nothing else.

I was then a young man in a terrible hurry, with time only for essentials. I had no time to investigate the various contemporary musical snobbisms, or the musical cliques who invented them, promulgated them. I hardly knew they existed; this unpleasant surprise was to be reserved for a year or two later.

These new qualities, starting with the songs, probably drew Ernest Bloch to me. I had put the purely academic behind me, was commencing to reach out for my own music and, because I was unconscious of all other contemporary effort, probably hit something quite astonishing to him.

My lessons with him continued. When the symphony was completed he wanted to send it to his very good friend, Pierre Monteux, then director of the great Boston Symphony. He told me that he thought Pierre Monteux would surely play it. He also told his other close friend, Paul Rosenfeld, the music critic, that he thought I was the most talented of his pupils.

Soon after, in his book *Musical Chronicle*, Paul Rosenfeld wrote: "This youth from the Trenton suburbs seems to be one of the most musically talented creatures this country has produced."

However, I was very poor. My father, owner of the small shoe store in Trenton, "Antheil's, A Friendly Family Shoe Store," could hardly afford to continue my music education beyond Sternberg, so I had to discontinue my lessons with Bloch. A month later, when Bloch discovered that I had often gone without food in New York in order to study with him, he returned practically all of the money I had given him for lessons—a most generous act which prompted me to take a vow I have never broken: I have never refused lessons to a talented young man, however impecunious. (As practically all of the young composers I have ever met were impecunious, at least the talented ones, I'm away in the red insofar as a livelihood from teaching is concerned!) This allowed me to continue living in America for a while without doing anything at all except composition, and I spent it up at Bernardsville with Margaret Anderson (editor of the famous *Little Review*) and her group. Margaret tells all about it in her book, *My Thirty Years' War*, so I will not recapitulate here—except, possibly, to say that Margaret invited me only for a week-end but I had not understood this clearly, so I stayed for six months. Margaret's delicacy and her interest in my composition, prevented her from pointing this out.

When Bloch's returned money was gone, I left Bernardsville for Philadelphia, to see Constantine von Sternberg. I told him I was broke and that I was getting rather tired of it. He wrote a letter to his friend, Mrs. Mary Louise Bok (now Mrs. Efrem Zimbalist) and asked her to hear me. She did.

She seemed very pleased with the songs, the new symphony. She immediately enrolled me in the Curtis Settlement School, the forerunner of the now tremendous Curtis Institute, one of the finest music schools in America. I studied piano (George Boyle) and gave lessons in elementary theory. And, in order to permit me to compose, she also gave me enough of a monthly allowance to pay for rent, food, clothing. Mrs. Zimbalist is still a good friend of mine, and it is only to-day that I begin to realize, fully, how much she and the budding Curtis Institute have helped me.

The Curtis organization was very intimately connected with the Philadelphia Orchestra; Mr. Bok was then one of its chief executives.

I liked the idea of Pierre Monteux doing my new symphony in Boston, but liked the idea of Stokowski doing it in Philadelphia even better. I had idealized Stokowski for years—from my high seat in the topmost balcony. Therefore, in spite of Bloch, I sent my symphony hopefully into Stokowski's office, with a prayer.

Not very many weeks afterwards Stokowski announced his new works for the next season. Amongst them was my symphony! He made special mention of it, saying that it was a very interesting new work!

I was twenty-one. Bloch had said that I was his most talented pupil. Paul Rosenfeld had said I was one of the most musically talented creatures this country had produced. I was an honoured member of the budding all-powerful Curtis school. My youthful symphony was to be played by the finest symphony orchestra in the world.

And then, early in 1922, I had two dreams in a single night.

I dreamed, simply, that I was living during some future period, a time of "The Great Peace." This peace followed a great war, a war even larger than World War I, of which I had once very nearly become a part. The great new war had just concluded, and I remember walking alongside of some European or Asiatic river filled to the brim with corpses. But it was springtime, now, and all-pervading peace filled the air; the river and the corpses had disappeared and I was back in my homeland.

Lovely streamlined buildings were built into the hillsides and upon the flat plains; the houses were beautiful, each with its swimming-pool, its tennis-court, its sheltered garden. Some of the houses were large, others small; but all were handsome. Children were running about in the nearby parks, well clothed, well fed, well educated.

The scene had the atmosphere of Chirico, without the atmosphere of ruins, factories or wars. Except for the music of children's voices, everything was strangely quiet.

I found myself walking along a pathway of small residential buildings. Out of each of them, as I passed it, came the music of a symphony orchestra playing—*my music!*

But it was not music similar to anything I had written or, indeed, to anything I had known. It was not like Holst's *The Planets* or Stravinsky's *Sacre* in the sense that it was at once more difficult to catch with the ear, and easier. Its nearest relative was Beethoven or Brahms, but without their chords, harmonies, melodies. It was a sort of "Brotherhood of Man" music, the quadruple essence of nobility and man's greatest spiritual efforts.

(Needless to say, I have never been able to write this symphony awake, although, in many succeeding compositions, I've tried.)

I woke up, and as I have a very retentive, almost "photographic" ear—which often outwits me when I get to liking and hearing too much

of any one composer's work—I immediately snatched a piece of blank music paper and, for the next two hours, wrestled with the problem of getting down as many fragments of the music as I could remember. These, as I discovered the following morning, were very unsatisfactory; they were but chords, pieces of melodies, a few rhythms I had never heard awake and some rapid orchestral sketches.

Yet every time that I was to play this page for myself in the future, the atmosphere of that particular dream returned as vividly as the scene of a drama acted out in technicolour and with perfect sound recording. It did not return wholly, but the fragments recorded into musical notes returned. . . .

I went to sleep again and towards morning I had another dream. This dream was not about the deep future, but the more immediate future or present. I dreamt that I stood in the reeking smoking ruins of a European battlefield of the war just concluded. Standing sadly among these ruins was a girl with dark short hair, dressed—I remembered this very particularly for some reason—in a dark plaid skirt. As I was also to make a written note on my music manuscript about this dress, I can tell you that it was on a green background, red and yellow crossed stripes.

I approached her, took her by the hand, led her away. She followed me without question. But she seemed to be looking elsewhere, paying no attention. . . .

Psychoanalysts, of course, will have a field day with these two dreams. They will, for one thing, point out that any child in 1922 knew that there would be another and greater war in twenty or more years. They will point out that because of my association with Margaret Anderson's group I undoubtedly was already aware of the growing implications of modern architecture. They can, if they choose, say that my dream of the symphony in every house was the purest of wish-fulfilment dreams and grandiose at that!

They can say that the short-haired girl in the Scot kilt. . . .

In any case, let them say what they wish; probably most of it could be true. What is more interesting to me, however, is that from now on I dreamed in life as though this dream were a prophecy.

When, one month later, Anne Williams and her mother disappeared, I suddenly turned to this piece of paper as though there, in its almost unintelligible scratchings, were the hieroglyphics through which I could escape into my true future—if I could only decipher them in time.

I sat down at my piano and played them, over and over. Then, grabbing a piece of music paper, I wrote as if by automatic writing a whole but very difficult piano sonata, the *Airplane Sonata*, I called it



that because, as a symbol, the airplane seemed most indicative of that future into which I wanted to escape.

Not so many months later I was to play it in Europe and it, in turn, was to father a whole series of other similar sonatas even nearer to the "dream": the *Sonata Sauvage*, *Death of the Machines* and the *Mechanisms*.

After I had written the *Airplane Sonata* and realized at long last that now I was finally embarked upon my true pathway in music, I suddenly remembered the Five Songs and the Symphony and that the new sonata was not even remotely like them. I knew in my heart that my friends would not like this new strange music; I cringed before the thought of showing it to Bloch.

I repeat, I was twenty-one, with one foot well upon the ladder of American musical success; yet now I was about to find powerful recognition for the *wrong sort of music!*

When I discovered that Anne and her mother had left for Europe it was almost like the Hand of Fate. The direction in which I must go was indicated and I had to obey, no matter how illogical it seemed on the surface. . . .

And so my *First Symphony* was not premiered in Philadelphia.

"Donaueschingen" actually means "Springs of the Danube." Here originates the great Danube River which, although not at all blue, nevertheless is associated with Strauss's lovely music, Vienna, Budapest Versailles, boasting resplendent gardens with row after row of statues, tiny marble summer-houses, fountains, pools. The heavy odour of mid-summer hung about us; I could not help but think of Watteau's "Embarkation for Cythera."

Hanson and I got off the train at the tiny railway station, where we were met by the emissary of the great Prince of Fürstenburg.

On our way to the hotel, where our expenses were to be paid for by the prince, Hanson wanted to know who had accepted, who was coming, who had arrived. The prince's emissary told us that a number of German, Austrian, Hungarian and Czech composers and conductors were coming.

"What," exclaimed Hanson, "no Frenchmen?"

"No," said the emissary, "no Frenchmen."

"What about the English?" demanded Hanson.

"No, no Englishmen," replied the emissary.

"And the Italians?"

"Only one," said the emissary. "Also, I believe, one Swede and one Dutchman."

"But this is an 'International Festival'," protested Hanson. "The Prince of Fürstenburg himself has written to me and told me so! It

is impossible that only German-speaking countries have accepted his generous invitation!"

"Alas, it is so," replied the emissary sadly. "Only Germans, Austrians, Czechs and Hungarians accepted, even though the board and all outside expenses will, for the next two weeks, be paid for by the prince."

I thought, with Hanson, that this was not a very auspicious beginning for the highly advertised, German-triggered "International Festivals of Modern Music," planned to be given once a year and to bring together all of unhappy post-war Europe into one big happy musical family—for music, they claimed, was an "international language." Indeed, I even felt very annoyed with the French, British, Americans and Italians for not coming . . . until, at the hotel, I chanced to pick up a printed programme for all of the various forthcoming concerts of this festival.

Every single programmed new work was either by a German (for the most part) or else an Austrian, a Czech, a Hungarian. Not a single work by Stravinsky, Ravel, Milhaud, Honegger, Bliss, Bloch, or all the rest! Later on, that evening, I asked several German musicians about this oversight. Why had they not programmed the modern composers abroad?

"What!" they chorused. "Is there, then, any new music of composers abroad?"

They were sincere. It was their sincerity which appalled me.

Not all of the composers and musicians at this festival were unaware of the modern music of the "Ausland"; on the contrary, the astute ones were very much aware of it—in decreased royalties and the sudden non-acceptance of the outside world of the age-long "superiority" of German music. Nevertheless not even these, for their own good, were able to grasp that which has always been incomprehensible to the average German musical mind (when it is exclusively born and bred on German home soil), namely, that "true music" could possibly be composed outside of the borders of Germany-Austria-Hungary and perhaps (with condescension) Czechoslovakia. They simply could not get it: it was a mental hurdle which none of them, excepting possibly Hindemith and Krenek, could ever jump.

In Donaueschingen I, symbol of young untried America, began to bump into this attitude everywhere. With the exception of two monocled Prussians, none of the musicians or conductors present would so much as look at my compositions.

I was an American, wasn't I? Ergo: I could not possibly be a musician worthy to associate, to be heard in company with young German musicians.

It was very irritating; also, to a young American with a career to

make (in order to find Anne Williams instead of being shipped back home immediately), extremely illuminating.

The musicians and invited folk of the festival went around to the various small theatres and concert rooms and heard works by Berg, Petyrek, Webern, Krenek, Hindemith, Schönberg, Rathaus. Hindemith and Schönberg weren't, as I remember it from this distance, present, but the others were.

They all liked these works very much. They liked one another very much.

There was quite a spirit abroad.

On the last evening of the festival the prince gave an elaborate lawn party. Towards dusk an orchestra dressed in the costumes of Mozart's day appeared, and a ballet troupe from Vienna; and as night came and bewigged butlers with hundreds of lighted candles surrounded the area, the orchestra played Mozart's *Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* while the dancers of Wien posed and rotated in the choreographic patterns of a century and a half ago. It was charming, really. This marked the end of the festival.

Various groups commenced the longish business of saying good-bye.

One very thin young man with a monocle approached me.

"You are George Antheil?" He pronounced my name as if I were an American, not a German—the sole exception in Donaueschingen. "Yes."

"My name is Von Stuckenschmidt—Hans von Stuckenschmidt. I am a composer and a critic. I have been talking to a friend of mine, Schultz von Dornberg, the conductor—perhaps you in America might have heard of him otherwise, for he was one of our most famous flyers, war aces. Well, to come to the point, he has been looking over the score of your *First Symphony* which your manager gave him yesterday. Von Dornberg tells me that he thinks it is extraordinarily talented. He would like to play it at one of his forthcoming appearances with the Berlin Philharmonic and he has asked me to hasten to tell you news of this before you depart. In the meantime he'll probably be able to contact your manager. By the way, I understand that you are now going to live in Berlin. I shall shortly be living there also. Would you therefore much mind giving me your address? I'd like to look you up. I'm deeply interested in the new music of America, France and England. You would do me a great favour. . . ."

I gave him my probable address, which was in care of Caesar Searchinger, *Musical Courier* Offices, Berlin.

On the train M. H. Hanson told me that insofar as our trip was concerned it had been somewhat of a flop, but not wholly. An extremely

talented young German conductor, Schultz von Dernberg, had accepted my *First Symphony* for performance with the Berlin Philharmonic. The conductor's name, he added, was well known to American army men as one of Germany's chief war aces in the last war.

He had shot down sixty-two planes, including some Americans.

I had seen this chap about Donaueschingen—tall, Prussian to the core, austere, with a hard-bitten countenance sporting a glistening monocle. Curiously enough I had thought that he, of all the Germans in Donaueschingen, had despised me the most!

This immediately put me in mind of Von Stuckenschmidt. I asked M. H. if he knew him.

"Von Stuckenschmidt? Oh, yes, of course, that other young monocled Prussian—what a race, they all seem to have been born with a bad left eye! No, I don't know who he is. There is a story about him, though. The story is that he was born on the wrong side of the blanket, so to speak, but I have no evidence of this."

Hanson refused to speculate any further upon the subject. He was especially respectful of royalty, having been decorated by a number of European kings.

Years later I discovered that his sources of information were, as usual, most excellent.

## CHAPTER III

### BERLIN

ALMOST the very first night I came to Berlin I met a young prominent German newspaperman and his pretty and intelligent young wife. It was obvious that they were very much in love with each other. It was also rather obvious that they were both starving.

It did something very queer to me when, three nights later, I saw this girl in another quarter of Berlin, soliciting. When she saw me she was horrified, turned and ran. . . .

Berlin had commenced its real period of starvation. The money which the people had saved up was no longer worth anything. Money had become the sign of a sign.

The girls and wives of some of the best families of Berlin were out on the street. Everything else had been hocked. Now they were hocking themselves, in order to eat.

Press human beings far enough and you will be surprised how far they will go.

Would you like to know what the girls of Berlin looked like? What

does Beverly Schultz or Anita Heimholz in your own home town look like? Her ancestors were lucky enough to come over here; but the ancestors of the girls of Berlin had remained in Germany.

It was very depressing to me. Most German girls were blonde. Anne Williams was blonde too. It was extraordinary to see how much alike Anne and some of these German girls looked. Moreover, I was from America, where there were about as many women as there were men. You had to mind your P's and Q's to get a good one. Out in the old West a man could very well commit suicide by speaking untowardly to a young lady. Women were comparatively scarce in America and so women in America were still upon a pedestal.

In Berlin they had stepped down.

There were just too many women. The men of Germany had mostly been killed off, or were crippled. In any case, the men left over were as poor and as starving as the women.

It was curious to be a young foreigner with money, enough money, in Berlin those days.

One night Igor Stravinsky and I decided to walk home instead of taking a cab. It was rather late to be taking a walk and dangerous too, for it was well past midnight. Berlin was full of thugs. Also full of street-walkers.

We went through the famous Brandenburger Tür. When we got out on the Tiergartenallee strasse we saw about fifty girls running towards us, and they surrounded us. I guess that nobody except Frank Sinatra ever had such a strange feeling; but the girls who surround Frank Sinatra are nice little girls whereas the girls who surrounded us that night were very bad little girls indeed; at least I'm afraid that the Ladies' Contemporary Club of Trenton, New Jersey, would think so.

I would not have known how to get out of such a jam. But Stravinsky was about twenty years older than I and he knew. He spoke to the girls, calmed them down. He said that we had just come from entertaining six girls, three apiece and that we were really very very tired. They would, he felt sure, understand. They did. They broke up and left us. Professional etiquette.

I felt a little shaky. This was right in the earliest days of my Berlin stay and I wasn't used to it. Later, I became used to seeing girls, girls everywhere.

This same overabundance of hungry and demoralized women was true of all parts of Germany. During my first stay in Germany my concert tours eventually took me over a goodly part of it. A concert pianist, especially a young one, invariably finds a gang of young school-girls hunting for his autograph after the concert; and this was particu-

larly true of Central Europe, where it was an honour to be a concert pianist and where good piano playing was almost on a level with good crooning in America, for popularity. I don't count these 'teen-agers, who are probably eternal in all climes and ages; but it was striking to notice how often a certain type of well-dressed, elegantly coiffured and manicured young woman, three to eight years my senior (I was twenty-two at the time) would wait in the green-room and attempt to get me to make an appointment with her the following day, usually in the tea-room of the most worthy hotel in town. Naturally, when Hanson wasn't along, I made a number of these appointments and kept them, because the girls were obviously of good families, education, intelligence. Besides, and by this time, I had gotten a little wiser and could tell one girl from another.

They invariably propositioned me. Not directly. Most of them wanted to get the hell out of Germany somehow. If I had told them all I was going to Paris soon, I could have taken a carload, even though they knew that the French still hated the Germans. I listened because I wanted to learn all about life. This was a quick way, very quick.

These girls did not want to sell themselves—that is, not exactly for money. But they wanted to sell practically everything else. One wanted to sell a scenario—for, of course, *any* American would be sure to have direct connections with Hollywood. Another wanted to sell a precious lace shawl. Another an irreplaceable manuscript. Only one wanted to buy anything and she wanted to buy my services at a marriage ceremony—in order to obtain an American passport which, at that time, was still possible through this method. We would be divorced directly afterwards, she said.

And so on. I began to understand that sex in Europe and sex in America were not exactly the same things. They had a head start on us.

It was very strange, this sort of life. It never escaped me, whether I was on tour, or back "home" in Berlin, this rapacious, "dog-eat-dog" philosophy. Eventually it became too much for my simple Trentonism and I longed (as did the girls whom I had met backstage during my tours) to get the hell out of Germany.

As this is a book mostly about music, the chief and most important effect of this post-war Berlin upon me was to house-clean out of me all of the remaining old poesy, false-sentimentalism and over-juicy over-idyllicism. I now found, for instance, that I could no longer bear the mountainous sentiment of Richard Strauss or even what now seemed to be the fluid diaphanous lechery of the recent French impressionists.

Only recently, in 1944, have I been able to admire most of Richard Strauss once more and even now not everything. And never again have

I been able to bear for long the Pierre Louys-like atmosphere of Debussy and Ravel, although they were once the favourites of my earliest youth. Stravinsky's music, hard, cold, unsentimental, enormously brilliant and virtuous, was now the favourite of my post-adolescence. In a different way it achieved the hard, cold post-war flawlessness which I myself wanted to attain—but in an entirely different style, medium. . . .

#### CHAPTER IV IGOR STRAVINSKY

DURING the last half of 1922 Igor Stravinsky made a trip to Berlin, where he had intended to remain just one week. However, because of circumstances beyond his control, he remained in Berlin for exactly two months—a fact which caused him to become increasingly furious as the weeks went by.

I saw him for practically all of this time. Stravinsky's unwilling incarceration in Berlin therefore added greatly to my education and, possibly, to anecdotal history concerning perhaps one of the greatest composers of recent times. There are two versions of Stravinsky's two months in Berlin—his own (the less accurate) and mine.

His version (at least so it was repeated to me in Paris in early 1923) was that I had early fastened myself upon his neck and every day thereafter pestered him nearly to death. I prefer to recall our two months' daily talks together as a sudden decision on Stravinsky's part to visit America to learn, first-hand, just what Americans are like and how far they might be expected to understand his music, should he decide upon an American tour.

The truth, as usual, probably rests somewhere near direct centre. For it is entirely possible that I did force myself upon Stravinsky, pester him daily and unduly. He was my hero. I worshipped the brain that had conceived the colossal, world-shaking *Sacre du Printemps*, the fingers that had actually written *Histoire du Soldat*, *Renard*, *Petrouchka*, *Oiseau de Feu*.

On the other hand Stravinsky also probably deliberately chose my company not only as his official first informant on America, but also as the only possible antidote to the German conductors and performing artists who besieged him daily.

By associating only with a young unknown American composer-pianist he was slapping them all in the face in a peculiarly offensive way—which both he and they would understand.

When in mid-1922 Stravinsky came to Germany he did not intend even so much as to stop. He hated Berlin, all that Berlin stood for and,

a year later (when I fully comprehended exactly how Parisian he had become) I could more fully appreciate how, during this long Berlin interval, he must have awakened every morning to clamp instantly and firmly his fingers to his nose. He wanted to go only to the port of Stettin on the Baltic, for it was here that a Russian Soviet ship from Leningrad was to disembark his mother: he then planned to take her directly to Paris.

Stravinsky and his mother had been separated since he had left Russia as a youth; and the first World War, then the Russian Revolution, had prevented his bringing her to Paris; so that it was not until 1922 that it had been at all possible for him to so much as even hope that he might ever be able to see her again. At the first moment, therefore, he had made the necessary arrangements; there remained only one final hurdle—the scheduled sailing of the Soviet ship. But this sailing was postponed, not once but many times, adding up to two months in all. In the meantime Stravinsky did not dare to stay too far away from the port of Stettin, for, had the Soviet ship suddenly arrived, the German authorities would not have allowed his mother to land without Stravinsky's actual presence on the dock.

Stravinsky, therefore, decided to remain near Stettin, in nearby Berlin, frittering away his time as best he could.

At this moment I was staying at the very American home of Cæsar Searchinger, who lived in a Berlin suburb, Dahlem. Hanson, having sensed that I would be homesick as soon as he left me alone in Berlin, had asked Cæsar to take up the slack; and he had been kind enough to do so. Cæsar, being the Berlin representative of *Musical Courier*, always knew immediately about everything that was happening in Berlin, and told me over the breakfast table one morning that Ignor Stravinsky had just arrived at the Russischer Hof.

Without further ado I went out to the Dahlem underground station, took a subway for the Wilhelmstrasse Bahnhof and arrived inside the Russischer Hof within twenty minutes.

I had not the remotest idea of how I would introduce myself. At the desk, quarrelling with the desk clerk, I saw a smallish man whose photograph I had studied a thousand times. I walked up to him, touched him on the shoulder.

“Herr Stravinsky, I am an American composer. . . .”

This particular introduction proved to be one hundred per cent. the correct one. Future musicologists may even analyze it as the beginning of a Stravinskian American trend—for to-day he lives five blocks away from me in Beverly Hills, California, and has become an American citizen to boot. So, instead of cutting me dead (which afterwards I learned he was perfectly capable of), he immediately assumed



an attitude of consummate interest. (In whatever he does, Stravinsky is always consummate.)

"An American composer! And why do you wish to see me?"

His words were friendly. "Because, Herr Stravinsky, my young American colleagues and I admire you above all other living composers." (This was not quite correct, as most of my colleagues in America loved, if they loved any modern composer at all, Schönberg; but this did not suit my purpose.)

"Is there, then, a group of young, enterprising, new-spirited composers in America?"

"Oh, yes, Herr Stravinsky, a whole large group. I am a typical representative—you would be interested to hear about us. . . ."

He was. He invited me to breakfast. I already had had my breakfast, but I cheerfully ate another. During the breakfast I told him about myself, Clafin, Leginska. Sessions and a number of other budding "American" composers—all of whom I described as flaming Stravinsky admirers.

Stravinsky was intrigued. He asked me if I happened to have any of their music with me.

I whipped a composition out of my brief-case. It was my little *Symphony for Five Instruments*, as nearly similar (at least in style) as I could have made it to Stravinsky's own *Symphony for Wind Instruments*. Stravinsky looked at it carefully with great interest. When he turned to me again he was obviously friendly. "Very, very interesting! Not at all like contemporary German, English or Italian music. And"—questioningly—"all of you, in America, compose somewhat in this manner?"

"Oh, yes," I said emphatically, "very much in the same manner!"

"Come to lunch to-morrow," he suggested; and thereafter, for two straight months, he and I had lunch together (and also, more often than not, breakfast, dinner and supper), talking about everything in the contemporary world of music.

In exchange he pumped me about America, how advanced was its musical thought, how well received were previous tentative performances of Stravinsky's in New York, Boston and even Philadelphia.

But first he carefully asked me, "Is there such a town as Philadelphia?" Then: Did I think America would welcome a tour by Stravinsky? What would it be best to programme? Should he conduct or write and play a new piano concerto, or both?

In every instance I answered him "correctly," as he would have wished. *How could I have done less for my hero?* Curiously enough, I also did this in all sincerity. If Sessions & Co. were not quite enough Stravinskyphile to suit me at the moment, I was nevertheless convinced that they soon would be, as such was, of course, inevitable. (I was right.)

If America had not received his works as enthusiastically as I had described, it would in due time so receive them. *I had merely ventured a fraction into the future!*

In those days I saw the entire world in rose-tinted glasses of my own making; what I saw was the literal truth for me; it has taken me half a lifetime to see the world in any semblance to reality.

Stravinsky quickly proved to be vastly ignorant of America. I gathered the impression that, in common with most artistic Russians of his era, he thought we in America were still busy chopping down the trees and, in certain isolated western sections, still having trouble with the Indians.

For instance: one day previous to my visit, Leopold Stokowski had come to see Stravinsky, who was then taking a bath. Oeberg, Stravinsky's publisher, was waiting for him in the living-room of his hotel suite, so Oeberg opened the front door and asked Stokowski what he wanted. Stokowski said he wanted to see Stravinsky. Oeberg yelled back in Russian to Stravinsky that a bloke was there at the front door who wanted to see him. "Tell him to go away and come back some other time," yelled back Stravinsky, still in Russian. "But he says that he is the conductor of a symphony orchestra in America," shouted back Oeberg.

In the meantime Stokowski, shifting his weight from foot to foot, and on the outside of the door, too, began to get pretty hot under the collar. They should have known who he was.

"Ask him what orchestra," instructed Stravinsky, still in Russian.

"He says the Philadelphia Orchestra," replied Oeberg.

"Never heard of it," said Stravinsky. "Send him away; in all probability he's an impostor!"

"Wait a minute," interrupted Stokowski (who understands Russian as well as anybody!). "There IS so a town called Philadelphia, and it has an orchestra; and I am its conductor, and what's more I can prove it! I have records in my hotel across town, and I'll go and get them!"

And Stokowski did.

When he came back an hour later he passed the records through the door and Stravinsky played one side of one or two of them in order to ascertain whether or not it was a good orchestra. Then, and only then, was poor Stokowski admitted.

Curiously, and without any reason that I have been able to grasp, Stravinsky has ever since maintained a semi-suspicious attitude concerning Stokowski—who is certainly one of the very best interpreters of Stravinsky's music alive.

Stravinsky rather shocked me during this period by invariably turning idealistic musical conversations into mercenary channels. Perhaps he thought he was just being American. But previously, in America, I had always supposed that great composers (Stravinsky in particular) never discussed the corrosive matter of money.

Stravinsky always did, with great gusto.

He even told the following "money, money" story on himself: One day the composer Ginsberg, who was then also the director of the Monte Carlo Opera, asked Stravinsky to compose an opera for him. Stravinsky immediately demanded what seemed to Ginsberg an outrageous price. Ginsberg remonstrated. He said: "But, Stravinsky, look at me, I compose too, but the Paris Opera only gave me five thousand francs for my last opera." "Oh," replied Stravinsky. "But you, Ginsberg, compose music so easily. I, on the other hand, compose music with greatest difficulty, very, very slowly. Because of the extra labour involved, I must ask more, much more."

He hated anyone to cheat him out of any money whatsoever. I once referred to the great monetary success of a contemporary of Stravinsky's. "Yes," he admitted, "he's successful enough; but it is from me that he has gotten his musical ideas. It is, therefore, I who should really receive his royalties." Again, in speaking of his then close friend, Picasso, he sighed, "Ah, yes, Picasso! What a lucky man! Why, Picasso can literally draw thousand-franc notes on plain paper with mere pen and ink, sign them, and hand them in as legal tender!" Still Stravinsky was no lover of money for its own sake. He loved it because it made life gaudier, more pleasant. After Stravinsky completed his first tour of America he came back with \$40,000. It now immediately became apparent to all of Paris that Stravinsky expected this sum to last him for ever. He moved out of his small apartment, bought himself a huge motor-car which was chauffeured by a magnificent Negro in red-and-gold uniform. The next year, however, Stravinsky moved to a slightly smaller house, bought a slightly smaller car and had a slightly less magnificent chauffeur. The year following he moved back to his old apartment over Pleyel and was seen exercising in the Bois on a bicycle.

Soon after this, however, he went to America for another "killing," after which the entire process began all over again—the huge motor-car, the smaller car, etc., etc.

I told my friend Ethel Leginska, who was then in Berlin, that Stravinsky was staying in Berlin too. Having heard positively that he was in London, she refused to believe it. I offered to produce him on the hoof. With her tongue in her cheek, she invited us both to tea. When Stravinsky came she still remained incredulous. The man *looked*

like Stravinsky. But *was* he Stravinsky? She would test him. She set her conversation as she would set a trap. But Stravinsky, who—if he is in the mood—can be a pixie of the pixies, neatly evaded her. He answered her questions in a way that might, or might not, indicate that he was Stravinsky. Leginska became mad with uncertainty. She lured him to her piano to “play just one piece.” He did, but in a curious off-tempo, off-beat mixture of rag-time, somewhat in the manner of his *Piano Rag Music* or his *Ragtime*. It was very exciting, but sounded to Leginska (who knew nothing of Stravinsky’s late music) as if a rag-time-band pianist had suddenly gone stark raving mad upon her pianoforte.

This mystery still continues to haunt Leginska. She is not certain whether the greatest of her musical heroes visited her or not. But he did.

Stravinsky was then constantly being collared by top-ranking German musicians whom he intensely disliked. One now well-known German conductor once waylaid him in the Russischer Hof lobby and asked him for permission to play *Oiseau de Feu*. It is, incidentally, a work not too difficult to conduct and this German conductor had premiered many of the most difficult new German works, amongst them Schönberg’s.

But Stravinsky refused him permission to conduct *Oiseau de Feu*. “It is too difficult for a German conductor,” he claimed.

Stravinsky avoided all Berlin teas; but at last there occurred a very important one, attendance at which he could not possibly get out of. During this tea a third-rate German composer caught him in a corner with a piece of cake in one hand and a cup of tea in the other, additionally flanked on right and left by two enormous German dowagers. The third-rate German composer made instant use of his strategic position. “Dear Herr Stravinsky,” he purred now, “I have been wanting to meet you for such a long time. Would you do me the very great honour of looking at my new Symphony in B flat?”

Stravinsky, who could not escape (and before important ladies never wishes to seem unkind to budding composers), said: “Come to my hotel to-morrow at four o’clock.”

The next day at four the third-rate composer came gleefully, his brief-case bulging with a 300-page symphonic score. He knocked on the hotel-room door. But, alas for him, he was not this time flanked by two enormous dowagers; neither was Stravinsky in a corner with a piece of cake in one hand and a cup of tea in the other.

Stravinsky opened the door, gave him short shrift.

“I cannot look at your symphony to-day. I’m sorry. Good-bye!”

The composer walked sorrowfully down the hotel corridor. But just before he came to the elevator he saw me step out of it, with a

brief-case in my hand. I walked straight to Stravinsky's door, knocked on it, was admitted immediately. The German stood there awhile, listening to the sounds of laughter and friendly conversation coming through the transom. Then Oeberg, also with a brief-case, came down the corridor; he knocked on Stravinsky's door and was admitted immediately.

More sounds of laughter and conversation through the transom. Then Pavel Tchelitchev, the painter, also with a brief-case, came down the corridor, knocked on Stravinsky's door and was admitted immediately. Laughter and conversation now fairly bubbled and foamed over the transom.

Our third-rate German composer wrathfully made up his mind. He too knocked on Stravinsky's door. When Stravinsky opened it, he said:

"But Herr Stravinsky, you distinctly said, yesterday, that you would look at my symphony to-day at four o'clock, in your hotel room. We had a definite appointment. It is four o'clock now, and this is your hotel room. In the meantime you have received these three gentlemen, although you have told me that you cannot look at my symphony to-day. Would you, therefore, please be so kind as to make an appointment for me to-morrow, the day after, or any time which suits your best convenience?"

Stravinsky looked at him coldly. "Ah, yes," he said, "I will arrange it, but first I must get my appointment book. Let's see [thumbing it], to-morrow is impossible, I've got to see Cæsar Searchinger. The day after is no good; I'm going to be in Potsdam all day. Next week? No, I'll be at Stettin to get my mother. The week after? No, I'll have a lot of things to do around Berlin getting ready to leave for Paris. The week after? No, I'll be leaving for Paris. Next year? No, I won't be coming back to Berlin again. The year after? No, not then, either."

He came to the end of the appointment book, took out a pencil and looked up brightly. "Fine!" he said triumphantly. He scribbled down on the last page, "Never!" and looked up brightly. "Is that O.K. with you [*Eh bien—jamais—voulez-vous?*]"

The mothers of famous composers are just the same as any other mothers; *they* are not going to stand for any of their famous sons' temperamental nonsense. When, finally, Stravinsky's mother did turn up in Berlin, she brought with her a great pile of Stravinsky's earliest attempts at composition; but she also brought with her a faint but typical Soviet Russian contempt for his present "mercurial" (as she considered it) reputation in Paris.

Her idea, then, of a *really* important modern composer was Scriabine, to whose music she was apparently devoted—possibly

because, at this period of Soviet Russia's musical development, Scriabine was practically the official Russian Soviet composer.

Stravinsky, on the other hand, cordially hated Scriabine's music, on purely æsthetic grounds. Scriabine's music, with all of its voluptuousness, its fat, juicy orchestration, its ramification with the mystic, its derivation from the purely mathematical (insofar as construction and tonality were concerned), was anathema to Stravinsky—whose music was often thin to the point of being almost skeletonized, and always economically orchestrated, non-mystic, composed out of musical ideas rather than musical formulæ.

One evening, while I was sitting with both of them, I heard Mrs. Stravinsky and her son break into a heated prolonged argument. She would not give in and finally Stravinsky almost broke into tears, so wrathful did he become.

At last he turned to me and translated: he, Stravinsky, no longer able to stand his mother's inordinate admiration for Scriabine (when, after all, she had a son destined to become more famous than Scriabine would ever become!), admonished her, criticizing her taste and finally admitting to hating Scriabine. Whereupon she had answered:

"Now, now, Igor! You have not changed one bit all these years. You were always like that—always contemptuous of *your betters!*"

Stravinsky shrugged his shoulders and again looked absolutely forlorn, hopeless.

We had many more talks and I shall refer to some of them later, in detail. He talked about his family, how many relatives he had, how difficult it was to support them all. He talked about Mozart (who was his musical love of the moment), and said, "If I had my way I would cut all the development sections out of Mozart's symphonies. They would be fine then!"

Another time he said, "The trouble with music appreciation in general is that people are taught to have too much respect for music; they should be taught to love it instead. People who are in love with one another do not really respect each other—they know too much about about each other!"

"Music," he once told me, "should be written in exactly the same manner that one makes sexual love. And, if one is not good enough, one should be kicked out the side of the bed."

On another occasion he said, "I write my music now on sheets of music paper glued together so that the staves are continuous and then I paste this continuous sheet around the four walls of my study. I start on the right-hand side of the doorway and keep on composing, going as intensely as I can until I reach the other side, or the left-hand side of the doorway. When this happens, the composition is finished."

In this way I am enabled to make my music "continuous," that is to say, into large broad lines instead of tiny breathless chunks as, for instance, Schönberg does."

(This was one of the very few instances, incidentally, that Stravinsky even so much as admitted his great rival Schönberg's existence!)

Soon after Stravinsky's mother arrived in Berlin they both departed for Paris—not without, however, Stravinsky's first offering to arrange a piano concert for me in Paris—that is, if I so wished. "You play my music," he told me then, "exactly as I wish it to be played. Really, I wish you would decide to come to Paris. . . ."

Stravinsky's departure left a big hole in my daily life. So long as I had been with him—whether or no he had denied it—I scarcely noticed that I was in Berlin, or even in Europe. But now, with the smell of autumn commencing in the air, and also with my moving out of Cæsar Searchinger's typical American household in suburban Dahlem to a musical pension in Berlin proper, I felt suddenly my first terrible soul-twisting pangs of homesickness.

Hanson, having arranged all my concerts for the autumn-winter-spring season, had already been absent for one month and a half; he had returned to America.

Before he left, however, he told me that he was fully satisfied with our fairly impressive beginnings, both in London and with Schultz von Dornberg.

## CHAPTER V

### PRELIMINARY STUDIES IN LIFE

MY first mistress, and perhaps my only really legitimate one in the accepted sense of that word, was obtained in fair exchange for the first jazz instruments to enter the Soviet Union.

When Stravinsky left Berlin my days were extremely lonely, for young artistic Berliners gave me a wide berth, and young Von Stuckenschmidt and his coterie of painters, musicians, writers and sculptors had not yet turned up. So I wandered alone through the streets of Berlin in the Bahnhof am Zoo sector, in which my new pension was located and one day I wandered into a Russian bookshop where a Russian dancer by the name of Parnach came up to me and said:

"You are George Antheil, the jazz pianist?"

I said I was George Antheil all right, but just an ordinary pianist—Bach, Chopin, Stravinsky and stuff like that. He looked disappointed.

"Oh," he apologized, "then you would not be carrying about with

you any jazz instruments, an American percussion set, a saxophone or an American jazz mute?"

I assured him I would not, really.

"In that case," he said sadly, "I shall have to go back to Russia next week without a jazz orchestra." (By "jazz orchestra" he meant only the instruments, not the orchestra personnel.)

Seeing that I was mildly interested, he played up the subject further:

"I want so very much to take a jazz orchestra back with me because, in Paris, I heard an American Negro orchestra which played some of the most exciting music I've ever heard in my life. It is like the vital new spirit of the future and I would like my colleagues in Russia to hear this orchestra. But that, I learn, is impossible; at least I would like to take back some instruments. With what I have heard and a few records I picked up in Paris, perhaps I can teach a few of our fellows to play."

I cocked a sympathetic ear. Anything which would make American music—even American jazz music—better known to the world in general would in those days immediately enlist my support. I got in touch with Searchinger and, through him, discovered that the members of a so-called American jazz band were arriving in Berlin. When they arrived I went to see them. There was only one genuine American among them. The drummer was willing to sell me his percussion outfit, as, with the money, he could easily buy and put together a new one and make a handsome profit. I also bought a broken-down saxophone and a wa-wa mute. These I presented to Parnach.

He was so overcome by these presents that, sensing that my main interest in life outside of music was femininity, he brought to our café table the next day a little dark nineteen-year-old Russian actress by the name of Valentine Sahkar.

(Sahkar, in Russian, means "sugar." Really, she could not have been better named. . . .)

Valla parted her hair in the middle, had the typical oval face and accentuated nostril of the true South Russian and she was one of the fastest talkers I've ever met. She was also, as I seem to remember it, very pretty—because, frankly, remembered mistresses are nearly always "very, very pretty."

Parnach, after a satisfactory interval, got up and excused himself, and I never saw him again. But, God bless him, he left me no dud. He had taken care to repay my favour in a way that could not possibly misfire. Valla was nitroglycerin.

When I first attempted to smuggle Valla into my staid pension I created more than a flurry of excitement. Hanson had previously taken Searchinger into his confidence and told him to find me the most



conservative quarters in Berlin. Fulfilling this, Cæsar had outdone himself. The pension at 9 Kaiserallee was, indeed, the very epitome of everything that represented conservative, well-entrenched musical life in Berlin. It catered to visiting pianists, conductors and such like and furnished luxurious board and lodging with a piano in every room. In the dining-room one could eat at a large table or at a small individual table, as one preferred. A famous (but momentarily impoverished) German lady of abundant musical connections ran the pension somewhat in the manner of a continuous salon where, at any time of the day or night, one could indulge in musical small talk and scandal.

Into this elite atmosphere one could also bring (if one paid for the extra plate) an occasional friend.

A great many striving young musicians in Berlin would have gladly paid for that plate out of their own pocket in order to enter this sanctimonious but extremely well-connected musical salon if only for an hour.

Other regular guests in this dining-room were an American lady and her overwatched daughter, who was studying singing. One Sunday, previously, I had been given the supreme honour of taking this young lady out alone and unescorted to a nearby Berlin lake (Wannsee), where I rowed her about for a good half of the day; but I never attempted to repeat the experience on following Sundays.

With this conservative background, it is perhaps understandable that when I first brought Valla into the Kaiserallee dining-room considerable sensation occurred. It never struck me at the time that, all considered, Valla was remarkably dressed, to say the least.

And that she had doused herself much too thoroughly with the strongest chypre perfume. . . .

I'll return to the impression Valla made on our pension later. Much more important, actually, was the question of what kind of impression I would make upon Valla's circle. She pondered over this quite a time before permitting me to be introduced to them. It was a matter of the proper kind of clothes and a wrist watch.

The wrist-watch part of it must have been very important, for when Valla discovered that I had no wrist-watch she immediately made me go out with her and get one.

My clothes at that period were widely separated in style, my wardrobe consisting on the one hand of elegantly made London formal afternoon clothes, evening clothes, full dress and "smoking"; and on the other hand of remotely Trentonian ready-made suits. In other words, on the concert stage and in the Berlin salons I was very elegant; but out on the street I was a hick.

In Valla's eyes this would never do. Where Soviet-minded Parnach

had ever found her I do not know, but she had a White Russian soul. She took me to a Russian tailor of her acquaintance and when he was finished with me I looked like a Berlin gigolo. She also coached me in the scandal of the theatre at which she was working: who was mad at whom; who was in love with whom; who was living with whom. Also, all of their various idiosyncracies—which seemed to be multitudinous. . . .

When finally I did meet her friends, it was somewhat in the manner of a coming-out party. I “threw” a small dinner at their favourite café and thenceforth I became a sort of beloved American accomplice—and, because I was an American (and therefore automatically the most likely person to reach for the check) a sort of major miracle, an extremely lucky catch, not only for Valla, but for the whole crowd.

They always fawned on me, begged me to play the piano whenever any piano was available, always fell over in loud admiration whenever I finished.

All of which would not have been so bad had it not been for an unfortunate occurrence at the Kaiserallee pension.

Using my privilege as an official inhabitant of the pension to occasionally invite Valla to dinner at one of our separate tables—an experience which she vastly enjoyed, as this made her feel that she was taking a step upwards in society—I once asked her to invite as an extra guest her best friend, a Russian girl journalist. This, in the final analysis, proved to be a mistake. The lady journalist arrived but, whether through mistake or intention, she also brought with her another girl, a young Russian actress even more sensational than Valla—if such a thing were possible.

We all sat down to dinner but were promptly joined by (1) a dwarf, (2) a wild-looking Russian painter and finally (3) a Mongolian giant, all of whom were under the mistaken impression that they had been invited too.

After this, a coolness settled down on the pension and I felt that I was no longer welcome. The American lady and her daughter refused to talk to me; a well-known violinist and his wife were scandalized beyond description; and I began to feel that my comings and goings were closely watched.

This would never do as, every time I came or left, Valla came and left with me. I decided to move.

Moving time should come only in late autumn. Not until then does the sharp nip of real autumn make one suddenly realize that one wants to stay indoors most of the time to feather whatever sort of “home” one can.

I now rented a furnished apartment on the outskirts of Berlin. Valla

1

moved in with me and with her she brought seven enormous expensive-looking trunks. This, frankly, amazed me no end, for, in all the weeks I had known her, I had never seen her change her costume more than twice. Indeed, because of this, I had bought her a number of dresses—but no such amount as would fill seven enormous trunks.

The fact of the matter was that she was a trunkophile. She loved trunks. Twice a day she would take her wardrobe and pack it neatly into one of the most gaudy of them, but she never had enough to fill it up even halfway. Occasionally she partially solved this problem by taking off the clothes she had on and packing them up too.

Then she would stand off and admire the effect. The whole effect was truly one to admire.

"Someday," she told me, "I will travel. I will travel everywhere over the earth. And my seven trunks will go with me, packed with clothes."

She had the wanderlust in her blood and I knew that I should never be able to keep her with me.

One day, without forewarning or explanation, she was gone. I missed her terribly for exactly a week—exactly as long as the odour of her chypre perfume lasted. She had commenced, but not completed, a very essential part of my education.

I never saw her again.

I occasionally wondered, meanwhile, whether Anne and her mother ever read the *Musical Courier*. If they did, they would know that I, George Antheil, was not only in Europe, but specifically in Berlin.

Cæsar Searchinger had printed a story about the fact that I had stopped for a while at 9 Kaiserallee. And had Anne written a letter to me at this address, it would have been forwarded.

But no letter had arrived.

It was now finally November, and Berlin was growing chilly. Because the German mark was skyrocketing in value and because I had a generous allowance until my midwinter concerts should begin, I bought myself an enormous fur coat made of Siberian cat. Since the episode of Valla I faintly courted the idea of possibly extending my concert tour to Russia, if Hanson would so permit. Russia must be most interesting.

Schultz von Dornberg came to Berlin, contacted me, told me to visit him at the Adlon Hotel. I went up to his room, found him seated before a hotel table with my *First Symphony* on it. He permitted his icy strange Prussian face to relax into a smile.

"So, so!" he observed, screwing the inevitable monocle into his eye.

"So indeed! Here is our young George Antheil, the composer of this remarkable symphony."

His voice sounded dreadfully sarcastic, but later I discovered that he meant just what he said. At the moment, however, I noted that he had a broad white scar across the whole top of his forehead. He was pale, tall and spare and rather resembled (as I remember at this considerable distance) Conrad Veidt, but in a rather more sinister edition.

This man, Schultz von Dornberg, had killed sixty-two Allied aviators in action. Had the war lasted a year longer he might have killed me too. But now—well, he liked my symphony. In fact, he liked it so well that he was going to play it with the great Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra.

He immediately displayed a tremendous knowledge of the work. "Sit down here," he invited. "I want to go over some passages with you." We spent two hours together in which, in finest detail, he went over every note of the score with me, readjusting dynamic marks, tempi, little points of orchestration in the light of his much greater experience. He never dictated a point. He was older than I, a man of considerable reputation in orchestral conducting as well; still he insisted on nothing. Rather, he suggested.

He might have had no respect for me as an American. But as an international composer, he bowed to my wishes, my intuition, my inspiration. Although, certainly, I was nothing yet but a very callow youth.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE GIRL FROM THE DREAM

THERE are really only three basic ways in which a composer may write his autobiography. One way, for instance, is the Rimsky-Korsakov way. Rimsky simply eliminated everything except that which pertained to the purely musical side of the picture. It is purest musical autobiography and I suppose that it is all right, only it presupposes that one's own music is destined to become world-shaking.

Another way is the Stravinsky way. Stravinsky's autobiography goes to the other extreme, tells you little about the way in which he makes music or concerning the birth of his compositions. Stravinsky rather (just for an example), belabours conductors for not buying Stravinsky records—his, Stravinsky's, *own* conducting of his *own* works—so that they might, for God's sake, conduct them right for once; or at least that seems to be one of his many inferences.

Stravinsky's preoccupation seems rather to get *his life* straightened

out, at least in his own mind; and although this is very laudable, more often than not it does not concern either the public or the young composer to come.

A third way I should call "the Antheil way." It doesn't pretend to know anything about Antheil—whether or not he's ever destined to be anything of a permanent addition to musical literature; but it does propose to let you in on the inside of Antheil, happenings that "triggered," so to speak, his compositions, the difficulties which one way or the other beset him in writing them during the past thirty years of rather world-shaking history. Perhaps, therein, will also be a history of our times—but in any case I do not intend to hold up my compositions as anything else than that which they are—the mad, outwardly illogical, but inwardly necessary pursuing of a dream music.

Most composers that I know are perfectly normal citizens, good fellows to know. One looks like a bank president, another like a shirt salesman, another like a poetic plumber. They are good composers and I am sure their lives would be interesting if you were only able to really get inside of them; for to embrace a composer's life is and always has been tantamount to taking the veil or plunging into a criminal career. Or, at the very last, subscribing to a life of the highest, most precarious adventure.

Few persons to-day could, I believe, earn their living through the composition of serious music alone. Thus, right in the very beginning, certain externals must force themselves into the music of every modern composer: one composer I know, for instance, is a teacher in a great university; his music, although admirable, inclines to be academic. More of his attention is devoted to the paper formula than to the actual sound of his music. Consequently almost anything he might write about music or his musician's life would be nearly valueless unless he at once let us be aware of this plot inside of himself to outwit his best intentions. What could be interesting from now on would be a sort of novel about how well he does or does not cope with that situation.

Another composer I know is subsidized by the money and excellent intentions of a friendly music patron; but every time I have met him recently, I usually find him at his wits' end attempting to write some composition or another which is either so much in the accepted "modern" style of the cities in which he operates, or kotows so utterly to what the local critics think is great stuff, that he seldom comes to think about how he really feels about the great musical compositions he once intended to write. His problem is, of course, to continue pleasing that music patron and company with the fuss and flurry of minute-to-minute public opinion in order that he may continue to eat.

Having once gone through this myself, I do not envy him; but

his life would nevertheless make a most breathless autobiography, an object lesson for other young composers!

Another mature composer I know must use many of his works in a concert career—and his concert career is his “bringing home of the bacon,” so to speak. Now I really wonder how much the fact that his new work is going to be premiered in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, next season will bear upon the actual composition of that work?

These questions—and not a lot of æsthetic musing about—are, I believe, the truly fascinating problems of the composer’s soul and the ones often most interesting to read about.

If I were to particularize about my own composer soul, I should say that in many aspects it would probably resemble that of a confidence man.

I am now going to bring into this particular composer’s soul autobiography a certain girl called Boski. Because, without her, I would all too often be at a constant loss to explain many of the external phases of my life and music—and not a few of the internal.

One day in December 1922 I came back home to my Berlin apartment to find a letter from Paris awaiting me. It was a letter from Stravinsky; he wanted me to come to Paris, where he had arranged the promised piano concert.

I went out and wired him that I would come. Then I went to a café not far removed from my abode.

A girl and two men soon entered the door of this café and sat down quite near me. The girl was dark, had high cheekbones, but otherwise was delicately, rather sensitively beautiful. She was dressed in a black dress and blouse, wore no cosmetics whatsoever. The two men with her were young, evidently brothers and astonishingly enough resembled twin Mephistos. They looked as if they were Mongols.

All now ordered coffee and when it came drank it in almost complete silence. What little they did say seemed to be in Chinese or some sort of Mongolian dialect.

They spoke in no language known to me; and I spoke German, French and New Jersey, with some knowledge of Swedish, Italian and Russian.

The girl and the two men were sort of “arty”-looking.

Late the next afternoon I wandered as a soul possessed into an expressionist art gallery, called “Der Sturm.” Here, from time to time, I had bought various modern paintings from a young girl attendant, Fräulein Eva Weinwurstel, a good-looking slim girl of about twenty-three.

Eva was interested in the fact that I reputedly composed music of

a wildly unorthodox order; she was a sort of high priestess of modern art, as so often girls in bookshops, art galleries or modern museums are, the eternal but utterly nice Sylvia Beaches of all climes.

Eva was a person who could help me about that girl if anyone could. Nothing occurred in the art life of Berlin without Eva's knowing of it; she sat at a sort of central headquarters of art intelligence.

And Eva was able. She said she knew the girl in the café. Her name was Boski Markus. The two young men with her were related to her by marriage, the elder of the two being her older sister's husband. No, Boski did not like the unmarried one very much. They probably all went into the café together because their group treated in turns and it was the turn for one of them to treat. They were all very poor. Not because their parents did not have money, for Boski was related to various well-to-do Viennese and Budapest families, but Boski had turned radical and run away from her family in Budapest. More, Eva did not know. Wait a minute: Eva had also heard that Boski had somehow been mixed up with the Revolution and barely escaped Budapest with her life after its downfall. Not much more. She was only eighteen or nineteen, wild, untamable. At present she studied at the Berlin University.

"She will hate you for an American capitalist," Eva remonstrated, "what with your buying three or four hundred dollars' worth of modern paintings at a time, wearing full-dress clothes in the evenings and invariably going to the most expensive restaurants, the choicest salons. You're crazy to try to meet her. Moreover, and if by any mad chance she does take a liking to you, her own very clannish group will disown her. This group have been her closest friends since childhood, including her beautiful older sister whom she loves devotedly. She will not bother with you for long. Why bump your head against this impossible wall?"

"Logically," I replied, "you are fantastically correct. Yet I must meet Boski Markus. Please, Eva, help me."

And I suggested a plot wherein Eva should invite Boski Markus to the premiere of my *First Symphony* the week following at the Berlin Philharmonic under Schultz von Dornberg. I pressed two box seats into her hand. After the concert Eva was to manoeuvre Boski into having after-concert dinner with me and Eva.

Eva sighed. "I'll try," she said. Eva was a nice kid and very attractive, but not my type.

Many hyperthyroid autobiographers keep telling you that even if they live to be a thousand years old they honestly will not forget this or that notable incident of their lives. Now, and in order to be thoroughly democratic, I too will say that even though I live to be a

thousand years old I will never forget the first morning's rehearsal of my *First Symphony*!

Schultz von Dornberg lifted his baton, tore it down, and the orchestra struck!

It was incredible, this miracle! This was the first chord of my *First Symphony*, my chord, sounding just as I had orchestrated it.

I almost fainted with sheerest joy.

Also, at this supreme moment, I knew that I should never become a good conductor, at least not of my own music. For I would forever be too enchanted by the sheer sound of my music to give my musicians their proper cues.

Then, suddenly, Schultz von Dornberg stopped the orchestra, gave directions for some missed note which, although it had passed me, had not escaped his fine conductor's ear. The orchestra went forward again, then stopped to repeat another small section, something which Von Dornberg wanted to polish. I was first alarmed, thinking I had made some unforgivable musician's error, but when I saw that everyone accepted this as usual procedure, I calmed down—although this constant starting and stopping of the orchestra continued to jar me. I wanted them to go on, on. I could not wait until I heard the entire orchestration unwind—the thoughts, atmosphere and emotions of the days during which I had written the symphony unreeling from a gigantic yardstick assisted by eighty men. . . .

Yes, here was that passage I had orchestrated one day after canoeing on the Delaware River.

And here, during this part, it was summer night; the honeysuckle had bloomed; somehow this odour had got so entwined into the orchestration that now, as my black notes found sonic life, the actual smell of honeysuckle and the quiet New Jersey night came into the Berlin Philharmonic hall for just a split second. . . . (Later I was to discover that this is one of the great joys of deeply felt musical compositions, which is that no matter how long ago you wrote the work, its thoughts, dreams, fears, joys and sorrows will always return to you as fresh as upon the day you pinned them down into that particular composition—particularly if it is an orchestral work in full colour.) Here, in this spot, for instance, my master Bloch had advised me to change the orchestration. He was right, perhaps! But, curiously, how it now sounds just like Bloch, as if it were a part of his mental-spiritual processing. The spot is passed in a split second, thank Heaven, but I can almost see Bloch during this moment, nodding his head and saying, "Yes, it will sound better this way"—Bloch's way.

Schultz von Dornberg now repeats once more the part orchestrated during the honeysuckle night; and once more honeysuckle odour



penetrates the great empty Philharmonic, as if it were turned on by a giant atomizer—but this effect is obviously for me alone.

Then comes my scherzo; yes, I sketched this scherzo on a number of July nights, with the memory of skyrockets in the sky above and patriot airs sounding dimly over the river waters where Washington had once crossed. It is slightly "jazzy," a sound never yet heard in the halls of the Berlin auditorium. The first clarinetist finds his part unspeakably funny and suddenly bursts into laughter. He laughs until the tears come; the men laugh with him; Schultz von Dornberg waits, frowning but patient. The men are laughing not at the work, but with it, enjoying its humour. For, after all, what does "scherzo" mean but "joke"? I do not know orchestra men very well as yet, for this is my first symphony; but as I sit there, I realize slowly that the most important thing of all has been gained; the men like the work, are swinging along with it, not against it.

Regardless of what the critics may say about it the morning after, my work will at least have a good performance!

Schultz von Dornberg realizes it too. A severe Prussian drillmaster when occasion demands, he has the good sense to stop and allow the men to enjoy the work when they want to stop. His thin lips begin to smile, the first smile I have seen upon them. We still have a long way to go, but the first and largest mountain has been scaled, passed. What he has heard up to now—from this first and second movement of the symphony—tells him that his confidence in my talent has not been entirely unjustified. He is more relaxed now, for he knows he has not made *too large* a mistake in selecting my symphony for first performance in Berlin.

There is an intermission, and the first trombonist (who is also my copyist) takes this occasion to come down and congratulate me. "The men like it," he tells me, "and they will do their best with it. They think you have genuine talent."

I look at the men up there, eighty of them, and think: "Most of these men are still young enough to have served in the German Army. I wonder how they feel now, playing this music of an American? Apparently they feel no resentment whatsoever. How universal is the language of music! Or, at least, this would appear to be so among orchestral players the world over who, playing every night the composers of all the various nationalities, gradually accustom themselves to respecting talent as international, beyond chauvinism."

The rehearsal resumes, and we hit a bad snag. The orchestra suddenly sounds dreadful, as if the merest tyro had orchestrated that

section. Schultz von Dornberg stops the orchestra, investigates carefully, calling out note after note. For a few moments longer the director, eighty players and myself become members of a detective force hunting down a criminal—whose crime might soon be found to be my own!

I hold my breath as Schultz von Dornberg says, "Ah, there it is!"

But it merely (thank God!) proves to be a copyist's error; and so it is corrected, this by all the orchestra men at once, into their parts, in lead pencil. My trombonist looks sheepish and the men kid him.

"Hans had one too many on that night," they claim.

However, there are very few copyist's mistakes. It was not without some foresight that I had originally decided to hire one of the Philharmonic players to copy out the parts.

Some mistakes, however, are inevitable. The copyist is not yet born who does not make some mistakes, nor the proof-reader who occasionally fails to discover them.

The rehearsal continues.

I now begin to realize that some sections sound as strangely to me as if some other composer had written them. They sound barely "all right," so to speak; at least, they pass in the general *mêlée*, but they do not sound *as I had thought they would sound*. This astonishes and even frightens me. I must be the master, not the medium, of the sounds I write. This section sounds to me like a frightened bull plunging away from an otherwise well-regimentated, orderly herd, the possible forerunner of a gigantic stampede. I fidget. Would that I could still recompose, reorchestrate this section overnight. But I cannot; there would not be time enough. No, I must bear these terrible moments with a gritting of my teeth. I give Schultz von Dornberg a swift glance; does he suspect anything? No, he does not, thank God! "Modern music," people say, "occasionally sounds very strange." Indeed it does! I will never tell anybody, but after this Berlin performance is over I will certainly fix these spots, these horrid, bloody, murderous spots!

And so, with many more stoppings, repeatings, polishings, questions by the orchestra men such as "How many bars before number sixty-five? I think Hans left out a measure" . . . finally this gorgeous first rehearsal, with all of its fine expected sounds, its occasional brilliant surprises and horrifying disappointments, comes to end.

Before the final performance there are more rehearsals in which there is much less stopping and polishing.

Then the night of performance!

The first thing I notice on this final night of all nights is how splendidly the orchestra is dressed. This somehow surprises me. For on the rehearsal days, previously, they have sat sloppily at their desks in any old sort of clothes, sweaters, hats, or whatever was comfortable.

To-night, however, they are arrayed in formal white and black; and no pencils stuck behind their ears. They look very pert, professional, keenly aware that an audience is assembling.

And the audience is unexpectedly well dressed too. I say "unexpectedly" because, somehow, I had expected the audience to come clothed rather shabbily. In the recent past I have seen too many frayed cuffs, too many old overcoats, too many pinched faces in Berlin. But if there are shabby overcoats among this audience to-night, they have been checked at the cloakrooms.

This audience is as swanky as any audience in the world.

"Apparently," I say meaningly to a chance acquaintance with whom I have entered the Philharmonic, "Berlin has not yet hocked all of its furs, necklaces or full-dress suits!"

He sniffs disdainfully. "Only a few of the furs and necklaces are genuine. Moreover, full-dress suits may still be rented in Berlin. The brilliantly overdressed are in all probability war profiteers or foreigners. There is a goodly sprinkling here of Russians—White Russians. Their jewels and furs are genuine. In six years from now they will no longer be genuine.

"But mostly," he continues gratuitously, "Berlin has turned out in its best to-night because it has come to honour this first appearance of Schultz von Dornberg! He is a German war ace! Imagine, back in America, your Eddie Rickenbacker suddenly turning conductor of the New York Philharmonic; imagine what a turnout there would be, how many young kids waiting in the street backstage to get his autograph! Well, here in Berlin it is so backstage to-night. In the audience—well—Berlin is putting on its best show for Schultz von Dornberg. In a way, perhaps, this is also lucky for you, because this audience will therefore almost certainly greet your symphony with at least better than polite enthusiasm, if for no other reason than to pay tribute to Schultz von Dornberg's judgment in programming it."

At this moment a man whom we both recognize to be Berlin's chief music critic walks down the right aisle in the orchestra seats. He is well past forty, tall, plumpish. There is a bookish air about him. He sits down, while a rather squat middle-aged German woman who has followed him all this while occupies the seat alongside of him.

My companion, watching this, says, "That is bad!"

I ask, "What is bad?"

"*He has brought his wife!*" he whispers. "That is always bad. Have you ever heard of a critic writing a good criticism of a concert to which he has brought his wife?"

"I don't know," I say helplessly. "I'm still a little new at this con-

cert business. I mostly play concerts myself—other composers. Perhaps she insisted upon coming along in order to see Schultz von Dornberg?”

“What difference does it make?” he asks. I can see he pities me. “Critics, *Berlin* critics, do not like new compositions—especially those which they hear *with their wives*. Don’t ask me why, but it is so. However,” he continues, brightening up somewhat, “don’t worry too much about it. Berlin critics are notorious for their dislike of new music. This is known to be so throughout all Germany, so if they ‘kill’ you to-morrow, so to speak, everybody everywhere will discount it, at least a little. But you would have been better advised to have waited until your orchestral compositions had been fairly well accepted in Dresden, Frankfurt, Munich, Leipzig, before coming here. The critics there are more reasonable. Then, and with your reputation ‘half in the bag,’ so to speak, you could have entered Berlin *fait accompli*; the proverbially difficult Berlin critics would then have had this to countenance before relegating you utterly to the ash-heap!

“As it is, well, you may be in for a little of a pounding. Don’t take it too seriously, though.”

My stomach tightened and I suddenly felt seasick.

The concert began and I looked at the audience again; but saw them now as so many enemies, each and all waiting breathlessly to tear my little sham symphony to pieces. My chest constricted.

My symphony would not be played until the end of the programme; but precedent demanded that I be present in my box for all the programme from the beginning. I looked for Boski Markus, but could not see her.

Immediately before my symphony Schultz von Dornberg had programmed the work of a young German soldier “of great talent, whose unfortunate and untimely death during the 1918 offensive of the Great War robbed Germany of one of her greatest talents,” or so the programme stated. This work proved to be quite dull and pedestrian, but at its conclusion the audience broke out into the wildest applause, recalling Schultz von Dornberg many times.

Then many of them got up and left.

My *First Symphony* now commenced. Although the men were playing it superbly, indeed ever so much better than at the second rehearsal, it no longer seemed to sound as well. I saw, suddenly, monumental faults in its general construction, thin as I had never noticed before. I suddenly felt a psychic accord with the public, as if I read its most sensitive thought, as if I could feel its most minute reaction. And that reaction was *not* friendly. I needed no applause, or lack of it, to tell me what was wrong with my symphony. I needed

no critics in the morning papers to analyse the buts and whereas's  
*I knew*. I had heard it in public!

Every composer worth his salt knows, at such supreme moments of performance, whether or not he has succeeded *enough* in this particular composition to earn himself another hearing.

Performance is the supreme test.

At the end of my symphony I was astonished that the applause was as warm as it was! Schultz von Dornberg had given a splendid performance to an obviously difficult work. He returned again and again, finally asking the orchestra players to rise with him.

They rose, smiling, and at this moment the applause thundered out, truly emphatic.

It was not for me.

During most of this breathless excitement I had almost forgotten about Boski Markus and Eva Weinwurstel. I had previously glanced among the boxes. Had they come to the concert? I had not taken note of the numbers of the seats I had given Eva, so I did not know where to look for them.

However, had I not asked Eva to bring Boski to the entrance of the Philharmonic directly after the concert? From here, surely, I could convince them both to come with me to have some dinner. I stood at the entrance of this dismal Berlin Philharmonic long after it had emptied and turned dark, but no Markus or Weinwurstel were to be seen.

The next day I went around to the Sturm gallery. I asked Eva if she and Fräulein Markus had attended my concert.

"Oh yes," she replied suavely.

"And where were you both after the concert? I thought you and I had arranged to get all three of us together after the concert?"

"I tried to," Eva replied. "But Boski pulled me away; she just wouldn't keep the appointment."

"Why not?"

"Well . . . she didn't like your music."

## CHAPTER VII

### MUSIC CRITICS

BOSKI MARKUS was by no means alone in her dislike of my symphony. The Berlin music critics didn't like it either.

For two days their papers were full of their dislike.

I consoled myself slightly with the fact that Stravinsky had liked

the symphony; also with the fact that my hero had the greatest of contempt for contemporary German music and musicians.

But bad musical criticism is hard to take, no matter what the circumstances. This was my first rough encounter with the music-critic profession. The London critics had been kind, too kind. But they criticized, mostly, my piano playing. Here were a bunch of men who absolutely did not like my composing, which was much nearer to the point.

I read their critiques.

I was confused and unhappy about them immediately, so perhaps I did not read carefully. In any case, it seemed as if they were indignant about two things. (a) my symphony was not cast in formal enough pattern to suit them; it lacked many of the ancient construction devices, sufficient play of counterpoint and so forth, and (b) it did not employ the current German snobbism, atonality, or "the twelve-tone scale."

I now made a basic discovery about many music critics which, throughout all the years between, I have not found wanting. It is:

Music critics all too often do not criticise a work for what it is. They criticize it for what it is not.

Years later, in Paris, Jean Cocteau was to explain this mystery as well as I have ever heard it explained. "Let us suppose," he said, "that our critic is an excellent critic of, say, chairs. He knows all about a good chair, how it should be constructed, how well it looks, how well it rests the human body. In fact, he gets to be a very eminent critic of chairs, an international authority. Soon, however, he forgets that he is just a good critic of chairs and prints on his visiting cards: '*John Smith, Critic.*'"

"In this capacity he now examines a lamp. He looks at it all over, examines the electric fixtures, fingers the texture of the shade, considers deeply. Then he goes back to his newspaper office and writes for all the world to read:

" 'The lamp of Bill Brown is not a good lamp. You cannot sit on it.' "

It is quite possible that my *First Symphony* did lack a certain amount of originality, workmanship, even counterpoint. But, as any earnest critic must know, one does not listen to a youthful symphony for the workmanship or development which not even Brahms or Beethoven were completely able to fulfil until near the end of their careers: on the contrary, one listens to it for some sort of flaming youthful freshness, buoyancy, alert daring which, once youth is past, one never again encounters in a man's work with quite the same lovely bravado. The early symphony of Bizet, for instance, is from the originality and technical point of view a rather complete flop—for, certainly, much of

it is almost literally copied out of the Beethoven overtures! But what a *fresh* and lovely symphony it is, just the same! The *First Symphony* of Beethoven scarcely deserves to be compared with his great *Ninth*, yet how the work flames, sparkles, gives sheer musical pleasure! It is just right for a first symphony.

Had Beethoven written the *Ninth Symphony* first, I am sure it would have turned out to be a complete phony, what with all of that sort of heavy-frowning and nonsensical deep tragedy in which youth all too frequently masques its immature emotions. But Beethoven wrote his *First Symphony* first and his last symphony last, exactly as he should have done. My difficulty, now, was that the Berlin critics more or less seemed to think that I should have written my last symphony first.

No, it was not replete with canons, fugues, inversions, calculated and recalculated developments—as, indeed, my work is to-day. I write strongly contrapuntal and “developed” music to-day because, perhaps, I am approaching forty-five, am more sedentary than I used to be and, therefore, derive a certain amount of honest musical pleasure from these constructions. I also love late Beethoven, Brahms, Bruckner infinitely more. But then, when I was less than half as old as I am to-day, my objectives were different: my ideas, such as they were, would have died in the manacles of extreme development; they were just simply not those sort of musical ideas.

They were ideas which youth, with its early power, is more often than not able to carry across one slender bridge after the other through sheer audacity, if not dry learning.

This escaped, I think, the pudgy gentlemen in Berlin. They were learned gentlemen. They had studied the greatest symphonies, heard them many times; and these are well worth studying and hearing because most of them are the mature work of great geniuses. My argument, here, is that these excellent critics of a chair were studying my lamp.

This, however, was the least obnoxious. After all, I had composed a young symphony with the feelings of summertime in eastern America in it; and how, really, could I expect men from Berlin to catch these rhythms which so often were so exclusively American? Had I, like the young Mahler, “composed the countryside” of northern Germany, or Vienna, or even Czechoslovakia, I might have had a better chance to be understood. I could not now quite damn them entirely for having failed to understand that the music of New Jersey might be squeezed to death in the tight strait-jacket of the German post-Reger “sonata-allegro” forms.

But I did damn them for expecting my New Jersey music to conform with the current Berlin snobbism of “the twelve-tone system,” musical expressionismus.”

In the light of mature consideration and twenty-three years' thought devoted to the subject, I have at last come to the conclusion that the biggest musical criminal the world has ever seen was Balakirev, inventor and protector of "The Russian Five," the Russian nationalist school. For, aside from the fact that its one indisputable genius, Moussorgsky, hardly needed a Balakirev or a "school" in order to create that which he did create—this intriguing old rascal, Balakirev, and his doting satellites very nearly wrecked the career of one of the greatest of all musical geniuses, Tchaikovsky.

The thing becomes very plain in the Rimsky-Korsakov autobiography. Rimsky, an excellent technician and painter of Russian fairy tales in musical colour, was one of the group and, as all of his life and works prove, fairly well sold on its central idea—which was that if one's work wasn't one hundred per cent Russian, it wasn't anything, and that was very much that. Rimsky didn't want the composers of other countries to be Russian; he wanted them to be as national as their own soil and folk song; and here we encounter, again, one of those odious strait-jackets which, from the very beginning of musical composition in the larger forms, have destroyed the soul of music, killed its initiative in all pathways except the pathway fortunate enough to obtain the widest publicity—which is where the critics who exalt such "schools" come in.

For, indeed, how can one in one's musical composition be *intentionally* nationalistic? Or, for that matter, an *intentional* cubist painter? Or an *intentional* surrealist, or what have you? To superimpose a "school" upon one's personal method of artistic creation is, surely, the greatest of nonsense, the most flagrant of artistic forgeries! When a painter, for instance, as great and gifted as Picasso, turned to cubism during the frightened angular days of 1914-18, it is at least possible (indeed highly probable that he *could* have done so because of a most insistent and sincere artistic pressure from within. But when, in 1920, one hundred or more other cubist painters also emerged, is it not too unreasonable to suppose that a goodly portion were fakery, frauds, or simply imitators? That, for instance, most of them were very conscious indeed that Picasso's cube paintings were selling on the Rue de la Boétie for more than several thousand dollars apiece, and they too would like to sell cube paintings for several thousand dollars apiece?

Many critics seem readily to fall for this "school" situation, particularly when the school is a chauvinistic one. What is more glorious on the surface than nationalism? History tells us that at first they resist, then gradually become convinced of the righteousness of the new "school," and particularly if it is nationalist, eventually its most fatuous publicists.

And may God help any new painters, composers or authors who



from now on fail to identify their work with this accepted "movement"! This is as true to-day as it was in Balakirev's day.

So in those first early days in Europe I discovered that I was manufacturing a highly volatile product. What might charm New York or London might just as easily explode in Berlin or evaporate in Paris. All great European cities had critics in them who believed in something utterly different from their neighbours, and who had also trained their separate publics to believe in what they believed. If, therefore, a man's highly personal new music succeeded in one country, that fact might well prejudice another country because, frankly, the other country's critics knew that the former's were "all wet," and wrote accordingly.

So now, and every time I was to cross a border, my music, like my money, would change value. In one country it would be highly inflated. In another highly deflated. Still in each place it would still be the same piece, the same notes, the same sound. But this would not be my predicament alone. It would be the predicament of all composers whose music crossed nationalist boundaries.

No, my music was not atonal. Most "informed" Berlin persons—that is, at least during the Berlin of this epoch—thought that the only music which was advanced and "new" (and therefore laudable) was that which attempted to cope with the current atonal viewpoint! Just so, a few years previous, nationalist Russian critics had thought Tchaikovsky "too academic, too German" (if you can imagine that!) while with the same breath, the same ink, they also believed Rimsky-Korsakov to be just the *n*th degree of everything Russian music should be.

In my humble opinion, therefore, the "school" proposition is—in art—the most unadulterated vicious nonsense. And yet, to-day, in modern 1945-50, America still wants and assiduously seeks after an "American school" in music; may God forgive its sophomoric naïveté, its infantile anxiety to appear as advanced and sophisticated as decaying Europe!

An "American school" of music will come about only when, finally, we stop planning methodically to catch ourselves one. And, in the meantime, perhaps many a budding American Tchaikovsky may be utterly discouraged, or at least greatly restrained, by that method of critical analysis which rejects a lamp because you cannot sit on it.

Away back in 1923 I would have done very well to have returned to America. For those young composers who water home gardens are more often than not well repaid, as is shown by the often splendid careers of those composers who did not stay too long abroad. Besides, because of this invariable "well, we'll-show-these-critics-from-the-

foreign-country" attitude, it would from 1923 onwards even be dangerous for me to make my artistic reputation abroad.

But I did not, *could* not come back. In 1922 America did not even yet know whether it could accept as music *Le Sacre du Printemps*. In 1922 America the prevailing fashion in composition was Debussy-Ravel, plus some Ernest Bloch; and if, like excellent George Gershwin of that day one could *honestly* express one's idea within the charming limits of French impressionism, well and good—otherwise enough acceptance and popularity to continue with one's composing was not for you, my lad.

Most unfortunately for me, I did not hear my inner music in the Ravel-Debussy-Gershwin idiom.

Finally, in this 1922-23 America to which I could not return, there was not enough musical activity to satisfy the voracious appetite of the young. On the other hand Germany then possessed eighty-six opera theatres running full seasons; Paris had no fewer than seven separate symphony orchestras, one for every day in the week. In America a youth stood a good chance of writing his (say) *Orchestral Piece Number One* only to wait five or six years before it got performed while, in the meantime, writing *Orchestral Piece Number Two* or even *Orchestral Piece Number Three*—these latter without the errors of *Number One* having been heard or polished out of his technical equipment. Such a situation was obviously impossible. I reasoned that it precluded my return to America.

Europe was a mite better.

My *First Symphony* had at least been performed and I had learned much—much.

## CHAPTER VIII

### STANDARD-EQUIPMENT CONCERT

IT was five o'clock in the afternoon in Leipzig. I was scheduled to play a concert that evening, so I couldn't go in for a heavy meal; nevertheless, if I ate nothing at all I might feel faint. Feeling faint is one heck of a way to feel at a concert.

I thought I'd take a little walk around the centre of town, perhaps get a little tea.

At six o'clock I'd wander over to the Konzertssaal to see if my Steinway had been tuned properly.

For a concert pianist, of course, the most important thing in the world is his piano. It is as important to him as the muleta to the bullfighter. It must have many points. First of all it must be *his* piano.

A concert pianist cannot play just any make of good piano. Early in his career he must decide, somewhere, whether or not *his* piano is a Steinway, a Bechstein, a Blüthner, or a Mason & Hamlin. All of these are superb pianos. But one of them, one of these makes, is *his* make. It is difficult to explain just why this is; it is almost a psychic thing. You are born for one make or another. If you are born to be a Bechstein artist, you will find a Steinway just a little too brilliant, too stony. If you are born to be a Steinway artist, you will find a Bechstein just a tiny bit too tinselly, not quite full enough in the upper octaves. If you are born a Blüthner man, you will find both the other pianos too insensitive for the delicate passages; whereas Steinway and Bechstein men will find that the Blüthner lets them down in the all-important concert hall—although it is kind in the crowded small salon. And so on and so on.

My make of piano was the Steinway. More: I had a Steinway. It travelled about with me. It was the finest concert grand in the world. It never let me down. I never let it down. We worked together.

I walked into the tea-room of the Leipziger Hof. A swanky place, for 1922 Germany. The usual collection of unattached women. The usual type of men, drinking their tea or beer or liquor. I sat down and ordered tea.

Waiting, I took out an American newspaper I had bought at the station and commenced reading it. It was not the usual type of newspaper for these Germans—their newspapers are of tabloid size. When I opened it, a lot of people glanced in my direction.

I overheard my waiter speaking with a colleague: “Verdammt Amerikaner!” I said nothing and continued to read my paper, but when he brought me the bill I saw that he had overcharged me, not a little but considerably.

“Waiter,” I called, “you have overcharged me.”

“What did you say?” he said as he walked towards me. He was a tough guy, the kind we were later to recognize as Nazis. Perhaps he would even become Gauleiter of Leipzig—this was the type.

“I said you overcharged me.”

“And I say I did not.”

“But here is the *Karte*—”

“Are you going to pay or not?”

I paid.

But I also put my right hand under the newspaper now resting flat on the tablecloth—as if to reach for something. Pressing my five fingers down hard upon the table, I lifted my little finger as high as it would go and then brought it down, whack! A sharp snap. The table sang as if it had been hit with a pistol bullet. There was also a faint sound of breaking glass.

The waiter looked uncertain. The sound had apparently come from my table, yet there had been no motion whatsoever beneath the newspaper. I withdrew my hand, and in it was a package of cigarettes—innocent enough. The fellow was now in a quandary because he knew that someone in the immediate vicinity had broken the plate-glass top of one of his tables—for which he would be out of pocket. If he stopped now to take the tablecloth off of mine (the least likely in his eyes) the real culprit might escape. He looked to the back of him. Someone had just arisen and was making his way out of the tea-room.

He went after him.

I left unmolested. In the meantime my waiter had an argument with the other guy.

A pianist's fingers must be very strong. Few people have any idea how strong a concert pianist's fingers must be. Oftentimes the concert pianist himself does not know how strong his fingers are.

One day in Berlin I had grasped the arm of a young American lady to direct her across the street through the traffic. On the way over a taxi almost ran us down. My fingers tightened for a split second. The American girl screamed.

Back home she had a difficult time explaining five terribly black fingermarks on her arm. When, later, her mother demanded an explanation of me, I didn't like her tone of voice, so I said, oh, her daughter was just recalcitrant. I forgot to explain that I didn't like the girl very much either; she was studying to be an opera singer and had the voice of a young crow.

A pianist's fingers are both his ammunition and his machine-guns. By the time you are ready to be a concert pianist, they must have been tempered into steel. If you will look at a real concert pianist's fingers you will notice that they look soft and pudgy, but this is misleading. Just get a piece of plate glass, slip it under these fingers, ask him to lift his little finger as high as it will go without lifting the other fingers off the glass; and then tell him to snap it down. He'll crack the plate-glass every time. Practically any concert pianist with a real technique can do this.

You practice slow trills until it almost kills you, until your two forearms are like sore throbbing hams, twice, three times their normal size, or so they seem. Then you wait until the soreness gets out of them. Then you start all over again. Finally, after weeks, you commence playing an octave scale. No more, no less. Up and down, up and down until, at last, your forearms seem as if they will burst again. Moreover, by this time, the pain creeps up to your shoulders, spreads over your back. You keep on. You must never stop.

And so technique comes to you. It begins to fit you like a suit. You play concert pieces over so many times that you could hardly play a

wrong note in them if you wanted to. The hind part of the brain takes over.

When I came out to play the concert, I just sat down and started playing. Just a little noodling or so to make sure the piano hadn't been sabotaged in the meanwhile. Then I remembered that I'd forgotten to bow. So I got up and bowed and sat down again, and the audience hushed.

The concert was ready to begin.

I commenced. Easily, with certainty. It was a Beethoven sonata. . . . Here is the first theme. A noble theme it is, as noble as a man's true love, the woman he marries. I see that I am playing well to-night. Muscular co-ordination is perfect. The Steinway sounds like a burning thing. The bass, the bass!—it is a wonderful bass! Now comes the second theme. In the dominant, a brighter key. It is the mistress. The mistress always comes along a little while after the wife and she is in a brighter key. Don't worry, though, for the mistress theme will be as dull as the wife's in the recapitulation, in the same key. Isn't that like life? My goodness, I am playing well to-night. Look, I can feel it in the audience. They always exude something which I can always grasp with my antennæ. They are exuding now: "Fine! Fine! He plays well for an American—but then he has a German name. Blood will tell!" But they do not know that I am more Polish than German. Anyway, they are with me. It's fine to feel an audience with one. It's like riding the crest of a gigantic wave! Wow! Almost missed *that one!* Hey, Antheil, wake up! You almost took the first ending again, instead of the second. The audience, who knows every note of this music, knew it too, and for a moment an electrical thrill went through the hall. I'm all right now, though. Here's the development. Here's where the wife gets to know about the mistress and raises hell. Here they are together; left hand is the wife, right hand the mistress. They call it counterpoint. I call it a cat-fight! What a wonderful master Beethoven is! How wonderful he develops, expands his material! How wonderful his harmonic scheme! My God, I wonder if I shall ever be able to write music one-tenth as good as this? Alas, probably never. Still I shall try. Wasn't that waiter's face funny to-night . . . when he discovered that other fellow making for the door!

These were but a few of my thoughts that evening during the allegro of the Beethoven sonata, my first number. . . .

I knew that the total energy I would expend upon that piano that evening would be at least a number of tons, equal to the energy a boxer expends upon his antagonist at a prize fight, equal to killing three large bulls, perhaps four—and I would be ready to drop with exhaustion.

I knew that although my clothes were dry still, before the evening

was over they all would be slopping wet—twice—for twice I would change them entirely, except the jacket.

I envied the boxers who, although they work as hard and must be as completely accurate, nevertheless work up here before the public in shorts, fight only three minutes at a time, rest one whole minute for every three, during which cool water is thrown upon them, and get collodion to patch up the wounds. Concert pianists often wound their hands, but must continue. . . .

When I went out on the stage the third time in Leipzig, I was afraid it was going to happen. During the last half of the second section the sweat on me had been running cold. I began feeling leaden, heavy, as if I were flying but needed a defroster to avoid a crash. Now, during this last half when I needed my quick fingers the most, I seemed able to move them only by a supreme effort.

My arms gradually became as rigid as poles, my back muscles as tight as a drum. Mentally I tugged and pulled; physically I seemed to achieve nothing.

The lights in the house were on full, but now they seemed to dim: the old sign. The blood was not being pumped up to my brain fast enough, or else my sight was blacking out. The hall grew dimmer and dimmer. My head began to swim. . . .

Then the *warm* sweat suddenly broke out upon me again, great flowing sluices of it. I was practically dissolving. Thank God!

I breathed more deeply. The lights came back full and strong; I could see the keyboard again. My back muscles flexed and the warm blood flowed back into them; I felt as if I were having a wonderful massage; this continued down into my fingers until, at last, I felt them begin to *ripple* once more, flexible but firm, little machine-guns utterly in my control. I was playing all right again and I felt the public relax with me—they too had sensed my moment of peril and had swung along with me, breathless, horrified. . . .

I sped into the *allegro con fuoco* of the Chopin ballade, on to the ending chord.

The public applauded only as a public who has almost seen a man fall from a high tightrope wire applauds. Amidst this hysteria I bowed and bowed and thought, "What a hell of a way for a man to make a living! . . ."

## CHRISTMAS IN POLAND

STRAVINSKY had scheduled my piano concert in Paris for some time during Christmas week. He expected me there on or before December 23, but, because I wanted every last moment to practise upon my hard-action piano in Berlin, I delayed my trip until the last moment. However, I had faithfully done all my practising; moreover, I had even bought my tickets, packed my bags, a suitcase with my evening clothes and a satchel with toilet articles for use on the train.

Eva Weinwurstel phoned on December 23, just a few hours before my train time for Paris. She said that at long last she had, with great effort, been able to arrange a dinner that evening with Boski Markus and had prevailed upon her to allow me to be present. Scarcely believing my good fortune and realizing that I would have until midnight to catch the Paris train, I accepted.

I met them both at the Sturm gallery at closing time and took them to the best restaurant in Berlin, Horchner's.

We sat in an alcove. Boski Markus took off her hat.

Her hair was as black as a raven's; and short, very short!

She took off her coat, a long winter one.

The dress! Her dress. It was a green plaid one, with red and yellow stripes! *The dream!*

I knew that this was it.

We ordered our meal, proceeded to eat it. My mind, naturally, was in a turmoil. This was the exact girl, the exact short hair, the exact dress I had dreamed about on the evening of the dream of future music. I had a feeling of desperation, as if something drastic had to be done, and quickly. On Christmas Day Stravinsky would be waiting for me in Paris, not because it was important to him, but because he liked doing something for a young American pianist whose piano style he favoured or, if not that, because he favoured Americans, American music, youth. In any case he liked me, and Stravinsky was not given to liking people; in fact, he had a justified reputation for being dour, dry, preoccupied. To come to Paris, if only as a pianist, under his beneficent sponsorship would have, without doubt, been a most excellent thing—although, on the other hand, whatever might it do to my composition? Would I be strong enough?

Eva went out to make a telephone call. I turned quickly to Boski Markus and said:

“You now have a week’s vacation from Berlin University. Let’s spend it in Paris!”

“All right,” said Boski Markus, “but not in Paris. I am Hungarian and the French won’t give me a visa.” (Hungary had only recently been an enemy of France, and France was chary of her visas in this direction.)

I was thunderstruck. Boski Markus had said “All right.” That was the main thing. Let Stravinsky wait. I said, “I am packed and ready—I knew you’d say, ‘All right.’”

“All packed and ready?” she echoed, dismayed. “How did you know that I was going to say yes?”

“I’ll prove it,” I said. “After we take Eva home, just come up to my apartment and you’ll see that I’m packed for immediate departure. Why, otherwise, did you think I came to this dinner to-night?”

Boski looked bug-eyed at this American method of doing things. “Clearly,” she told herself, “these Americans are peculiar people!” But she was intrigued. After we had taken Eva home we stopped in at the Post Office Telegraph and I dispatched a telegram to Aunt Kolinski:

*Arriving on late afternoon train Christmas Eve as arranged last month stop please meet Boski and myself at station stop much love stop George.*

After which we continued up to my apartment, where Boski saw with her own eyes that I was packed and ready, utterly.

On my piano was a little group of four-hand piano pieces dedicated “To Boski Markus.”

“Such confidence,” Boski said, “should not go unrewarded. I had no intention of spending my Christmas vacation with you, of course. But now I am very intrigued as to whether there is an Aunt Kolinski in Poland or not. . . . Yes, let’s go!”

So we drove to Boski’s garret room, packed a few things and drove to the railway station. We had no difficulty getting accommodations, as few people travelled during these early days of the inflation.

On the train I explained to Boski that I hoped she would not think I was making an improper advance, because from the very first I had intended that Aunt Kolinski act as our chaperone. At that Boski Markus looked more bug-eyed than ever, but I could see that she had gained some respect for me in that I possessed and admitted that I possessed poor peasant relatives in Poland.

As she explained, she rather imagined that I was the son of an American capitalist, which would not have done at all.



I thought of poor Dad in his modest shoe store in Trenton, swallowed hard, crossed my fingers and said:

"Oh no, he's no capitalist, but a Chicago gangster. A Big Boss. I decided to run away from all that nonsense. Before I left home, Mother made me take this along"—and I opened my coat and shirt to disclose my black silken holster under my left armpit. Making sure that the train-compartment window was closed, I took out my automatic and showed it to her.

"Handle it carefully," I said, "it's loaded."

Boski gave it back to me very thoughtfully. Obviously, although extremely strange to all European standards, I was nobody to be trifled with. She relapsed into silence for a long time and then went to sleep on my shoulder.

She was still wearing the plaid dress.

Old Aunt Kolinski met us at the station in an ancient buggy she had borrowed from some relative. She greeted Boski affably, taking it for granted that she was my fiancée—an impression, incidentally, which was somewhat disturbed an hour or so later when Boski cheerfully admitted that we had only met for the first time a few hours earlier. Nevertheless the old peasant woman took everything very well, all things considered; life on a small farm in Poland probably brings one closer to the actualities of things than most environments.

But she looked old and wretched now; her husband was dead and the farm run down. The once bright little cottage was now an old tarnished and cracked one. Winter and snow made the contrast more desolate, for the last time I had seen this house was in the luxurious autumn, just as harvesting had commenced. But within the house all was bright and warm. A Christmas tree with home-made candles and gingerbread men stood in a corner and, miracle of miracles, the fireplace in which I had previously never seen a fire was now flaming and sparking in the jolliest of manners. A flock of children burst in, the children of the serious-faced peasant children I had played with. Frankly, this was the only Christmas Eve I've ever spent which seemed to me completely Christmas, up to the highest standards. It had everything, even the singing of ancient Polish Christmas carols.

After the children left we talked. Dad had written Aunt Kolinski that I was coming over, had given her a report of my London concert and my decision to become a concert pianist. This, for some reason, delighted her extremely. I grew a little nervous as our conversation drifted in and around the occupation of my father; all too soon it became apparent to Boski that he was no Chicago gangster at all, but a modest shoe merchant in Trenton, New Jersey, "a smallish city very near New York."

At which Boski put me at my ease by saying, "My father is a broker in Budapest." The manner in which she said it indicated that never again, in the future, need I reproach myself for the occupation of my father, gangster or otherwise. She could match anything.

We were tired and went to bed early, Boski and Aunt Kolinski sleeping together in the bedroom and I on an improvised bed near the fireplace. As I went to sleep many pictures passed before my eyes, not least among them an exasperated Stravinsky in Paris and an amazed M. H. Hanson in New York. . . . I also remembered earlier days. . . .

This cottage possessed vivid childhood memories for me because, when I was eleven years old, I had spent the summer of 1911 in and around it. Only at that time this particular farm had been a part of Germany, of Prussia specifically. Most of my relatives were, like Aunt Kolinski, Poles; but some were East Prussians. The Prussians were very tough guys.

It all came about (and consequently my decision to bring Boski here this particular Christmas) when long ago, in 1911, my sister died in Trenton. My mother had been so shocked by her death, becoming despondent and ill, that my father suddenly decided to take all three of us for a trip to Europe, although he could ill afford to make such an expensive trip.

Being considered too young to understand the ramifications of European travel, I was to be parked with mother's relatives in Prussian Poland; dad would then take mother all over Europe in order to cheer her up, bring her back to health again. In the autumn they planned to pick me up at Aunt Kolinski's and come back home to America again.

So one spring day we boarded the North German Lloyd liner *Kronprinz Wilhelm* and sailed to Bremen. From Bremen we went to Berlin and thence to Marienburg, East Prussia. Here my "aunt" Kolinski picked me up (she was an "aunt-once-removed" really—in any case, she was a blood relative) and took me back with her to a small farm about seventy miles away.

I stayed on the Kolinski farm that summer with Aunt and Uncle Kolinski, jolly thirty-year-old Polish peasants and a collection of relative children. We raked in the hay, brought in the sugar-beets. At this time of life I was supposed to be rather fragile, sensitive, too interested in music for my own good. Remembering the death of my younger sister, my parents left instructions with our relatives to "toughen him up." These instructions were obeyed to the letter.

I soon discovered that most of my relatives in the vicinity were fun-loving, music-loving Poles; we got along fine. But one small portion were Prussians—rather rich Prussians at that.

My Prussian relatives lived near Marienburg, the one-time seat of the Order of Teutonic Knights and the one spot in the world from which, in all probability, flows many if not most of the present ills of mankind.

When my Prussian relatives heard that I was living with Aunt Kolinski, they came over in a body to look at the little American curiosity related to them by blood. "So," I could see them saying, "this is what American birth does to us. . . ."

One of my younger and richer "uncles" (who, like Von Stuckenschmidt and Von Dornberg, wore a monocle and always stood as stiff as a bean-pole) became very interested in me; and he even exuded what must have passed for friendliness with him, especially when he discovered that I was tremendously interested in fortresses and knew all about the sinister history of Marienburg. He even offered to take me over to Marienburg for a week or two, near which he had his estate. Naturally, I accepted with glee.

I would be the only one of our garage-club gang in Trenton who had visited a real medieval castle: and we kids were especially bugs on castles, especially around the age of ten or twelve!

The day before my Prussian relatives took me to Marienburg Castle, my uncle insisted upon taking me to a slaughterhouse that they owned, attached to a meat-packing factory in Lublin. My parents had given instructions that I was to be toughened up, hadn't they? (Poor mother had never had anything like this in mind, though!) Now, for the first time in my life, I was to see a living thing alive one moment, stone dead the next.

The transition between life and death had never been clear in my young mind. From such religious teachings as I knew, I rather supposed the two to be rather interchangeable—in any case not too drastic. I now saw a hundred pigs knocked over the head with an enormous mallet, their heads split instantly open!

I turned from the spectacle, crying. But my uncle turned my head back, forced my eyes open. I saw a cow led before me, its head also cracked open right at the forehead with a small sharp hammer, saw it drop heavily, tiredly to the cement floor, saw the workers leap at its throat, slit it, the warm blood gushing into the cement drainage canals—for "Blutwurst." (Never again have I eaten "Blutwurst"!)

I had seen the pigs from a distance, but the cow at little more than arm's length. This, for me, was the most terrible shock possible; I would probably have been less terrified had I seen as many human beings similarly put to death—for the years on my grandmother's farm in America had caused me to regard farm animals as practically human beings; indeed, I think I loved them much better. This was murder, unadulterated.

I wrenched myself away, ill. . . .

At this moment, I know not why, my uncle had compassion on me, or else he was afraid. In any case we left Lublin; and for many years thereafter I could not eat beef or pork without severe indigestion.

The next day a contrite young uncle took me into Marienburg, where, as our carriage approached the city, I saw the great grim ramparts rise from the landscape which, for many hundreds of years before and for at least thirty years after, had terrorized and would terrorize Europe, would be the symbol of that Prussian thing which, more often than not, has been the quadruple essence of all that is grey, sinister, deadly, remorseless. . . .

Before we went inside we stopped at an arms shop, where he bought me that thing most dear to the heart of every boy, a real little rifle which shot real bullets with a fine crack and puff of smoke. He would teach me to be a sharpshooter, he said.

We then went through the fortress, from top to bottom. Here, he told me, some of my blood ancestors once lived (for all I know, however, as cooks or chambermaids!), and he explained the meaning of every nook and cranny.

I was particularly impressed with a huge stone cannon-ball embedded in a huge stone arch which looked as if, at any moment, it would break, bringing down with it the whole roof of the gallery.

We strode through the long, chill, mirthless galleries, full of great paintings, armour, swords and lances; I cannot say that I was not entranced. But, in all the years afterwards, I was never able to dissociate it from blood running in gutters, from the pale stiff face of young Uncle-once-removed Rudolf, his monocle glittering. . . .

All this haunted me for years afterwards, especially during the first World War, which followed soon thereafter.

When we came back to Uncle Rudolf's house, he took me out to the garden and taught me the rudiments of good marksmanship. Every day for two weeks thereafter he carefully taught me how to shoot and shoot well. We even practised with his big army pistol. I decided that Uncle Rudolf was not such a bad sort after all. He told me that he thought I had some natural talent to become a good marksman.

The rest of the summer was almost equally strange, and I can find no one other episode in my life to match. In a way it was very pastoral. The humdrum of every day consisted of working in the great flat sandy fields, stacking hay, gathering potatoes or sugar-beets, or other such tasks of which a small boy is physically capable. At night we had a simple farm meal, the visit of some Polish relative, farmers like the rest, speaking Polish until they realized that I was interested in understanding what they said and then switching to German.

Most of my Polish relatives were musical to the degree of playing

some one or another instrument quite well by ear. One nearby family, for instance, had trained themselves in a sort of ensemble, the father playing the contrabass, the oldest son the cello, the two younger the fiddle and the wife the zither. It made a pretty music. Occasionally a trumpet player or a clarinetist would join the band, and from seven until eleven we would have music—until two hours past everybody's bedtime. The Polish peasants all loved music; it was the only thing which gave this landscape any grace. Years later, when I first heard Stravinsky's *Histoire du Soldat*, I realized that he must often have heard such village ensembles struggling through some popular composition or another until it becomes completely unrecognizable and I have often wondered why some of those American composers who are so hell-bent on becoming leading rugged composers of our rugged American soil do not go to our own New Mexico and listen to similar nightly concerts of the farmers or ranchers of that region—this in almost identical instrumental combination. (In fact, I believe Copland has done so, in his two American ballets.)

When the autumn chill arrived, so did my parents; we left the vicinity for Berlin and then Bremen, returning on the *George Washington*, the same steamship which was to carry President Wilson to a peace conference of a war which had not yet started. Within three weeks I was seated at my school desk in McKinley Grammar School, an object of envy to all my fellow pupils, for I had been to Europe. I wrote a class essay on the subject and also gave a little interview to the *Trenton State Gazette* but, alone with myself, I began to wonder whether or not the entire episode had not been a dream.

It seemed so totally improbable, so completely out of line with Trenton and everything Trenton stood for. Nothing remained, now, except my inability to keep meat on my stomach and Dad's vast stack of Kodak snapshots which still show me as a small thin startled-looking blond youth peering anxiously into the camera, while a company of various buxom or bewhiskered Mongol-faced peasants in their Sunday best—our relatives—stand in the background.

As Christmas-time approached it became apparent even to me that mother was going to have a baby. This baby would be Henry, my brother who would some day die upon the very shores of the Baltic near which I had spent that summer.

When, in mid-1922, I returned to Berlin, I had practically forgotten that such a person as Aunt Kolinski had ever existed. She did not allow me to forget it, however. Within three months of my arrival in Berlin I received a letter in her cramped, laboured peasant's handwriting which said that she would come to Berlin to see me unless I

came to Poland to see her. She preferred the latter, as she was growing old. But see me she would.

I wrote her blithely, promising to appear without fail upon Christmas Day, explaining that I could not come sooner because of concert commitments. This was before the deal with Stravinsky had come up. Afterwards, somehow, I entirely forgot poor Aunt Kolinsky; and it is entirely probable, even typical, of my scattered frame of mind during that period that I might well have gone off to Paris without notifying her, leaving her to meet me at the station.

Early in the autumn I received Aunt Kolinski's answer; she would expect me on Christmas Eve; the children, my relatives, would all be in to see the visitor from America. It was to be an occasion. By this time the Paris invitation from Stravinsky was already anticipated; I remember reading her letter and thinking that I really should write her immediately—but I forgot it. The letter remained on my music desk for many weeks, rebuking me. . . .

But now I had come, Christmas Day was over.

We stayed several days more, saw the cottage once more fill up with blond children. I saw among them, in composite, myself.

But for my grandparents' decision to come to America I might easily have been one of them.

Boski and I boarded the train. The endless snow of the Prussian plains fled past. Occasionally, through the snow flurries, one could see unsmiling peasants riding on the road alongside the railway track in their unpainted sleighs—so different from the gay sleighs of Poland and Russia. "No unnecessary colour" seemed to be the rule of Prussia, as well as "no unnecessary humanity." How pitiless this country was!

Finally the red roofs of Brandenburg became more and more frequent and the Berlin outskirts promised to be just around the corner.

I wondered why the Brandenburgers permitted their tiles and bricks to remain red—probably because no good way of removing the colour by the cheapest process had been discovered.

I also wondered why none of our Prussian relatives had come to see me and why Aunt Kolinski had discouraged me from visiting them. Once back in my apartment in Berlin I decided to write her about it and the answer came back:

"My dear nephew, they are still very angry about the World War; and you are, after all, an American!"

Returning to my Berlin apartment, I found six telegrams—five from Stravinsky and one from Hanson. They read:

*Why no answer stop await you immediately Paris stop Stravinsky.*

*Must know immediately if you are coming Paris stop Stravinsky.*

*I and Ansermet fail to understand why you have not arrived Paris stop Stravinsky.*

(Ansermet, the fine Swiss conductor and great friend of Stravinsky's, was in Paris during December 1922 in order to conduct the premiere of *Mavra*, Stravinsky's latest but not wholly successful work.)

*What is wrong stop extremely worried stop Stravinsky.*

*Call me by telephone at Pleyel to-night stop Stravinsky.*

(The piano manufacturer, Pleyel, had given Stravinsky a suite of unused rooms at his Paris warehouse, which Stravinsky fitted up into a kind of apartment, where he worked and occasionally slept.)

The cable from Hanson read:

*Cannot understand your disappointing Stravinsky stop am arriving Berlin third week in January stop Hanson.*

In late January 1923 Hanson arrived in Berlin, found me an extremely well-practised young pianist. This, more than anything else, silenced any criticism he may have preformulated, for Hanson always operated on two principles: (1) more than anything else in the world, real mastery of the piano counts most, will succeed more quickly than excessive promotion by any one man excepting, of course, M. H. Hanson; and (2) boys, occasionally, will be boys.

It was now most fortunate for me that the critiques of my first Berlin concert were, to say the least, heavenly—at least insofar as my piano playing per se was concerned. I have never been able to understand it, but for some reason not apparent to my naked ear, critics invariably liked my piano playing, especially of Chopin.

Perhaps it is because the Pole in me raves the loudest when I am at the pianoforte in public.

Hanson and I proceeded together—to Vienna, Prague, Budapest. Finally, one evening, we landed in Dresden, where I was to give a concert the evening following. Hanson had permitted us to arrive in Dresden a day earlier because, that evening, the Dresden opera was to present Stravinsky's *Petrouchka* ballet (whose music I knew but had never seen as a ballet) and the premiere of a new work by a most talented young German composer, *Murder, Hope of Womankind*, by Paul Hindemith. He knew I was most anxious to hear particularly the Hindemith work. Previously, at Donaueschingen, I had heard a string quartet by this young unknown Paul Hindemith and it had

impressed me deeply—it was, perhaps, the solitary purely German work at that otherwise flea-bitten festival which had so impressed me. Hanson and I went to see the two stage works together; I was deeply moved by both of them, especially Hindemith's work. Afterwards Hanson had to look up some people he had seen in the audience, so I walked back to our near by hotel, the Europaischer Hof, alone.

I was a little depressed, however. As I wandered through those baroque streets, particularly with the music of *Murder, Hope of Womankind* still echoing in my mental ears, I kept wondering whether I should have to return to America earlier than I had expected. Because, on the train during the hours before the Dresden station, Hanson had talked to me in terms of mounting enthusiasm for my coming great career of international concert pianist. He was excited by my good critiques, by the way in which the difficult publics of Central Europe had accepted me as a pianist. He foresaw my making triumphal entry back to the United States, Carnegie Hall (!), if I could only keep this up.

(Later I was to appear in Carnegie Hall, but not exactly as Hanson would have expected it—if only Hanson could have seen into the future then!)

For me, of course, all this pianist business was beside the point. I wanted to become only a composer. Also, now, I was in love with Boski—which I considered “following the dream,” although I still had no complete idea as to where it would lead. In any case becoming *too* successful a pianist now would mean a premature leaving of Europe. Premature because instinctively I knew within myself that whatever composer-life drama I might be destined to play, this certainly was the scene of the first act.

The music in my mental ear kept forcing my decision. The Hindemith work had been very new and very exciting; I could never have heard such a work in the America of that day. I wanted now more than ever to stay in Europe, to be as near as possible to the great new creative impulses that were truly making the music of the immediate future, to be in touch directly. I wanted at the proper moment to abandon this false concert-pianist career—as I felt that it was false for me.

These cobblestones of Dresden! In their old antiquated way, they represented old Europe to-night. Here in this old Europe was plenty of composer talent. Here, unlike in my America of 1922, were plenty of young composers not afraid to write down the notes they heard bouncing around in their heads without bothering whether they were the exact right notes the first time. In America young composers wrote down two or three pages in only as many months; indeed they had often



frowned at me because, like as not, I'd write a whole piano sonata within a single week—here, however, composers were not afraid to write down quickly two hundred *wrong* pages, have them performed, listen to them carefully, correct them to something more nearly the sound originally wanted and soon afterwards write a better work as they tore up the old.

In Europe: boldness, creation, musical health, critics who considered new works either definitely good or bad. *Whereas*, the faint-hearted critics of America of that day were eternally damning everything with faint praise, appropriately wisecracked in order to keep their jobs and to camouflage the fact that they were not properly fitted to judge new creative music!

Europe had, of course, its own grave musical faults. I had experienced them personally after my *First Symphony's* premiere. But, even so, its virtues far outweighed its faults. It was musically alert, in constant flux, which is the essence and triggering of musical creation.

No, I couldn't bear to go back to America right now.

*I must be more careful with this untoward pianistic success of mine!*

I arrived at the Europaischer Hof and went into the cocktail lounge to have a chocolate (of all things) and think things over before going to bed. But I had scarcely sat down when, almost directly across the dancing space, my eyes lit on Anne Williams and her mother!

They were sitting with a handsome young German and did not see me. I looked at Anne; she was quite as beautiful as ever. (Imagine looking at Lana Turner!) My heart skipped a beat, even though I was now in love with Boski.

But even as I looked I realized that the new spell of Boski was potent. I realized that my taste for Anne's beauty was not really my own but that of ten million other Americans. It had been formed, I knew now, by the eternal glamourizing of certain American types of feminine beauty via the eternal American movie or magazine cover.

(America has always been like that—it picks from time to time some new type of beauty, propagandizes her until all the girls on the magazine covers or in the movies look at least somewhat like her; thus young American kids like me very often fall in love not with a real girl but with a propaganda girl—a billboard, magazine cover. When I fell in love with Boski, my taste was at least my own.)

No, Anne did not seem quite as beautiful. Suddenly she looked directly at me and gasped. Her mother looked too and was frozen nearly solid.

I knew that my picture was plastered over all the billboards of Dresden. They must know now that I was to play an important concert the evening following. I needed under no circumstance to feel as ill at ease in meeting them both now as I had once, in Germantown.

Anne's mother smiled, so I got up and went over to their table.

They both managed to be sympathetic, even charming and contrite. Since those faraway days of 1923 I have gotten to know Anne's mother better and realize that she had only done what she considered best for her young daughter, who was only seventeen at the time of our planned elopement. Anne said they had known I was in Europe, had even guessed that I had come over specially to find her, had followed my career with deepest interest and had been very excited when they heard I was coming to Dresden.

We talked amiably for a while; and, as I talked, I felt such skeleton remnants of my former love for Anne as still existed dissolve.

At this moment I also knew that I would not go back soon to America as a concert pianist, that I was going to stay in Europe as long as I could, that some day I was going to marry Boski and that, in the meantime, I was going to make my preliminary reputation *as a composer* on this European continent.

Hanson suddenly stood alongside of me at our table.

Although he said hardly anything, his attitude of "Well, boys will be boys" persisted. "But, dear George, your concert career comes before everything else," his eyes seemed to say.

He now reminded me, gently of course, that I was finishing a second highball, thereby breaking strict training. He could have been the manager of a young fighter caught out on the night before the big bout.

I explained that I had come in here only to have a chocolate before going to bed, but that I had met old friends and turned to highballs instead.

This Sidney Greenstreet of a man then switched tactics, sat down and proceeded to be very charming. He told Mrs. Williams at length about my successes, about his high hopes for my future career. This was very ironic! It was the culmination of all my plans for coming to Europe, and I didn't love the girl any more!

Two days afterwards, with an extremely successful concert behind us, Hanson and I were sitting on the train to Berlin. Up to this moment he had said nothing about our meeting with Anne. But now he leaned over and inquired confidentially:

"This charming, beautiful girl, Anne Williams—it was obvious from the general drift of her mother's conversation that once you had intended to get married. Is that so?"

"Yes," I said, "but I am no longer in love with her."

Hanson regarded me with one of his eyes—an eye, it always seemed to me, rather fishy and unblinking. He thought awhile, was about to say something, thought better of it.

But all of his future actions proved that he had then finally decided

that I was, basically, just a pianist at heart—in love one month, out again the next. From Franz Liszt on, virtuosi, he knew, had always been like this; it was something to watch, but nothing to be afraid of.

Only once again, and many months hence, did he ever reintroduce the question of my feminine interests.

"Whenever and if you do get married," he said, "be sure to marry a rich wife. Mere composers may be inspired by poor mistresses, but great piano virtuosi must live in a sumptuous atmosphere in which the ordinary girl of middle-class family does not fit. In fact, she much too often becomes bored in such an arrangement, raises the devil in one way or another. But a rich wife is used to all of this. Moreover, not only will she like to travel all over the earth with you, but she will also be able to pay her own expenses. . . ."

On the train back to Berlin I finally and forever decided for Boski and thereby for composing instead of concertizing. For music paper instead of piano keys. For the "dream."

But it was not going to be easy. We, Boski and I, were not very much alike.

She represented much of that war-torn, disillusioned Europe of 1923; I a young, hopeful, but utterly naïve America of the same period.

I came back to Berlin to compose several new works. Hanson, in splendid spirits, left for New York.

I now saw Boski often. But I soon had to realize more and more often that all of her immediate friends strongly disapproved of me. I was simply not of The Faith! Our meetings soon grew into a string of quarrels, mostly about philosophical niceties or political subtleties. These incessant bickerings between us gradually exhausted me. "Your friends have been talking to you!" I'd accuse. She did not deny it.

Still she continued to see me, apparently against her own will, her better judgment.

Finally, one evening, she came to me with a new spirit of determination.

"It can't go on," she announced firmly. "You and I have absolutely nothing in common. I disapprove of everything about you—except you personally—and that is bad. You are nice personally, but everything I live for, you and your background negate. I do not really like your music, your friends, or your whole sensational concertizing. I do not like your clothes, your conversation, your ideas, the expensive night clubs you take me to . . ."

I thought I talked her out of her macabre mood. I insisted that we go to a restaurant, an inexpensive one this time.

She sat there all evening and glowered.

But she stayed. . . . I thought this much, at least, a victory.

The next day, however, Boski's sister told me that Boski was in the Hospital des Westends. Her life was despaired of. She had swallowed enough morphine to kill two people; and it was only because she was young and extra hardy and had been discovered in the nick of time that she had any chance whatsoever of survival.

I went home and prayed earnestly.

I also thought, "Attempted suicide was her way of getting her conscience and her liking for me straightened out. Well, it won't work. I'll reform. I'll reform because Boski is going to live."

When she was well enough to go walking again, we went for a stroll in the Tiergarten. It was nearly spring in the air, balmy and sweet.

I said, "Let's go to Paris, Boski, just you and me. We'll live in a little room. I have enough money to last for a year or two, or perhaps even three—if the room is little enough. I also have some Picassos I've stored with a friend in America and some Braques, the ones I bought from Eva Weinwurstel. We'll sell them when we run out of money—the price on them is sure to go up. At last I'll write the music I want to write. And you'll help me. I will not play any more concerts after Paris, except my own music. I love you very much, Boski, and a career of any kind means nothing to me unless you share every moment of it."

Boski listened seriously and said that she would think it over. Tomorrow she would phone me.

To-morrow she did phone and said:

"Yes."

## CHAPTER X

### PREPARATION FOR PARIS

HOWEVER, there were still many formal concert commitments to fulfill before I could wash up entirely with this concert-pianist business. Boski and I talked it over seriously as young people do when, at long last, they finally decide to join their lives more or less permanently together.

We decided that we would need the money. It would take only two months longer, and Boski was willing to wait that long.

So several time more I left my Berlin apartment for one of the numerous Berlin railway stations and was flung off to some familiar or unfamiliar city of Central Europe where, once again, the same old familiar concert routine repeated itself.

By this time these concerts were becoming more and more boring to me. I manage to remember them to-day only because of certain

difficult passages in which I had made various noticeable slips. There was, for instance, an octave passage at Hanover in which my arm tired at the last bar. There was, I remember, a cadenza in Vienna which was not nearly as pearly as I wished. In Linz an outright slip of memory nearly wrecked a Beethoven sonata—I forgot the second ending of the exposition and so had to play the entire exposition through three times (a thing which excited the local critic no end!). I experienced a terrible fumble for a whole soul-searing second in Hamburg.

During these many concerts I often just sat there and played, wondering whatever Boski might be doing or thinking, or whether the box office "take" was sufficiently interesting to-night, whether I should have to go to a musical patron's party after the concert and whether she would have anything good to eat.

Sometimes, during the most soulful passages in (say) a Chopin nocturne, I just wondered how good a great big glass of beer would taste just then!

And if, for any mad reason, I suddenly became interested in the notes or execution of a musical war horse I happened to be galloping, then, likely as not, my timing and co-ordination would be thrown off. I hesitated and I also fumbled.

This will probably be a jolt to those who idealize the concert-pianist life, but I am only telling the truth as I once experienced it. For in the last analysis concertizing is mostly riding in trains—at least it was in that pre-aeroplane-travel day. I constantly sat in "first-class" train compartments reading magazines or practising on my silent keyboard, or both. (My silent keyboard once made an old man, who happened to occupy a compartment with me for part of the journey, think he was going deaf.) A good deal of my travelling was done at night, which makes me remember much of Europe to-day as a night stop at which I strolled out of the train to stretch my legs, watch the locomotives being changed, or observe the rolling news-stands with their Tauchnitz editions which may not be imported into Great Britain and the U.S.A.

Bochum, Duisburg, Aachen, all these bored me as much as a water tower, the back view of a factory, or a workers' housing district will bore a rider in a U.S.A. train. Düsseldorf? An arc-light under which I bought a "*belegtes Brot*" (German version of a ham sandwich). Mannheim? A place at which the restaurant car closed and was switched off on a siding. Passau? A town in which I was yanked off the train in the middle of the night in order to be examined at the local jail because I looked just a little too much like a certain criminal fleeing from Berlin.

But infinitely less boring was the fact that, wherever I went now, I saw more and more frayed overcoats. Even the best suits of the well-to-do business men were now mended not in one but in many places. Faces everywhere became whiter, tempers shorter. The critiques of my con-

certs were less genial. The mark, the kronen, the Austrian schilling and the Hungarian pengö were worth less and less.

I was now glad that Boski and I had decided to leave this grim Central European place. It was a licked, defeated place.

We were young, full of the future. The laughter of a yet unknown but surely accurately reported Paris was the place for us.

One late spring morning I stood on a change-over platform of a small railway station near the German-Austrian border just outside of Salzburg. Great sinister mountains capped with snow, topped again by black menacing clouds, stood all around me.

I had taken the wrong local train.

I looked up now and saw the station sign "Berchtesgaden." Beneath the sign was a small rolling news-stand with a local newspaper headline: "National Socialist Uprising Suppressed in Munich."

This was the first of the attempted putsches of the Hitler group in 1923.

An indescribable feeling of homesickness overtook me and, for the first time since I had hit Europe, I felt as if perhaps I should like to go back to Trenton, home, safety—a peculiar feeling I would not have again until early 1933.

When my return local train came down again out of this mountain retreat I breathed the fresh spring air and felt as if I had just left a bad dream.

Back in Berlin, just previous to the final flight to Paris, life was still very pleasant. I composed several piano sonatas, one for myself, one for Boski. For myself I wrote a sonata (now published in Ford Maddox Ford's *Transatlantic Review* of 1924 or thereabouts), called *Death of the Machines*, which, again, related back to the dream I had had in Philadelphia and was the musical feeling of vast amounts of dead and dying machines of some tremendous future war on a battlefield of a final cataclysmic struggle, ruined, overturned, blown to bits. For Boski I composed a sonata which, when I later played it in Paris, caused a riot; if one may consider music able to represent anything visual, one might poetically consider that it was a portrait of her, called *Sonata Sauvage* only because I habitually visualized her as a Mongolian-Hungarian amazon riding over an ancient "pusta" full tilt.

I now also wrote another "sonata," although I suppose that it cannot be called a sonata in the true sense of the word, for it is in eight movements. Blithely, then, I called it *Mechanisms*; but it was important to me because it was the beginning of that trend of musical thought which would result in *Ballet Mécanique* (and catcalls in Carnegie!).

Boski asked me whatever this eight-movement work was, and I answered:

“Oh, it is just the usual eight-movement sonata!”

During this period young Von Stuckenschmidt often came to see me, listened to my new works and violently approved of them. He now began to write about my music in the foremost Berlin art-music magazine, *Der Kunstblatt*. Once he wrote: “Antheil’s piano sonatas make all the rest of our contemporary music writing in Germany seem unimportant.”

Which, for sure, could hardly help but prejudice me in his favour! He had also liked the *First Symphony*, if somewhat less; but this was all right with me, for I, too, liked the older symphony less than the new piano sonatas.

We agreed on all the larger matters of music.

We decided, between us, that music should never devote itself towards explaining a system of composition—as was now the case with Schönberg and his budding atonalists.

We also decided that the mere following of one stylistic trend after the other—as happened now to be the case in Paris—was almost as bad (but not *quite* as evil) as the other extreme.

We did not know what music was going to be; but we both felt music in the future would more and more devote itself to what we blithely called “the human soul.”

Outside of music we also peered anxiously into the future, thought we saw future unhappiness, war, misunderstanding between peoples—our peoples. Stuck almost wept over the *Death of the Machines* sonata, which was his favourite. Afterwards he wrote: “Music must be abstract, yet be the legitimate language of all of those parts of human thought and feeling which exhausts words. Music is the language of beyond the beyond, so to speak. One must now, as does Antheil, use all kinds of new methods in order to trap these new-old emotions into musical sounds.”

We both believed that contemporary music was too full of dead wood, of the expression of emotions which, although real before 1914, were now obsolete, sickening even; in any case no longer vital, pointed, striking a light of recognition in modern man. Contemporary music was still full of meaningless rococo which, although once beautiful and expressive in a less restless age than ours, bounced around on the waves of 1923 thought and feeling as the rent-asunder timbers of a clipper ship run aground.

Life, in 1923, was no longer the same as it had been in 1913. The entire world had changed. Therefore music too must change.

Writing must change too, painting must change, but music above all.

There was only one certainty in this world, we decided: that all things would and must change.

Finally, on June 13, 1923, Boski and I looked out of a train window. We saw one bleak burnt-out, destroyed French village followed by another. Each time one went by, Boski said, "Stuck's papa!"

I asked her why she said that.

She refused to answer.

Years afterwards Stuck came to visit me in Paris, staying at our apartment. I had occasion to take him down to our bank on the Carrefour de l'Odéon to introduce him to the young teller whom I knew well.

During his entire visit Stuck cashed his monthly allowance cheques here.

One day, when I came in alone, the teller asked me about Stuck.

"It's curious how much he looks like the German Crown Prince, isn't it?" he said meaningly.

"Why is it curious?" I asked.

"Haven't you noticed?" he said. "About his cheques, I mean."

"No," I answered.

"All of them are made out by and signed with the name of Dr. Paul von Schwabach!"

"So what?" I asked.

"Why," he said, aghast that anyone shouldn't know this fact, "*Dr. Paul von Schwabach is the personal banker of Kaiser Wilhelm II!*"



PART TWO  
PARIS  
CHAPTER XI  
FIRST EVENING

WE entered Paris on June 13, 1923.

I remember this date especially, for, many years thereafter, we celebrated it as epochal.

We arrived at our Paris railway station in mid-afternoon, progressed from there by taxi to the Left Bank, where we found a small hotel right next to the Sorbonne—a place to hole in until we found the proper small apartment.

En route, out of the taxi windows, *we had seen Paris for the first time!* And we had suddenly understood the painter's saying, "He who paints any metropolis paints, in his mind's eye, Paris!" for here was riotous colour, gaiety, cafés flowing out into the pavements, flouncing awnings above them as risqué and lacy as a Victorian lady's petticoat.

Here was a city as bright and spanking as a whistle-blowing, pennant-flying ocean liner just home with the transatlantic record.

Here was every Monet or Utrillo you've ever seen!

We contrasted Paris with Berlin. It was the difference between black night and green tender morning! In Berlin everything was grey but the trees on Unter den Linden, the Tiergarten, or Kurfürstendamm. I always used to think that if the Germans could only have found a satisfactory cheap process to remove the colour in leaves, they would have made them grey.

Gone now, thank God, were the medieval piles, the "*prachtvoll*" ornate Wagnerian apartment houses, the German greys and browns which seemed, in advance, to camouflage all Germany into the North Sea mists.

Not until now did we both realize how much we both had missed and hungered for colour, people who were not afraid to laugh, atmosphere which did not seem a direct continuation of the Middle Ages.

Paris would be all right for us.

Our first evening was to be a great wonderful surprise for Boski. I had prepared it for months. It was not by chance that we arrived in Paris on exactly June 13, 1923.

This was the evening of the premiere of Stravinsky's *Les Noces*.

I had planned to initiate Boski to "our" Paris by taking her immediately to this great Parisian premiere and had insisted upon her purchasing at least one wonderful evening gown in Berlin (as Boski was not clothes-minded at the time); and I had also reconciled myself in advance with Igor Stravinsky.

He was certainly a little piqued about my non-appearance at Christmas. But I had invented some sort of preposterous cock-and-bull story so incredible that only a genius would have believed it, and Stravinsky did believe it. He had written me a nice postcard saying that he entirely understood and wouldn't I like to come and hear the premiere of *Les Noces* and see him again at the same time.

Of course, this was exactly what I wanted—not free seats, but to be able to introduce Boski to *my friend*, the great Stravinsky, backstage. This would be a most fitting end to our first stroll on "our" new boulevards and into "our" new ballet theatres and concert halls of Paris. Our first half day in our new Paris would then be as perfect as possible: my 1923 version of perfection.

Boski's Berlin gown was a black velvet tight-fitting low-cut affair, setting off her jet-black hair and that brown-blue glint which all Hungarians seem to flash from their otherwise white epidermis. She looked startling in it, if but for no other reason than that she was then barely more than eighteen.

What woman fails to look startling when, at eighteen, she is dressed in a low-cut evening gown, stands on high heels, has a proper extraordinary hair-do, an air of hyper-youthful excitement; and is really in love?

I personally looked ridiculous. I was dressed in an expensive full-dress suit which Hanson had specially tailored for me in London. I also wore a soft hat and a *cape of my own design* tailored by the same Berlin tailor who had made my silken padded revolver holster for my left armpit.

I looked like "le high life."

We strolled out of our hotel down a quarter of length of street-block. The pavements of the fabulous "Boul Mich" were beneath us! We walked on air . . . the blocks floating by.

We pressed one another's hands, crossed the bridge over the Seine in the direction of the ballet theatre.

We arrived at sundown, too early—but excited beyond all reason by the simple, homely, yet completely artistic miracle of Paris. The sweet summer air of Paris.

It was my previous idea that we should arrive a little early, have dinner at a café near by, near enough to see the important ladies and gentlemen of Paris arrive.

We found such a restaurant, sat down ordered dinner, watched the sunlight fade upon the *Ballet Russe* posters on the theatre across the street. We watched the first female ticket holders arriving in their bare bosoms, maddening jewellery and evening clothes. After the grimness of Central Europe this was magic. *This was the city of Stravinsky's music!*

Finally we made our way into the theatre, where two excellent third-row seats were waiting for us at the box office. Many eyes followed Boski as we made our way up the aisle.

This business of bringing into an illustrious assemblage a beautiful and slightly gowned woman is really silly and exhibitionistic. But also something singularly touching and tender, *provided* that the exhibiting persons are young enough. Youth, tremulous and uncertain, often needs to proclaim itself brazenly to the entire world, and with that which it has more than others—the wonderful resource of having come from the womb later than the rest of us!

Boski and I, very young, saw many eyes following us enviously. Many were in that audience, no doubt, who remembered their first spring promenade to the ballets.

The first ballet of the evening was *Pulcinella*—"composed by Stravinsky from music of Pergolesi" the programme said.

This was my introduction to something extremely important, shortly to be called "neoclassicism." It would become intensely important to me soon enough, even deflect me momentarily from my eventual goal.

I cannot explain the next four years of my life in Paris unless we thoroughly analyze the word "neoclassic."

Let us first consider only part of the word: "classic." Vulgarly speaking, the term "classical music" is usually only applied to a certain style, sound, a manner of making music a century or two old in certain highly restricted patterns. At least this is the way most non-classic-loving persons think about it: "Play us a piece of classical music, will you, Mabel?"

Also: to many of such people the result is still something incredibly dry, uninteresting.

But to present-day Gluck, Mozart or Beethoven fans (and, believe me, there are such, even if in smaller amount than Sinatra fans) it is something infinitely satisfactory, infinitely able to repay those who take the trouble to cultivate a taste for it. And they find great fun in it.

Of what does the "fun" in "classical" music consist? Is it its juicy lush melodies, its spicy harmonies, or trick rhythms?

Classic fans will tell you the opposite is true—that its fun is in the fact that it *does not* contain this gorgeous, expanding, all-over-the-place stuff. It rests, rather, in its limiting itself to a certain pre-indicated sphere of operations, as, for instance, one might call one's shot in a pool game.

The fun in "classical" music consists, as in chess, *of a strict keeping of the rules, operating to best advantage within them!*

Which brings up an important point and one without which much of the happenings of my Parisian years might easily seem to be so much senseless knocking about. However strange the exteriors of my music, I am, I consider, basically a classicist. I find my fun *in* the rules rather than out of them. This may astonish many persons, but I believe a careful examination of my published music will prove this. Let me explain further:

Throughout the history of art there have been but two basic phenomena, an *inhalation* and an *exhalation*. The first produces one series of art movements—among which we can include the so-called "classic." It inhales, pulls in, restricts. The second produces an equally different general kind of art—into which we may place "the romantics."

It might not be too dangerous, now, to liken all art of all ages to a "classic" inhalation after which comes a romantic exhalation, then again the classic inhalation, *ad infinitum*.

Art remains healthy and alive only so long as its normal in-and-out breathing is not too long restricted, inhalation or exhalation not too long held up at any one point of breathing.

Art cannot hold its breath too long without dying.

The "classic" period of Haydn, Mozart, early Beethoven commenced circa 1725 with the words of Johann Josef Fux, who, in his foreword to his *Gradus ad Parnassum*, wrote:

"Composers most unfortunately no longer permit themselves to be bound by the laws and rules, but avoid the names of School and Law as they would Death itself. . . ."

A few years later, in 1732, Josef Haydn was born, and with him the final most classic, *limiting* version of the superb sonata-allegro form—that great nucleus of all classic symphonic music of the Haydn-Mozart-Beethoven period. Note, here, Fux's A.D. 1725 irritation with those romantic lawbreakers who then everywhere thumbed their noses at musical law, rhetoric, grammar, basic principle. His textbook was to become the basis for whole generations of future music scholars, among whom were to be the greatest "classic" names in music: Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms.

Until Schumann, Chopin and Wagner came along to break it up, basic fun in music (from 1730 to well past 1840) consisted mostly in making new restrictions and keeping them—indeed Beethoven alone added volumes to the rules of symphonic form, although he did so in the spirit of liberating symphonic music from the purely abstractionist to the human, the feeling, the dramatic, the spiritual.

It would not be too far-fetched to compare this particular classic period to a man balancing first a single walking-stick, then adding a plate, then a vase of flowers, and then a whole table. *The interest of classic design usually increases as its hurdles increase*; Mozart, Beethoven, and even Brahms added to their hurdles rather than subtracted.

The "fun" in a Mozart symphony is not entirely unlike that of a baseball game. In baseball all plays are severely within the rules; what would you think of a baseball team that had twenty-seven players instead of nine! Baseball operates strictly within the rules; and, to make certain that the rules are kept, umpires stand right on the field.

The composers of the hundred or more years preceding the overlap of the Chopin-Schumann-Wagner romantic period derived their main excitement, their top spiritual exaltation, from the masterly way in which they could knock out home runs or move and skip about inside of these binding, limiting, classic rules.

Mozart's mastery was so superb, so utterly top-notch, that Mozart fans experienced exactly the same sensation which a modern baseball audience might feel to-day should its home-town team be blindfolded and still win hands down against a super-excellent non-blindfolded visiting team!

So much for what classicism is; now for what "neoclassicism" is. The idea of a truly *new* classicism is certainly all right, for a "new" classicism will forever follow an old romanticism—and if Debussy, Ravel and early Stravinsky were not romantics I'd like to know what is romantic. But here, within Stravinsky's new *Pulcinella*, there was no new operating within severely proscribed limits (as, for instance, there was in the contemporary Schönberg school's atonalism). The entire process was, with Stravinsky, purely arbitrary, "anti-classic" even; it only employed classic *sounds*, musical stuff which we have long associated with the classic periods. It was classic only in the sense that Dali's surrealist paintings are often *like* Vermeer without at all *striking* at Vermeer's objectives.

*Pulcinella* reminded me of perfume distilled in Bulgaria—two hundred pounds of the petals of Bulgarian roses to make an ounce of quintessence; or a lifetime of Pergolesi boiled down into one single Stravinsky *Pulcinella*. (Later it was to be worse—seven thousand pages of Bach and Handel to make a single Stravinsky piano concerto, a serenade or a piano sonata!) The boiling-down process was contractionist, therefore *superficially* similar to the classic principle, *but* here its similarity to true classicism stopped; it was as like a true Mozartian baseball game as is one of those ultra-synthesized table-board baseball games which one buys nowadays.

To cut to the chase: Stravinsky's "neoclassicism" was no *new*

classicism at all, but a primitivism-romanticism—if for no other reason than that Stravinsky so violently opposed all limiting rules except those which he made and destroyed daily for himself.

All this was then very important for me immediately to comprehend, for I loved Stravinsky's work.

From that early day to our last day of Paris I watched Stravinsky romp merrily through the classic masters, Bach, Mozart, Weber and any number of others, each one in turn to become his "prince of music," his star, his basis for his synthesizing operations, so to speak; each star in turn to be succeeded by a new favourite as the old fell exhausted, drained of essence. Out of all this Stravinsky produced some extremely beautiful music, the *Palms* symphony, the *Capriccio*, lately even the *Symphony in C*, and in the last analysis that is all that is important. Beyond question he is a genius, especially when it comes down to composing directly into the orchestra.

But he is no classicist, no classicist at all.

When *Pulcinella* finished that first evening in Paris, I was very bewildered. I did not immediately comprehend what this dangerous-to-me thing was about, or that the virus of neoclassicism had now made its first inroad upon me. *Pulcinella* did not make me angry, as it should have. On the contrary I had listened to it with pleasure. (But every young man should be extremely critical of every wrong action of his chief hero.)

After *Pulcinella* was finished I turned to Boski:

"Charming, isn't it," I said, "though it's only an arrangement? But *what* an arrangement!"

But Boski didn't like it; she was difficult to please sometimes.

She was better pleased with Stravinsky's *Les Noces*, which turned out to be a big bustling percussion piece, from Stravinsky's best (early) period. It had plenty of pianos in it, chorus, and a wealth of fine mechanistic clatter. I accepted *Les Noces* on the spot as Stravinsky's latest manifestation, unaware that he had really composed the music sketch *Les Noces* as long ago as 1914. (He orchestrated it in 1922.)

After the performance Boski and I went out into the night air to get backstage. As I emerged to the cool night air I felt slightly feverish, as does a man who has been stricken with an infectious germ which will almost certainly kill him, but the existence of which he is not yet aware.

Stravinsky received us backstage most warmly, pretended to be elaborately surprised to see me in Paris.

"Antheil!" he cried, "Antheil!" Then he rubbed his eyes. "Or your ghost! Don't tell me that you have come to Paris at last!"

I introduced him to Boski and he shook hands with her warmly. Then he invited us to come around to Pleyel's the day following, where,

he said, he would play the rolls of the pianola version for *Les Noces* for us.

The next day we went to see him at Pleyel's, the great piano warehouse rooms where Chopin had often practised; and Stravinsky himself played *Les Noces*, this time on an electric pianolo. I liked the second version even better than the one which we had heard last night; it was more precise, colder, harder, more typical of that which I myself wanted out of music during this period of my life.

"It is wonderful!" I cried. Boski thought so too, she said.

Stravinsky talked with us quite a while before we departed; I knew that I was still on the old terms with him, that my failing to appear at Christmas had not injured our relationship.

The next day, walking along the Boulevard St. Michel (the "Boul Mich") I accidentally met an old friend of mine, a fellow pupil of Ernest Bloch, Theodore Chanler. I admired young Teddy's music very much, although I did not approve of his producing it so slowly and his insistence that such slow production was a virtue rather than a vice. Chanler seemed very embarrassed, as if, now, he would have to tell me something which, had he not met me for a day or two longer, I would surely have discovered for myself. This disconcerted me, for I knew that Chanler's delicacy and tact were almost proverbial.

In fact, when we were pupils of Bloch together, he had once come to Bloch's third-floor New York apartment to find a note from Bloch pinned on the door telling him to go in and wait in the front-room study. To which Teddy had replied by climbing up the front of the Lexington Avenue building, entering the window and so waiting for Bloch until he arrived. Nothing was thought of the incident until, later that afternoon, Bloch happened to congratulate his two little girls, whom he had instructed about Chanler's arrival via the apartment door; they had taken very good care of the visitor, he said.

But Bloch's two little girls were very insistent that nobody had entered the apartment door; they had stayed near it in anticipation until their father returned.

This so puzzled and troubled Bloch that he immediately phoned Teddy about the mystery.

"Oh," Teddy said, "the little girls are right. I did not enter your apartment by the door, but by the front window!"

"But it is on the third floor!" protested Bloch. "Why on earth did you do it?"

"I did not want to frighten the little girls," said Teddy.

Therefore when Chanler blushed and hemmed and hawed as he saw me, I knew something was very much the matter. I said:

"Teddy, something is wrong. You are not glad to see me! What have I done?"

"To me, nothing," he answered quickly. "But perhaps to yourself."

"What is it?" I begged.

"Oh, damn it, I'll have to tell you." His embarrassment was increasing. "Look here, George, have you been telling everyone that Stravinsky is a very good friend of yours, that the two of you spent months together in Berlin?"

I thought quickly. I had known but few people in Berlin who could not have checked with their own eyes whether or not Stravinsky and I were often together. I could not remember boasting about our friendship to these few. As for Paris, I had not yet had a chance to meet anybody. But wait a moment. . . . As Boski and I had walked around the theatre to see Stravinsky, I had met an American and his wife whom I had previously known as members of an elite circle in New York City. I had said hello to them, introduced them to Boski, walked around to the stage door—they too were going to see Stravinsky, whom they knew slightly. On this short walk I had, actually, volunteered that I did know Stravinsky very well indeed, that we had spent considerable time together in Berlin and that I considered him my very good friend.

At the stage door they had been held up for a few moments while Boski and I, expected by Stravinsky, were admitted immediately.

I had not seen them since.

"I did boast to someone," I admitted, "but Stravinsky is really a good friend of mine."

Chanler sighed. "Let's sit down," he said dejectedly. "I'd better tell you. I went to a party given by an American whom we both know. The party occurred at his home last night. A lot of very prominent people in the New York music world were present. Someone brought up the subject of you, asking Stravinsky whether or not he had been such a terribly good friend of yours as you were everywhere boasting. Stravinsky said, why, yes, he knew you very well, but just what was Antheil saying? Antheil had said, this person reported, that Stravinsky had seen nobody else in Berlin because Stravinsky was so terribly impressed by Antheil's compositions. 'That,' answered Stravinsky with growing apprehension, 'was not quite literally correct; I thought him a fine pianist, but I scarcely know his compositions.' 'Ah,' cried the American and his wife, 'that's just what we suspected, a four-flusher.' 'What is four-flusher?' asked Stravinsky. . . .

"And so," Chanler continued, "it went on, from bad to worse. Stravinsky asked other people present about you, but their opinion about you wavered. One said you were a very silly, irresponsible young fellow who had left America just as Stokowski was about to play your symphony in Philadelphia, permitting it to be premiered in far-off and unimportant Berlin instead. Someone else said that you were an undependable idiot who had left a most wonderful situation at the



Curtis in Philadelphia. I tried to put in a word or two, but I was the youngest there and shy. I did say, however, that the lack of adequate rehearsal time in Philadelphia had held up the performance of your symphony this season, not Stokowski's pique at having the work premiered in Berlin—whoever heard of such a thing! Moreover, Mrs. Bok herself wanted you to undertake this concert career abroad, even helped you to commence it."

"I see," I said ruefully. "It was just one of those things."

"Just one of those things," said Chanler. "It was just an inexplicable anti-Antheil landslide and without rhyme or reason. I thought I'd better tell you . . . before . . . er . . . you continue to go about saying that Stravinsky is one of your best friends."

"But he is!" I protested.

"Not any more," Chanler said. And then, with a face as red as a beet, he got up from the café table, where we had unconsciously seated ourselves, and left.

I phoned Stravinsky immediately, but received no answer. I left my own hotel phone number at Pleyel's, but received no call back. I wrote him a letter of explanation in German (our mutual language), to which he also made no answer.

Months later I encountered him at a concert, but his steely monocle bored straight through me.

It would be difficult to express, here, how tremendously this incident depressed me. It haunted my dreams for many years. In the years to follow, I was to dream often that Stravinsky and I were friends again, conversing amiably, sitting down to dinner together and discussing music. I admired Stravinsky then as a hero of the first magnitude as, to-day, I still greatly admire him—although, in these forthcoming pages, I will more often than not rip his music apart.

This, however, should disturb no one, least of all Stravinsky, for where is the younger man who does not revolt against his elders? (In any case, I would not give a tin dime for such a young man!)

After I had told this entire incident to Boski, she said:

"I'm happy about it! You liked Stravinsky's music too much. You do not realize it, but every time you wish to prove a point you merely say, 'Stravinsky said it' or 'Stravinsky does it that way' or 'It is Stravinsky's theory . . .' Recently I have even begun to wonder if you have any startlingly new theories of your own."

She did not mean the latter. But she had put her finger upon one of my greatest dangers, a danger to which every young composer of twenty-three is not immune—hero-worship.

The weeks following, however, were not quite as happy as they could have been.

## CHAPTER XII

### 12 RUE DE L'ODEON

FOR the next several days we lived in our hotel room, walked around the Latin Quarter, dined in small sidewalk cafés, luxuriated in the splendid difference between Berlin and Paris.

Then we started looking for an apartment. After all, Paris was to be our home for many years.

But we soon discovered that apartment rents were by no means as inexpensive as they had been in Berlin. Previously we had decided that we could spend only a certain specific amount for rent; but no three-room or even two-room apartments were available for that small amount; finally we agreed that we would be willing to compromise on a one-room arrangement, provided it was large enough, contained a cooking arrangement and permitted me to stow a small piano in one corner.

We eventually did discover just such a place above a bookshop run by Sylvia Beach. Her bookshop was located at 12 Rue de l'Odéon, in the Latin Quarter. (I find that now, so many years afterwards, I still thrill as I type "12 Rue de l'Odéon"!)

When we walked up those stairs for the first time I did not realize how important this place would be for me. It would mean, in the first place, that the most important years of my youth would be spent there sitting still, working—instead of wasting too many fruitless hours chasing after girls, drinking, or reckless speculations about art with other *lonely* artists. (In order not to appear too puritanical I was not *that* good all the time, but most of the time anyhow. If you work hard *most* of the time you'll be all right. What else can you do?)

When Boski and I first saw the room at 12 Rue de l'Odéon, it looked impossibly small, as if Boski and I could just barely squeeze ourselves in—let alone a piano or cooking utensils. The place did have a small alcove to cook in, but Sylvia doubted that she could allow us a piano.

I thought quickly and decided that I could compose without a piano. To have Sylvia Beach, American ex-ambulance driver and present publisher of James Joyce's *Ulysses*, as a landlady seemed so enormously attractive that I immediately stated that I was willing to forego the other.

So we did take the place. Within it I was to compose my *Quintet*, my two violin sonatas for Olga Rudge, my *Ballet Mécanique*, my

*First String Quartet*, my *Second Symphony* and a number of other smaller pieces. I wrote all these, for the most part, without the aid of a piano.

Which, incidentally, brings me to a subject which many people all too often ask me about: "How do you compose music?" and, above all, "How do you compose music without the aid of a piano?"

In the first place I cannot tell you *exactly* how I write music any more than I can explain how I walk, although I most certainly do both. Generally speaking, writing music is much like writing down words on this page, or the painting of a picture on canvas. I could not write down anything here unless I first had that which I wanted to say fairly clear in mind. Lots of people, however, do not—and I too first started to compose by hammering out on the piano without thinking it out first.

But in the course of my adolescent compositions I found that I usually fell into incredible errors of construction by letting my fingers do my thinking for me, so to speak, just as some writers think on the typewriter before thinking in their minds. I made the most idiotic and amateurish errors.

I had talent, a musical ear, but no capacity for planning a composition, *hearing it in advance*. The piano usually made everything sound too pretty. It made me more easily satisfied with my material; also, piano keys get in the way of my *larger* musical thought.

Later, when I commenced to write words, I found it true about writing; a great many writers sitting down to their typewriters without a thought in their heads, the mere setting down of black type upon white paper usually getting them into the swing of the thing, so, before long, they feel themselves hot in the groove and are producing what seems (to them) marvellous stuff but which, in the longer perspective, may be very thin stuff indeed, ill thought out, especially for the final accumulative effect.

Which accumulative effect in art is, after all, everything, the "pay-off."

I remember, from this early Paris period, any number of young composers who, it seemed to me then, could hammer out much more interesting stuff than mine on their pianos. In fact they did, and the critics were kinder to them too. But to-day their thin fabrications have faded and seem infinitely older than the then contemporary music of Ravel or early Stravinsky.

*Their* musical brains existed mostly in their fingers, so their stuff, although much in the mode of the day and well thought of at the salons, eventually turned out to be fairly mediocre.

None of them, with the possible exception of Milhaud, has amounted

to anything very tremendous to-day—but Milhaud, I'm sure, has a splendid inner ear and has devoted much more time to thinking out the larger plan in advance than the rest of them—although every other work of his can also be as slipshod and “pretty-piano” as those of some of his contemporaries.

I personally believe that Milhaud is a very fine composer, the best in France; but he too has occasionally been touched by this sheer French animalism, this invariably luscious Gallic primitivism which still seems to insist that so long as it tinkles pleasantly it is meritorious.

I have always felt better, anyhow, when I worked out a composition in my head first—with the help of plenty of note-books, of course, to keep high points or accumulative details in mind. I am a good pianist, too good in fact to be permitted to compose at the piano.

I compose music mostly by planning it out in advance in my head, taking bits of thematic material which have caught my fancy, or which seem to have something to do with me personally. Then I reshape them again and again until they seem just right.

A “melody,” for me, hardly ever comes out all in one piece—as most persons seem to imagine that melodies are born. Rather, it comes out in chunks; I fit these together time and time again, until they *seem to fit*.

I also pay a great deal of attention to the harmonic possibilities, harmony's many implications in these “melodies”; for harmony invariably pleases me as much as rhythm or counterpoint.


Then comes the actual construction, the planning and finally the note-by-note building of the edifice—but my having obtained the quadruple essence in advance permits me to make it all of one piece without bothering (as one otherwise must) with the question of style, whether or not this portion is “my style” or somebody else's, whether it is contemporary, *à la mode*, etc., etc., *ad infinitum*.

All this does not explain, however, how I compose without *hearing* what I compose in *actual living tone*—i.e., in the tone of the piano or the orchestra.

There is only one explanation: training. For example, before I learned how to read I used to look at persons absorbed for hours in books which, insofar as I could see, contained only millions of flyspecks in various orderly arrangements. Still, from these same pages, my mother and father obtained miraculous stories, splendid information, much genuine pleasure.

After I had learned how to read, it seemed impossible to me that reading was not as basic a human reaction as, for instance, seeing, walking, or tasting.

It seems almost impossible to me now that most people cannot pick



up a score and hear it simply by looking at the notes. Because, through long early training, I can do this practically without effort. It has become so utterly a habit, a completely unconscious reaction, that very often I find myself showing a part of a score to another musician who is not a composer and realizing too late that in all probability the score is as Greek to him as it would be to the layman—until he commences playing it on his piano, violin or mouth-organ.

Everything difficult is probably a matter of habit. You may read words with intelligent reaction because you have been reading combinations of letters and words all of your life. We composers read our music notes in exactly the same way—but, as we read them, we *hear* them.

They form a different variety of mental image.

Indeed, we often give ourselves a whole symphony concert just by sitting in a corner with a symphonic score—just as you may to-night enjoy an evening at the theatre merely by sitting down in a corner with a good play.

Of course, you may also read without understanding. I, for instance, am not very well acquainted with the Schönberg method of processing music notes for public hearing which is called "atonalism"; thus, even when I hear them performed "in the flesh," so to speak, I do not always grasp the actual sound. This inability to comprehend Schönberg's sound extends to my reading of his scores on paper. Frankly, they are often so scattered, so difficult to pull together by *my* inner ear, that I hardly ever read a Schönberg score away from the piano without the mad impulse to go over to the piano and play it—"just to see how it really sounds."

However, apparently Schönberg himself is no stranger to this emotion, for, recently, I happened to attend a rehearsal of his during which I sat but one seat removed from him. The orchestra progressed until a certain complicated point, when he suddenly turned to his companion and said:

"Well, now! I'm really quite curious to see how this next part will sound! [*Nun bin ich aber neugierich zu sehen wie das klingen wird!*]"

Boski absorbed herself with the buying of pots and pans, blankets, linen, towels, soap, coffee-pots (for composers always need plenty of coffee), and becoming acquainted with the local grocer, butcher, baker. After the first several days—meals home, and evenings spent either at the Café du Dôme or at my music desk—it seemed as if we had been living in Paris forever, would live there forever. Indeed, even to-day, when persons at the last moment of parting ask me to scribble my home address on the back of an envelope, like as not I will write: "12 Rue de l'Odéon, Paris." Although it is already almost two decades since

we left there, it has been more “home” to me than any other place I have ever lived in.

After our first meal in “the apartment” Boski said, “Here, help me do the dishes!”

I said, “I’m very sorry, but I cannot help you do the dishes.”

“Why not?” Boski demanded.

“It’s because of my father’s advice,” I answered.

“Oh yeah?” Boski said, or the German equivalent thereof—we spoke German together at the time because Boski could not yet speak English, nor I Hungarian, so we compromised on a very funny Anglo-Hungarian German.

“Yes indeed,” I said. “Sit down and make yourself comfortable, while I tell you a story.”

“But the dishes!” she protested.

“They can wait. Now listen. When Hanson decided to take me over to London for a concert, I went home to Trenton to pack up a few things. I told mother and dad that I was going to Europe to be a concert pianist. I noticed that this agitated dad very much, and the day before I left he took me out for a walk because he didn’t want mother to hear what he was going to say.

“When we got sufficiently far away from the house he turned to me and said earnestly:

“‘Georgie, I can’t give you any money or anything like that. But it has been the custom in our family to give something of value to a departing son. I could not sleep very well last night thinking over what I might give you. Finally I decided that I would give you three pieces of advice. This is the sum and essence of my experience of life. First, *always wear your best overcoat*. Second, *never wash the dishes*. Third . . .’”

I paused and looked at Boski, thunderstruck. I could not remember the third piece of advice!

“Well,” I said to Boski, “it doesn’t matter anyhow. I’ll remember it sometime. But the first piece of advice has proven most valuable. It has helped me make a success in London. It helped me in Berlin, with Stravinsky, with everybody. It inspires me with confidence in his second piece of advice—*‘never wash the dishes.’*”

“Boloney,” said Boski, or the German-Hungarian equivalent thereof. But I noticed that she started washing them. “Here,” she said, throwing me a dish-towel, “did your father say anything about not drying them?”

“He did not,” I admitted, “but I believe that was implied.”

“For gosh sake!” said Boski in equivalent. “I hope to gosh that your father’s third piece of advice doesn’t turn out to yoke me to a

cart." She was half finished with the dishes and stacked them in a nice new wire holder. But I just sat there and tried to remember my father's third piece of advice. By the time I had given up, I absent-mindedly reached for the dish-towel to help Boski dry the dishes, but they were already dry.

I am very absent-minded.

For instance, in Prague one exceptionally good concert had brought in some six hundred dollars above expenses. When I returned to Berlin (this had been the year previous) I had immediately gone out and bought at ridiculously low prices a number of very fine paintings, including two Marcoussis, a Braque and two Kubins. Having thus become an amateur picture collector in one fell swoop, I occasionally added to "my collection" as my concert life grew more successful. I bought a Picasso, a Leger and several other valuable paintings. I bought these, of course, at the lowest prices possible, from Berlin collectors, whom the inflation had hit badly. When Boski and I had departed for Paris I had had these paintings crated and sent to a friend in America; I knew that they would increase in value and it was my idea that we should live in Paris as long as we could upon our ready cash and then sell the paintings.

This was undoubtedly a very good plan, but it had a flaw; when I sent the paintings off I neglected to make note of the person in America to whom I had sent them.

Having forgotten my father's third piece of all-important advice—the sum and substance of the experience of his lifetime—I now began to be frightened that perhaps I had forgotten to whom I had sent these paintings. In fact, as I continued to think about it, I suddenly realized that I had utterly forgotten to whom I had sent the paintings! There were two thousand dollars' worth of paintings in that crate!

It would be many years now, and the value of the paintings multiply many times over, before I would ever receive that crate back again. But even more important and infinitely more disturbing would be the question of the forgotten piece of father's advice. As the years passed I would discover that both Piece One and Piece Two worked so well that, if I could only have remembered Piece Three, I might, indeed, have become Superman.

That evening I sat down and wrote a number of letters to friends in America, asking them please to write me if, by any chance, I had sent them a crate of something. I also wrote to dad, asking him for his third piece of advice—I ashamedly admitted I had forgotten it.

Inside of a month the answers to the letters had arrived. My friends said that they had received no crate of anything. My father wrote that he could not remember his third piece of advice right now, but that it would come back to him.

## SALONS DE PARIS

MARGARET ANDERSON was in town, Sylvia Beach said. She wanted to get in touch with me.

Margaret, as everyone probably knows, was the editor of the famous *Little Review*. The *Little Review* had, among other notable "firsts," been the first publication to print James Joyce's *Ulysses*.

It had also been the first to publish Ben Hecht, Sherwood Anderson (no relation), and Margaret was evidently a young woman who possessed a *brain*—which was all the more remarkable, when you pause to think about it, for Margaret was a young and beautiful creature who could easily have walked right into the Ziegfeld Follies.

I remember that when I first saw Margaret at her place in Bernardsville, New Jersey, I very nearly swooned (she had just the day previous dyed her hair red and the effect was unimaginable), so, somehow or another, I just simply stayed on; and Margaret was either too sensitive or too puzzled to ask me to leave. In her book, *My Thirty Years' War*, she records that I lived mostly upon a bottle of peppermint which I carried in my vest pocket and upon orange-peels; and also that I had a penchant for perfect order, as exemplified by the neatness of the music-desk in my room. And also, thank God, that my conversation was stimulating, even though I changed my entire mind every day. And that I played the piano a good deal, going through practically the entire piano literature. . . . Margaret loved the piano and intended, some day, to be able to play it well herself.

From a very great distance I adored Margaret and, viewed from 1946, she undoubtedly had a very great influence upon my earliest ambitions, for through her I first became acquainted with the entire contemporary world—sacks of mail came into the house at Bernardsville from all over the world, but particularly from London and Paris, bearing manuscripts, reproductions of new paintings, news of new art movements, among these manuscripts of Jean Cocteau and Ezra Pound.

So here, in 1923 Paris, I immediately phoned Margaret; and she said that I should come to a tea which was being given for herself and Georgette LeBlanc in the elegant St. Germain quarter; Boski not being able to speak English, did not want to go, so I went alone.

There for the first time I met Erik Satie and a Mephistophelian red-bearded gent who turned out to be Ezra Pound. Preceding my entry, Margaret had given Ezra quite a spiel about me; according to her I was a "genius," and Ezra was vastly intrigued by all this, for, as every-



one knows, Ezra was at that time the world's foremost discoverer of genius; in fact he frankly called himself "an expert in genius."

He was unusually kind and gracious to me; and as I left he asked for my address and said that he would some day come around to see me.

Ezra turned up early the next morning, in a green coat with blue square buttons; and his red pointed goatee and kinky red hair above flew off from his face in all directions. Boski looked at him, not a little astonished, but unable to talk to him, for she had not discovered that she remembered practically all of her high-school French.

As for Ezra, he immediately took her for granted, which disconcerted her.

Ezra asked me to get some of my music and go with him to the home of a friend who had a piano. I did so, went with him, played for hours and Ezra seemed very pleased with it all. He accompanied me back home and asked if by any chance I had written anything about my musical aims and I said, "Yes, I have"; which accidentally happened to be the truth, for I had purchased a typewriter in Berlin and had occasionally amused myself with typing out pronunciamientos on art and music which would have blown the wig off any conventional musician; among other things I said that melody did not exist, that rhythm was the next most important thing to develop in music and that harmony after all was a matter of what preceded and what followed.

Ezra was most delighted with all this and asked if he could keep the "precious sheets" for a while, he would take scrupulous care of them.

"Oh sure," I said. "I'm finished with them anyhow."

I was, really. I had gotten this particular sort of adolescent effervescence out of myself by capturing it on paper so that it could be read over once or twice, then destroyed. I had, I have mentioned, written that "melody does not exist." Of course I did not mean that melody did not exist; I meant, rather, that a new melodic æsthetic had come gradually into being, invaliding many older ideas concerning it. But how can one explain the writings of one's youth—poems, love letters, high-school articles, etc.? Also, much of what I had written was stuff which I had formulated only in order to combat the aggressive anti-Antheil musical arguments of some of Boski's Hungarian musician friends in Berlin.

After Ezra's visit, and as the weeks went by, it became more and more apparent that Ezra was working with the stuff I had written. Sylvia—who, like Eva Weinstel, always got to know about everything first—told me that Ezra was planning to write a book about me, and that a friend of Ezra's, Bill Bird, would publish it in Paris.

This scared me.

Two months later Ezra was to bring me proof sheets with big black letters on the front page: *Antheil and the Theory on Harmony*.

In the meantime, however, I would learn a good many things concerning Paris which would cause me to look upon such a book with better favour than I would look upon it now.

I would learn, for instance, that Paris operated on very different musical principles than did New York, London or Berlin. Whatever else the music critics of the great foreign dailies were, they were at least incorruptible.

But in Paris music critics operated on a price-list basis; for instance, you could be a "genius" here for only three thousand francs (\$150), a "great talent" for two thousand; a "white hope" for a mere thousand.

Of course, no one except very inexperienced foreigners ever paid either such prices or the slightest attention to the newspaper criticism of Paris. Moreover, audience reaction here didn't count for much either, as the claque was everywhere and there was not a person in Paris who was not fully aware that deafening and continued applause at your concert may have been much more due to your fat pocket-book than to any excellences in your composition or performance.

This automatically made the musical salons of Paris, and the peculiar kind of musical life surrounding them, *infinitely more important*

In 1923 musical opinion and prestige in Paris was formulated only in its salons. If one wanted to be recognized in musical Paris, one had first to be properly introduced to the various all-powerful musical salons and for this one had to have a sponsor whose opinion was worth something in them.

Satie, for instance, would have been a wonderful sponsor for me, which was undoubtedly the reason Margaret had invited both of us to her tea.

But Ezra, at least, had entrance into many of the foremost French literary salons, where, because of his former battles in behalf of James Joyce and half a dozen lesser literary figures, his opinion was extraordinarily honoured. Using these as a basis, Ezra had previously bludgeoned his way into a number of musical salons, not for me, but for Olga Rudge; moreover he was a very good friend of Jean Cocteau, who was then the high priest of all modern French artistic endeavour.

It seems terribly unfair of me, at this time, to proceed to criticize Ezra Pound, now that the poet has fallen into disgrace. But, I emphasize, I would write these pages exactly this way if Ezra had become an international hero instead. For from the first day I met him Ezra was never to have even the slightest idea of what I was really after in music. I honestly don't think he wanted to have. I think he merely wanted to use me as a whip with which to lash out at all those

who disagreed with him, particularly Anglo-Saxons; I would be all the more effective in this regard because I was an "unrecognized American."

Esra was in 1923 merely fighting for a stale old moth-eaten cause, the cause of the cubist age; for what he termed "the cold, the icy, the non-romantic, the non-expressive." But in painting, in poetry, and in music the cause of the cubists, the vorticists and the abstractionists had already been thoroughly won; indeed it was already being superseded by the equally cold neoclassicism—that is, if one wishes to speak of all this in terms of art movements alone.

In the 1923 that I speak of, Ezra still hovered there in artistic space, apparently fighting for me but in reality fighting for himself. He seemed like nothing so much as a ridiculous Don Quixote standing there, shouting all over a battlefield from which the opposing armies had not only long ago gone home, but upon which even the monument to victory was decaying. Futile and obsolete, poor old Ezra still clanged his sword upon his shield, yelling, "Come on, come on, you varlets!"

I still do not know why I permitted Ezra to issue his book about myself. Perhaps it was because at that moment I could see no other way of blasting into the otherwise tight-as-a-drum salons. In any case my error and lack of judgment were to cause me a lot of future grief—grief which has not been entirely dispelled even to-day.

Esra's flamboyant book, couched in language calculated to antagonize everyone first by its ridiculous praise, then by its vicious criticism of everybody else, did me no good whatsoever; on the contrary, it sowed the most active distaste for the very mention of the name "Antheil" among many contemporary critics, prejudiced them before they had even so much as heard a note of mine.

Nobody could have been a tenth as good as Ezra made me.

All this was not even necessary. Less than three months later Satie himself would take up the cudgel for me, this at my first concert in the great Champs Elysées Theatre. . . .

As Boski is not very large and our single room apartment in the Rue de l'Odéon was extremely small, I commenced a miniature-sized quintette to fit and express us, a piece for flute, bassoon, trumpet, trombone and viola. Into it I also composed my first impression of our new local Paris; the local streets which we daily and thoroughly explored. This quintette still pleases me to-day. I have never been able to bring myself to frequent public performances of it because it still seems so utterly intimate, a piece for Boski and myself exclusively.

It is full of little themes heard on our own street corner, the cry of our old-clothes man; it is Paris in our summer of 1923.

Esra, however, interrupted the finishing of this quintette with a

hurry-up call for *several* violin sonatas. Not one, mind you, but several; his idea was, he said, to arrange a concert for me with a friend of his, Olga Rudge, the concert violinist. Two large works would be required to fill the programme. At this concert, he explained, he would take care to see that all of important Paris was present, the really important Paris that mattered.

To prove his capacity he took me that same afternoon over to a friend of his, Jean Cocteau, the French poet and fellow "specialist in genius."

Jean was interested in everything that Ezra said about me. He said that he would help us.

At this moment of Parisian art history, Jean Cocteau was, as previously indicated, the most powerful Parisian talent scout. He scouted for the salons specifically, and, among all the salon genius-specialists of that period, he had somehow got the highest rating. A merest nod from him and—poof!—a young painter, novelist, or even a musician became the veritable rage of the town. By all this, I would not like to create the impression that I then in any way disapproved of Cocteau, who, among all of the great poets I have known, impressed me as a most sincere, devoted, thoughtful artist. But he was also undoubtedly a politician—which could scarcely be said of T. S. Eliot, James Joyce or W. B. Yeats, even though the latter had been an Irish senator.

We bade Cocteau adieu and on the way home we stopped in to meet Olga Rudge.

She was a dark, pretty, Irish-looking girl, about twenty-five years old and, as I discovered when we commenced playing a Mozart sonata together, a consummate violinist. I have heard many violinists, but none with the superb lower register of the D and G strings that was Olga's exclusively.

Olga, actually, could lay claim to being an American girl, for she was born in Boston and carried an American passport; but there all resemblance to things American stopped. She had been raised in England and Italy, spoke English with a decided British accent. She also spoke Italian, for all I know flawlessly.

She had already made a successful debut as a concert violinist, and her name was well known to me. I now consented to write two violin sonatas for her and, looking at her Irish adrenal personality, I decided that the sonatas must be as wildly strange as she looked, tailored to her special appearance and technique.

I went home and started *Violin Sonata Number One*. As, to-day, I read the music of this sonata over, I realize that something important must have happened to me between my previous piano sonatas and this

new "percussive" work. There appears to be a whole world of difference between the former and the latter.

I sit to-night over these aging pieces of music paper, to study them as if I were a detective looking for one more important clue to the true story of my life. The world of this difference now is unpleasant to contemplate; but I am at least able to decide that this was the first sign of my inward acceptance of the very scintillating, exciting, and kowtowing Paris that was soon to follow.

*The main clues of a composer's life are in his music; but it is not always so easy to read them.* Here, within the first pages of this violin sonata, seems to be a new bravura not quite typical of another older, but I hope better, me; this combines with a perfectly legitimate synthesis of all that had been "wild and woolly" in my previous pre-Parisian music.

The effect, now, seems to me to be that of great empty chic!

Ezra soon dropped in again, was pleased to see that the sonata had grown so perceptibly. Its first movement was now complete.

He warned, however that *two* sonatas were needed and that the concert was a bare four months away.

When he left us I suddenly went quite to pieces. *Two* violin sonatas!

So, very logically, I said to Boski:

"Boski, we are going to Africa!"

She looked astonished. "But our budget, your concert with Olga, the sonatas—it will not permit!"

"The sonatas," I replied, "are not so good, while the budget is sacred and will not be touched. Look around you, in this room; do you miss anything?"

"The Picasso drawing!" she exclaimed, seeing the vacant place over the fireplace.

"It is back on the Rue de la Boétie, where it belongs," I said, holding up two hundred dollars' worth of French francs, "and anyway it was not the best possible Picasso. As for Ezra and his concert, the hell with it."

"You've run into an impasse?"

"Yes, I've run out."

"Good, let's go to Africa then—but we must spend no more than two hundred dollars!"

That evening we took the train for Marseilles and one month later, in September, we opened the door of our "apartment" again with a whole wealth of new impressions, new horizons, new impetus to work—and we had spent exactly two hundred dollars.

I could here very easily devote a chapter or two to this first African

trip, but I am no ace on description, nor is this a book of travel. Nevertheless, there is one department of this 1923 Africa of ours which, as a musician, interested me consummately and still gives me musical ideas.

We now went out of Tunis by electric train to a little village about ten miles distant; it was by the sea and situated on the Acropolis of ancient Carthage, that same Sidi-bou-Said whose lighthouse I had seen upon our first approach to Africa. Boski and I wandered about in this village as two people enchanted; I told her the story of Flaubert's *Salambo* (which I had read at least twice in Trenton) and explained that we were here walking on the very main street of that once-powerful city of a million which once had ruled the whole Mediterranean and threatened the might of Rome!

Well, Carthage was far away from that now! The little Arabian townlet was quiet and peaceful in the afternoon sun, as if resting from its labours of two thousand years ago.

We heard a zither! It was being very expertly played in a nearby garden. We, still young and therefore brazen, pushed open the garden doorway and made our way towards it.

It could have been dangerous, for it might have been an Arabian harem (the Arabs brook no nonsense in this direction), and I might have had my throat cut. But, fortunately, the man who played the zither was a European, a kindly old gent at that, with white walrus moustaches, who, as I remember him from this distance, looked not unlike "Eskie" of *Esquire* covers. He looked astonished to see us both; but I explained to him that I was a composer who had been attracted here by this strangely beautiful zither music.

This pleased him and we engaged in further conversation. This was his place. He was also a friend of Stravinsky's. The music which I had heard was an ancient Arabian melody. He was a specialist in Arabian music and was in the process of writing a seven-volume work, in Arabic, on Arabian music. In order to complete this work properly he often took long trips into the desert, to far away Mohammedan places, even as far as India.

His name, he said, was Baron d'Erlanger—which amazed me, because the name was so utterly French, whereas he spoke English with so thoroughly Oxfordian an accent.

Not venturing to question him concerning this discrepancy (for which I now offer no explanation), I told him that I should like to write down some of this music, for, as I explained most truthfully, to hear was with me to see in music notes. I needed only to hear a tune, however complicated rhythmically or melodically, to see it in my mind's eye on paper. In short, I was a most marvellous musical stenographer —if I chose to be.

I demonstrated that this was the truth. Whereupon, after I had written down correctly one very difficult tune he played for me, he invited us both to lunch the next day—for twilight was now upon us.

The next day we came back from Tunis to this same garden gate, and he took us through the ornate winding garden (which had a most marvellous view of the entire Tunisian Bay, as it was situated on the top of a high promontory) to an Arabian mansion at the rear. We went inside of it and down into the cellar.

Or, better, we *seemed* to go down into the cellar. For here, down underneath the small mansion, was a huge Arabian palace, hewn downward into the cliff's solid rock—whether by modern workmen or by Phœnician slaves I knew not. He gave us our lunch, then led us to a theatre, marvellously carved by special workmen out of stone which he said he had imported from Persia.

A group of musicians, all Arabs, came out and played for us all afternoon. My pencil now flew over the music paper, attempting to capture forever what seemed the most interesting authentic ancient music I had ever heard.

D'Erlanger explained that this orchestra was his own private one, collected from the finest musicians of the entire Mohanmedan world. He kept them on salary. As Arabian music does not have the benefit of our own very exact notation, it is a heritage handed down from father to son, a compendium of rules and exact method rather than a series of exactly notated masterworks—as is the case with our music.

However, if, like D'Erlanger, you are able to put on permanent relief top Arab musicians who, through their training, can play for you the almost exact notes of a tune originating in the time of the Pharaohs, you are then far more able to secure a substantial notion of what music used to sound like, say, in the time of ancient Egypt than you would through mulling over a thousand musical volumes in our best-stacked university.

I considered this musical experience invaluable.

One tune in particular made a great impression upon me. I wrote it down exactly. D'Erlanger later told me that it was at least three thousand years old, had come directly from the valley of the Nile, and was of course quite unlike any of the modern Arab music of the last three or four hundred years.

I lost this piece of paper until, quite recently, it turned up in a pile of forgotten sketches.

I then played it over on my *mental* orchestra, with all of its orchestration in strange instruments; and 1923 Africa came back to me as clear and strong as upon the day I had written it.

Which reminds me to philosophize appropriately upon how little, really, Western music knows about Eastern music and how vast that

Eastern music is. One day in Tunis proper I saw a vast modern gramophone shop, with streamlined listening booths and row upon row of gramophone-record sets. I asked for a catalogue, was given a bilingual one in French and Arabic which I discovered to list only music of the Mohammedan world.

Here, actually, were tens of thousands of records played, sung and recorded by thousands of "well-known" or "famous" Arabian artists, but artists I had never heard of. The catalogue in my hand was quite as thick as Victor's or Columbia's and still not one item in it would have been faintly distinguishable as "real music" to our Western world! Yet here it all was, and in a fine gramophone shop too, comparable with anything on Hollywood Boulevard.

And with dozens of great gramophone-record factories, from Morocco to the Philippines, behind that gramophone shop and thousands more like it throughout the Orient!

When we arrived back in Paris it was late summer. The concert season was commencing—if not actually, then in all of its multitudinous announcements. (Is that not the most exciting part?) The colour and tendency of the coming season were already visible.

Boski and I walked the streets of Paris, very happy with one another. I talked to Boski as to my artistic conscience, told her about the vast new symphony I was planning, a symphony infinitely better than the *First* which she had heard in Berlin (and had not liked). This new symphony, I said, was to be harmonically more simple but architecturally more complex than anything I had written previously.

"I must make my music," I said to Boski, "completely independent of whether or not it employs pepper and salt. I do not relish the idea that people like my music to-day only because of the exotic condiments I employ. I must make them like it because it is *good cooking!*"

We went to a concert of the *Beethoven Ninth*. "That," I said to her, "is the way I want some day to write music, utterly without fear of discord or concord, following out only the *inner* pattern, the inner logic, the apparently too-mad logic which escapes the too-sensible man. I suppose that when I bring out this new symphony everybody will say that parts of it are neoclassic, that I am following Stravinsky or *Les Six*, but that will not be the case; I shall try to be following Beethoven, or as much of him as I can comprehend. I am not very clever, Boski, but I have peasant ancestors on every side who have, in spite of everything, endowed me with horse-sense! Beethoven is horse-sense in music!"

Finally, one day, I had to recommence the *First Violin Sonata* in spite of myself. I told myself that I was at least thankful that I had interrupted it for the trip to Africa.



For now it began to be utterly unlike *Les Noces* at last. The pernicious Stravinsky sound was out of my ear.

I finished with the *Second Violin Sonata* ahead of time and secured a copyist to copy out the parts. He was a nice old man who had been a composer; when he brought back the parts and I began to check them with the score, I was astonished to discover that he had edited out all my fine nuances, harmonies, "discords."

I remonstrated, but he patiently explained that he had once been a composer himself and had therefore been able to detect my inexperience. He too had been young. His compassion urged him to "correct" these errors *absolutely free of charge*—in fact it was a labour of love.

I had not the heart to spoil his good deed, so I paid him and spent many nights thereafter copying over the parts myself.

Copyists always give me a turn, if for no other reason than that most of them are disappointed composers turning to the next best from of music-note writing. There, but for the grace of God, go I. Most of my copyists know I am a softie. My present Hollywood copyist, for instance, makes no secret of the fact that he is not very impressed with my compositions. This does not particularly irritate me, for I know that he judges a composer, not by the quality of his sound, but by the neatness of his score page. Quite recently he bought himself a facsimile of a Beethoven symphony just to have on hand an example of what a dirty, slovenly job Beethoven could make of laying out a score.

It gives him a good feeling (he says) every time he compares it with some of his own work!

He is also fairly regularly burnt up with his client, Stravinsky. Stravinsky regularly sends him microscopic score pages written in pencil; to extract these parts he must therefore use a magnifying-glass and sustain the eternal glare of pencil-written notes; but no amount of argument will, he says, cause Stravinsky to develop better manuscript habits. Accordingly, he has a very low opinion of Stravinsky as a composer too.

But (as he will now point out) Jake Zilch, our eminent local composer, ah, there is a man for you! What a composer! My copyist showed me splendidly written score pages by this same Jake Zilch, with a mixed air of fierce triumph and rebuke. I look and, sure enough, this Jake Zilch certainly knows how to lay out a score—but his music's sound—oo la la!

All of which goes to prove that artists have their way of looking at art; artisans theirs; the latter is more visible.

One incident of these early months in Paris cannot go unrecorded.

My old teacher in Philadelphia, Constantine von Sternberg, had not liked the Debussy-Ravel school and had once attempted to discredit them with me by claiming that they, including Satie, had stolen their entire impressionistic technique from an Italian, Ernest Fanelli.

Fanelli was an older composer living in Paris during the 1880s.

I wondered now whether it was true, because, if it were, it might mean that a young foreign-born composer like myself, inventing a whole new music such as I now intended to invent, might easily find his work voraciously predevoured, then reassimilated, finally to be given out to the Parisian public under other names than his own.

I decided to investigate the Fanelli case. To see if any traces of him still remained in Paris. Among the biographers of the French musical impressionists I found little or nothing. But in an old musical directory I found his former address.

The address at least supplied me with a trail which led me to his widow—for he was dead. His son (my age) and the younger daughter also lived in the same apartment.

I explained to Mme. Fanelli that I was an American music critic (a lie) anxious to write an article on the true worth of Ernest Fanelli. Whereupon they innocently took me into their household, where I was permitted to peruse Fanelli's manuscripts at leisure.

I soon discovered that Constantine von Sternberg had been right, at least in one regard: the works of Fanelli were pure *Afternoon of a Faun* or *Daphnis and Chloë*, at least in technique and they predated the Debussy-Ravel-Satie works by many years.

But, as I also soon discovered, they were not as talented as the works of the two slightly younger men, although they had had the advantage of being "firsts." In my recent investigations I had somewhere read that young Debussy, Satie and Ravel had known old Fanelli well, had visited him and even borrowed his scores; I asked Mme. Fanelli if this was so.

"Oh yes," she said, "it was so; young and nice Claude Debussy was very enthusiastic about my poor husband's work!"

I left the Fanellis in quite a quandary. To write an article about Fanelli now would be to unbury a possible unpleasant body—who in Paris wanted to hear such a thing! Besides, frankly, the worth of Fanelli—his intrinsic musical worth—hardly merited the sacrifice this would quickly prove to be.

Debussy was the genius who had distilled Fanelli into immortality!

As I wandered home I recollected bits of Mme. Fanelli's answers. For instance, I had asked her when his *Tableaux Symphonique* was written; I saw that the date of publication was 1884.

"He wrote it around 1880," she said.

"And when was it first performed?"

“In 1912.”

Twenty-two years, during which time Debussy, Ravel and Satie had visited him, borrowed his scores!

Finally, out of bad conscience, I did write an article about Fanelli. Shortly afterwards Ford Maddox Ford published it in his *Transatlantic Review*. (Collectors of rare magazine articles may find it there still.) But it was a wishy-washy article, said nothing about the score borrowing—which, if it had, would have instantly made me the most disliked fellow in Paris. . . .

I did not feel like being hung for a principle I had never believed in—the eternal question of who invented what first.

Art is not a question of precedence, but of excellence.

The end of the Fanelli case was not yet. A few days after this article first appeared, I suddenly found deposited at my door a card from Fanelli's son, wrapped in a little French advertisement of a “remedy” for sexual impotence! I knew but little of the ways of the French, but had already comprehended that the insult they considered most vile was that of sexual impotence.

Also, I suddenly remembered that the French still fought duels and that the prelude to a duel was an insult like this, plus a visiting card!

An adoring son could well take issue with the furtive article I had just published on his father. What now if he were an expert swordsman? I had never taken a fencing lesson in my life—but I was an expert pistol shot and I would (I thought) have the choice of weapons.

As I read the disgraceful advertisement, my gorge rose and I decided to go out and fight a duel. I would find my seconds and make whatever arrangements were necessary.

As I passed the concierge, however, she called out:

“Did you get your card?”

“What card?” I asked, just to check.

“Why, the card that nice young gentleman left,” she explained. “You were not at home, so he left his card here and in order to keep it clean I wrapped it in some kind of handbill which had been left here in the loge; I slipped it under your door. Don't tell me you didn't find it!”

“I did find it,” I said, relieved beyond description and ran upstairs to tell Boski not to worry—I wouldn't have to fight for my honour.

## THE MUSIC OF PRECISION

TOWARDS the end of September 1923, Olga and I practised hard. Our coming concert was to be in November.

One day Margaret Anderson phoned me and asked whether I'd like to play at the opening of the *Ballets Suédois*—after Diaghileff's *Ballet Russe* the next most important social event in Paris.

I said indeed I would—as who wouldn't? Everybody of importance would be present on that October 4! October 4, however, would come before Olga's and my concert!

Margaret said, "Start practising and be sure to programme your most radical works, the sonatas that caused riots in Germany." I would go on, she added, during the early part of the programme, before the ballets commenced.

As an added attraction (as if I needed any) she mentioned that Satie would be there too.

Satie was a most peculiar little old man, working in the daytime as a clerk in a post office, selling stamps, and in the late afternoon and at night becoming a high and mighty potentate in the decisions of musical France. He had come to this high position because he had been one of the first Frenchmen to recognize Debussy, Ravel, Stravinsky and, finally, Les Six, and the youngest school of French composers called "the Arcueil."

Indeed, he had *always* been in the vanguard.

He too was a "specialist in genius"; and, outside of this, a great composer whose marvellous *Socrate* had done more than any other thing to usher in really new and good French music.

I told Ezra about it because Olga and I would now have to quit practising for our Salle Pleyel concert, scheduled for November 7, until the Ballets Suédois concert was over. Ezra seemed concerned that I would first appear in Paris without his personal sponsorship, but remembering that his book on me would appear next week on the bookstands, I suppose that he figured that he could put in his claim of discovering me first, in any case.

Besides, if I were a success on October 4 it would bring more people into our concert of November 7—in which Ezra had money of his own invested.

He soon became reconciled to the idea, even enthusiastic.

When I came out on the stage of the Champs Elysées Theatre to

play on that night of October 4, I noticed that Satie and his friends had three boxes, Satie in the middle box and Milhaud alongside of him. Strong floodlights, strong as battleship searchlights, played upon the stage.

Floodlights at stage performances are not unusual, although these lights seemed tremendously large.

I had programmed three sonatas, my *Sonata Sauvage*, *Airplane Sonata* and the new *Mechanisms*. I started with the *Sonata Sauvage*.

As I did so I noticed a steely silence creep over the audience.

*That*, as any concert artist will tell you, is rather strange, for when a public really enjoys a work it will continue to cough, wiggle, whisper, all this being the normal comfortable background of concertizing.

But when it immediately subsides into steely silence—*beware!*

Midway through the second sonata I suddenly noticed a sharp little wave rippling through the audience. (To me this is always the preliminary gust of wind blowing over a still ocean just previous to the hurricane!) Then the storm commenced to burst.

Someone down in the front row started to catcall, and then someone alongside of him punched him in the jaw; a dangerous bustle of astonishment rustled through the audience.

Another man in the orchestra jumped up and angrily yelled, "Silence! Silence!"

We were now on the edge of the riot.

I felt for the automatic under my arm and continued playing. I had gone through riots in Germany, but this promised to really become something. The French are a different, more passionate race, descendants of the mobs who had followed the tumbrels to the guillotine! Catastrophe breathed down my neck.

But catastrophe and myself at concerts were old pals. This was "home" to me. When I was sure, I suddenly became relaxed, efficient, "Superman Riding the Waves." *Besides, I could always shoot my way out.*

I even had time to listen to myself and think, "What a marvellous pianist you are, Antheil, you dog!"

My endocrines now shifted into fourth gear.

I finished the second of the programmed sonatas and looked up at Satie. He was applauding violently; Milhaud seemed to be holding him back; I couldn't tell for sure. Satie seemed to push him away, continued to applaud. Satie, with his amiable goatee, looked like a beneficent elderly goat!

His applause would, I knew, mean everything to the all-powerful group around him.

I now plunged into my *Mechanisms*. Then bedlam really did break loose. People now punched one another freely. Nobody remained in

his seat. One wave of persons seemed about to break over the other wave. That's the way a riot commences, one wave over the other. People were fighting in the aisles, yelling, clapping, hooting! Pandemonium!

I suddenly heard Satie's shrill voice saying, "*Quel precision! Quel precision. Bravo! Bravo!*" and he kept clapping his little gloved hands. Milhaud now was clapping, definitely clapping.

By this time some people in the galleries were pulling up the seats and dropping them down into the orchestra; the police entered, and any number of surrealists, society personages and people of all descriptions were arrested.

I finished the *Mechanisms* as calm as a cucumber.

Paris hadn't had such a good time since the premiere of Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*. As Jack Benny would have said: "Boy, they loved me in Paris!"

The future Carnegie Hall "riot" of my *Ballet Mécanique* would be a pale carbon copy by comparison.

The next morning the Parisian newspapers caricatured me on the front page. One caricature showed me dressed in overalls, standing before a piano that had a small steam engine attached to it. I was controlling a system of indicators, gauges, levers substituting for a keyboard. Its caption read: "Last Night's Music of the Future at the *Ballets Suédois*."

From this moment on I knew that, for a time at least, I would be the new darling of Paris. I was notorious in Paris, therefore famous. Picasso would not have become famous in Paris unless he had first become notorious; the same was absolutely true of Stravinsky. Paris loves you for giving it a good fight, and an artistic scandal does not raise aristocratic lorgnettes.

Yes, fame approaches one differently in Paris, London, New York, or Berlin. In Paris the general idea and reaction after a so-called "*succès du scandale*" is: "Let's see, where there is smoke there might be fire." In New York, on the contrary, too often it would be: "There is too much smoke, let's get out of here, it has a bad odour."

The endorsement of Satie made it fairly certain that my career in Paris was a settled matter, at least for the next three or four years.

The extraordinary riot had been cabled to New York. Hanson sent me a congratulatory telegram.

In the afternoon Boski and I went to the Café du Dôme and noted that most eyes present followed us to our table. I was pointed out from every hand; I knew that almost everybody was talking about me.

I must say that it is a very interesting feeling, but not too healthy.

A few days later I announced to the Press that I was working on

a new piece, to be called *Ballet Mécanique*. I said that I also sought a motion-picture accompaniment to this piece. The newspapers and art magazines seemed only too happy to publish this request, which interested a young American cameraman, Dudley Murphy. He had really been flushed by Ezra Pound, who convinced him.

Murphy said that he would make the picture, providing the French painter Fernand Leger consented to collaborate.

Leger did.

Whereupon Erik Satie immediately announced that he too would write a mechanical ballet, to be called *Relâche*. It was to be accompanied (in part) by a surrealist film by René Clair and Man Ray.

This, of course, was the compliment supreme.

People now began to buy Ezra's book. They even almost believed it.

The French now began to take notice of what some of the most advanced arbiters of art had to say about me in the literary French magazines.

One article claimed that my music had the extraordinary power of either chasing demons or evoking them (I am not quite sure which), giving me credit for being in cahoots with powerful "elementary" forces!

Satie did write the advertised ballet, *Relâche*, and it was produced the following year at the *Ballets Suédois*. It was partially accompanied by René Clair's notion picture, and it had a full *décor* and book by Picabia.

It was also Satie's swan song; he died shortly after this.

"*Relâche*," by the way, means "closed for the summer." In Paris, you may remember, theatrical programmes and announcements are always published on those fat round upright cylinders with roofs, called kiosks, which make every Parisian street corner so typical. Somewhere on this cylinder every theatre in Paris reserves a space, but in the summer most of these spaces read "*Relâche*." In explaining why he wanted to call his ballet *Relâche*, Satie said that it had always been his ambition to have a work of his running at all the Paris theatres at once, and this was his only possibility of ever achieving it, even partially.

My *Mechanisms* and the *Ballet Mécanique* received additional Légions d'Honneur. Honegger followed it with *Pacific 231*. Prokofieff came out with his ballet *Steel Step*, the latter a mechanistic masterpiece in full symphony orchestra and a very good work indeed! It was his first step away from effete Paris back to a Soviet Russia which was to receive him then with open arms.

One year later I went to see a film called *L'Inhumaine*, featuring Georgette LeBlanc. In this silent film (still preserved by our New York

Museum of Modern Art) you can if you wish see a vast rioting public, including such illustrious figures as James Joyce, Picasso, Les Six, the Polignacs, the Prince of Monaco, the surrealist group, and Man Ray —although a good many of these remain seated. They riot, scream, yell, jump up on the seats; and, also, their rioting seems directed against the character which Georgette LeBlanc plays; she is supposed to represent an “inhuman” opera songstress, who, because she has previously done something or another dreadful, compels this snob audience to riot instead of listen to her. (This, at least, is what this film’s plot is about.)

However, most curiously, this riot is no fake one. It is an *actual* riot, the same riot through which I played and lived that night of October 4, 1923. When I first viewed this movie a year later, I suddenly remembered Georgette LeBlanc walking up to my piano while the great floodlights in the balcony poured on us both simultaneously. I had thought it odd then. So I naturally asked Margaret Anderson about it, not without a grin of appreciation. She said yes, it had been a *sort* of plot at that, but a plot in which she and Georgette had been sure I would greatly profit. (How right they were!) She said that she thought I would be too nervous if I knew in advance that the house floodlights had been previously reinforced and cameras hidden in the balcony in the *hope* that my piano sonatas would cause the same sort of riot in Paris that they had caused in Germany.

So that was it! I had always thought that the wonderful break being able to play to all Paris before the opening of the most important autumn ballet event in Paris was all too good to be true. They, the *Ballets Suédois* people, in collaboration with the film people, had simply wanted a riot in a great theatre. Now I knew the truth.

However, by this time, such was my state of self-illusion that I actually managed to believe that Paris had, that evening, seen my worth in spite of all the noise, the obvious film floodlights, the grinding cameras!

Nevertheless, it *had* been a real springboard; I had since had any number of successful concerts in Paris, both with and without Olga Rudge, each of them at least a *succès du scandale*.

One could not announce a concert of mine between autumn 1924 and autumn 1926 without its being sold out far in advance.

During the winter of 1923-24 I spent most of my time on the actual composition of the *Ballet Mécanique*. The work had really sprung from previous inspiration, derived from its three predecessors: the *Sonata Sauvage*, the *Airplane Sonata* and the *Mechanisms*—to say nothing of my microscopic sonatina, *Death of the Machines*. But it was a work



of greater length and orchestration; it also said more exactly what I wanted to say in this medium.

It was finished before 1925, and it closed a period of my work and life.

For, after I had written it, I felt that now, finally, I had said everything I had to say in this strange, cold, dreamlike ultra-violet-light medium. I could have written another *Ballet Mécanique*, of course, but to have done so would have been for me repetitious, tedious. I always tend to write the same work over and over again, so to speak, until finally I get it as nearly perfect as I can, then I abandon it.

Many composers, however, continue the same *type* of composition. Perhaps it is because they have made an initial great success with this style—which is certainly the worst possible reason. Perhaps it is because this is all there is, there isn't any more. In any case, by so doing, they more often than not arrive at a certain degree of popular eminence and easier and earlier comprehension by the public.

The public only has to focus its attention upon *one* style, one form of expression. Ravel, for instance, invented a certain new type of shimmering orchestral piece; but once it had been accepted by the public he never departed from it—excepting late in life, in his *Bolero*; but it is reputed that Ravel suffered from fits of insanity then—in any case, he had arrived at a stage in life where he threw caution to the winds.

Stravinsky, on the other hand, hardly ever “repeated,” at least not in early life, in *Firebird* or *Petrouchka*; indeed he did not commence repeating until (as I interpret it) he hit the snag of neoclassicism.

If the public still thinks of me at all, it probably thinks of me as the composer of this damned *Ballet Mécanique*. It is now strange for me to remember that I actually finished it as long ago as early 1925, twenty years ago—yet I am still listed among the “young American composers”! Therefore this *Ballet Mécanique* has become to me what the *C Sharp Minor Prelude* must have become to Rachmaninoff: it is frankly my *nightmare*, this in spite of the fact that since 1925 I have never again touched the idea of “mechanism” in music, either aesthetically or practically, not even in the generically related *Woman with 100 Heads*, written in 1933.

Better men than myself have been longer remembered and damned for their youthful escapades or some flamboyant action than for their more sedate efforts. Don't get the idea, however, that just because I grouse and mumble here, I consider by *Ballet Mécanique* a mad youthful prank! It is a completely sincere, although possibly youthful, work, but utterly representative of a very interesting period in the world's history. It *has* had a tremendous success in Paris, aroused the enthusiasm of an entire artistic generation, among them Jean Cocteau.

Virgil Thomson, Erik Satie, even James Joyce. . . . It has also been in bad repute in America *only* because it once endured a wrongly advertised and badly presented performance in Carnegie Hall. In short, it became something else than what it really is, a myth.

I think that my *Ballet Mécanique* has been misunderstood, not because of its music, *which few people* have ever heard (I am not even counting all of the three thousand people who were at Carnegie Hall; they came to see, not to hear), but because of its title and its still more unfortunate publicity. Its title, for instance, seems to imply that it is a "mechanical dance," a ballet of mechanism, machinery, possibly to illustrate the interior of a factory. But it must be remembered that 1924 was the beginning of the day of titles without connection. If one wrote a book then, for instance, one usually gave it a name as far removed from the contents as possible; as, for example, the titles of Hemingway's or Ford Maddox Ford's novels were hardly connected with their contents. (This has even continued to be the style!) I called my musical piece *Ballet Mécanique*, but I really do not remember why. Actually I called it *Ballet Mécanique* against the better advice of Sylvia Beach, who was certain that the title would be misinterpreted by the French as "Mechanical Broom"; the words for "ballet" and "broom" sound exactly alike in French.

My original title for the work (given on the manuscript started in Germany) was *Message to Mars*. Considered from the purely euphonistic point of view, it is, of course, a much worse one than *Ballet Mécanique*; moreover it implies all kinds of moralistic and mystic things which would certainly be allergic to the ice-blocks of its music. The words *Ballet Mécanique* were brutal, contemporary, hard-boiled, symbolic of the spiritual exhaustion, the super-athletic, non-sentimental period commencing "The Long Armistice."

My original idea in writing the work was to both synthesize and expand the piano sonatas. Also to eliminate whatever effect *Les Nocces* might have made upon me through the first movement of the *First Violin Sonata*—all this in a work of sufficient size that the public could, so to speak, see it better. The *Ballet Mécanique* strictly followed "the dream"; it had nothing whatsoever to do with the actual description of factories, machinery—and if this has been misunderstood by others, Honegger, Mossolov included, it is not my fault; had they considered it purely as music (as, being musicians, they should have), they might have found it rather a "mechanistic" dance of life, or even a signal of these troubled and war-potential 1924 times placed in a rocket and shot to Mars.

But certainly not a mundane piece of machinery!

It is true that at the time I did consider machines very beautiful.

and I had even advised æsthetes to have a good look at them; still, I repeat again and again, even frantically, I had no idea (as did Honegger and Mossolov, for example) of *copying* a machine directly down into music, so to speak. My idea, rather, was to warn the age in which I was living of the simultaneous beauty and danger of its own unconscious mechanist philosophy, æsthetic.

As I saw it, my *Ballet Mécanique* (properly played!) was streamlined, glistening, cold, often as "musically silent" as interplanetary space, and also often as hot as an electric furnace, but always *attempting* at least to operate on new principles of construction beyond the normal fixed (since Beethoven's *Ninth* and Bruckner) boundaries.

I was not successful *in toto*, but it was a "try" towards a new form, new musical conception, extending, I think, into the future.

After I composed the *Ballet Mécanique* I felt that I had possibly gone too far in this matter of reaching out for purely new form. All was not properly digested, synthesized. I returned to study my *First Symphony* (which I had written under Bloch) and, in the light of everything I had gone through recently, discovered its true flaws at last.

It had attempted to resume the patterns of old symphonic form but not to push them out farther from their present fixed boundaries exemplified (just for instance) by the symphonies of Mahler, Bruckner.

I commenced a new symphony, my *Second*.

To-day I can look at the score of this *Second Symphony* with a great deal more sympathy than I can, for instance, at the *Ballet Mécanique*. This makes the latter none the less interesting, but in all probability I am a *classicist* at heart, and the *Ballet Mécanique* is essentially a *romantic* work, breaking all the barriers, the rules, and thriving upon it.

Unfortunately, in writing the *Second Symphony* I was also to return to fixed tonalities, the juggling of one tonal block against the other. Which, as any symphonist knows, is the quadruple essence of symphonic writing. This, in turn, brought me face to face with various well-known posturings of "classical music."

The *Second Symphony* was to be played later in Paris. It was then to be mistaken by my now rather doting, in any case credulous, Parisian public as a signal of my embracing the "neoclassic" à la Stravinsky.

This, naturally, would first of all antagonize those friends and supporters (Ezra Pound, Benoist-Mechin) who had put themselves into print favouring my *Mécanique* direction. They had written that the "passé" direction of Stravinsky's neoclassicism had been superseded by the *Ballet Mécanique*. Indeed, when my *Second Symphony* was eventually played in Paris, Ezra and Benoist-Mechin walked out on it.

But there was nothing I could do about abandoning the *Ballet*

*Mécanique* direction. I was being driven by a relentless inner logic that would not hear "nay." How foolish it must have seemed to my dyed-in-the-wool careerist friends! Here I was, accepted by most of *avant-garde* Paris as the exponent of cold, mechanistic music, yet suddenly I stepped down and *behind* Stravinsky, whose recent neoclassicism was already regarded in these inner circles as a come-down, a *retreat* from his own glorious past.

If I had then been only a seeker after sensational publicity, a success-at-any-price composer, a mere *follower of fashionable trends* (as some musicologists have written about me!), then the abandoning of my "mechanistic" music at the height of its success must still be explained to them. I did not need to turn "back" to neoclassicism; I had already been given as much credit as would be given by Paris to any youth for going beyond it. Also I was first-class news as a mechanistic bad boy—as a classicist I was no news at all. It is therefore not true that I have always sought publicity, success.

On the contrary I have more often than not beaten a hasty retreat from success, the premature fame which haunted all my youth.

Nobody knows better than I what a fickle and all-demanding bitch Fame is.

There must be something darkly tragic about the score of the *Ballet Mécanique*. For not only did it attract the wild enthusiasm of the darkly strange Ezra Pound, but of yet another macabre human being. Shortly after the first trial performance of the *Ballet Mécanique* (in a private salon) there came up to me a dark, tall, handsome youth about my own age; he presented his card upon which was printed:

*Baron Jacques Benoist-Mechin.*

The name meant nothing to me; but the last name, Benoist-Mechin, meant a great deal because Jacques's father, a native-born Parisian, had been closely associated with the Germans during the war of 1914-18; this dark blot upon Jacques's name would shortly make me feel very sorry for him. I felt he should not be made to suffer for the ancient sins of his father.

Since Jacques had first gone to school he had been given a wide berth—as, for instance, the son of Laval might to-day be given a wide berth. Consequently he grew up an angry youth, hating the entire world, particularly the world of Paris, which, in France, means the world of France. His bitter inner strife, twisting his rather handsome if weak face, at once expressed apology and bitter prideful determination.

He had become a composer early in life, but his talent was not quite great enough. The music of the *Ballet Mécanique* moved him strangely, touched something deep and perhaps terrible within him. For, from the day that he first heard it, Jacques became a frantic propagandist

of my music. He went far out on the limb, gave many concerts of my music (he was an excellent pianist and organizer), besides writing articles in one of the top intellectual magazines of Paris, in which periodical he occasionally functioned as critic.

Finally, he wrote and published a book about me simply called *Antheil*.

In it, without reserve, he attempted to demonstrate that I was a true prophet of the musical future.

Later, it is true (at the performance of my *Second Symphony*), he turned his back on me; or, as he had it, I double-crossed him. But up until that moment we had been the closest friends. When, finally, I left Paris in 1928, I heard nothing more from him until, nine years afterwards, in 1937, Sylvia Beach visited Hollywood and told me then that it had been alleged that Jacques had been mixed up with French Fascists; he was right next to Laval himself. "Just like his father," she cried, and I was deeply shocked.

Four years later I saw a picture of him in a war issue of *Life* magazine, walking down a street with the notorious Darlan, whose secretary he had become. News now began to come out of France by radio concerning Jacques. He had wormed his way up in Vichy France to the very top. He had been elected to contact Hitler himself on behalf of the French Fascist Government headed by Pétain. (Jacques spoke perfect German.)

Finally he eased himself into a position of great power—this by gaining Hitler's complete confidence. Indeed, at one particular moment he very nearly succeeded Laval, but the master double-crosser heard of the coming double-cross in time and clapped Jacques into jail.

That was the last I ever heard of him. But if he is still alive, both Milhaud and I believe that he cannot possibly escape the guillotine. And that would be a just end.

## CHAPTER XV

### JAMES JOYCE AND OTHERS

FROM mid-1924 onwards, many persons came to the door of our little flat in Rue de l'Odéon. Fame, even of such fleeting unsubstantial order, is like that in Paris: persons just drop in on you unannounced. It is not an unattractive way of making lifelong friends and acquaintances, although sometimes it takes up time.

By 1925 we felt it incumbent upon ourselves to add another room to our apartment, the room adjoining. Previously it had belonged to two American girls, Leda Bauer and Merle Schuster, who had been

our friends and counsellors. After they moved back to America we added their somewhat larger living-room to ours, and we suddenly felt as if we had become very swanky indeed.

We decorated the "apartment" in what we considered the most flawless taste, arc-light-blue walls, white pine natural-finish woodwork, and massive doors of almost solid aluminium paint.

You may remember that 1925 was around the time of the Paris World Fair, at which a great deal of new architecture and interior decoration was exhibited for the first time. It had had its telling effect upon us.

Besides the inevitable young blonde baroness Li Czibulka, one of our most frequent visitors was a young Russian girl by the name of Natascha Borisov. She was about seventeen years old, a friend and model of Pavel Tchelitchev's, and beautiful. However, Natascha was terribly poor, lived in the smallest room of the worst hotel we had ever seen, and she wore only cast-off clothes. We very seldom saw her unless it was a few seconds before dinner-time, when she usually appeared as if by magic. We always invited her to stay to have dinner with us, of course. She never failed to accept. After dinner she would stay only long enough to help Boski wash the dishes and to indulge in a little banter with us.

Sometimes, even, she brought us her problems, which were multitudinous.

Of course, our rather snobbish friends could not help bumping into Natascha whenever they came to our apartment for dinner. Finally their fine clothes and an act of mistaking her for the maid irritated Natascha, so one evening when a particularly well-dressed but rather bony young matron came to dinner and began high-hatting her, Natascha suddenly flung off all her clothes and sat down to our elegant company dinner as naked as the day she was born.

Natascha's figure, flawlessly classic, took everybody's breath away, including that of the bony matron's husband. And the rebuke was understood; nobody said anything untoward.

Up until this time Boski, who is by nature taciturn anyhow, had very seldom spoken to anyone of our acquaintance who did not speak French, German or Hungarian. Finally she decided that she would learn English. The English which she most frequently heard, however, was the rather peculiar English indulged in by my immediate acquaintances and particularly myself. This gave her a rather astonishing vocabulary—of which, however, she made good use.

An Irish priest once came to tea, and he spoke no French or German. Accordingly Boski spoke "English" to him. When it came time for him to go, he looked at his watch and said:

"Really, I must be going!"

Boski said, "Please don't go yet."

"But I must go," he insisted.

"For Christ's sake, don't go!" Boski protested and in a very nice ladylike manner too, just as if she were saying, "Please have another biscuit!"

Also true is the fact that one day I opened the door and saw standing there a tall blond man I had seen a thousand times previously but had never actually met. As I opened the door he smiled, introduced himself.

"You may not know who I am," he said, "but I am Leopold Stokowski!"

As previously explained, our flat was directly above Sylvia Beach's famous "Shakespeare Bookshop," the veritable centre of belles-lettres in the English language on the Continent. Whenever T. S. Eliot or Wyndham Lewis left London to spend a holiday in Paris, their first point of contact was always Sylvia's shop.

After Ezra Pound wrote his book about me the entire Anglo-American literary set became interested and wanted to know what I looked like, what my music sounded like. All this persuaded Sylvia and our French concierge that a little piano in the larger room of our "apartment" would not be out of place or sound too rambunctious downstairs; accordingly I got myself one and made it clear to one and all that tea was habitually served with music in the Antheil establishment upstairs at four-thirty every afternoon.

The great writers of the day, French and English, took to dropping in and I can truthfully state that for one afternoon at least we simultaneously entertained James Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Ford Maddox Ford, Ernest Hemingway, Wyndham Lewis (who was writing then), and Ezra Pound. They were not all friendly with one another; some would not even have come if they had known the others would be present. It was one of those curious accidents.

As I remember it, the tallest among these was Ernest Hemingway, with T. S. Eliot running him a close second. Ezra was not a short man, but he looked small alongside the other two. Joyce looked the smallest, most frail. Ford Maddox Ford was round and stocky, a little on the H. G. Wells type. Wyndham Lewis was tallish, but stocky.

No one dressed even remotely like another. Hemingway, exponent of the rough and ready, dressed like a lumberjack; T. S. Eliot, a bank official in London, dressed in a quiet brown business suit; Ezra Pound wore a bizarre outfit of tweeds designed by himself and sewn with bright blue square buttons; Ford Maddox Ford draped himself in a tentlike suit of light grey tweeds; Wyndham Lewis wore a jet-black suit, hat and cape to match; Joyce wore white duck (despite the fact that white ducks are not worn in Paris, even in midsummer).

Their speech was hardly more alike. T. S. Eliot spoke quietly, *à la* Humphrey Bogart, to the point; Ezra Pound rambled around in high-pitched flourishes; Ford Maddox Ford spoke with many hr-r-r-rumphs and clearings of the throat (he had been gassed during the war), which finally became so frequent that unless one knew better one might think him stuttering; Wyndham Lewis snapped out his sentences with cold, icy anger; Hemingway hardly spoke at all; and Joyce spoke with deliberation and in a smooth, fine voice that betrayed the trained singer. Their accents, too, were as equally multitudinous: T. S. Eliot's was Bostonese rather than Londonese (for some reason this astonished me; almost every American living for some time in London begins to speak like an Englishman); Ezra Pound habitually spoke in a dialect only comparable to that of Lum and Abner of the radio; Joyce, unless he lapsed into French or his beloved Italian, spoke English with Irish richness, in a fine tenor voice; Hemingway spoke in an American mid-western accent, slightly higher than one would at first imagine to hear him; Ford Maddox Ford talked mushily, sounded for all the world like Nigel Bruce as Dr. Watson in the *Sherlock Holmes Adventures*; and Wyndham Lewis's accent was frigidly Oxfordian—which means little accent at all.

The presence of one single man among this illustrious 1925 assemblage reminds me that in a small way I had previously something to do with the first widely distributed publication of his first printed work—a fact about which I have so long been proud that I see no particular reason to refrain from including it in this humble biography. During this particular period of my life I often found it necessary to augment our too-frequently-dwindling bank account, this through various extra chores—chief among which were teaching and representing in Paris a German version of our own *Vanity Fair* magazine.

The latter German magazine was called *Der Querschnitt* and I had become its Paris representative through a series of mistakes and circumstances incurred during my last days in Berlin.

In early 1923 this *Der Querschnitt* was hardly more than a few issues old, the brain child of an extraordinary man, one Count von Wedderkop who, insofar as I could ever discover, spoke only two words of English, which were: "awfully nice." However, they seemed to do him well enough. Around about this time Wedderkop, or "Mr. Awfully Nice," as we called him, heard from Stuckenschmidt (erroneously) that I had been an assistant editor of some kind on Margaret Anderson's *Little Review*, a magazine which for some reason "Mr. Awfully Nice" admired inordinately (although how he ever understood any of its contents I am not prepared to say). In any case he got in touch with me, seemed amazed that I should turn out to be



so young a gent, but proposed anyway that I represent *Der Querschnitt* in Paris.

I consented and promptly forgot all about it. However, after my first Champs Elysées concert, Wedderkop wrote me, reminding me of my promise, so I went to Sylvia Beach, Ezra Pound and Ford Maddox Ford and asked them to help me fill my quota—in a good cause, of course, for the incomes derived would keep me in music paper and groceries. They all helped me with a will; and the first manuscript I sent to Wedderkop was no less than Joyce's *Chamber Music*, which he immediately printed.

Upon which, of course, his editorial rating in Germany went up some three hundred per cent and he became the leading intellectual of German magazine life. My own rating with him went up accordingly and he clamoured for more stuff.

One of my pupils during this period was young George O'Neil, son of a prominent north-western lumberman then staying in Paris. (Those of you who are interested in the cinema might like to know that he also had a pigtailed sister Barbara O'Neil, later to have a leading role in *Gone with the Wind*.) George studied music composition with me, but had another tutor whom I met occasionally; my colleague taught George English composition, boxing and (when weather permitted) ski-ing. The other teacher and I got somehow to be friends and one day he even took me home with him to show me a whole sheaf of typewritten manuscripts, short stories, never before published.

I sat for a while, reading raptly, when, of course, I suddenly thought of Wedderkop.

My colleague was not very anxious to give me his manuscripts, however, especially for publication in a German magazine, but at last I got Sylvia and Ezra to prevail upon him; and then I sent the material on to Wedderkop immediately.

Wedderkop published it serially without further ado.

The manuscript of the yet almost completely unknown author was *In Our Time*.

The unknown writer was, of course, Ernest Hemingway.

Illustrious persons, however, did not always come to my house first. Sometimes I was invited first to theirs. The other day, here in Hollywood, Nadia Boulanger reminded me about a first visit I made to her during 1925. Nadia, of course, is one of the finest musical-composition teachers in the world, and among her pupils she can number the elite of present-day American composers—Copland, Harris, and Thomson, to mention only a very few. At that time, I believe, she was teaching both Copland and Harris.

But I was not her pupil, yet I was then in danger of becoming the

best-known of young Parisian composers. Accordingly she sent me an invitation to come to play my compositions for her. I accepted gratefully and arrived with a suit-case full, which I then proceeded to play all afternoon.

The other day I attempted to explain to her why, upon that afternoon long ago, I did not ask to take lessons from her. It was not that I was not anxious to learn, or that I had conceived the notion that I had no more to learn. It was only that, as we proceeded with our conversation that day, I discovered more and more that Nadia believed (with all good French composers of the time) that symphonic form had died absolutely and completely with the *Second Symphony* of Beethoven.

Mozart, according to her, was the perfect symphonist.

But I had already wearied of this then typical French attitude of "form reached its ultimate in Mozart" which, however laudable its musical productions, looked upon Brahms as insufferably dull, and Mahler and Bruckner as completely padded and of no consequence whatsoever. Announcement of the playing of Brahms's symphonies during those days of Paris drew little more than empty houses; moreover, all later Beethoven (with the exception of the second movement of the *Seventh*) was considered quite *de trop*; and I am now frank to say that although I was then considered the wildest of young musicians I could not understand all of this.

Thus, and to sum up, I never became Nadia's pupil because, in essence, I felt then that no Frenchman or Frenchwoman, however talented, could teach me anything I wanted to know. I wanted to know about the great larger forms, the new ramifications that were expanding the symphonic form since Beethoven's *Ninth*—and I felt that Nadia either did not know this or that she did not feel sympathetic towards it.

The French are great miniaturists, and Nadia was trying, I felt then, to get all of her pupils to compress, diminish, even as contemporary French novelists were attempting to compress three novels into the size of one; speed and condensation were the bywords of that era.

It all did not fit into my sense of fitness. I turned my back upon it.

But it was not a very easy choice. Even then, I knew, Nadia Boulanger's pupils were being groomed for Boston Symphony performance—for Serge Koussevitsky was one of her most trusted friends and a word from her would more often than not ensure his sympathetic study of a new American composition. Copland and Harris both found their feet upon the first rungs of the American ladder in this manner.

Frankly, that afternoon, I looked at the ladder with some longing.

The other day, in Hollywood, I wondered vaguely whether I could once have been mistaken. I asked Nadia what she thought of Brahms, later Beethoven, Mahler, Bruckner. Consequently or not, she changed

the subject. I injected the question of Sibelius—who, despite everything, I feel to be one of those who have tried to progress great musical form farther.

“Ah, Sibelius,” she cried, “poor, poor Sibelius! A tragic case!”

And we had several more cups of fine tea, I ate several more delicious crumpets and I departed once more, just as before.

I like Nadia very much. She is the world's greatest composition teacher. She knows more about the art of composition in her little finger than most musicians in their whole torsos. But it is very, very hard to learn from teachers.

It is easier to teach them.

James Joyce loved music, and that is probably the only reason he and I became good friends. Certainly I was totally unprepared to understand his colossal stature as a writer.

My friendship with Joyce commenced shortly after the riotous concert at the *Ballets Suédois*. During that concert Joyce had sat in a box near Erik Satie; later he was to report everything that happened in Erik Satie's box up until the time they had turned the floodlights upon him and temporarily hurt his very sensitive eyes. Sylvia Beach introduced us one day in the bookshop, and he had come upstairs to have some tea and look at my music manuscripts.

Around about my second or third year in Paris I very often journeyed over to the Right Bank, Montmartre, to spend the afternoon in the Moulin Rouge; it was for me a quite wonderful place whose atmosphere had not changed an iota since the days of Toulouse-Lautrec or even Offenbach. One day I took my courage in hand to invite Joyce to come with me, and he did. He liked the place very much, and thereafter we very often visited new places of interesting discovery together. One of these was discovered by Joyce.

It so happened that both of us were very fond of Purcell, but hearing Purcell in a Paris possessing its own Rameau was as difficult as getting Gertrude Stein to say that *Ulysses* was a great work. Nevertheless, there was a French lady of great wealth and a centrally located mansion whose particular Sunday delight was in giving performances of early French, Italian and even English operas; she had these performed in her own private theatre and for her invited guests. Being extremely French, and also of the old school, the new skyrocketing name of James Joyce meant nothing whatsoever to her, and she could not be persuaded to send him an invitation.

Whereupon Joyce immediately set his mental energies to work upon means and methods of gate-crashing her house. I was usually his companion on these expeditions. Her performances always took place on Sunday morning, in a small church-like structure which may

have been a private chapel before it became converted into a theatre; and a good many various people came to them, so it was not too difficult to crash the gate, particularly when the gate-crashing plans were conceived by Joyce himself. He often wrote our "scenario" out: what he was to say, what I was to answer.

The French lady soon suspected us, however. At our third crash, a performance of *King Arthur*, she cornered us, had us thrown out. I have never been thrown out of a better place and in better company.

Joyce was good enough to take a deep interest in my own composition, write several articles in French magazines upon my music (which deeply impressed less prejudiced French persons than our lady of the Purcell operas), and suggest writing an opera libretto for me to set to music.

We often used to discuss this libretto, in the course of which Boski and I were often invited to his home.

Our first entry into the Joyce apartment was quite startling to us, if for no other reason than that our own apartment was so unconventionally decorated. The Joyce apartment, located near the Trianon Restaurant where the Joyces habitually dined, was first of all a nightmare of the conventional French wallpaper. French wallpaper is difficult to describe and I find myself at a loss except to say that, so far as I've observed, it comes in two patterns, roseate syphilis and green gangrene. When Boski and I first found ourselves projected into the Joyce apartment we found it so utterly different from our own rather ultra-modern niche that we first had a mad impulse to giggle—an impulse which was immediately amplified by our discovery of a gas fireplace with two colour-retouched photographs above, one of Mrs. James Joyce on the left, one of Mr. James Joyce on the right.

The apartment was evidently a creation of Mrs. Joyce's. Joyce, already blind enough not to be able to take great interest in visual detail, had let her have her way; and her way was a nice up-to-date Dublin bourgeois apartment. But for the wallpaper, it looked strangely out of place in Paris.

But Mrs. Joyce was pure gold for all her lack of interior decoration. In her Irish way it was evident that she loved Joyce deeply without, however, quite understanding her genius husband. On many various evenings Boski and I heard her admonish him; once she asked him why in the world he didn't write "sensible books that people can read and understand"; at another time she said, "I just can't understand why you didn't become a banker instead"—and to us: "You know James's father wanted him to become a banker."

One evening Boski and I entered the apartment to hear her scolding him loudly for getting egg all over the bedspread and wondering audibly why in the world didn't he get up to work instead of sitting in bed all

day writing (a thing I, too, like to do occasionally). She watched him like a hawk, administered to his every need, was undoubtedly the best wife a man like Joyce could ever have found.

She didn't understand him, but she did better, she loved him.

She was also a good mother to Joyce's two children, the daughter resembling her and the boy resembling Joyce. His daughter, then seventeen, was slender, willowy, beautiful only as Irish girls can sometimes be beautiful—in a sort of fey way; Andrea King, to-day, reminds me somewhat of her. The boy, Giorgio, was then being encouraged by Joyce to become an opera singer—Joyce's frustrated ambition. Giorgio, incidentally, had a fairly good voice; we often went through various opera scores together for papa's benefit.

Which, in turn, reminds me that, excepting Mrs. Joyce's, the household language was Italian. The children had been brought up in Italy (Trieste) and spoke the language like natives. It was curious to hear the lovely girl skip unconcernedly from a rich Irish-accented English to the beautiful round sentences of the Italian language.

Italian, apparently, was a sort of secret society between Joyce and his two children to which Mrs. Joyce had not been admitted—and which she did not mind.

Joyce's madness was opera, preferable Purcell, but if no Purcell was available, just opera. On one occasion he even managed to drag me to the Paris Opéra to see *Siegfried*, on which occasion I became violently ill at my stomach—which is the way Wagner invariably affects me (particularly the way in which Wagner used to be done on the Paris Opéra stage). Another one of Joyce's madnesses was Irish singers; almost any Irish opera singer travelling through Paris could be assured of Joyce's support; he was always in the front row applauding loudly. On occasion, after a glass or two of white wine, he could be persuaded to sing himself; at such moments he displayed a really splendid if somewhat untrained tenor voice; he could have become a good singer had he chosen to do so.

Conversation with Joyce was always deeply interesting. He had an encyclopædic knowledge of music, this of all times and climes. Occasional conversations on music often extended far into the night and developed many new ideas. He would have special knowledge, for instance, about many a rare music manuscript secreted away in some almost unknown museum of Paris and I often took advantage of his knowledge.

I also timidly approached him concerning a deplorable lack in my previous education; in my youthful high-school and Philadelphia days I had read plenty of American and Russian novelists, but hardly any French or English. What should I read? He advised me to start with two books of Stendhal's, *The Red and the Black* and *The Charterhouse*

of *Parma*. He might just as well have stopped there, for these two novels have, since, become my favourite books, re-read not once but perhaps ten or eleven times.

I did not understand Joyce's last *Work in Progress* very well, but was ashamed to admit it. Joyce, however, presumed that I understood everything, invariably gave me each new book as it was issued—with appropriate autograph. With *Ulysses* he even gave me a copy of his basic plan—which is to-day one of my most valued possessions.

When his works appeared in German, he autographed them for Boski. He spoke German flawlessly, as he spoke French, Italian, English and Spanish. He also spoke some Russian—how well, I would not know. (Boski is responsible for reports on his Italian and Spanish.)

One of the things which most deeply impressed me about Joyce was my old concierge's veneration for him. At one time or another she had seen at close range most of the greatest names in literature going in and out of Sylvia's bookshop, but she rated none of them so highly as Joyce. As I knew the old lady to be particularly astute about humanity in general, I felt sure that she had given him the closest study; later, however, I discovered that her admiration for him was based on the fact that he so exactly resembled the picture of William Shakespeare which had been painted on Sylvia's shop sign, "The Shakespeare Bookshop."

History will probably provide a hundred verbal portraits of Joyce. I will not bother to paint a further word picture except to note that when one first met Joyce one had rather the impression of meeting William Shakespeare just before he lost his hair. His features were delicate and finely drawn. He wore a fine Shakespearean goatee—as did Satie and Pound. (Elliot Paul and Ernest Hemingway were only occasional goateers at that period.)

On the surface he was respectable and old-fashioned, had immaculate manners—incidentally a most unusual characteristic in the Paris Latin Quarter of all periods.

Beneath he was typically Irish, full of sly fun, daring practical jokes, and mad expeditions.

Once, for instance, he insisted upon our taking Sylvia's partner, Mlle. Adrienne Monnier, all the way to the Right Bank and the Moulin Rouge because he wanted to shock the otherwise unshockable cocottes who inhabited the Moulin Rouge. Adrienne had long ago decided she looked best in a rather exact adaptation of nun's attire, so she always wore a grey full dress down to her ankles with white starched collar and cuffs. Adrienne was also a bit over on the stout side, so she really looked better in this costume—but extremely like a real nun.

After we'd gotten her into the Moulin Rouge we went around to all the cocottes, whispering that we had just managed to lure a genuine

nun out of the nearby convent and moreover were about to transport her with us to America—for unspeakable high jinks, of course.

Adrienne's placid, spiritual, unlipsticked and unrouged face, completely unaware of whatever we might be whispering, added credence to this otherwise unparalleled information—information well calculated to cause a sensation in the Moulin Rouge—because, no matter how unshockable a French *filie de joie* might be, there is just one matter completely sacred to her: a nun. No matter how low she ever sinks, the purity of her more spiritual sisters is like a pure flame that must not be made fun of.

They were all really outraged, and Joyce and myself had quickly to spirit poor unsuspecting Adrienne out of the place before the girls became violent.

## CHAPTER XVI

### LA VIE DE LA BOHEME

IF I were ever awakened in the middle of the night and asked to name quickly the most extraordinary character I've ever met, without hesitation I'd say, "Abraham Lincoln Gillespie, Junior." Very recently Ben Hecht, Harry Kurnitz and I engaged in a vocal bout as to who was the most extraordinarily rugged character in the world, Ben at first holding out for Maxwell Bodenheim. But after he had heard Harry and me expound the superior qualities of Linkey Gillespie, he relapsed into moody silence.

Somewhere around this time, which was mid-1924, Linkey knocked on my door, but I had met Linkey at least five years previously, in Philadelphia. Let us return to 1919 first. After getting my subsidy from the Curtis I suddenly decided that my new affluence indicated an apartment instead of just a room, bed and piano. I announced generally that I was looking for an apartment, and this flushed Linkey.

When I first met him my chief impression was of a cross-eyed young Abraham Lincoln, but the years may have dimmed my memory. Linkey was quite young then, a teacher of romantic languages in a Philadelphia boys' school. He had lived an absolutely normal life until an unfortunate (or fortunate, depending upon the way you look at it) automobile accident knocked him permanently cross-eyed and, simultaneously, imbued him with a talent to write like James Joyce—that is, very generally speaking.

It had also made him conscious of a certain vague resemblance to his namesake, Abraham Lincoln, a resemblance which he then cultivated; for, from now on, he talked slowly, looked impressive, cultivated the same beard growth.

He explained to me then, in 1919, that he and a young painter called Bill Blood had found an apartment at 2200 Pine Street, a wonderful five-room affair with a kitchen, bath and, most wonderful of all, a fireplace. It was expensive, but the cost could be borne by the three of us. I accepted, sight unseen, and the apartment was indeed charming—except that it had no furniture. Linkey and Bill promised that this would be remedied the second night.

As, indeed, it was. It was still summer-time, and the porches of Philadelphia were replete with the most marvellous porch furniture, including comfortable porch swings. Bill's mother had a car, and Linkey and Bill went cruising; the next morning our apartment had the splashiest assortment of furniture you ever did see. Our equipment included three of the widest and handsomest porch swings. When, after I had met Anne Williams and followed her off to Europe, the apartment three broke up, the porch furniture was taken back to wherever it had come from, but I have never spent as comfortable a time in any bedroom as I did in my porch swing; it is an idea that someday when I get rich I'll try out again.

When I left Philadelphia for Europe, I left a supremely unhappy Linkey behind. He was now hell-bent for Europe, where he wanted to luxuriate at the Café du Dôme and write exotic prose à la Joyce and Stein. I lost track of him during this period, but research produces the fact that he immediately approached his parents (who were rather well to do) for a minute subsidy to sustain his efforts in Europe, a proposition they promptly and firmly refused. Linkey, however, was not without resource; his two attractive elder sisters, for instance, were just about to make splendid marriages; Linkey now proceeded to become so widely eccentric that the parents of the bridegrooms began to be impressed—and Linkey's parents figured that perhaps, after all, sending Linkey away to Paris for a year or two might not be such a bad idea. . . .

When he came to Europe he, of course, immediately knocked on my door, and this without warning. Which, in itself, might not have been so uproarious had it not been for the fact that to knock on my door in the Rue de l'Odéon, especially at four in the morning, you had first to knock on the street door, which entailed getting past my old concierge, a Parisienne of past seventy summers and a rugged individualist in her own right. There occurred the sort of squabble downstairs which happens only when a moving indestructible meets a fixed indestructible; Madame Tisserant was having none of Linkey's nonsense, and he was bound to get upstairs to me. My arrival downstairs was fortunate and precluded a calling of the police.

Boski is not at her best at four in the morning and dislikes being introduced to new male friends of mine at that time. On the stairway,



upstairs, I conceived the solution of introducing Linkey to Boski as a friend who had once saved my life in a most courageous way; this I did, and Boski grumpily got up and began to prepare breakfast for the newcomer from America. Linkey followed her around the kitchen with considerable interest, watching the preparation of the eggs, chocolate, toast, but as we sat down to table (at five in the morning!) he asked her why she had set a place for him. For, as he *then* explained, he was a diabetic and could eat only a certain sort of bread which he had brought from America with him—to prove it he opened up his suitcase, unrolled the one shirt it contained (a soiled one), and disclosed a loaf of iron-like quality, from which he managed to shave a couple of slices. This he munched while we ate our eggs and drank our chocolate; he could not, of course, touch our food.

Linkey stayed with us in our microscopic three-room apartment for such a long while that we began to be troubled. His method of writing was to place manuscripts upon every chair and table in the place; he could not write “by heart,” so to speak, and needed to refer to this or that while he compendiously his growing masterpiece—which was, he said, to “rival *Ulysses*” (and, for all I know, might have eventually succeeded!). When he was not writing he would disconsolately play his mandolin—his other piece of baggage. This disturbed my composer’s thoughts no end. One day I thought I could shame him out of the apartment by stating that I had soon to take a fortnight’s trip to Cologne—but his answer to this was that my absence would inconvenience him not at all. When I asked him what about Boski, he suggested that she might go off and stay with a girl friend during this period. Finally I invited him to leave, but he was not taken aback by this, either. Charming and without pique he left, but not until he had been asked, and not until all argument against it had been exhausted. Linkey’s approach to life’s problems were, in his own individual way, orderly.

Linkey, now, was seen at the Café du Dôme every day; it was his office. He conducted a sort of stock exchange of ideas on the Joyce-Stein literary market and managed, after a manner, to impress a sufficiently large group of persons so that, one evening, he was invited to lecture upon James Joyce and Gertrude Stein at the august Sorbonne itself.

Special lectures at the Sorbonne are affairs to which the French come in dinner coats—if they have them. They are formal and smell of conservatism. How Linkey had managed to get invited to lecture here I will never know, but he arrived out on the Sorbonne platform in a borrowed dinner jacket and began his lecture by taking off his glasses, disclosing to all and sundry that he was quite incorrigibly cross-eyed. The scar on his forehead which had caused it was also plainly visible. He beamed at his audience.

"Folks," he commenced, his glasses still off, "I know that a good many of you have had great difficulty in comprehending Joyce or Stein!" He stopped and beamed at them again, a tremendous cross-eyed beam.

"It is not easy to understand Joyce and Stein," he continued, "not easy at all. In fact, I confess to you in all confidence, there actually was a time when I, the world's greatest expert on Joyce and Stein, didn't understand them either. . . ."

He paused for effect.

"Before my accident——" he commenced, but he got no further. With a roar of rage his audience started stampeding towards the door. Linkey continued his lecture, but only to two or three Americans in the front row, including myself.

Such championship, of course, was not at all relished by either Joyce or Stein, and they both promptly and publicly disowned him; but this had no more effect than to sadden him slightly—he had rather thought that the very great would have proved to be beyond such petty exhibition of jealousy. For, after all, Joyce and Stein *had* taken due notice of him; he *was* a writer of their *genre*; it was difficult to interpret all that had transpired as anything but flattering. Indeed, now, Linkey's stock did go up around the Café du Dôme; he became a mild sort of literary celebrity, and the local *avant-garde* literary magazines in English (of which there was always more than a few) began printing his stuff. He even wrote a most flattering article on me—flattering, that is, if one wanted to take the trouble to disentangle its grammar. I deduced from it that, in comparison to myself, Stravinsky and Schönberg (the two greatest *avant-gardists* of those days) were the merest fatheads.

But Linkey's sisters got themselves safely married, and Linkey again began to have his financial troubles. His professional stay-away-from-Philadelphia days were over. How for a time he managed, I do not know—except that I occasionally saw him following a funeral. I must explain that one of the great cemeteries of Paris is directly in back of the Café du Dôme, and as one follows Parisian funerals on foot rather than in a carriage, it is not difficult to join the processions, providing one sits watchfully at the Dôme and is dressed in appropriate mourning. During our first months in Paris I used to be considerably mystified by a number of Café du Dôme girls who, in the day-time at least, invariably dressed in deepest mourning while they sat at the Dôme sipping their Pernod. The mystery was solved when, one day, I saw a funeral procession go by and they got up and surreptitiously joined it in the rear. From here they would progress to the nearby cemetery, weeping copiously all the while—beneath their heavy veils, hastily pulled down.

After the burial they went back with the rest of the burial party to the house of the deceased—where a sumptuous repast was always

prepared and waiting. Thus, if one chose, one could follow three funerals a day, eat splendidly indeed. Café du Dôme did not fail to take advantage of its splendid strategic location—nor did its chief inhabitant, Linkey.

His actions alone, however, would not make Linkey so extraordinary—although he has been the originator of countless pranks that would, I'm sure, make poor Charlie MacArthur turn green with envy; indeed, I've never even dared to broach the subject of Linkey Gillespie to Charlie. Linkey's extraordinariness consisted, rather, of a number of elements difficult to describe. For one thing he did not, as did Joyce and Stein, speak ordinary every-day English; he sincerely and completely believed in his literary style and, accordingly, spoke it. His customary greeting was:

"How are you, old boy, I hope not."

His conversation, a sample recorded by me:

"To emph-remind that the German Psyche has never—as it presumably does in other arts—exot-purloined its music-constructik, condition maybe entitling Teutbloods to such occasioned Absolute-Discludes. That makes three of us, mine an Ear-HAF-TO View FructSpanDarrive from (A) NYC-Philada's since 1921-Music Season the *fin-de-siècle* MewsicKails (pardon) there splawing my musicpalate à la guzzkubgsidapopwhenwater'scraved—a delude-drown Joy . . ." etc.

His atmosphere, to those who did not know him well, was tragic; for he never failed to explain to everyone he met that the doctors gave him only a month longer to live and that he was making the best of things (Linkey was still alive only a few months ago, when I telephoned him in Philadelphia). He made no secret of his diabetic condition; it was with horror, therefore, that one would see him down one *fine-à-l'eau* (brandy in water) after another—although, frankly, Linkey is one man whom I've never seen even remotely drunk; his real constitution is one of the most iron-bound I've ever encountered.

But, for me, Linkey was mostly extraordinary, as a Robin Hood, for the multiplicity and variety of his projects which, when put under the light of cold, hard analysis, were invariably something in which you lost and he gained; but he gained for others. He never, so far as I remember, ever put any of his profits into pleasure or comfort for himself; all he asked of life was a pile of pillows, straw or blankets in which to sleep, a little diabetic bread or cheese, brandy now and then, and pencil and paper. If his profits exceeded the amount necessary to purchase these barest of necessities, he shared it with those less fortunate but—as he always considered it—equal in talent. As a talent discoverer, incidentally, Linkey put Satie, Cocteau, Pound, Wyndham Lewis, or anybody to shame; he discovered at least one genius a day, and, what's more, he went to bat for him or her. Unfortunately, however, previously

having neglected to build up sufficient prestige in the salons, his efforts usually were for naught.

Unlike Maxwell Bodenheim or the Baroness Elsa von Freitag-Loringhoven, or a score of similar extraordinarily rugged individualists, Linkey's shenanigans were seldom selfish—unless he was practically on the point of expiring. He thought of others first, himself last. Over the face of early Armistice Europe he has had a score of households, each one jammed to the caves with various humanity, mostly impecunious. Unlike some other international softies I have known, Linkey had no heart for animals; stray cats and dogs could keep away from his door; but stray humans could, and did, always find a welcome, provided they could lay slightest claim to artistic interests, which they usually could. I remember, in particular, his establishment in Cagnes-sur-mer (don't ask me how he maintained it financially, and I'll tell you no lies), which consisted of an ordinary two-storey Cagnois stone house; outside nothing, but inside accumulated into the maddest atmosphere into which a human being has ever stepped. The artists whom, from time to time, Linkey had housed had decorated it, their imagination exceeding the limits of any surrealist or non-surrealist; for instance, in one room they had attached the furniture to the ceiling, it was the "dance hall." Another room's otherwise white plaster was decorated *al fresco* with pictures no cabaret of my acquaintance could ever boast without inviting police interference.

After Linkey's sisters' marriages, his existence abroad was, financially speaking, perilous; but he made up for the lack of a solid income by ingenuity. His bottle parties were famous; they also provided him with a part of his income; his method was simple: persons, all and sundry, were invited, provided, of course, they brought a bottle of liquor appropriate to their financial status. Less solid citizens brought cheap bottles of wine; but Linkey always saw to it that plenty of local tourists were invited or, at least, artists of one sort or another with steady and solid incomes from abroad. These brought whisky at the very least. Linkey collected the bottles from the guests as they arrived, but none of the good whisky ever found its way into the party or the punch—which latter was nevertheless potent enough, although Linkey never betrayed its secret (I think it contained white wine and Pernod, an explosive mixture guaranteed to make anyone sedentary after a few sips). Nobody ever protested, however, because the entertainment offered, always new and of Linkey's concoction, was sufficient recompense for the outlay of whatever bottle.

But the bottles themselves, and their contents, disappeared from the house the next day, and Linkey's bank account suddenly expanded; these parties also occurred at strategic times—when Linkey and his company of fellow geniuses were just about to die of starvation.

In addition to this, Linkey was also an expert bridge player, much in demand at the bridge parties of the Riviera, or the Right Bank, or elsewhere. This enabled him sometimes to turn a profit, and always to interest some potential patroness in one or another of his protégés; we were always amazed by his singular power and charm over these ladies.

His appearance was not always of the most prepossessing type.

Occasionally, but not often, Linkey would run a four- or five-day poker game, during which interval he, if nobody else, stayed awake—a physical feat which, during its closing stages at least, usually proved profitable. His physical powers were really prodigious!

Boski and I went to a good many of Linkey's parties, both in Paris and (later) Cagnes; through him we got to know those of Paris we should not otherwise have easily met—the unknown. In return I had to bear Linkey's admiration and his faithful never-tiring advertisement of myself; but, unlike Ezra's, it was never without humour, never without a wink and a grin, as if we nevertheless understood one another. I am indebted to him for much.

Not so many weeks ago I passed through Philadelphia and wondered, first of all, about Linkey. Anne Williams, I knew, was married; and I hardly knew anyone else except Mary Louise Zimbalist, who was out of town. I decided to try to phone Linkey at an address at which his parents had lived many years before. A heavily cultured Oxfordian voice answered:

"This is Mr. Abraham Lincoln Gillespie's secretary speaking . . . He is not at home. May I take a message?"

"Yes indeed," I said. "Tell him George Antheil called."

"Georgie!" Linkey was astonished. "I hope so; I hope not. Lock the doors! On the other hand a couple of warts!"

"I do too, Linkey. And what may you be up to now?"

"Ah, Gantile, I've the most marvellous proposition for you, a hot band gusfly for Hollyweeds. . . ."

## CHAPTER XVII

### VENUS RETURNS TO TUNISIA

UP to now, Boski and I were not married. This was all right with us, but not with Boski's relatives—who were beginning to get wind of it.

However, the mere idea of marrying anybody, even Boski, absolutely terrified me; this terror was dittoed and mutual with Boski.

Still, I repeat, we undoubtedly loved one another, madly, devotedly, truly.

Hanson caught wind too. One day, without warning, he abruptly

appeared at our Rue de l'Odéon apartment and was introduced to Boski for the first time. Later, pulling me aside, he discovered that we were not yet married.

He heaved a sigh of relief. His consistent attitude continued: "Really, young concert pianists are so incorrigible!"

I may also add here that Hanson had not pressed me to leave Paris. After October 4, 1923, he took the attitude that you do not advise a man to leave a gold mine once he has discovered an inexhaustible vein of ore. Each month longer in Paris was—*he* thought—making me more valuable in America; but poor Hanson, of course, was still thinking in concert-pianist terms.

Mother and Dad in Trenton were also catching wind. Mother began writing me long epistles in which admonitions against the "typical sins of Paris" were uttered on every other page, threaded in between items of news from home. Finally she came out with it and told me that she was disappointed in me; she had now definitely learned that I was "living in sin." In short, I should come home immediately. Of course, she did not expect me to come home really, but she knew I always quirmed beneath her disapproval.

Boski received similar letters from Budapest. Our previous calm and beautiful household, harbouring only love and work, now suddenly became disturbed. We quarrelled with increasing frequency—not about the letters from home, or their content, but about trifles of no consequence. We would quarrel, for instance, about whether we should turn left or right while taking one of our exploration walks in those parts of Paris unknown to us. We would quarrel about what we should have for lunch.

We both began to feel that our precious time together had not much further to run. One day, quite exhausted by all this, I found myself walking towards the Tuileries. . . .

And here, quite properly, begins the true story of how Boski and I came to get ourselves married to each other—upon the advice of Aphrodite herself. It is, I realize now, not very credible, but then I am not engaged in writing a nicely touched up history, but merely the roughed-out incredible story of my life. In fact, not so many years ago I once told this story to Charlie MacArthur, and he pretended to break into tears; but I could see that from then on I was not on the same terms of friendship with him any more. I told the "Venus-in-Africa" part of it to Miriam Hopkins one evening, but she greeted it with shouts of most unladylike laughter, although I have always had great confidence in Miriam's sympathy. Several months ago I took the actual photographic proof to my erstwhile boss, John Nesbitt, of "The Passing Parade" broadcasts, and his only dour comment on it was that if the

girl in the photo was Aphrodite, she was certainly a little hefty around the hips.

In case you may have heard different versions of our marriage, it may only be fair here to warn that for many years Boski and I have had a different story ready with which to excuse ourselves from so bourgeois an undertaking as marriage; it is that finally we got so eternally indignant with passport officials—this particularly when travelling over borders on sleeping-cars—that we finally decided to get married (so that the same name could appear on both passports). Sometimes we have varied this story and merely said that we married in order to get wedding presents; but neither of these stories is true.

The *true* story is that one day, in June 1925, I found myself most disconsolately wandering towards the Tuileries, when some will greater than my own started steering me; and where should I wind up but in front of the Venus de Milo statue in the Louvre. This disconcerted me because, when I was a youth of thirteen or fourteen, I had once built a secret altar to Venus down by the Delaware River—an inspiration from a youthful reading of the autobiography of Mme. George Sand, for, as a little girl, she had once built herself an altar to Aphrodite and sacrificed beloved cherished objects upon it, apparently to good effect. When I was thirteen I considered Chopin the greatest genius in the world; the Pole in me was having his way; accordingly I not only learned every note he had ever written, but I also perused his life and all the characters thereto appended, in the course of which I had flushed the equally interesting George Sand, much to my secret delight.

The little altar down by the river had seen many "sacrifices"—a beloved score, a cherished penknife, a book on how to become a superb baseball pitcher—all of which had, in their separate ways, enabled me to pass various difficult bi-yearly school examinations or other crises. Accordingly there was nothing at all strange about my finally finding myself before Venus; I appropriately bared my head, bowed and mumbled beneath my breath:

"Great Aphrodite, you know the situation as well as I. Please do your stuff." Whereupon I turned and left.

Not, however, without having left upon the floor before her a small but valuable talisman which Boski and I had picked up in one of our happier days in Paris. My steps were now as if directed. I walked back to the Left Bank, to the Café du Dôme, sat down and ordered a café au lait. A few moments later a red-haired girl with a classic cast of countenance sat down at the table next to me; Aphrodite had been a decided red-head, so I could not forbear asking her:

"Pardon me, but aren't you a Greek?" (Such questions between habitués of the Dôme would not be at all out of place.)

"Not quite," she said. "I am an Albanian."

"That's near enough," I answered.

"I beg your pardon?" she asked.

"It's near enough ancient Greece, I meant. Aren't you a Greek goddess—you know who I mean?"

"I am," she said stiffly, "a pupil of Mary Wigman's dance school in Dresden."

"Good!" I said. "In that case we have many friends in common, including Mary Wigman. . . ."

We continued the conversation that day, and the next; and a week later we both found ourselves on the old *Oujda*, Tunis-bound.

There will be now, I realize, a good many persons who will snicker and point, and even say "oo la la" or whistle in a peculiar manner. But those who do, reckon without the superbly incorruptible Antheil of those days. I took this Olga (*not*, for God's sake, Olga Rudge!) all the way to Tunisia and back; we lived together in the same house for several months. But not even so much as one little once did our relationship progress beyond what I can here roughly but lucidly explain as "Sunday-school." Not that I didn't try, once Olga and I had removed ourselves far enough away from the shores of Europe—but she had immediately said:

"Antheil, look here, you asked me to accompany you on this trip because you are unhappy, and I consented, and here we are on the way to Africa. We are going to be in close proximity, I take it, for at least several months. You could, of course, attempt to make love to me; *and perhaps you'd even succeed*. But let me warn you, it's bad luck, very bad luck. . . ."

I remembered, suddenly, that all mortal men who progressed farther than the Sunday-school stage with Aphrodite died. The Greek gods did not encourage this sort of thing between god and mortal—witness the beginnings of Helen of Troy!

It is only fair, perhaps, to break all this down into the terms of three separate opinions, MacArthur's, Hopkins's, and Nesbitt's.

(1) MacArthur claims that Olga was momentarily suffering from a disease which would not permit other relationship than that which we carried on; she needed to get away from Paris and her real lover in order to recover.

(2) Miriam Hopkins's theory was, simply, that Olga was an exceptional smartie, anxious to chalk up one on her men friends in order to show the girls at Wigman's what an extraordinarily clever girl she was.



(3) John Nesbitt merely says that it is a damned lie anyway: this moribund attitude on his part stems entirely from his once having employed me to write up various true events for his radio broadcasts and only finding a mere ten per cent of them a figment of the Antheil imagination.

However, to these and other such unbelievers, I should like to point out that no sooner did Olga and I commence rummaging around in the ruins of Carthage than, one particularly hot afternoon, she said:

“Come with me; I want to show you something!”

I followed her, and she took me into one of those long shafts with which ancient Carthage is honeycombed, and we descended into utter darkness. Her step, however, never faltered. We went up steps, down steps, around corners, she leading me by the hand every step of the way. Finally she paused and said:

“Here, we dig here.” She scratched at a large rock, finally pulled it away, and when she spoke again I heard the reverberations of an empty chamber beyond. She pulled a flashlight out of her purse, flashed it into the opening.

It was a small circular temple, Greek style, with a statue of an unknown Venus in the very middle! Dust was thick everywhere; it had been untouched for centuries!

Perhaps I only dreamed it, because when, the next day, I tried to notify the authorities, they insisted that these cisterns had been combed over and over, not once but a hundred times, and that if there were any remaining temples of any sort they would be glad to give me the entire contents of same. I looked at Olga to support my claim, but she only looked wise and kept her own counsel.

In his book partially devoted to me, Bravig Imbs describes this particular visit of mine to North Africa as a publicity stunt purely and simply. He says it was solely connected with the future autumn performance of my *Ballet Mécanique*.” For all that I remember, this may very possibly be true, for I was not above propagandizing forthcoming work in those days, alas! Bravig says that our plan was to have me lost in the Sahara for a month or two, apparently eaten by lions or tortured to death by savage Bedouin tribes. Again I say, this may very well be true, because, try as I will, I cannot accurately remember this part of the business—although I remember very well that the international Press blackballed me for some years after 1925 for having died in the Sahara and then not staying dead. In any case, all this was not the truly important aspect of the matter; and I pause here only to warn any prospective publicity seekers, however meritorious their objective, to forever and a day refrain from dying with the mere objective of making the front pages.

For, if you do not really die, you will be amazed by the number of your closest friends who will deeply resent your returning to the world of the living again—especially after they have copiously and publicly slobbered all over the place concerning you, what a great guy you had been, etc., *ad nauseam*.

To continue with Olga: I did go down to the Sahara with her, first going to an outpost town called Gabès, later to figure importantly in the Allied rush to capture Rommel. From here we promptly disappeared from civilization and had a lovely time. Olga and I talked a good deal about the problems of life and love, the main burden of which (from my side at least) was Boski. We made our way back to the coast, spent long hours in the warm sea just off the shore of Djerba—which, as scholars will tell you, was the one-time “Island of the Lotus Eaters” of mythical fame. It was during one of these afternoons that I took a photograph of Olga as she emerged from the sea. . . .

To make a long, comfortably lazy story short: Olga, considering all sides of the question, advised me to marry Boski, marriage certificate and all. “For after all,” she said, “what does a little piece of paper matter? It can be a joke between the two of you, and so you can remain forever true lovers.” This seemed eminently reasonable, so, at the first outpost of civilization, I wired Boski:

MEET ME IN MARSEILLES HOTEL CALIFORNIE NEXT WEEK STOP WE ARE  
GOING TO BUDAPEST TO GET MARRIED STOP DON'T TELL ANYBODY STOP  
LOVE EVER SO MUCH STOP GEORGE

Olga and I departed for Marseilles; and after we arrived we spent one more day together, at the Hotel Californie, and then Olga departed for Paris. An hour later, at the same railway station, Boski arrived from Paris, and we went back to the Hotel Californie together. The Hotel Californie in Marseilles is not a first-class hotel; it has seen many things. But, I venture to say, for some considerable time to come it will at least have some respect for young American boys on the loose.

Boski and I arrived in Budapest, where, her parents having been advised of our intentions, we were greeted with all-round warmth; no people can be so genuine as the Hungarians—that is, once they agree to accept you into their inner family circle. In marrying one of them I became, in part, a Hungarian; and if you doubt this I will tell you that only very recently I attended a rehearsal with Béla Bartók, the great Hungarian composer, and he asked all about Boski with the interest of a kindly elderly uncle—although, so far as I remember, he has never met her or had occasion to know her name.

Boski and I were married quickly because, by this time, I had a most important engagement in Paris—to verify the fact that I was not dead but alive. Boski had told Sylvia that our address was to be Budapest; consequently, on the way to our marriage ceremony, a telegram

was hastily thrust into my hands by somebody, and I was afraid to open it until the ceremony was over—God knew from whom it might be Hanson perhaps! Upon opening it I read:

FOR GOODNESS SAKE GEORGE COME BACK TO PARIS IMMEDIATELY AND DENY THIS IDIOTIC NEWSPAPER STORY LIONS ATE YOU IN AFRICA OR ELSE YOUR NAME WILL BE MUD FOREVER STOP TIME IS OF THE ESSENCE STOP  
SYLVIA BEACH

On the way back I picked up several American newspapers published in Paris and read:

“COMPOSER EATEN ALIVE BY LIONS IN THE SAHARA!”  
after which followed a long account about the way in which I had disappeared from Gabès, leaving no trail behind me until an “Arab messenger” had discovered my “mortal remains” a thousand miles to the south! This was pretty strong stuff, even for a Hanson, so I decided that I would immediately have to fly back to Paris. Boski and I stayed that night at a beautiful hotel in Buda, on the crest of the hill once supposed to have been the mighty Attila’s headquarters, but our first legally married night together was unhappy, mostly spent in discussing whether or not we should further agitate Boski’s relatives by explaining our predicament. We decided against it, burned the American newspapers. The next morning Boski, myself, and her various relatives were to see us off at the airport. Suddenly Boski remembered that she would have to stay at least several days longer because of some sort of regulation concerning the marriage certificate. If she did not stay it would, it seemed, take months to get it. We now agreed that I should go, but that she would stay a few days longer.

When I flew off to Paris alone, Boski’s relatives, it seems, became agitated. Inasmuch as I was an American—and therefore, perforce, probably very naïve—they believed that I was flying away thus because I had discovered on our first night together, that Boski was no virgin—or something or another; God knows how these idiotic Americans, however lovable, occasionally disport themselves with what singular ideas.

In due time, however, Boski arrived in Paris with the all-important certificate—in Hungarian.

To this day I could not really swear to it whether I am married or not. Boski is calmly confident about the matter, though.

I stress it—this was Aphrodite’s solution. At first I forgot. But some months after this, I discovered the photo I had taken of Olga emerging from the Djerba beach. Looking at it, I suddenly realized that I had seen it a thousand times before, but as a photograph of the ancient statue of Aphrodite called “Venus de Medici.” Hastily I went out and bought a postcard of it in the Odéon market. It and Olga compared in every detail; the two photos were one and the same, even down to the smallest

toe. To-day I have them pasted, side by side, in our family photograph album, having first duly told Boski the story of how I had come to send her that telegram from southern Tunisia. . . .

Boski never has any comment whatsoever to make about this story.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### PARISIAN APEX

SUCH fame and notoriety as I was ever to attain in Paris had by now almost reached its apex. Boski and I had come to Paris unmarried and unknown. Now we were ever so officially married and, in musical circles at least, I was probably known for better or worse throughout the world. One way or the other the U.P. and the A.P. had done their work well, while most of my non-salaried propagandists in Paris still continued their work.

The year 1926 began most auspiciously with a performance of my *First String Quartet* at Natalie Barney's famous salon at 20 Rue Vavin. Natalie had once been the recipient of Remy de Gourmont's famous *Letters to an Amazon*; she was also a good friend of ours and a very intelligent woman whose group included what we may smilingly to-day call "the elite of 1926," the rich and titled intellectuals who, more often than not, made modern art of all varieties in that city financially possible.

I cannot pass by Natalie Barney's extraordinary home without comment on her butler. It may, for all I know, be quite a commonplace thing, but this butler's bald pate was lacquered on top, where he had painted a neat head of hair, all in nice Frenchy curlicues.

The string quartet had come very near not being played at all, for, having finished the work after a series of sleepless weeks, I was very sleepy indeed while delivering the score to my copyist. I left it in the taxi-cab. Fortunately, however, I still had the majority of my pencil sketches, was thereby able to reconstruct it; but it demanded a whole new series of sleepless nights, and I was nearly dead for want of sleep on New Year's Day, the date of its first performance.

I remember this occasion only vaguely, but recall that it was quite successful and brought forth a commission for a new and major-sized symphony for which I was to receive quite a substantial sum.

A 1926 salon performance in Paris was a very interesting happening, usually taking place in an antique room, among priceless antique furniture and still more antique French millionaires and bearers of ancient titles. Whatever they may have made of it I often wonder, for this particular little quartet was by no means a mild number. But, anyway, it flushed a commission.

Generally speaking, things were now going over very well. My *Ballet Mécanique* had already been given a number of semi-private premieres, several with Jacques Benoist-Mechin, some with the Leger-Murphy film, or attempts thereat (as we never managed to arrive at any semblance of synchronization of the film and the music. This didn't seem to matter very much in those pre-talkie days).

The violin sonatas had been extremely successful.

Our money in the bank had held out surprisingly. Now I was going to add to it by a thousand dollars, literally several thousands of francs. All of my suits were tailored now; and Boski's clothes came from the best shops in Paris.

We still lived in the Rue de l'Odéon, but our original one room plus kitchen had expanded first into two large rooms, and then into a three-room arrangement.

We thought our apartment very, very elegant, although we had no bath-room (very few French apartments have) and we still had to get our water from the one bath-room at the end of the hall.

Once during this period Charles and Kathleen Norris came up to have tea with us, and Kathleen promptly proceeded to break into tears.

Putting her arms affectionately around Boski, she had said: "I can't help crying when I see this cute little place of yours. It reminds me so much of the tiny little flat in which Charles and I once lived when we were very young and broke. Please don't ever change, children. This kind of poverty is the most beautiful thing in the world! We have never again been so happy as we were then, in our little New York garret!"

Several weeks later I began my *Second Symphony* in earnest. I had previously sketched for it a mass of material but had not yet brought it into proper order; it had not yet become digested, a part of me. Now it was digesting and, once again, I could work late into every night. It is a very pleasant feeling for a composer and I believe the only time when he is completely happy and at peace with the world.

Boski sat up with me, making me countless cups of coffee. More often than not Boski's friend, the extraordinary young blonde Austrian of singular unforgettable beauty, Baroness Li Czibulka, sat up with us. Often, when morning came around, the three of us were so full of caffeine that we would have to take a taxi to the great markets nearby to make ourselves sufficiently sleepy again. To see Paris come alive at five in the morning is something nobody should miss, especially when very young. Li was twenty, extremely sophisticated, even worldly, at that tender age. She was a dress designer for Poiret—Poiret whose exotic oriental star was just then at its zenith.

Her title, incidentally, was genuine; and her father had been military governor of Vienna during the great war. She had more money than we did, spent it more freely, had fancier friends—among them the great

Poiret himself. Occasionally we would go with her to his magnificent exotic parties.

One of them, I remember, was a garden fete at which huge Negroes in red buffoons served dishes at enormous tables seating hundreds of guests and behind the trees of which was an immense golden staircase strewn with exotic pillows with almost nude girls from one of the great Follies—a sort of Elsa Maxwell and Ziegfeld party gone to heaven.

The trees themselves had electric blossoms and hundreds of live parrots. Li thought all this very amusing, and although Boski and I didn't, we thought her very amusing; and I secretly wondered at the incredible difference between European and American girls.

On Sundays we usually went out to see William and Louise Bullitt. The two of them lived on the outskirts of Paris and seemed to be very happy together. They would reverently take us into a little nursery in the back of the house to pick up the covers over a little bed and show us their baby daughter. Bill, the young diplomat whom President Wilson had sent to revolutionary Russia, had now turned novelist and was writing *It's Not Done*; Louise was the widow of John Reed, hero of the Russian revolution and a very beautiful Irish-looking girl with a splendid brain and a wry sense of humour.

Occasionally we would manage to get them to come over to our apartment for a return dinner, but they accepted only rarely. For which we couldn't really blame them—they were so popular and one could scarcely sit down in our place.

These frequent get-togethers with the Bullitts, however, were to play a considerable role in my future life; in the first place they gave me a most excellent background of the various political situations of Europe—situations with which, as a wage earner, I should often have to cope. Also, much later, in 1933, it enabled me to ask Bill to interview my brother Henry as a possible member of his staff when Bill became ambassador to Russia, and gave Henry his part in the State Department.

I was now planning out my new symphony. It was to be absolutely different not only from the *Ballet Mécanique* direction—which I now considered I had done as perfectly as I was capable of doing—but I particularly wanted it to be divorced from any tendency of contemporary Paris.

I had no intention, believe me, of creating a new style simply to *épater le bourgeois*, or to create a new style *per se*.

I simply hated the current "neoclassicism" and felt that some kind of "return" to classic principles, a drawing in of the neo-romantic boundaries, so to speak, was now definitely in order.

I proposed to write a symphony that was "classic" in outline, design, organism, yet incorporating as much as possible of all that I had learned

in my recent bolder, non-impressionistic—which would exclude the *First Violin Sonata*, the *First Symphony*, but include the piano sonatas.

I felt that music had still to follow the great symphonists. One had still to at least attempt to push the form which they had carried thus far so well just a little farther. My plan was to attempt to push it just a little farther towards Mahler and Bruckner. Not by imitating their style—for all this had nothing to do with style, mannerism, but what used then to be called loosely one's "musical personality."

By March my symphony, despite all interruptions, had progressed considerably. It also seemed to be developing into the sort of work I wanted, so we began to think who would be best to approach to play it.

I did not have to think long, for my choice had already been made—provided I could get him interested.

It was Vladimir Golschmann, brilliant young conductor of the Concerts Golschmann, the best concert organization in Paris.

Previously, in 1925, I had heard him conduct the Stravinsky Octuor—this almost immediately after having heard Stravinsky himself conduct it. The difference had been supreme. I was completely sold on the young French conductor and had been attending his every concert.

I don't know whether it was my native "angel-face" thymocentricity, or an acquired Parisian sophistication which now made me approach Golschmann as a young man of the world instead of the humble composer that I really was. For instead of going to him directly with the score in hand, I first rather timidly made his acquaintance, then invited him to luncheon at Foyot's (which is one of Paris's three most expensive restaurants), as if it were an every-day occurrence that I had luncheon at Foyot's. A luncheon there for three could easily cost twenty-five dollars American, even though it might have consisted of just a glorified hamburger.


Golschmann accepted, and once we were inside I pressed him to order the most expensive dishes, Boski and I setting the example. He was reluctant, but we insisted; finally the bill came and I reached for my wallet.

I had forgotten it!

Boski had brought no money with her, either!

Golschmann grinned wanly and reached for the check. I'm sure he must have thought we had no money in the first place and that this was a put-up job. Fortunately he also has an extraordinarily good sense of humour.

Then he asked me about my new symphony, which, naturally, he must have known was in the back of my mind. I cannot think of anyone who could have bridged this embarrassing situation more graciously. He asked to see it, said that if it pleased him he would play it. Boski and I went home elated, but poor Vladimir went home minus

some one thousand francs, or about  dollars—a considerable sum for a luncheon and one, I'm sure, he could not well afford in those days.

Boski and I later used to worry a good deal about how we might ever repay him: he has remained our good friend to this day, and we have never yet found a way.

To-day Vladimir is the conductor of the splendid St. Louis Orchestra. He is one of the finest conductors in America. His style is special, flawless, belonging to him alone. No one turns orchestral phrasing more genially than does he, no one polishes in such a special way. Throughout those years in Paris I got to know his conducting like the inside of my palm. It has the cool control of a Horowitz. This 1945 afternoon I happened to turn on my radio at random without looking up the radio programmes. I heard the end of the first movement of Brahms's *First Symphony*. I needed only to listen a moment before turning to Boski and shouting, "Vladimir!" It was Golschmann guest-conducting at the Cleveland Orchestra during the equally brilliant young Leinsdorf's absence.

Also, whenever I see a motion picture in which the hero is a conductor of a symphony orchestra, I am sure the producer and writer must have (or should have) had Vladimir Golschmann in mind. Vladimir is the last final dot of perfection; his conducting technique is a thing most beautiful to behold.

In those days the feminine hearts of Paris could not look at Vladimir without a catch in their throats; to-day they need strangle no longer, for Vladimir is married to the only woman in the world who could give Hedy Lamarr (Hedy is a close friend of mine and, incidentally, I hope she won't take offence) a run for her matchless beauty.

But then, in 1926, Vladimir was somewhat of a Don Juan.

His faithful Man Friday, one Daniel Lazarus, had a special job: to chase women away from Vladimir.

Lazarus, incidentally, was quite a good composer, married to Ariadne Scriabine, the daughter of the Russian composer Stravinsky hates so cordially. She was a strange Russian girl, not without considerable pretension to beauty, except that her hyperthyroid animation always seemed to destroy it.

I often used to be amused, then, to think that Ariadne had arrived in the Scriabine household almost simultaneously with the *Poème de l'Extase*, a composition which resembled her wide-eyed distraught frantic beauty almost exactly.

The five of us, Vladimir, Lazarus, Boski, Ariadne and myself became good friends. We often had dinner together.

Vladimir accepted my *Second Symphony* as soon as it was finished. He scheduled it for the June 1926 Concerts Golschmann, by now only one month and a half away.



This automatically brought daily contact. The usual conductor questions came up, that of changing tempi, dynamics, the question of rehearsals, invitations, all the multiple curiosities that went to make up a swanky Parisian concert in 1926.

From all of this emerged one of my warmest, most enduring friendships.

I must not, at this moment, fail to make mention of another intensely interesting and prepossessing personality—George Gershwin. We met him during this Parisian period.

Boski had one other close girl friend beside Li. She was Mabel Schirmer, wife of Robert Schirmer, the music publisher. Mabel was a young, delicate, but handsome blonde American girl. She and Bob lived in a huge flat in the middle of Paris. Mabel was also a very good friend of the entire Gershwin family.

Whenever George Gershwin came to Paris he invariably spent a great deal of time at the Schirmers'. I met George at their dinner table one evening. It seemed a most opportune time to ask him a question which had long been troubling me—why his famous *Rhapsody in Blue* was not published by the firm of his closest friend.

"Oh," replied George (to Mabel's and Bob's intense embarrassment), "I offered it to Schirmers' as soon as it was finished, but they turned it down. They said it was not 'commercially feasible.'"

And he grinned. This, I believe, was probably the greatest boner of music-publishing history!

After that particular dinner George played for me for the first time on record his piano concerto, just completed, and so did me the great honour of showing me the score to ask my advice upon various parts of it.

Golschmann had just told him that day that I knew a great deal about the orchestra, and George, humble and open-minded as always, had grasped at any opportunity to get a perspective.

Somewhat previously Stuckenschmidt had arrived in Paris from Berlin. Accompanying him were a number of young German intellectuals, among them a Hansjorg Dammert, a young German composer of considerable talent of an entirely new order. I was very happy to look over his new compositions, advise him, even while making preliminary sketches for my new symphony.

Stuck visited me frequently, usually in the company of young Hansjorg.

Stuck was now as ever warmly my friend, but some new undefinable element had crept into his various musical admirations, made him somehow more Germanic in his philosophy and outlook.

For one thing he had discovered Hauer's latest German manifestation of the atonal system.

It seemed at that time that all young Germans not previously infected with the atonalism bug were discovering Hauer. The atonal system had existed in principle before Hauer, but Hauer was the "genius" (as they all called him) to put it into perfect working order, organize it into long regiments of rules and regulations and fumdiddle-dee apparently so dear to the Germanic musical heart at its worst.

Hansjorg, however, laughed at Hauer, told Stuck and myself fantastic stories about him—as, for instance, that Hauer considered himself a Musical God Beyond Reproach, insisted always upon would-be young atonalists kneeling when ushered into his presence, and so on.

Together with me, Stuckenschmidt had once discarded the atonal system as "too mechanical." But now he, too, claimed that Hauer was a "genius" and Schönberg himself would profit greatly from Hauer's magnificent discoveries.

I listened in alarmed silence. Was my German reverting to type? But Stuck's new enthusiasm for Hauer did not seem to make him any the less enthusiastic about me or about our old ideals. Aside from Hauer, we still seemed to understand each other perfectly in all matters except, possibly, the most important. We were now going in opposite directions—slowly.

Hansjorg's music was very tonal in foundation and fairly peppered through with startling new musical devices. Years later, after the Nazis had come into power, this same Hansjorg was to be thrown into a concentration camp from which he was to escape, flee to Spain, fight against Franco, escape again, join the International Brigade of the French Foreign Legion, where he would be captured by the Vichy French, set to slave labour building the desert railway to Dakar—and the last I heard about him was that he was very ill.

In Spain he had legally changed his name from Hansjorg Dammert to Robert Jordan, the name of the hero of *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. During the period he fought with the Loyalists in Spain, he became very good friends with Hemingway, to whom I introduced him in Paris in 1926.

Hansjorg was one of those very troubled young Germans whose family background should have automatically drawn him into the folds of the arrogant German upper crust with all its implications, but whose sympathies were from the start with the fighters for liberty. He came of the very best family, born on Berlin's swankiest street, Tiergartenallee.

I sometimes wonder how many Hansjorgs there were in Germany. I have only known one. Stuck put up a nominal resistance against the Nazis at first, but eventually did go back to the fold, I believe—at least so I have heard.

Atonalism is not musical naïveté. But it is *super-super*-regimentation in music. When Stuck stepped towards it, he took the first step towards all the rest, and away from me.

Around early 1925 I had made the acquaintance of a most talented American composer, Virgil Thomson. A mutual respect for each other and a certain same angle of approach to the great art of music quickly kindled our acquaintance into genuine friendship, one that has lasted until to-day. During this 1926 interval he often came up to our apartment and talked with me while I orchestrated on my lap board, discussing everything and sundry with an unheard-of brilliance. I marvelled at his incredibly witty conversation, but still more at his fine compositions, for his was an extraordinary talent.

It had, for instance, little if anything in common with the "Boulanger Group," in whose company, I understand, he studied for a while.

At that time Virgil precariously supported himself by writing monthly music criticisms for *Vanity Fair*, then still in existence. The job demanded a lot of his time. He neglected his composition, which seemed a pity to me. I think that I may even have been partially responsible for his abandoning this first critic's job of his—this in order to devote himself entirely to musical composition.

"You are a greater composer than critic," I said one day, and I believed it sincerely. (It is something which I would say to him even now, although he is undoubtedly one of our greatest critics to-day, chief of staff of the New York *Herald Tribune*.)

We saw a good deal of each other from then on. Among all the hundreds of musical persons around me then, he was almost the only one really to understand the why and wherefore of my *Second Symphony*. He attended its first rehearsal and became so enthusiastic about it that I subsequently dedicated it to him.

The concert of the new symphony came off in apple-pie order at the Champs Elysées Theatre. My main impressions concerning it were (1) that my concierge and the Duchesse de Clermont-Tonnere, both equally formidable old ladies, had by some strange coincidence secured seats side by side and later gave me mutually complimentary reports about each other, as well as upon my music; (2) the Champs Elysées Theatre was jammed; (3) I came out on the stage to bow only to discover at the last moment that moths had considerably weakened the fabric of my striped afternoon-dress pants at a most strategic point. I managed to avert a social calamity only by some very trick bowing.

Try as I may, however, I cannot recollect hearing a single note of my symphony.

The aftermath of this concert was wildest social and musical success.

I was now really in the swim. Not one evening, now, but that Boski and I were invited out to some one or another social event of real importance. Paris was full to brimming with important artistic personages from all countries, for it was summer, the social season for visitors from abroad. My daytimes were full of important concerts, musicales, luncheons, salons, too.

Virgil, by now, had written a most beautiful quintet and some new songs. We were anxious to secure a public or at least a semi-public performance for these, and, naturally, I was not against more performances for my own works.

To accomplish this gracefully we eventually secured a young American married lady quite anxious to get into French society.

I must explain here, in passing, that in the old Paris of 1925-26 there was nothing more closed or impossible to break into than the society of French blue-bloods, the *crème de la crème* of the period. There was only *one* golden key which could and would open society doors to an outsider (unless he were a diplomat): that of artistic fame. If in those days you were a *famous* artist, or one much talked about, no social barriers existed; in the best sense you really became an equal, not just a tolerated guest or a curiosity—which, to my regret, I have all too often noticed to be the case in some of our best and wealthiest families.

I will conceal the name of our young American benefactress, mentioning only that she was young, intelligent, and beautiful enough not to have needed the grand-standing of Parisian social position to attract a proper amount of international attention. However, she may have been too young to know this; or perhaps she was merely attempting to impress her handsome young polo-playing husband, with whom she was very much in love; in any case she wanted towering social position, and towering social position we gave her.

For, once having discovered her and her mad foible, and making quite sure she could not be dissuaded from it, Virgil and I promptly persuaded her to use her sumptuous mid-Paris home as a sort of weekly concert hall of extraordinary music—for which concerts she, of course, would foot the bills. In return Virgil and I promised her that we would draw into her home and social circle the true elite of Paris every Friday in the year. And when we said the true elite, we did not mean the second skimming of the cream, we meant the first.

When she consented, we got together all the prominent Parisian composers whom either one or the other of us knew. We also got our own intimate salon groups to submit chamber works to us for immediate performance. We said we would take care of everything else, including the copying out of the parts.

They, of course, consented in wildest delight—as who wouldn't?—

readily agreeing to bring their whole coteries, lasso their patrons and even their concierges if necessary.

But before playing any of the above works, of course, Virgil and I planned to give performances of Virgil's and my chamber works, particularly his new quintet and my *Ballet Mécanique*." After all, such gorgeous opportunity as this does not fall into a composer's lap too often—let us say once in a hundred years.

In this extraordinary atmosphere the first real full performance of my *Ballet Mécanique* actually and finally took place. It occurred at one of the earliest sumptuous summer musicales.

As I remember it now, her house, large as it was, was not only filled with white-gloved butlers, guests, food, and wonderful champagne, but with grand pianos as well; the grand pianos literally hung from the ceilings. The *Ballet Mécanique* is really scored for eight grand pianos, to say nothing of xylophones, percussion, and what not—although there were twice as many instruments in Carnegie Hall.

Naturally, in this arrangement hardly any room remained for the guests—a slight oversight on our part. The eight grand pianos filled up the giant living-room completely and without an extra inch of room while the xylophones and percussion were located in the side room and on the giant staircase. Vladimir Golschmann, who conducted, stood at the top of the piano in the centre. To this absolutely jammed-packed house, just add two hundred guests! Every nook and cranny between the pianos sheltered a guest; I think several even hung by the chandeliers—the Duchesse de Clermont-Tonnere in all probability; she was such an iconoclast! Ah yes, and add to all this the fact that it was summer and ultra-hot; in short, by the time we were ready to start, practically everybody in Paris seemed to have poured through a funnel in the chimney down into the house, where they were perspiring and waiting.

At the first chord of the *Ballet Mécanique* the roof nearly lifted from the ceiling! A number of persons instantly fell over from the gigantic concussion! The remainder of our guests squirmed like live sardines in a can; the pianos underneath or above or next to their ears boomed mightily and in a strange synchronization.

At the end of this most sweaty concert, champagne was served in great quantity, and people were very thirsty, not to say shaken and distraught.

I will not, now, come out with it and claim that the élite of blue-blood Paris imbibed more than was good for them, but I will say they were all greatly shaken and needed refreshment, and that refreshment was instantly at hand—a detail good Virgil and I had not overlooked for this strategic moment.

The result: the most congenial party possible; and the last we saw

of our beautiful young hostess that day she was being thrown up and down in a blanket by two princesses, a duchess, and three Italian marchesas. A good time was had by all, and the fame of our hostess spread like wild-fire throughout Paris. The pathway to the young American lady's house had not only been broken; it had become a seven-lane highway with traffic cops at every corner!

At this moment Virgil and I, realizing that our joint star was very ascendant, went even a step farther to invite the various embassy officials, even manipulating star diplomats to meet one another or important local personalities; our friend Bill Bullitt coaching us here.

Do I need to remark now that at the end of these summer musicales our vibrant and determined young American no longer needed our help? She and we went our different ways. But, for a very short time at least, we had wielded power in the musical salons of Paris. Very great power indeed. I say "we" poetically, because, as a matter of fact, Virgil's masterful wit, presence of mind, and sheer resourcefulness did a great deal more for these concerts than my poor efforts.

But perhaps I imagined them in the beginning.

I might now have continued to live on in Paris for ever except for a mishap. This mishap was shortly to interrupt for ever the golden chain of the past several years' events, which, if they had continued, would sooner or later have thrown me to the very top of Paris, perhaps permanently.

Early one day in the autumn of 1926 I caught pneumonia. And in the subsequent weeks of dreadful illness I very nearly died.

The year of 1926, with its too abundant music writing, its countless sleepless nights, its bewildering kaleidoscope of friends and acquaintances, each one to be properly estimated, cultivated, or discounted; its concerts, musicales, salons, dinners, manipulations of incessant musical politics, its complete Machiavellianism, had finally pulled down my constitution, left me open to the infection of more actual realistic microbes—pneumococci.

As soon as I had sufficiently recovered, my doctor looked at me and shook his head. I would have to leave my beloved Paris for at least six months, he said.

It seemed a tremendous blow.

One day soon Vladimir came to sit by my bed. He said, "Why don't you write a piano concerto? You are such a good pianist, George. Why don't you go away for six months, to Chamonix, write the concerto, recover your health, and then practice so that we can top our last concert in the Champs Elysées?"

He had given me now a *project*.

All this reconciled me; the departure from Paris would now become nothing more frightening than a delightful excursion during which I

could create something novel that would (I determined then) rock artistic Paris to its very foundations!

Boski had been frightened almost to death all these past weeks. She thought I would take leaving Paris, even for a short while, very hard. Seeing me in such good humour at last, she went out and bought us a gay variety of winter things, sweaters, jackets, overcoats.

When she returned she found me already occupied with pencil and music paper.

## CHAPTER XIX

### CARNEGIE HALL OF UNSACRED MEMORY

SITTING in our compartment of the train that was to take us to Chamonix, the thought flashed across my mind:

“Will I ever again come back to the Paris I know?”

Out of the blackness seemed to come—well, no answer at all!

In any case, the Paris I had known would never again be there to welcome me. It had disappeared in the crash of my pneumonia.

On the train I felt very shaky. I was still not very well. I made a check-up of the Parisian years—as one will do after leaving a city of three tremendous years of endeavour.

I had held my ground in Paris. All these years. The new symphony was, in my opinion, not a bow to neoclassicism. The neoclassicism of Paris was preoccupied with style, chic, pretty new sound, quick musical wit, everything but new expression of form, of the greater abstract meaning of music. Paris liked extraordinary and new contortions of the old classic sounds—much in the way that a modern dressmaker takes an old painting and fabricates a new style from the costumes of Rembrandt, or Leonardo da Vinci. I can never return to this particular period of Paris without remembering what a particularly snobbish Parisian friend of mine said to me while attending a Bach concert; at a certain passage he turned to me and remarked:

“Why, that passage is almost as beautiful as when Stravinsky wrote it!”

My *Second Symphony* had had no such ultra-Parisian exterior or “local” finicky intentions. It preoccupied itself first and foremost with the expression of a large symphonic form—if the reader will forgive me—almost à la Bruckner or Mahler.

In all these years, therefore, I had not capitulated. That, at least, was something. Paris, although more sympathetic to new art than any other city, was a difficult one in which to hold one's artistic integrity.

It was so shot through with every abomination, cliques, isms, herding instincts towards the new style of every new season.

When we arrived in Chamonix, Boski showed me for the first time a French magazine article by a young critic, Guy de la Pierre, currently representing the youngest intellectual idea in France. In so far as my future Parisian prestige was concerned, it was a marvellous article, excepting that Guy de la Pierre had missed the entire point of my new symphony. He had chosen to regard my symphony as a sort of new super neoclassicism, the fulfilment of all that Stravinsky and Les Six had so well started. He even appointed me as the head of a "formalism" movement; he was apparently attempting to start via the simple formula of giving it a name. This "formalism" he said, was destined to "super-classicize, so to speak, neoclassicism."

He hailed my symphony as a masterpiece of this formula. This article of Guy de la Pierre's was now to have serious effect upon me. Remember, please, that I was still rather ill, therefore perhaps more unreliable and impressionable than usual.

Or perhaps, again, I was just then beginning for the first time to be really homesick for my dear Paris.

In any case, as my new piano concerto grew, it became more and more neoclassic both in style and principle. I am not going to attempt to explain this except to say it was a good work of its kind and that I felt then that here, at last, would be my *typical Parisian work*, the synthesized result of three and a half tumultuous art years in Paris!

But the incident of its composition proves—at least to me—that under proper conditions I can be the greatest idiot on earth, and no one can be more susceptible to flattery than I.

From Chamonix we moved on to Budapest. Here I premièred the new concerto, but only in a two-piano arrangement. On the evening of the concert Béla Bartók seated himself directly in front of me on the concert stage itself—because of the way the main Budapest concert hall was built. This upset me very much; I have always had a tremendous respect for this particular Hungarian and was afraid of making a mistake.

The Hungarian Press, accustomed to my swashbuckling music of some four years before, was vastly disappointed by this tame piece. The *Pest* critics damned the work with faint praise.

But it would, I knew, be received differently in Paris.

*Paris understood me!*

On the first day of our arrival in Budapest I looked at our bank book and saw that we were spending our money at an alarming rate. Not much was left! I once more thought of those Picassos and Braques of mine, somewhere in America, and in the middle of the night I



suddenly awoke to remember, I thought, the name of the American friend to whom I had sent them. I got up immediately and wrote him a letter to sell the pictures and send me the money.

His reply came by return boat:  
"I never received your pictures."

Hanson, who had been ill for a year or so, suddenly died, and with him my last lingering thought of a pianist career with which to recoup my fortunes. Otherwise, I regret to say now, I did not mourn his passing too much. The events of the past year had almost caused me to forget his existence.

As the days of absence from Paris increased, Budapest seemed to become more remote from "civilization" than ever before. Finally it seemed to have drifted to the very edge of the Asiatic steppes. Compared to our gay, exciting Paris, its civilization was rude, most of its young creative musicians myopic. From my prejudiced Parisian view-point none of them could possibly have anything interesting to say.

I often wandered about in Budapest's disconsolate streets, my mind and heart as blank as a sheet.

In despair I commenced the writing of a new orchestral suite, based on a strange little funeral march I had heard in Chamonix, and which had most curiously moved me to tears.

It was full of death and homesickness.

Vladimir now wrote me that he had received the piano concerto and liked it very much, although not quite so much as the *Second Symphony*—"but perhaps it will grow," he apologized.

One day I walked on the white snowy blankness of Rosenhuegel. I had just received a cable from a "Donald Friede." He offered me excellent financial arrangements for a single concert of my *Ballet Mécanique* in Carnegie Hall.

Budapest had had a most depressing effect. I felt that everything was slipping. I was almost broke, worried about the future because I was still not too well. Mostly I worried about money.

I therefore decided to accept the offer which had so suddenly and unexpectedly presented itself in the shape of a telegram to our hotel in Buda. Although even then I had another offer of a gala performance of my *Ballet Mécanique*, also in New York, through the auspices of the League of Composers.

Certainly this latter was a more desirable medium of presentation of a new modern work such as mine than the one which I did accept; but I accepted Friede's offer because I thought I could make more money with him than with the League of Composers.

I had now deeply, and perhaps permanently, antagonized the

sedately respectable League of Composers, a most important concert organization for any young American composer.

I had now also made it impossible for the new piano concerto to be performed by myself in Paris at the Concerts Golschmann. Personal appearance in one's own piano concerto in Paris is most important. But Vladimir arranged for his brother Boris, a splendid pianist, to première it.

There was nothing wrong with Donald Friede's managing my first concert in America except, perhaps, that he was a book publisher with a book publisher's ideas about managing a concert. As a matter of fact, from a certain non-musical point of view, Donald Friede did a very excellent job with the *Ballet Mécanique* concert on April 10, 1927. Thousands of persons arrived in Carnegie Hall on that night, well prepared to enjoy the proceedings—except, perhaps, the music critics who had most certainly been outraged by our attempting to make the public's mind up for it in advance.

This reminds me of a rather peculiar incident, peculiar only because its like has never been repeated—at least not in my humble experience. One of the editorial writers (and also an occasional music critic) of a large New York newspaper began poking much fun at my forthcoming concert, in advance. Whereupon I wrathfully wrote him a letter and invited him to come up to our apartment in order to hear me play my *latest* compositions. He accepted, and I played for him my new *Second Symphony*, my piano concerto, and a number of other recent works.

He was impressed enough to go back to his newspaper office and print a public apology.

This is the only case of a public newspaper apology I've ever received. Shortly thereafter, however, my apologist left his newspaper and turned to writing novels, the first of which was *The Postman Always Rings Twice*. It was James Cain.

The other critics' pre-opinions of me were now even further deteriorated by our advance propaganda. It was extraordinary, to say the least. Donald, who is to-day still my very good friend, meant exceedingly well, but, as I have once emphasized, he was a book publisher first, and his 1927 idea of wildest success was to get arrested by the Boston police for selling a banned book. In short, he aimed to make our advance publicity "controversial," a project in which, alas, he succeeded all too well.

An *adequate* performance was also to be denied to the *Ballet Mécanique* itself—this because of a last-minute augmentation of the original number of pianos in the score.

This, to be sure, was *my* fault, as, indeed, were most of the mistakes of this misbegotten concert. It was *my* music, and *I* should have remained firm against the piano manufacturer's not too illogical idea

that the more pianos the merrier—it would all enhance rather than detract from the performance. He argued that inasmuch as the whole concert seemed to have been planned by Friede from the visual, not the audible, point of view, we should make it *really* visual. After all he, the piano manufacturer, was in business to sell pianos.

And here, too, I must just once plead in my own behalf that I had just recovered from pneumonia and was therefore far from being my old fighting self. I was now to permit many things which, a year previous in Paris, I would have fought against tooth and nail. But now my spirit had dissolved into thin pneumococci; I watched everything happening about me in this early April 1927 as if it were the slow motion of a horror dream—a horror dream which found me trapped to a board called “listless recovery from pneumonia.”

I agreed to almost everything proposed.

Also, I now made the additional mistake of discounting the importance of the concert in New York. I considered the première of my piano concerto in Paris infinitely more important—this after I had made the decision of going through with the New York concert. I neglected a hundred important details of the New York concert performance itself—musical details.

The one which I most keenly regret is the ultra-sensational element of the *visible propeller*. In the score of my *Ballet Mécanique* you will find indicated the *sound* of an aeroplane propeller, this point being rather near the end. This *sound* indication is intended as a sort of “organ point” (as we say in music) for the building of a certain kind of accumulative climax; for instance, Bach employs such “organ points” in most of his great fugues. This peculiarity of my score, however—and I emphasize it was only a *sound*—provided our genius-filled publicity agency with a most sensational idea:

My score, remember, called for nothing visible. Musical scores are constructed audibly, not for visibility. But, because the entire concert was now expanding into a highly *visible* proposition, our industrious publicists suddenly decided to smuggle a *real propeller* on the stage, this at the last moment.

They did not, I think, really expect my co-operation in this. A *real propeller* cannot, of course, be turned fast enough in a concert hall to make any appreciable noise, but they got around this by supplementing the propeller by a propeller-sound machine behind it.

But the public was to *think* it was hearing the noise of the *real propeller*, and this, it was then confidently expected, would make them quite afraid of being blown out of their seats, especially those in the front row.

Another damning element that night was the huge sensational *visual* curtain, hung against the back wall of Carnegie Hall, an element I par-

ticularly regret because, more than anything else, it soaked out the profit from what I had intended to be the most profitable of all my concerts. This gigantic, rather tasteless curtain (representing a 1927 jazz-mad America!) single-handedly accomplished two things: it sent me back to Europe broke—and gave an air of complete charlatanism to the whole proceedings.

Consider now the doubled number of pianos, the fantastically tasteless back-drop, and the aeroplane propeller! We certainly operated within a three-ring circus that night—visually as well as audibly!

As our April 10, 1927, concert approached, the bad will generated by our publicity became more and more pronounced. Its final touch appeared, I believe, on the morning of the concert—in a cartoon on the front page of one of New York's greatest newspapers.

It showed a group of men in evening dress digging a street with automatic picks, steam-shovels, etc., all producing a fearful racket. Above them, on the arm of the steam-shovel, stood the music conductor of the *Ballet Mécanique*, directing them. On the side-lines was a long-haired musician expostulating with a short little man with an amazed, incredulous expression, labelled "Chotzinoff."

Chotzinoff was saying, "Yes, but is it music?"

Incidentally, my *Ballet Mécanique* was not the only piece offered that evening. Three other works of mine were also performed, but the public scarcely paid attention; they had come to see and then hear the *Ballet Mécanique*. I should, however, make mention of these other works, the most important of which was a new *Jazz Symphonietta*, a piece which I had composed specially for this occasion and which was played by a large Negro orchestra whose personnel contained a great list of names later to become tremendously important in the popular-music world. Aaron Copland—who played one of the pianos in the *Ballet Mécanique*—told me directly after the concert how much he liked this special work; but the critics took almost no notice of it except to say that it was reminiscent of Negro jazz and was not as good.

The *Jazz Symphonietta* was, after the finale of my *First Symphony*, my second attempt at symphonic synthesis of jazz; but its poor first reception that evening precluded further performance. Still it is rather an historic work, after a fashion; it was certainly one of the first authentic attempts to synthesize one of our most difficult national mediums. Recently I looked at the score again to find it not at all bad or even very dated—as, for instance, is so much of the popular jazz of that period.

Symphonic synthesis, apparently, is a preservative of the music of a day—at least it seems so to-day in my very prejudiced eyes.

During the many rehearsals of this latter work I had got to know and admire many of the Negro orchestra men; so I now gave them box

seats in foremost sections of Carnegie Hall, which on concert night they filled with their wives and relatives—one of the truly nice things I still remember about that otherwise most depressing concert.

Another work programmed that night was my *Second Violin Sonata*. I was scheduled to play the difficult piano part, which, ordinarily, would have been duck soup for me, except for the fact that my physician, noting my low physical condition, thought it well to give me some sort of glandular injection at the last moment—an injection which he most unfortunately put into my right arm, causing it to swell almost immediately. This unfortunate shot gave me no new energy, but made every note I played that evening a special torture comparable only with the subtleties of the Spanish Inquisition.

Finally, to mention even the dog, a little string quartet of mine was admirably played but utterly lost on the great Carnegie stage, especially before that curtain; it had commenced the performance. It was the same *First String Quartet* which had been so admirably played that New Year's Day (1926) at Natalie Barney's, and with such success as to land me a commission for my *Second Symphony*.

I came out upon the stage that night after three or four weeks of high-tension rehearsals, rather ridiculous interviews, Harlem speak-easies, brilliant night clubs, parties and plays about tough gangsters like *Broadway*, utterly convinced that New York—indeed perhaps all America—was unspeakably rich, wild, fast, off balance, hardly important from the artistic point of view. Perhaps I was even right—for to-day, when we look back at the New York of that 1927 period, it seems as cheap, gaudy, and raucous as a fifty-cent street-walker who had just inherited a million dollars.

Under these special 1927 conditions the "show" we were about to put on in Carnegie Hall did not, perhaps, seem as ridiculous to me as it should have seemed—as it would have seemed in quiet, artistic, thoughtful Paris.

To conclude this miserable episode:

Eugene Goossens had been engaged as the *Ballet Mécanique* conductor. He had rehearsed us splendidly, but not even his superlative gifts could outweigh the tremendous new handicaps which were then thrust upon him at the last minute.

For instance, our many new grand pianos looked very nice on the Carnegie Hall stage. But now, when they all started to play, they by no means sounded anywhere near as well, as incisive, as had the compact, smaller percussive orchestra in Paris. The added pianos blurred the original effect, caused the percussion orchestra to generate only one third of the original electricity of the Golschmann performances in Paris.

Moreover such reported "rioting" as might have occurred on that April 10, 1927, seemed—at least to me—synthetic. For instance, one

man put up a white handkerchief on his walking-stick in mock token of surrender; another cried, "Quiet, quiet!" towards several gossips. Ha, ha!

Naturally, too, the tenor of the next day's newspaper critiques (splashed all over the *front* pages) was:

"Well, New York certainly showed Paris something last evening!"

"Don't make a mountain out of an Antheil!" (Get it?)

"Forty million Frenchmen CAN be wrong!"

The critics of those days preferred a wisecrack above everything else. I believe they have changed greatly.

A number of New York's *oldest* music critics have, however, never forgiven me this concert—nor, for that matter, can I entirely blame them.

Two days after this concert the well-known concert manager, Sol Hurok, called upon Donald Friede and myself and offered 40,000 dollars to "tour" the *Ballet Mécanique* and its present orchestra over the whole U.S.A. The newspapers had at least given me a million dollars' worth of publicity!

I sat there and listened to Sol Hurok, and then I looked at Donald Friede.

"What do you think, Donald?" I asked.

Donald shook his head. "It's up to you, George," he said. "It's too big a decision. But we won't make much out of this concert—the publicity costs were high."

I thought it over. Forty thousand dollars was more money than I had thought was in the world, and it would have lasted me for a long time, particularly in Europe.

"No," I said. Hurok looked puzzled.

"Are you sure?" he asked.

"Yes," I said. "I'm sure."

Sol Hurok shook his head, got up and went away. But ever since then, whenever and wherever I have met him, he always greets me with a sort of amazed cordiality.

Many years later, in 1935, the *Ballet Mécanique* was given once more in New York, this time at the Museum of Modern Art. But this time properly, in the correct version, and it was quite successful, being repeated entirely on the same evening at (I believe) public demand. In a way, therefore, the work has been vindicated in New York. None of this popular vindication has ever found its way into the newsprints, for not a single music critic attended that evening; they evidently considered that they had done everything necessary for the *Ballet Mécanique* eight years previous.

I went back to Paris that 1927 heartsick and broke.

## CHAPTER XX

### NEW START: GRAND OPERA FOR GERMANY

WHEN I arrived back in Paris I discovered that the première of my new piano concerto had only been politely received. I now began to lose not only the remainder of the friends formerly made by the *Ballet Mécanique* and the piano sonatas, but the new friends of last year's symphony.

Paris—as is the way with Paris—now had me down for what the piano concerto seemed to indicate. I had become a mere imitator of the latest and most elegant Parisian (and also most decadent), the most recent neoclassicism of Stravinsky.

I can't honestly record that they were entirely wrong.

Paris, I should emphasize here, would not especially have cared about the miserable failure of my New York concert. Paris cared absolutely nothing whatsoever for the artistic opinion of New York. If anything a New York failure might even have reinforced Paris's good opinion of me, all other things being equal.

My new Paris deflation was due entirely to the première of the new piano concerto. After the sonatas in the Champs Elysées, the *Ballet Mécanique* and finally the *Second Symphony*, to have now switched to what was obviously mere imitation of an older man—and all this *after* Paris had recognized me as a younger path-breaker—this indeed was unforgivable in the eyes of Paris, and Paris chastised me accordingly.

I was put under a temporary cloud of Parisian disapproval.

Among the musicians only Vladimir and Virgil remained steadfast, unshakeable. Virgil had even written me a letter in New York in advance of my returning to Paris—as if to pad me in advance for the coming shock of Paris. He told me how much he had admired my new small orchestra suite, performed by Vladimir at the same concert which had seen the première of the piano concerto.

But of the piano concerto he said nothing at all. This fact had made me very apprehensive, and when I arrived in Paris I was literally in a cold sweat, which swiftly proved justified.

I saw Stuck. He said he was going back to Germany; a year or more of Paris had been too much for him. He said he was now preparing himself to assume an important post as critic on a prominent German newspaper.

I noted that old Stuck had now become even more reconciled to

modern German creative effort in music than ever before. He now exuded a certain indefinable anxiety to place new German music above all other contemporary effort, especially the French and in particular Stravinsky's. His point of view was changing, and in my state of mind at this time I could not say that I found it *entirely* unsympathetic.

America, my own native country, had exploded behind me while Paris, my dearly adopted city, was exploding all around me.

Well, I had still some admirers in Germany. I had sown seed there.

Stuck spoke now of the wonderful new German opera movement, the "renaissance"; he advised me to write an opera in popular American rhythms which I had once talked over with him several years before. From this great distance of years, almost a quarter of a century, I cannot say that Stuck's re-entry into my life and thought at this moment was unfortunate. With all of his sickly atonalism, there was something less effete about Stuck than my run-of-the-mill Parisian advisers. Advisers, during that period, flocked to me by the carload, each of them with eyes full of crocodile tears, each anxious to see how young talent, dethroned, betakes itself. In the storm Stuck was a rock. He said that I had made one mistake, the piano concerto, but that my talent was too robust to be deterred by one mistake. Of the *Ballet Mécanique* mishap in New York, he said nothing; music making in New York, especially of a contemporary order, was beneath his monocled Prussian contempt.

Yet once upon a time long ago, he and Von Dornberg had spoken to me wistfully of America. They had said it was "the future."

Paris, too, had changed. Not only to me. It was less friendly to all Americans. When we had first arrived, in 1923, Americans were those sweet people who had literally saved France from the Hun. But now, in this 1927, France was a "great empire suffering from American avariciousness, Uncle Shylock, squeezed dry by American politics."

The attitude of the Frenchman on the street changed with the sinking value of the franc; an American sight-seeing bus at the Etoile was attacked. The entire feeling of Paris changed gradually; rich Parisians, formerly patrons of the arts, pulled in their purse-strings; there were also fewer gala concerts, fewer interesting commissions to important composers, less interest in the questions of art.

Somehow, without being able to explain quite why, one felt that Paris was beginning to die a little, perhaps not to really live again until immediately after the next war. . . .

But in spirit, artistic spirit as well, Paris never dies. It has a soul which other cities have not yet gained; I think Sylvia Beach explained it best by saying, "People say that Paris is decaying, dying; that is not true. You may kill the politicians of a city, but never its spirit or art."



Paris changes only its costumes; art, *La Vie Bohême*, freedom to create and ability to attract the world's greatest artists will never depart from Paris!" Amen.

On the other hand, Stuck's new Germany, also an old art centre, was now pumped full of new financial blood (a mere two billion dollars—this by naïve American financiers who thought they were being very astute!). Germany had commenced a new lease on life.

This was particularly true of her artistic life.

Tolerance in the arts now suddenly moved from Paris to Germany. Here, and not in Paris, were the new markets for Picassos, Braques, Stravinskys, Milhauds, Gides, Cocteaus.

Whatever else had been new and amazing in old Paris now migrated to Germany. The Parisian musicians frantically began writing operas because there was a demand and market for them in Germany: eighty-five opera houses against two in Paris.

Stravinsky and Milhaud were among these.

I, too, would be among them. I began to write an opera—hoping for a performance in Germany. Stuck had, you will remember, advised me to write an opera about America, contemporary New York if possible. He had said there was no more interesting subject for Germany. He said that he would write about my project in his newspaper, attempt to arouse interest in it among the German music publishers.

In Germany, he explained, everything musical was run by the big music-publishing firms, in particular those of Schott and Universal.

It worked this way: these two biggest firms had first of all cornered the market on new and interesting works, operas particularly. Opera houses or symphony orchestras in the German-speaking Europe of those days could not continue operations without constant injection of new, interesting (but not necessarily profound) musical works; and those who played best ball with the big publishers simply got the best works.

Just as in France it had been all-important first of all to play ball with the salons—just so in this new Germany had one first of all to play ball with the music publisher; he was all-important, especially if he had "cornered the market" on any one special and important musical commodity.

This, once again, would mean a new reorientation for me. That's the way it is in modern music—new countries, new ways.

Stuckenschmidt brought up as example Ernst Krenek, whose very recent and overpowering Central European success with *Jonny Spielt Auf* certainly proved that German publics were ready and even eager for operatic novelties—and that Universal Edition had the monopoly on such particular "novelties."

Perversely, I did not at once follow Stuck's excellent advice, but

consumed first months of valuable time making up my mind to write an opera at all, then as to what kind of an opera I would write.

Finally I decided against writing a "jazz opera" about modern America; perhaps the recent neoclassicism was still sticking too closely to my inner ear. Or maybe my recent New York experiences prejudiced me against taking contemporary New York as an opera background.

The result of all this procrastination found me running very short of money again. The *Ballet Mécanique* concert not only had not brought in any money, but had wasted my energy, made me incapable of giving concerts, seeking commissions or teaching.

So, as usual, whenever Boski and I found ourselves in a complete quandary, we decided to go to North Africa.

Several friends of ours, Mr. and Mrs. Miguel Covarubias, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander King, and De Hirsch Margules, had rented for the summer a large-sized Arabian house in Marsa Plage (the best beach near Tunis) and invited us to share this house and expenses with them. They were all very nice, exciting people, so, deciding to get out from under the present heavy blanket of mental stalemate, we decided to go.

Morover, we decided to go by plane, as it did not cost much more than the boat; this was a new service, just commencing.

Our first long-distance passenger-plane ride together deserves mention. Boski and I arrived in Marseilles, purchased our plane tickets to Tunis, were told that the plane departed the following morning from Antibes—this at eight o'clock. (Antibes is somewhat to the eastward of Marseilles.) We immediately went by train to Antibes, slept the night there, and were on the funny looking, rather dilapidated plane by seven forty-five. Curiously enough, it departed on the minute.

By the time we arrived on the African coast-line it had become twilight, or just a moment before. The sun was setting in the Mediterranean, throwing huge long shadows across terra firma beneath.

As I looked down below us, I saw a great miracle!

Carthage, ancient Carthage, lived once more! There it was, block for block, street for street, ground plan intact within its far-flung city walls! Several summers previous I had walked over every square mile of this enormous ancient city, but had not been able to put ancient Carthage together in my mind at all—so thoroughly had Scipio Africanus done his ordered job of destruction.

But now, from above, the long shadows of the sun accomplished a peculiar optical effect; it made the ancient ground plan of the city, formerly hidden to me by the mass of vegetation and little gardens, leap into powerful and startling high-light. Here, again, was the ancient Carthage which, once in history, had ruled the seas, frightened Rome to death, and housed over a million souls. Scipio Africanus had crumbled it, but only superficially; it would have taken an earthquake to crumble

its ground plan—which, nevertheless, was visible only from above and for one passing moment at sunset.

I had seen it as a bird might have seen it centuries ago!

The house in Marsa Plage was interesting if for no other reason than that a group of desert Arabs had camped for the summer in the vacant lot adjoining it. This Arabic group, obviously a family one, consisted of an old man (the boss), several younger men (his sons?), and a whole group of younger women and their squawking children.

The children cried a good deal at night, disturbing our sleep. Finally we sent our Arab servant boy to remonstrate with them. He did, and that night we heard a baby start to cry, and then suddenly it was choked off, as if a pillow had been put over its face.

Worried, the following morning we asked our boy what in the world he had said to them.

"Oh," he said indifferently, "I just told them that you would shoot the babies!"

"What!" we screamed.

"Yes," he said. "I just told them that you were Americans and, therefore, always carried revolvers." (Desert Arabs occasionally go to open-air movies, at which they invariably see Americans portrayed as either quick-shooting western cowboys or gangsters.) "I told them that you were becoming extremely irritated with the crying of their children. I said that I was afraid that if it continued one of you would simply come out, shoot the child, pay one or two hundred francs to the government as a fine, and that'd be an end to it."

After ascertaining personally that the children had not been suffocated, we abandoned ourselves to a whole summer of sleepless nights in which we all too often heard the choked-off cry of an Arab baby, only to wonder for the rest of that night whether it had been murdered because of us.

The Arabs, incidentally, were quite sure that we could shoot them with impunity, and for the mere payment of a fine of a few hundred francs.

The days in Tunisia were pleasant enough for the others, but I was not in the mood for them. I was unhappy, upset, anxious to be back in Paris, composing, regaining what I had lost. I kept thinking about Stuck's advice, the opera idea, the new German operatic renaissance, plus the constantly changing musical world which apparently had no future in any one place, and where one had constantly to be on the alert to learn new ways if one wanted to stay musically alive. Our companions in Tunis were of the jolliest, and the marvellous summer climate (curiously cooler than that of the French Riviera) had much to offer.

But we left long before the rest.

When we arrived back in Paris there was already a whiff of autumn in the air, although it was still only late summer.

Boski and I walked our beloved streets of Paris again, still hand in hand, discussing and rediscussing opera librettos for Germany. We even went to movies, but this only in the mad hope of getting an idea. We also asked all of our literary friends for ideas—but most of their ideas seemed much too literary, too “belles-lettres.”

At last, one cool autumn day, we both lit on it, commenced to write an opera libretto on a theme which we finally both liked. It was *Ivan the Terrible*. Yes. A Russian subject!

I went to work on the music almost simultaneously (also a mistake in opera composing), and it was not long before there were many pages in my new portfolio labelled “OPERA—IVAN THE TERRIBLE.”

I had no knowledge of opera construction whatsoever.

After I had lit into the third act of *Ivan*, however, I began to know that I had wasted much time. I would never finish this opera! Its libretto was wrongly constructed. Its arias began to have a neoclassic sound—imagine neoclassicism in early primitive Russia.

When I realized that it was an impossible project, I resolutely put the large parcel of manuscript in a drawer, locked it, began over again on a new opera, an American opera this time.

I wrote Stuck about my recent adventures; and soon afterwards he sent me a series of newspaper clippings of articles which he had written and published in his great Berlin newspaper concerning the sketch-plan of my projected opera, *Transatlantic*.

It now began to interest various German composers (who, incidentally, knew nothing of my recent plunge into neoclassicism and so still considered me a very interesting ultra-radical), and it interested the German publishers as well. One day, only a few months later, I was returning from a walk and pushed open the door of my apartment only to see an often-pictured chap hovering over the gigantic manuscript on my music desk.

I grew pale as I remembered that not only my own manuscript lay on that desk, but that I had also left a copy of *Jonny Spielt Auf* alongside that manuscript. The man who hovered over my opera was, undeniably, Ernst Krenek himself; I had seen too many photographs of him to mistake that; besides, I had once met him slightly at Donaueschingen.

He introduced himself immediately, and at that moment Boski entered, breathless, with a package of cigarettes, and a bottle of wine which she had hurriedly purchased downstairs at the shop next door while looking frantically up and down the Rue de l’Odéon to call me home.

Krenek had knocked on the door of our apartment in my absence, and Boski had let him in. He had brought a letter of introduction from Stuck.

I now read Stuck's letter; he said that he was sending Krenek to me because Krenek, of all people, should be best able to give me important pointers concerning the construction of my opera—which, indeed, it was now very much in need of.

Krenek now became perhaps the most classic example of how wrong I can be concerning German musicians. In Donaueschingen I had conceived the idea that of all persons on this earth least likely to give me a helping hand, this glassy eyed, apparently cold, almost disdainful Ernst Krenek would be the most likely.

Yet he did help me, and very greatly. This record is quite faithful. He sat down with me for at least four days, going over every page of my almost finished opera in detail, offering the most valuable suggestions, corrections, most of which I did not hesitate to accept.

From Paris he went on to Vienna to visit his publishers, the all-powerful Universal Edition, who had a virtual monopoly of the market on modern opera.

One month later (it was now late December, 1927) my opera was practically finished, at least in pencil sketch. Another man now knocked on my door, this time with a letter from Krenek—although his name was already well known enough to me to have easily dispensed with such formality.

This was the famous Dr. Hans Heinsheimer, director in chief of the theatre division of the Universal Edition of Vienna.

Dr. Heinsheimer at this particular moment was one of the most powerful musical figures in Central Europe. I will not say that he was the only one, but I will say he wielded the widest power. His word could more often than not "make" a conductor, an opera singer, or a ballet master. He was often deeply interwoven into the inner political structure of almost every Central European opera theatre. And his influence was not confined to Central Europe alone. The power of Universal Edition even extended to such far away places as the Argentine and the United States. But for all that he was a very nice young chap, more often than not using his tremendous temporary power for the good of modern music's development rather than to advance his own interests.

I believe that Heinsheimer has an important place in the development of "between the wars" music; for his business genius made a great deal of it possible.

To him, rather than to any other organizer in Central Europe, Germany owed much of her new brilliant opera renaissance—that of

the late twenties, lasting up to the time when Hitler wiped away all that was fine and progressive in that unhappy country.

This new opera renaissance was to produce such masterpieces as *Wozzeck*, *Schwanda*, Weill's *Threepenny Opera*, and any number of other fine new operatic works that will last long after the war and its complications are forgotten.

The secret of this new opera renaissance? One could over simplify and say that new opera was made as interesting as any other show. This simply made music-loving Germans love it better than the movies. It had to have good "book" (as opera composers say), a fine libretto, well constructed, with real musical ideas behind it—all in order to "knock 'em dead" at the final curtain.

The music of the opera itself could be as wild as Berg's atonal *Wozzeck* or as conventional as Weinberger's *Schwanda*; it was all one and the same to Universal Edition, just so long as it was talented and singable. But the "book"—that was Heinsheimer's province, and here he seldom if ever slipped up. The book had to be good, or *else!* Or else it was rewritten by Universal experts, and the music recomposed by the composer to fit the new libretto.

It was a system and, as such, not bad.

Universal contracts were given out on this basis. It irritated some composers. The attraction, however, of being published and "handled" by the great Universal Edition was so great as to bring practically every valuable or potentially valuable opera composer in Europe into the Universal fold. To be accepted by Universal meant that your opera would be performed!

And if by any chance composers didn't come to Universal on their own account—Heinsheimer simply went out and got them.

This is where I came in.

Or rather he came into our apartment in the Rue de l'Odéon.

He had come to fetch me into the Universal fold before Schott and Sons in Mainz should catch wind of my new opera.

Heinsheimer was a kind of musical *dictator*. It is a specific word. He would be the last to deny this. When he recommended a work to an opera house, and it declined, he promptly offered it another equally good work. If it declined once more, he sent one more excellent work to its conductor for possible premiere next season. But if the conductor declined once more, Heinsheimer didn't take it lying down. He remonstrated. He argued. He indulged himself in a large, patient correspondence.

Finally, if nothing came out of it, he never again gave that conductor first choice of Universal's best new operas for that season. The recalcitrant conductor could take the left-overs. Saddled with the pros-

pect of performing premieres of only second-, third-, and fourth-choice works, that conductor speedily lost his standing in the world of German conductors and, consequently, his job. The only competition which Heinsheimer faced in this regard was Schott and Sons in Mainz; they published the operas of Paul Hindemith.

That competition, however, was not great enough, nor could the first-class top-flight Hindemith produce enough operas to give Universal any serious run for their money.

The appearance of this smiling, extraordinarily young (he was only twenty-seven), and gifted Dr. Heinsheimer was, therefore, epochal. He wanted, of course, to see the opera, read its book, hear it played upon the piano and sung as well as I could sing it. He approved of the book as soon as he had read it; and I could see that he was hoping that the music would be good enough for him to accept the work for Universal.

We walked around to a local piano-practice studio, the like of which is only found in Paris. There, in a bare and freezing room, I played the opera *Transatlantic*, and Heinsheimer accepted it immediately and without further ado. We signed a preliminary contract, and he departed for Vienna.

I still had to orchestrate the work. If I finished in time, Heinsheimer had thought that he might even still secure a performance for it in April or May of 1928! This, of course, would be marvellous. What better comeback could I make, to the musical worlds of both New York and Paris, than a gala premiere of a new grand opera in the great opera theatres of Berlin, Frankfurt, Dresden, Prague? Obviously, none better!

And only one year after the double flops of April, 1927, one in Paris, one in New York!

I commenced the orchestration with redoubled energy. Orchestration demands, if anything, long hours bent over a work-table. I worked fifteen, seventeen, even twenty hours every day.

One month later, in early February, I became very ill.

We thought, at first, that it was a recurrence of my pneumonia of 1926; pneumonia often returns if the human constitution has not been permitted sufficient recovery. The year of 1927 had been for me a most difficult, irritating, heartbreaking one; first there had been the indifferent two-piano premiere of my piano concerto in Budapest, then the fiasco in Carnegie Hall, then the disaster with the piano concerto at the Concerts Golschmann—not due to Vladimir, but to me. Moreover, I had returned to a Paris I had never known and was by no means prepared to cope with, cold, distant, indifferent. The summer-autumn months of almost futile plugging at *Ivan* had, in all probability, not

helped. Finally, the composition of *Transatlantic* itself, first its book, then its music, now its orchestral score, had finished me. . . .

Ah, yes, I almost forgot, somewhere in between June and September I had also composed a new score for the Copland-Sessions Concerts; these well-known concerts were then just commencing in New York. Aaron Copland, sympathetic, and also understanding of the disaster in New York (he had been one of the pianists in the *Ballet Mécanique*), perhaps wanted to give me another if not greater hearing, and I was equally anxious to take advantage of this opportunity; so I had composed for him my *Second String Quartet*.

No one, except Aaron, Roger Sessions, and Donald Friede had ever paid the slightest attention to it, so now, finally, irrevocably, I knew at long last, that my name would be "mud" in New York for many years to come, this despite the new 1927 string quartet, this despite whatever I might now write, even my new splendid opera *Transatlantic*. . . .

I knew now what my future held, and often I felt like giving up altogether. However, my illness soon turned out to be influenza rather than pneumonia; it was also not too heavy an attack, but it did not permit my continuing with the orchestration of *Transatlantic*, so I saw my spring performance à la Heinsheimer-Universal Edition flying out of the window. I wrote him about what had happened, and he wrote back a very cheery letter saying not to worry but to bring it to Vienna whenever I was ready.

He would secure an even better performance for it for the following year.

I now lay back in my bed and dismissed the idea of finishing the orchestration immediately. I grew better; my influenza disappeared, but it left behind a hacking cough.

Also, unfortunately, it left a constant perspiration that seemed never-ending.

I lost weight, could not eat, became haggard-looking.

My friends, those wonderful people who were true friends all the time, now thought I had become incurably tubercular. I now remember these days only as one remembers a nightmare. I had no idea what was up, that this was what they were whispering about. I did not know that the idea of my having tuberculosis had so far advanced itself around the Latin Quarter, that a collection was now actually being taken up among the artists in order to send me out of Paris! Shades of Mimi!

For now, apparently, the point had been reached in my fortunes where all events and decisions were being concealed from me. My friends considered that I had been acting most queerly all through 1927. They knew little if anything about Heinsheimer or the opera situation in Germany; Frenchmen in general did not consider German artists, and Americans considered that Germany was still dead broke from the last



war, incapable of offering me anything interesting or recuperative in the way of musical premieres.

Finally, in their eyes, I had become ill of an almost incurable and very contagious disease. They hardly knew how to tell Boski and myself this. Another piece of bad news—for all they knew—might kill me.

The thing to do now, obviously, was to get some money, to handle me with kid gloves, get me down to some place like Amélie-les-Bains (a consumptive resort) with as little protest on my part as possible.

They were all fairly poor artists, and they meant very well.

As a matter of fact, I did not really realize the plot against me until some time after I arrived in Amélie-les-Bains. For finally, after one manipulation after another, I was prevailed upon to hie myself there.

It is a little village which snuggles up against the French side of the eastern Pyrenees. Everyone in this village walks around with a black parasol to shield themselves from the sun.

One day I discovered a man whom I knew. Curiously enough he was one of Paris's foremost music critics. He wrote for the splendid *La Revue Musicale*. He had not liked my music, but now we became good friends. Some days later I asked him in passing why everybody carried a black parasol.

"Because, like us, they are consumptive!" he said in amazement.

He had heard, previously, from Paris, that I had been sent down there for the same reason as he. Didn't I know about it then?

He was amazed.

So was I. I immediately went to a local doctor, but nevertheless a great specialist on tuberculosis, known the country over. I would spend the money I had been given to spend on my tuberculosis here! I had fallen upon stony times in this 1927, was in need of the money which my friends had thrust into my hands at the Paris railway station just before I came here, but I had then had no idea *why* it had been collected for me. Now if this money was to be spent on my tuberculosis, I would spend it just so. But quick!

Result: I was given a series of the most expensive tests on the specialist's books.

Afterwards he told me: "Whatever else you die of, you will never die of tuberculosis. You are simply not the type!" (His diagnosis was afterwards confirmed by the world's leading specialist in Vienna—I double-checked.)

Thereupon I returned to Paris in a huff. My towering indignation helped my health; the perspiration disappeared, the cough with it. I gathered up my half-completed orchestral score of *Transatlantic* and departed for Vienna without saying good-bye to anybody except Boski.

Boski, we agreed between us, would follow me to Vienna as soon

as I received my second part of the advance on *Transatlantic*; according to my contract I could only receive it when I delivered the score itself.

The third part was to follow immediately afterwards, provided that no further changes were needed.

It was spring when I entered Vienna; my already returned good health gave me a new vast feeling of optimism and freedom. I liked the opera which I had written, knew that it was in the line of my best compositions. Although it was a large work, it followed the true pathway which I had originally set for myself; it was "the dream" itself, especially in the last act. (As a matter of fact, I have incorporated a large section of this last act in my recent *Fourth Symphony*!) Gone was the hated neoclassicism which so unhappily had stuck in my ear since that first night in Paris. Gone, indeed, was Paris itself! Gone were many of the false friends, the fair-weather apparitions who, with the first coming of any storm, always disappear into the nothingness from which they had come. I regretted leaving only a very few: the artists of the Latin Quarter who had contributed their centimes; the courageous Vladimir, brave Virgil, penetrating Bill Bullitt—who, among all my friends, had been the only one really to see through this silly tuberculosis business, attempting to warn me in time. But I had not been able to comprehend the enormity of what they had been saying. . . .

I walked into the Universal Edition offices, where Heinsheimer, all smiles, greeted me, took over my *Transatlantic* manuscript, introduced me to Emil Hertzka, the "big boss." Hertzka, incidentally, had tremendous spreading whiskers like Santa Claus and lived in a secret inner holy of holies at the U.E. which few ordinary mortals and very few young opera composers ever penetrated. He greeted me with utmost kindness, and after I had played my opera for him (rather nervously), I had a feeling that I had just had a friendly, rather preliminary, but utterly business meeting with God.

Several days later Heinsheimer informed me that Hertzka had consented to my drawing out all of my advance if I needed it.

There would be no further changes as far as Universal Edition was concerned.

The money amounted to some 425 dollars.

I went out and sent Boski a money order. I knew that she was sitting in Paris without a nickel.

## PART THREE

### VIENNA

#### CHAPTER XXI

#### VIENNA IN THE SPRING

BOSKI and I were soon sitting at a Vienna café together, having, of course, that wonderful Vienna coffee with whipped cream, when who, of all people, should walk by but Ezra Pound.

"Hello, Ezra!" we yelled.

He saw us, came over and sat down. Not without a moment's indecision, however.

Ezra had walked out on my symphony concert in Paris. Moreover, his recent spotty correspondence continued to emphasize that I no longer knew what I was doing. When a fellow starts out on the kind of art Ezra Pound (the great Ezra Pound) approves of, he should stick to it—and not embarrass Ezra by suddenly turning to something else, just when Ezra has ballyhooded the whole world to his other side show.

I now explained to Ezra that I had written an opera; moreover, that it had been accepted by Universal Edition in Vienna. Which, in essence, meant that a big gala and first-class performance somewhere in Germany was sure, guaranteed!

Also I emphasized now that I was through with neoclassicism for ever, especially since my piano concerto. I kept batting it into his head that the symphony he had walked out on was not neoclassic.

We dropped the painful subject.

Ezra was on a vacation and wanted fun. His idea of fun (as we knew) was visiting literary people. He liked to torture them with what he fondly considered Whistlerian wisecracks.

I knew that he was up to something in his favourite line and braced myself.

"I suppose you mean let's go out and flay a writer?" I asked. I knew I was pretty safe in saying that, because I knew that very few writers Ezra admired lived in Vienna.

But Boski piped up quite unexpectedly: "Would you like to visit Schnitzler? He's some sort of an uncle of mine."

I considered this, decided that it was perfectly sane. First of all, Boski is a person who provides you with no more information than you ask for. I had never *specifically* asked her whether Arthur Schnitzler was

related to her or, for that matter, whether she was related to two or three thousand other playwrights, poets, or novelists. I was even amazed that she had volunteered this information, and for a moment I thought she was kidding Ezra.

"Oh yeah," I said. "Let's see you telephone him!"

"All right," she said. "Let's see if he's in the telephone book."

But Arthur Schnitzler's name was not in the fat Vienna telephone book. Boski looked up another uncle, Julius Schnitzler, the great Viennese surgeon and teacher of many of the world's greatest surgeons. She phoned his home and immediately obtained Arthur Schnitzler's private telephone number. Then she phoned him, and when at last he had been brought to the telephone, she said:

"Hello, Uncle Arthur, this is Boski!"

Neither Ezra nor myself believed for a moment that it was really Schnitzler.

"Tell him we want to come out to see him," Ezra called to Boski in the phone booth.

"I am married," Boski explained into the phone, "to a mad American husband who has a poet friend which is even madder. We all want to come out to see you. Will it be all right?"

There was some more conversation, and then we all got on a tramcar and proceeded to some far-off outskirt of Vienna. Then we got off and walked a few blocks to Schnitzler's house. A maid let us in and announced that Schnitzler himself would be down in a moment.

He came downstairs looking exactly like the photograph in *Vanity Fair*, a large, warm, roundish face accentuated by a heavy, dark beard. He looked vaguely like that eternal photograph of Brahms playing the piano smoking a cigar. He was about sixty-five, was dressed in a ski-ing sweater, and came down the steps three at a time, swinging his short, stubby self along by grasping the two handrails.

"Hello, Boski," he said.

"By golly," I thought, "this Boski is a rugged character. If I had been related to anybody famous, I would probably have blurted it out to her within the first hour of our meeting. But here I've known her for six years, and not a word!" (Later I discovered that she personally did not approve of Schnitzler's rather effete, polished style, although she liked him as a man and an uncle. In recent years, however, she has come to admire him more, at least understand him better.)

"Hello, Uncle Arthur," she said, and she introduced us. Uncle Arthur looked at us with sparkling interest. "So, so," he bubbled, "you've been living in Paris all these past six years—but I've heard that you and George were in Budapest last winter, or was it the winter

before last? Well, it doesn't matter. Now tell me," he continued anxiously, "what is going on in the literary world of Paris?"

"Well, there are the surrealists," I began tentatively.

"Yes, yes, the surrealists!" he said brightly. "Tell me more about them. Do you know them? What sort of fellows are Elouard, Aragon, Breton? I've just read a very excellent first novel of Aragon's. Do you know him?"

"Yes I do," I answered. It was true, Aragon and Breton had started to write a libretto for me, but had not finished it because the surrealist group had split into two factions, Breton heading one and Aragon the other. I knew Aragon particularly well, and described him. But I was thunderstruck, and so was Ezra. The sixty-five-year-old Schnitzler profoundly interested in the French surrealists! I didn't believe it! Schnitzler, having caught wind of my extreme reputation, was putting on an act. I decided to throw in a few probing questions of my own, questions designed to flush whether or not Uncle Arthur had read the surrealist novels he claimed.

Beyond question, he had.

This impressed Ezra too, so much so that he completely forgot the Whistlerian wisecracks he had previously formulated. He put his mental scenario back in his mental pocket and offered, almost humbly:

"I am a writer too, Herr Schnitzler."

"Ah so?" replied Schnitzler. He was the picture of the older successful writer beaming upon, and offering inspiration to, the younger but yet unsuccessful writer. "And have you published anything, Mr. Pound?"

"Seven or eight books," Ezra answered.

Schnitzler still smiled, remained charming, but was clearly incredulous. "What did you say your name was?—perhaps I did not hear it clearly."

"P-O-U-N-D."

"Oh yes, I've heard the name—somewhere. Seven books, you say. Well, don't be discouraged. I published at least ten books before anyone took any notice of me at all." (This wasn't, as both Ezra and I knew, true; Schnitzler was merely to ease the painful situation.) Let it be recorded, now, that Ezra took all this very well, for, from then on, he played with talent the part of the hopeful poet.

"But my books are well known, Herr Schnitzler; I am a well-known poet."

Schnitzler put this through the old meat grinder, ground awhile, but nothing came out. He shook his head.

"Well, there, you see," he said sadly, "I am getting old, out of touch with things." He paused a moment, then continued brightly: "And

now please tell me more about the surrealists; really, they are a *most* interesting group of writers!"

When we rode back to the centre of Vienna, Ezra said that the interview had not been satisfactory from his point of view.

As winter approached, it became more and more evident that Central Europe, in particular Germany, would enjoy the most tremendous opera season it had ever known. Moreover, new operas were being premiered everywhere, and the chances seemed reasonably good for my own. Germany was spending money like a drunken sailor, and no wonder.

She had made a profit of 2,000,000,000 dollars out of the Great War—a simple problem in arithmetic which even I was capable of figuring out: i.e., original reparations fifty-five billion, which was then kindly knocked down by the Allies to a mere eleven billion, of which she would pay only four and a half billion, while borrowing six and a half billion from some of the deep-frowning, important-looking bankers I had met in various salons in four capitals.

Heinsheimer now suddenly notified me that the Berlin Opera people were quite interested in my opera, indeed would probably accept it. They first wanted to discuss several rather radical changes, however. Heinsheimer was not sure that I should make such enormous changes, suggesting my visiting Berlin to talk them out of it.

"We here at the U.E.," he explained, "like the opera the way it is. Besides, I'd really rather place it in some other opera than Berlin, for Berlin critics always pan anything new—unless it has first become so accepted in the provinces that they do not quite dare. If we wait for a little while I think I can place it in Frankfurt, where young Dr. Graf works. He is, I think, either the best or one of the two best stage directors in Germany. So don't let them bulldoze you in Berlin. Stick to your guns.

"However, if they are able to convince you that they are right, well, Berlin isn't such a bad premiere at that. After all, we must also remember that Berlin runs the greatest opera house on the Continent, perhaps in the world—and we cannot yet be too sure of Frankfurt!"

I was confused, but planned to leave. I wanted to get out of Austria in order to size up the complex German situation myself.

Before I left Vienna my opera was printed. It was very nice to see it in fresh, crisp print, three hundred and twenty pages of it, piano score. On the front page it said *TRANSATLANTIC*, this in big, bold print. And below "Georges Antheil, published by Universal Edition." I wondered at the *s* on "George," but patted it just the same. Nice, nice piano score! (Every composer seeing his work in print for the first time feels just like this.)

The Russian composer-critic Boris Asafieff (pen name Igor Gleboff) happened to be in Vienna, *en passant*. He had looked at a copy of *Transatlantic*, bought it, decided to visit me. (Just in case you don't know who "Igor Gleboff" is, he is still the leading music critic of Russia, the fellow mainly responsible for the recognition of Shostakovich and in particular Prokofieff; indeed the latter dedicated his famous *Symphony Classique* to him.)

Gleboff looked as completely unlike a music critic as any I've ever seen, and I've seen many. His costume consisted of what seemed to be a Canadian mackinaw, riding breeches, leather puttees, and a fur hat.

I played *Transatlantic* for him—from beginning to end singing, as per usual, all the parts and ending up with a mild laryngitis.

After it was finished he said: "It is a young, powerful work."

He also mentioned that my libretto rather precluded its being done in Russia (this was in 1928, and my libretto deals semi-idealistically with an American election!), but that he felt sure that the authorities in Russia would be pleased to commission me to write for them another opera, but upon a libretto furnished by them.

He even mentioned an interesting financial consideration.

I asked Heinsheimer about it, but he was not much in favour of it. He said that no matter how much Russia agreed to pay me, I could not take the money out of the country. However, if the project interested me artistically, there was no doubt that Gleboff could swing it, as he was *the* musical authority of Russia, its veritable musical dictator.

I told Gleboff that the idea of writing an opera for Russia intrigued me greatly, and he said not to worry, everything could be arranged.

So he went back to Russia with four scores of *Transatlantic*, several of which, I have been told, he gave to public libraries.

(This incident may interest several critics who find that my *Fourth Symphony* reminds them of Shostakovich, especially in the middle of the first movement. When, in 1942, I was in the process of writing my *Fourth Symphony*, as I developed it, the thematic material seemed more and more to stem from the last pages of the final act of *Transatlantic*. This sort of stealing from oneself is habitual with composers; for instance, all of his life Beethoven kept stealing three or four favourite notes from previous compositions. As this seemed so much the case, I went further and made bold to incorporate several sections of *Transatlantic* into the *Fourth Symphony*; in fact, pages 18 to 28 of the score of the *Fourth Symphony* printed by Boosey-Hawkes are identical with pages 280 to 285 of the piano score of *Transatlantic*, published away back in 1928. Several critics have recently pointed out that this particular section is peculiarly similar to a section in one of Shostakovich's last symphonies; yet dare I be so bold to say, and prove if need be, that mine was written many years before, in fact, just somewhat before

Shostakovitch had written even one symphony, let alone seven. In any case, I am not going to change *my* style to please said critics: finders is keepers.)

Before I left for Berlin I received a letter from Trenton in a new handwriting, a rather large, childish one. "Dear Big Brother George," it said, "I hardly ever knew I had a big brother until you returned home last year. Now I think of you very often. When I grow up, I want to travel all around Europe with you."

It was from my little brother Henry, the one who had been born not long after Mother, Dad, and I had returned from Europe in 1911.

Mother had wanted another girl then, to replace my sister Ruth. She had even been a bit disappointed with having had a boy instead. A few years later, however, she got her wish when my sister Justine was born.

Henry had been charming from the beginning; we had all immediately taken him into our hearts, even though originally he hadn't been wanted. He was the beloved good son of our family.

I am afraid I have merely been the ornery one, the black sheep.

I had left home when Henry and Jus were both still quite small. Previously I had scarcely noticed them, particularly during the years of study with Ernest Bloch in New York, or during other exciting adolescent happenings in Philadelphia and Bernardsville.

Indeed, by 1926 I had almost forgotten their existence. But in 1927 I had found both of them almost grown up, wonderful and typical young American kids going to high school, riding about after school in their jalopy; vital and alive with young ideas.

Henry and I had taken to each other immediately.

I was his hero then. I saw him constantly following me with his eyes. And now he started following me with his letters.

Carelessly, I answered. I painted for him great glowing pictures of Europe, of the Vienna in which I was staying, of the Berlin for which I intended immediately to depart. . . .

He answered in his adolescent scrawl: "Dear Big Brother . . ."

## CHAPTER XXII

### IDEA AT TWILIGHT, OR ROCKS OF THE SIRENS

THE first thing I noticed when I hit Berlin was that good coffee was twenty-five cents a cup. Whee! The last time I'd seen Berlin it



was about twenty-five million marks a cup—or about three cents American.

Berlin was in the chips. Everywhere you looked there were new, expensive night clubs.

The electric lights were back in their sockets.

The red carpets, new ones, were down on the floors of the expensive hotels.

People had their brass doorknobs out again—whereas in 1923 you couldn't find a brass doorknob in all Berlin: people would just steal it in the night.

Everybody had a new overcoat. No more beggars on the street—1923 Berlin had five to a block. No more girls, ten to a block. Berlin was swanky now. Everybody was making lots of money.

I began to be troubled. At this expensive rate my money started to run out again. I wrote Heinsheimer about it, candidly, and he said, "Go see Kurt Weill and tell him I sent you."

I did. Kurt Weill, whose prestige at that time was terrific because of the recent overwhelming success of his *Dreigroschenoper* [*Threepenny Opera*], took me over to the Berlin Stadtstheater on Gendarmenmarkt and got me a job writing background music for a play they intended to produce shortly. It was called *Oedipus Rex*, based upon Sophocles, but with a vastly foreshortened text.

My commission carried with it a title, as most official German jobs do; I was (for a time at least) to be called "Assistant Music Director of the Berlin State Theatre."

I still occasionally like to tell this to my friends, especially when I feel they need to be unfavourably impressed. But actually my job was a cross between musical office boy and official patsy. If anything went wrong at the Stadtstheater it was usually my official fault.

The job produced plenty of money, however, both in the form of salary and royalties. But I had to work like the devil.

My job produced one situation possibly worth retelling. For a while, every day, I was actually commander of a small group of young German soldiers—real ones. The German State Theatre never paid for supernumeraries, but got them from the *Kaserne* (barracks) down the street. Young eighteen-year-old Germans, doing their "secret" two years of military service, usually delighted in this chance to abandon momentarily their present-day uniforms to dress up as Grecian soldiers in *Oedipus Rex*.

Our rehearsals were long, and so, in the intermission, they could mingle with all the chorus girls. (There was quite a mingling, too.)

I had now to train them in various choruses of a simple variety. This was where I came in as their actual official "commander." I was an official state employee, momentarily in complete charge of the State's

own theatre. I not only wrote the choruses for *Oedipus Rex*, but also trained the soldier extras how to sing them. (You can be sure I made the choruses as simple as possible.)

I used to feel rather amused when, on chorus-rehearsal days, the soldiers from the barracks marched up to the back door of the State Theatre and their sergeant turned them over to me, this with a snappy salute. I was their official commander then. If they had refused to obey me while they were in the theatre they would have been court-martialled.

The money earned by *Oedipus Rex* enabled me to wait out the period during which the Berlin State Opera (separate organization) made up its mind about my opera.

This would be a good place to make known that nobody in the world makes up his mind more slowly than does a Berliner—although he usually likes to think that he's the very soul of decision and efficiency. Should you ever want to see a Berliner about something concerning life and death, even to him, he will never be so mundane as to tell you to come directly to see him if, by any possible means, he can first make you telephone him three or four times at least.

Boski and I had a theory that the Berliners (in distinction to the rest of Germany) are so badly bitten by the Superman complex (mostly exemplified by mechanical gadgets) that most of them would wake up screaming every night if they did not at least have two or three telephones in their homes or on their office desks.

After I got the job at the State Theatre (now again don't confuse it with the State Opera, where *Transatlantic* was still being considered), I sent for Boski in Vienna, so she went through the same old routine of closing up the old apartment and hunting for another in a new city. But apartments in Berlin were very expensive.

At last we found one in Charlottenburg. It was furnished by a doctor and his wife who had a mania for skulls, so that every time we opened a cupboard or a box or a bookcase, a real skull, or a bone once belonging to a human being, fell out. We eventually managed to collect them all and dump them in a cupboard which we didn't use. But one night I stayed up, while Boski went to bed. Suddenly I heard her screaming loudly. I ran into the bed-room and saw her looking with eyes popping at the top of the wardrobe.

There, still undetected by us, was another skull, perched high and out of reach! And after another thorough search of the apartment we still found other human bones, including two more skulls!

Finally our Berlin Opera people said yes, they'd like to do *Transatlantic*, but wouldn't I change it? I said, well, that depended on the changes. They said it was a good opera, but it would be more interesting if the whole scene from modern New York could be changed to ancient

Greece. I said, "For cripes' sake!" and that was all. I wanted to quit, but Heinsheimer advised me to stick along for a while. So I countered them with other suggestions. They said they couldn't say until they saw them on paper. So I had to start sketching these changes on paper, appending them to my original printed score.

I stuck as nearly to the original score as I could; I hated to change the music with which I was well satisfied, besides, I knew that Heinsheimer would be sore as the devil if they had to print too much of the score over.

After months of this gruelling and unpleasant work, Heinsheimer advised me that he had a better offer from a fellow called Rosenstock, music director of some small second-rate opera house in Germany, who had just been appointed music director in chief of the great American Metropolitan Opera Company!

Heinsheimer suggested to Rosenstock that he do an American opera at the Met, a real one, and by an American, too. He showed him my opera.

Rosenstock looked at it, studied it, said it was indeed swell. (All this was reported to me later by Heinsheimer.) Rosenstock said that he would do it next season, subject, of course, to approval by the Metropolitan officials.

He anticipated no difficulty in this direction.

I did, though.

In the first place, try as I would, I simply could not induce my mind to jump over the hurdle of imagining my opera produced in the Metropolitan Opera, particularly not after the recent *Ballet Mécanique* concert. That was number one. Secondly, I inquired into the history of Rosenstock's extraordinary appointment as music director to the Metropolitan Opera. In German opera circles we had scarcely heard of Rosenstock until now.

Something somehow seemed rotten in Denmark. Was it? If so, what was it?

I wrote to friends in New York and discovered that Bodanzky, former music director of the Met, had resigned in a huff. Also that the Met publicity office was pumping up Rosenstock as the major opera-conductor miracle of the epoch.

"For Pete's sake," I now wrote Heinsheimer, "let's not waste any time. I have no doubt that Rosenstock is the nicest guy in the world and a fine conductor. But he hasn't made an overpowering reputation in Germany, like the New York publicity says. He's just a fine, competent director. So why all this? Could it be that Bodanzky is fed up with all the recent squawking he's been getting? Could it be that he resigned only to let them get another director, but another director not

as good as Bodanzky? Particularly a director who is not as good in, say, *Tristan and Isolde*.

"To permit him, for instance, to conduct *Tristan* on opening night?"

Heinsheimer, who more than occasionally thinks I am weak-brained, said it didn't matter as, anyhow, Dr. Graf, of the Frankfurter Opernhaus, was mightily interested in my opera, and Graf was the best directorial talent we could get for it. So, insofar as he, Heinsheimer, was concerned, the hell with Rosenstock. Only, of course, Dr. Graf also wanted a few special changes.

I should explain here that Heinsheimer operates on the good publisher's premise that three royalties are better than one. He now suggested that I make tentative changes in manuscript form (but not to be printed, of course) for (1) Berlin, (2) Rosenstock, and (3) Graf—that is (with a note of pity for my already almost exhausted brain), if they were not too extensive—in any case to make the changes for Graf.

Around this time I was working like a maniac for the Berlin State Theatre, making money, too, but the first thing I knew was that with all this multitudinous work my old post-pneumonia cough and perspiration had come back. And it was not helped by the fact that this was the coldest winter Berlin had known in sixty-six years.

So back to bed I went. But my morale was high. I had money in reserve and three opera conductors fighting for my opera. Reflecting on all this, I started to get palatial, decided to go to Italy in order to recuperate in style. I read plenty of novels about sick composers going to Italy or the Majorcas to recuperate, and who were they to be able to do what I couldn't do?

Moreover, "Sunny Italy," they always said.

So we got on the train and left for Italy—with *Oedipus* still drawing royalties from most stages in Germany.

I didn't know anybody in Italy except Ezra, and I knew of no small Italian towns except the one he lived in: Rapallo. I had previously written a good many letters to his address: 12 Via Marsala, Rapallo, Italy, and had developed a curiosity to see it. We decided to drop off there, at least for a while.

When I got there I saw that although Ezra and I had made up in Vienna, he was no longer as cordial as in the early Paris days. Still, he was better than knowing no one at all, especially as we didn't speak a word of Italian then.

Boski, who has a capacity of finding her way around in the strangest places, even if she has to do it through sign language, promptly found us a little apartment near by, also on the ancient Via Marsala (Road to Marseilles), right on the Mediterranean, with a cellar that opened out on the sea and housed a small sailing boat.

She was slightly disappointed, however, in not finding two pianos in the apartment, for, as she had breathlessly announced the good news of the new apartment to me, she had also said that this apartment had not one but *two* pianos! We found out eventually that the sign on the house advertising an apartment with "*due pianos*" meant simply that it was on the second floor.

We rented the sailing boat, and Boski and I sailed out upon the same seas as once had Shelley, and in which he was drowned. The British Fleet put into our small harbour that early 1929, and we sailed in and about it, getting to know many of its great battle wagons by heart.

Ezra now introduced me to a number of persons who habitually sat at the only free table of Rapallo's only decent restaurant, the Hotel Rapallo café. Two of them were Nobel Prize winners, William Butler Yeats and Gerhart Hauptmann. I had never even so much as met a Nobel Prize winner before, and now, every day, I could sit down with *two* of them and question them on all kinds of little mundane matters, such as what they were feeding their dogs on, had they read any good detective stories lately, etc.

All of them, incidentally, were voracious detective-story readers, including Ezra. When they eventually exhausted the local English lending library, I decided to write a detective story for them. I started it, and as it developed, chapter by chapter, almost every one of this august literary body took part in editing and correcting my grammar (which was hopeless). Eventually, through T. S. Eliot (then editor-in-chief of Faber and Faber), it was published under the title *Death in the Dark*, by "Stacey Bishop."

It was a poorly written but honest-to-God detective story, and the criminal was apprehended by glandular methods, too. I can understand to-day why Faber and Faber purchased the manuscript. Being a "first" in glandular detective methods was not as interesting to them as the fact that the original manuscript was full of copious corrections and footnoting by T. S. Eliot, Yeats, Hauptmann, Pound, and even Werfel.

I wish I could get that manuscript back!

The other two literary habitués of the long table were Franz Werfel and Emil Ludwig. Franz Werfel never talked, but just sat there and looked and looked, while Ludwig never looked, but just sat there and talked and talked.

Yeats was always getting messages from spirits. He was also a veritable expert on seeing ghosts in broad daylight—a rather difficult feat, as I am told by those who are authorities on this subject.

I saw quite a bit of Yeats now, because when he discovered that I was a composer whom Ezra had once written a book about, he conceived the gay idea of my writing incidental music to three of his

thoroughly Irish plays. (I did, finally, write music to one, *Fighting the Waves*, which he subsequently produced at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin.)

We would often sit together discussing our project, when suddenly he'd say: "Hello, William," and he'd tip his soft felt sombrero.

I'd follow his look and, seeing nobody within fifty feet of our table, I'd ask him, not without astonishment, where William was.

"Right in the chair alongside of you; he's the ghost of my indigestion," Yeats would say.

Yeats would sometimes talk quite a bit to William, and also other Irish spirits who had been kind enough to come all the way from Dublin to see him. Previously I had often visited Yeats at night, but now I developed the habit of seeing him exclusively in the daytime. Not being on such friendly relations with the spirits as Yeats, I hated the idea of walking home alone at night.

But I think I wrote him a good enough background score for his play. He seemed well enough pleased with it, at least in the introduction to his group of plays, *Wheels and Butterflies*, published by the Macmillan Company. *Fighting the Waves* was played in Dublin with notable success, and raving Dublin critics from then on decided that I was really an Irishman because the score (so they said) was so thoroughly Irish.

As a matter of fact, the secret of my success in writing such true Irish music is contained in the fact that Yeats's play is entirely about Irish ghosts. With "William" sitting there alongside of me at the café every day, what else could have happened but that William soon became quite visible and even audible, giving me not only most valuable tips on ancient Irish music, but also singing old Irish melodies (in a rather cracked voice, I admit) while I hastily wrote them down in my notebook.

And, too, I must not forget the day I was sitting at the Café Rapallo when I glanced to one side and almost choked on my chocolate. For there, most undeniably, sat a man I had once promised myself I personally would hang. Moreover, he knew my name and even smiled at me.

"You're George Antheil?" (He gave it a German pronunciation.)

I said (choked), "Yes, indeed."

"A friend of mine often talks about you," he continued kindly.

I looked at him thunderstruck.

"Not Hans von Stuckenschmidt?" I blurted.

"Most certainly," he said.

It was the former Crown Prince of Germany!

He was having himself a hell of a good time in Rapallo, what with one imported mistress in one end of town and another in the other end—his happiness only occasionally marred by the sight of the British Fleet!

I wonder if I shall meet Hitler some day under the same circumstances?

The cough and perspiration abated somewhat, but not enough. In

fact, one day I fainted right on the street and Ezra had to carry me to a nearby doctor.

I decided then and there that if I were to fall into such a bad habit I'd rather go somewhere where I could have somebody more dependable than Ezra to carry me to nearby doctors.

So we thought of Capri. We had a friend in Capri, a strong German girl.

We moved on, southwards, to the capricious island. Boski promptly found us a room in a villa, called the Villa Apollo, high up on the summit of a lovely rock looking down into the middle of indigo-blue Naples Bay.

But the ashy air of Vesuvius kept getting into my lungs, and I realized most definitely that Capri was not long for me—even though the German girl was very strong, blonde, and curvacious.

We thought with passionate nostalgia of our beloved Tunis, with all of its healing hot dry winds of the Sahara to dry out my damned cough.

We commenced arrangements in Naples for the trip to Tunis; it entailed getting new passports, visas, and all the rest of getting out of one country into another.

But before we actually left, I remember a most important incident—one that was to have considerable impact upon my life for at least three years.

One day I was walking on the south side of Capri, looking over to the Siren Islands—you remember? These are the islands where the sirens used to call over to antique seamen in the *Odyssey*, who, momentarily getting their minds off their job, would get themselves dashed against the siren rocks only to be eaten by the sirens—or at least so my classic dictionary says.

My mind that day was rather full of things antique anyway, because, in a belated copy of the Paris *Chicago Tribune*, I had just read an item concerning John Erskine's visiting Paris.

He had been interviewed there and had expressed his extreme interest in writing new opera librettos.

In another item, just beneath, it stated that John Erskine was president of the mighty Juilliard Foundation, an institution for giving money to worthy musical projects—such as producing concert pianists en masse, concert violinists en gros, and concert singers by the bushel.

*Also the Juilliard provided half of the money by which the mighty Metropolitan Opera Company subsisted!*

This latter item caught my eye.

I now sat myself down and wrote the eminent author, Mr. John Erskine, a lengthy letter about reading the interview in the Paris *Chicago Tribune*, and wouldn't he like to do an opera with modest little me on his favourite antique subject, Helen of Troy?

And as I wrote those last lines I gazed out of the window and looked at those damned Siren Islands, and I believe I could see sirens on them.

Later that afternoon I walked along the top of the hill, where I could get a better view of the islands, and some girls with no clothes on again seemed to be waving in my direction.

My idea in writing Erskine (at least in the beginning) was this: I was almost sure that the Metropolitan would turn down Rosenstock's plea for *Transatlantic*. And that, I felt, would not be right—because, as I figured, they would not turn it down for the right reasons, but because it was not an Italian opera. The Met, at that moment, was one hundred per cent Italian; and if you tried to speak English past the stage door, nobody understood you.

In writing this opera with Erskine I figured that I could educate him to the way of the modern opera, be a general good influence on him and—who could tell?—perhaps I could even help to persuade him to give the Met back to America.

Besides, frankly, I was getting rather fed up rewriting and rewriting *Transatlantic* scenes for this director and that. *Transatlantic* was a tragic opera; I felt, now, that my next opera should be a comic one.

And for a comic opera, what subject could be better than Helen of Troy?

Or, at least, so I thought then.

Boski and I moved on to Tunis, and from there we took an automobile trip to Kairouan, on the edge of the Sahara. We stayed in this hot, dry town for about a month, during which time my cough disappeared entirely. Then we took a small narrow-gauge train for Sousse, on the coast.

Kairouan is one of those desert cities which have a high wall around them—with guards in the watch towers. Its railway station is located a short distance out of the walled city. After our train had left the railway station the conductor, an Arab, came around and punched holes in all our tickets. One Arab, a Bedouin, wanted to murder him because he punched a hole in his nice new ticket for which he had paid a goodly sum. The train itself ran without brakes; it huffed and puffed up the hills and ski-ed down the other sides. The entire way to Sousse is very hilly, so we had quite an exciting journey—particularly as the whole trainful of Arabs always hooted and yelled with delight when we coasted down the other side. Most of them rode on the roof.

When we arrived back in Tunis we went to the Hotel Moderne, the first hotel we had ever stayed in, away back in 1923. A telegram from Heinsheimer was awaiting us. It stated:

AM VERY HAPPY TO REPORT THAT DOCTOR GRAF OF FRANKFURT HAS JUST ACCEPTED TRANSATLANTIC STOP MY HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS STOP HEINSHEIMER



(A week later I received a letter from him saying that the Metropolitan people had turned down *Transatlantic*, and that, accordingly, he had immediately placed it with Frankfurt, which was certainly the best performance it could have. I agreed with him utterly. *Transatlantic* would be one of the very first American-written *grand* operas to be performed in Europe. It was—I permitted myself to think—"a moment in American musical history!")

On the evening that Boski and I first read this magnificent telegram we got ourselves dressed in our best Sunday-go-to-meeting white clothes, walked out of our Hotel Moderne and down to the best outdoor café in Tunis!

And we got ourselves a bit "lit up"—in honour of this most splendid occasion.

It was my birthday, July 8, 1929, and I was just twenty-nine years old. I remember it as if it were yesterday.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### FINAL WALTZES IN THE PRATER

TUNIS became stifling in August. It was not always so, but it was so this summer.

We decided to spend the rest of our summer in alpine Chamonix, where it would be cooler. We managed to get back the same house we had lived in previously, and I started orchestrating the changes which had been agreed upon by Heinsheimer and Graf.

Graf is a top opera man; I liked his changes and agreed to them utterly. It is well that I did: they helped my opera tremendously—in fact, they might very well have been the final touch that later made it so acceptable to a knowing German opera public.

These changes, however, took me quite some time, during which I made one trip to Frankfurt, where I finally met Graf himself, played the opera for him at his house, broke his piano (I seem to leave a trail of broken pianos behind me), and left him apparently quite enthusiastic about the work and its forthcoming performance.

At this time I received a letter from John Erskine. He said that he would be most delighted to write an opera with me, and sent a sketch of a new story about Helen of Troy. This first sketch was swell. I was genuinely enthusiastic, and wrote him so.

He replied immediately and asked if I would come to America, if only for a week or two, just to talk things over.

Boski said, "Yes, why don't you? You could be there over Christmas week, and Mother and Dad would love having you home for

Christmas. I could stay in Paris, and Graf won't need you in Frankfurt during December."

(I wrote Heinsheimer, and he said sure, go ahead, although he told me to make no commitments to Erskine before he, Heinsheimer, O.K.'d the new libretto. Heinsheimer was always most suspicious about the librettos of all gents too intimately connected with belles-lettres, as he imagined Erskine to be. I set his mind at rest and prepared to depart.)

After I bought my boat fare to America and back I discovered as usual that we had less money in the bank than I had believed; we must have been spending money faster than usual—which was invariably the case when I was ill.

I now told Boski and myself that my visit to America would have a threefold purpose: I would also go to see all the people who I believed *might* be holding my precious and valuable paintings for me—and surely among all these I would discover the culprit who actually had them, although he might be claiming otherwise.

Boski said, "Sure, but don't forget to ask them, as we did the last time we were in America!"

I said, "How can I? There's no *Ballet Mécanique* concert now to upset my memory."

I boarded the liner *Bremen* on Friday, December 13, 1929. On a *Friday the thirteenth!*

We were only three days out when the biggest hurricane in the history of the Atlantic broke out. The *Bremen* lay hove-to on her heaving belly for three ghastly days, in mid-Atlantic. The waves broke over her; we were not allowed on deck, and the stench of people getting sick down below added a nightmare touch that was unforgettable.

The *Bremen* eventually reached New York. Slightly wobbly in the legs and with the sea still mentally heaving beneath me, I went to see Erskine.

He was sitting in one of the swankiest offices it has ever been my privilege to see.

We soon went out to lunch in a plush-lined restaurant conducted on the "silence" principle: heavy carpets, funereal waiters, expensive silverware. It was his treat.

He had brought the libretto—half finished—with him.

I glanced through it at lunch. It was already seventy-six pages long. Holy smoke! I had read it only skimmingly, but enough to see that Erskine was abandoning himself to belles-lettres!

Although it seemed rather unkind to say to anyone who had devoted so much high-priced time in an ultra-modern office of a great institution to my small affairs, I forced myself to say: "I cannot set all of this; it would run the first half of the opera to four and a half hours!"

"That's all right," he said. "I expected it'd be a *little* too long. I guess I got too interested in it, got carried away. I've always wanted to write a great poem like this, and now I've done it. I've been dictating a little of it every day to my secretary. You can cut it down, though."

"Why don't *you* cut it down?" I asked, hoping that he would rewrite it *in toto*.

"Oh no, *you* cut it down." He smiled right back at me, and I went away wondering.

You must remember that at that exact moment of history I was Musical Bad Boy Number One in America, and widely known to be ultra-recalcitrant and difficult; I did not wish to augment this reputation any more than necessary.

I figured that I would start a little of the opera for him, then find out that the job of cutting it down was just too much, find that I didn't get "the proper inspiration."

In other words, I planned to "go artistic" on him. (When legitimate device fails, I expect this of myself.)

But that afternoon I went down to the Metropolitan, and as it was still Gatti-Casazza's old Met (most definitely *not* the present nice brand-new Johnson-Herbert Graf Met), I was incensed beyond description.

I phoned Erskine—who, incidentally, had asked me for a report on the Met, this in the light of my general experience in Europe. I now reported that the performance I had just seen was one that in Europe I could not be dragged to; indeed, I knew of only one fifth-rate opera house in the suburbs of Ljubljana, Yugoslavia, yet capable of such "performance."

In short, I discouraged him mightily about the Met, in the process of which I remembered Rosenstock.

"What ever became of Rosenstock?" I asked. "I haven't heard anything about him."

"Oh him!" said Erskine. "He conducted *Tristan and Isolde* the first night, but it was by no means as good as Bodanzky's. The public was quick to realize it, and Bodanzky is now back, on his own terms, I believe."

I thought to myself: "After all, I have but one career to give for my country. Perhaps I can do something that will give the Met back to the U.S.A. I will write that opera libretto with Erskine of the Juilliard Foundation!"

Now composers who write operas merely to bust up unpleasant opera house situations deserve what they get. I did not write *Helen Retires* strictly to bust up the unpleasant situation in the Met previous to Gatti-Casazza's departure, but I cannot deny that the wish to do something about the old Met had something to do with triggering my final decision to finish the opera.

I now told Erskine that I'd been thinking about his new libretto, and that I thought I could cut it properly and that I would write the opera.

Then I went home to Trenton for Christmas.

This was the first time in my life that I really had a chance to get to know my young brother and sister. I was delighted with both of them, but with Henry particularly. He was a real American boy, the same sort of high-school kid I had been, although more level-headed. He was anxious to become an aeroplane pilot, to travel somehow as I had travelled.

I could see once again that I was his hero, the apple of his eye. It was a funny feeling of responsibility.

The family saw me off on the *Europa*, and I soon hit Paris again, where Boski was waiting for me. She was staying at the home of an English actress friend of ours, a pretty blonde à la Madeleine Carroll.

The actress had a little daughter from a previous marriage, aged six, but she had recently married again. The little daughter had taken the new marriage in her stride. When the new husband came into the house, I was not immediately introduced, neither did I recognize his status. I asked the little blonde girl who that man was.

"Oh, it's just George," she said.

"Who's George?" I asked.

"Oh, it's just the man who sleeps with Mother," she said.

I could not, of course, forbear going to see Sylvia Beach and our beloved apartment in the Rue de l'Odéon. Sylvia was very happy to see me, but she said that we could not possibly go up to our old apartment because she had rented it to the Crown Prince Norodeth of Cambodia.

"The Crown Prince of Cambodia!" I cried.

"Yes," said Sylvia, "but if you really wish, it is quite possible for you to see your apartment again. The young crown prince is an enthusiast of your music. He plays the piano very well and has been attempting to play your *Airplane Sonata*. I often hear him, above, playing the rolls of *Ballet Mécanique*, which, incidentally shakes the whole building!"

"I'd like to meet him," I said, impressed. The only crown prince who, so far, knew me by reputation was ex-Crown Prince Wilhelm! Here was a prince who was really going to be a king.

Sylvia called outside to a French detective pacing the pavement. He went upstairs to talk to the prince. "The French Government is scared to death about the young prince," Sylvia explained, "and it always has several detectives on duty outside, night and day. We've gotten to know them fairly well by now. This one runs errands for me."

"But," I protested, "for goodness' sake, Sylvia, our poor little quarters upstairs—they're not suitable for a crown prince!"

"The prince is very democratic," she explained. "He refused to come to Paris to study unless his uncle, the regent, permitted him to bring along some thirty other Cambodian lads; he's paying the expenses of all of them, and so he's living here in the same sort of Latin quarters as are they."

The prince now suddenly appeared through the side door of the bookshop. He was young, about eighteen, handsome, with clean-cut, rather sensitive features. He was dressed in expensive slacks and a turtle-neck sweater.

He seemed very glad to see me, was friendly as a puppy, and invited me upstairs.

I shall never forget walking into that living-room again. How utterly it had changed! A real Cézanne hung upon one wall, a priceless oriental carpet lay across our former humble floor! The piano, a Pleyel automatic, was a huge grand instead of my small upright.

Other small touches, quite difficult to describe, left no further doubt in my mind that here resided a real prince—for I, who knew this room so well, could sense the minutest difference between to-day and yesterday, between the simple objects in the abode of a poor artist and the mock simplicity of a young crown prince.

In payment for seeing my apartment again, however, I played him my *Airplane Sonata*, also several other pieces of the same period; and he invited me to visit him in Cambodia some day.

I never saw him again. I am not really terribly interested in crown princes, even though they know my name and play my music. . . .

Finally back in Vienna, we gave ourselves a fine time, something to forever remember Vienna by.

I remained a bit nervous about the opera's forthcoming première, of course, but Heinsheimer wasn't; he said it almost surely would be a success.

He told me that Stuckenschmidt, now critic of Berlin's foremost newspaper, had promised to come to the première. If Stuck liked it in print, he would be a most powerful factor in having it performed in at least one other opera house—the all-important "second hearing."

Stuck was now the rising young critic in Germany, and perhaps one of its most important; he had previously heard my own playing of *Transatlantic* upon his apartment piano (I broke it) and had liked it.

Dr. Graf was also quite enchanted with it by this time; so, I understood, was the Frankfurter Opernhaus music director, William Steinberg. So we were at least sure of getting a first-class performance.

Some critics probably wouldn't like it, Heinsheimer said, but then some critics always don't like something.

"The main thing is," sage Heinsheimer said, "we now have a fine showcase, called the Frankfurt State Opera House. It is a showcase in which your opera will be superlatively displayed. All the opera directors of Germany will be present, to look into the showcase. If they like what they see, they'll all play it the season following."

I did not show Heinsheimer the libretto of *Helen Retires*, as I did not wish to antagonize him with something so utterly unoperatic. When he questioned me about the new project I put him off by saying that the libretto wasn't ready yet.

As spring approached, Vienna was all very charming, a word I love to beat to death on occasions such as these. For one need only to close one's eyes to see Laxenburg, stately and placid in the well-tended Versailles-like gardens surrounding it. A veritable Watteau in the flesh—especially the flesh, pardon me, of the modern maids of Laxenburg, a place fraught with subtle beauty and delicious splendour. My, my, I must break away from this.

Evenings Boski and I often sat at a famous artists' café-on-the-street, called the Museum. It was well named because in it sat every well-known Viennese artist, painter, composer, or what not of the last generation, or even the generation before that. I have, on occasion, even seen Schnitzler and Richard Strauss there.

The Universal Edition was near by, so we often used to sit here to meet Heinsheimer and one of his girl friends (the current one) after he had closed his office. And go to dinner from there.

Usually we used to eat at a nearby restaurant called the Green Anchor. I am here to advertise that if Vienna should ever come to life again after this war, and you happen to be in Vienna, you should not miss going to eat at the Green Anchor. It produced some of the best cooking at the most reasonable prices I've ever eaten.

Viennese cooking, at its best, ranks with any.

The waiter who waits on you the first time always continues to wait on you—that is, if you become a *Stammgast* (regular customer). The one who always waited on us used to be very put out that I had no title. Heinsheimer, as one of the titular heads of a great music-publishing house, was, of course, "Herr Generaldirektor Heinsheimer." Practically all of our other friends at least had a title of "Dr." in front of their name, or some other official title.

But I? Finally our waiter decided upon "Herr von Antheil." As soon as I consented to this christening, the service at our *Stamisch* (regular-customer table) became superlative.

One of the pretty girls who always sat at the Museum café in the

early evenings was a girl by the name of Emmy. She had a cultural turn of mind.

Once she heard Boski and me discussing James Joyce, and she joined in. She had read Joyce (translated into German) and practically every other important contemporary. One day she even took us up to her apartment and showed us one of the finest modern libraries in Austria: Gide, Proust, Larbaud, Cocteau, Hemingway, etc.—all first editions, too. Some of the Austrian volumes were personally inscribed by their authors.

I mention this only because it absolutely and positively could not happen in France or any other place I know of; and perhaps it will give you a final idea of the real charm of Vienna, something otherwise indescribable.

Also, don't get the idea that Emmy was a pale, anæmic-looking miss; on the contrary she was red-headed, racy, very daring, very able to take care of herself in any company or any fight, mental or physical.

But she loved Gide!

Ah, Vienna! After Paris I love you best.

And then there was Georg Kirsta. Kirsta was a young, good-looking Russian, one of the best painters I've ever met; and, if you'll forgive my horrid boasting, I've met Picasso and can count Joan Miro and Pavel Tchelitchev among my very good old friends. But this Kirsta, a veritable god of painting, could "paint like a bastard," as the saying goes, only, of course, Georg was no bastard but the son of aristocratic and well-married Russians of another era. We met him first at the Museum café—I forget how; one makes so many friends without knowing how at such cafés—and he took us up to his studio, a squalid Viennese attic in the best artistic tradition. We grew so enthusiastic about his paintings that our friendship blossomed immediately—for Kirsta was undoubtedly hungering for the praise of Parisians who had actually seen modern painting, talked with Paris painters. He was very modest, however, merely claiming that he was the "best painter in the Fourth District of Vienna."

He had a pale white face with a trace of a sad, resigned smile, one single suit of clothes (always spotlessly pressed), and a wife he called "Kobalov"—a name which, I understand, means "little horse" in Russian.

Kobalov was not quite as young as Kirsta, but devoted to him, the "practical one" without whom, I am sure, he would have starved.

Kirsta was handsome in some strange ultra-upper-octave way that instantly struck a sympathetic chord in the hearts of beautiful women. For instance, quite recently, Hedy Lamarr was looking through our photograph album when she came across a picture of Georg Kirsta, and

she said, "My goodness, so you knew Georg Kirsta. Wasn't he handsome? He brought out something entirely motherly in me!"

"Think of that!" I replied in amazement.

Georg liked beautiful women, too, but in the most distant, helpless sort of way. For instance, we used to walk home every night through the Ringstrasse, past a certain light-opera theatre. The theatre had a sign in front of it with the picture of a beautiful girl; her name was Vera Salvotti.

She was the diva of this show, and she was really beautiful.

We used to stand there, the two of us, in front of this sign every night, while Georg sighed:

"Oh, the beautiful, beautiful Salvotti!"

And you would understand from the way he sighed that she was for ever and a day beyond him.

Still, the next time I was to visit Berlin (1932), I went to Georg's new Berlin apartment, and who was there, as his wife, but Vera Kirsta, née Salvotti.

Moreover, Kobalov, now divorced, lived in the very next apartment; the three were always together, and Kobalov seemed quite content with the arrangement.

This must have been around the time Kirsta aroused motherly feelings in the extremely young and extremely beautiful Hedy Lamarr.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### TWO GRAND OPERAS PREMIERED

WHENEVER I remember that wonderful first performance of my opera *Transatlantic* in Frankfurt-on-the-Main, I cannot escape the conviction that when Herbert Graf first read its libretto he was sold on it then and there.

For *Transatlantic* not only takes place in modern New York, has scenes in moving lifts, Childs restaurants, and the only operatic aria in the world which a lady sings in a bath-tub, but it is also full of revolving doors.

And, as anybody who knows the present stage director of the Met can tell you, there is nothing so dear to his heart unless, perchance, a whole stage revolving—or, for some time in the future, a whole opera house revolving.

In fact, come to think about it, it might even be barely possible that somewhere in his past Graf may have had a psycho-affair with a revolving door. For only recently I have seen a performance of *The Bar*, by Johann Strauss, directed by Graf, and everything was perfectly in



period (about 1840) excepting the entrance to the jail in the prison scene, which had a nice modern revolving door with glass windows!

All this does not mean that I do not consider Herbert Graf the greatest living opera stage director, *for I do!* Most emphatically! I do not use the word "genius" often and mean it, but I mean it now. I merely wish to point out here that inasmuch as he *is* a genius, he is also slightly mad in one specific direction, a direction which in my particular case was his Achilles' heel, no doubt.

Several times previously I have made special mention (in my peculiar egocentric way) of the fact that *Transatlantic* was one of the few American *grand* operas ever to be given *official* performance by a foreign opera house. This is quite true; although thousands of American operas have been written and hundreds produced, one might count those which have been legitimately produced abroad upon the fingers of one hand.

Consequently in May 1930 it was a bit more than unusual to see an American grand opera produced on the backs of the peasantry of Europe—in other words, upon their own tax money. Most (if not quite all) American operas previously produced in Europe were the result of the American composer or his friends walking up to the intendant of an impecunious company and saying, "How much would it cost to produce my opera in your opera house?" And forking over the amount plus beaucoup pourboire to the director.

Anybody who knew me then knows that I was a most impecunious young man; moreover, by this time most European opera houses were quite beyond corruption, or so nearly so that it would have taken quite a tremendous sum even to attempt to corrupt.

The German State Opera of Frankfurt was incorruptible; it *paid* to produce my opera, lock, stock, and claque; indeed, it even paid my expenses to Frankfurt.

Of course, in that May of 1930, the Hitler clique had not yet come to power; Germany was still operated by an extremely liberal government. As all of the opera houses in Germany were either state or city institutions, holders of important positions in them were invariably friendly to the political left; these ranged from near centre to far left, and applied perhaps less to music directors and stage directors than the "big boss"—the intendant.

My opera *Transatlantic* came to production at the very end of this wonderful liberal period of German music.

A couple of months later, in July, 1930, when Heinsheimer and I were sitting at a café table in Juan-les-Pins, on the Riviera, we heard for the first time of Hitler's slow but definite drift to power and his dictum. "When we succeed to government, many will be the heads that roll!"

This, of course, would be the signal for all the faint-hearted local governments to throw out their stout-hearted liberal managers; the local politicians, mayors, political job-holders sensed the growing inevitable power of the still small Hitler group and did not want to be caught short at the final reckoning with groups of left-wingish intendants in their some eighty-six city and state opera houses.

With the liberal intendants gone, the pruning of opera house personnel continued rapidly downwards, starting as early as late 1930 and continuing on through 1931 and 1932; so that by early 1933 (when Hitler did come into power) there were but few forward-looking opera directors or opera workers for the Nazis to dismiss.

The smart local political boys had, as always, cleaned house far in advance, had not been caught with their political pants down.

But the première of *Transatlantic* was actually a splendid success. We had twenty curtain calls—this speaks for itself. The audience was far too select (coming in elegantly from all parts of Europe) to be much influenced by paid *claqueurs*—if, indeed, any *claqueurs* were present.

By normal standards, therefore, *Transatlantic* should have had a long, happy life on the many German-speaking opera stages of Europe, especially the following season, as it was premièred at the end of the season.

Hitler's pronouncement of summer, 1930, however, utterly ruined its chances. After July-August, 1930, intendants would not in any case permit the performance, on German money, of the work of so dangerous a political personality as an American, so everything for which I had been building these last several years suddenly went up in smoke.

This brilliant new performance proved exactly nothing to New York or Paris, for it did not continue, and those places were in no mood to split hairs about me. Either I was a great success again or I wasn't, and there their interest stopped.

*Transatlantic* did not appear on a single German stage following the several performances at Frankfurt, and for this reason many music-minded Americans still consider that it was probably a flop.

It *could* have been barely possible that the success of the opera was due to the fact that it was positively replete with things that would make the staging of this work a veritable *tour de force* of directing. Graf absolutely loved the music, which he said was "truly operatic," but apart from that the whole opera was cast in "moving-picture technique," which means, in opera parlance, rapid action, lots of things happening all the time, and a plot you're breathlessly interested in. The last act took place in some *thirty* scenes upon a kind of a constructivist stage, parts of which could be blacked out or lighted as they were needed—old stuff now, but bright and new then.

The second act was almost similarly constructed; and the first act

started with a whole ocean liner entering the stage on the opening curtain. In fact, this ocean liner was the cause of a near catastrophe on opening night. Somebody backstage pressed the wrong button right after the opening curtain, thus starting to sink the whole great ocean liner right in the beginning of the opera—while the leading tenor was singing on top deck, too!

However, most fortunately, our bewildered stage hand discovered his mistake just in the nick of time, before completely sinking the liner and the tenor, and pressing the right button this time, raised the liner from the salty deep, with my tenor bellowing his lustiest to a crashing climax. It really was quite a hair-raising effect, and for a time I had to be forcibly restrained from including it in the following performances in Frankfurt.

Opening night was, of course, sensational in the extreme—at least for me.

I remember sitting there, in the smallish right-hand box, with the rather corpulent mayor and mayoress of Frankfurt packed in with me. I could not breathe without touching them. As the overture started, the house blacked out, and a huge American flag in colour was projected on the white opera-house curtain.

Then the curtain went up, and there was New York Harbour, with a giant liner edging in forestage, and the tenor singing *my music!*

It was a wonderful experience!

Then the liner began to sink, and my heart with it—but, as the tenor's aria began to climb to a climax, the steamship raised with it, up to its final grandeur.

The public was quite pleased right from the first, and the first-scene curtainlet got a hand which immediately indicated that the public liked this sort of goings on.

In the cabaret scene Graf went a little off. He had then not yet visited America, and conceived my gangsters as turtle-neck sweater boys à la the Bowery, *circa* 1870, although, of course, gangsters of our period were strictly dinner-jacket boys. But otherwise he did a truly remarkable job of capturing the American atmosphere.

Finally the opera came to an end, and it was a success.

I went out once with Graf and Steinberg, clasping each by the hand, then with Graf, then with the leading soprano, then with the soprano and Graf, then with Steinberg, the tenor, the baritone, and Graf, then with Graf, then I skipped a couple, then with the soprano, etc., ad absurdum, ad libitum.

Suddenly, down in the front orchestra seats, I saw all of my old acquaintances from Paris! Surprise, surprise! They had hired a special

train to get here! Ezra, Nancy Cunard, John Gunther, Billy Kaufman, Bill Bird, and about seventy others.

I soon discovered that they had arranged to give me a huge party after the show, had even brought down a genuine American coloured orchestra from Paris for the event, just to show me that they had always loved me, really.

As the frau mayor had arranged a little after-theatre party of her own, this at first promised to become rather embarrassing, I being in debt to the city of Frankfurt to the tune of my opera.

But at last all was solved when the frau mayor got invited to the American party and decided to come, bringing the mayor himself, the opera singers, Steinberg, Dr. Graf, and the rest.

I will not attempt to describe this party except to say that the Frankfurt contingent went away from it both extremely impressed (i.e., with the way Americans do things, for which my opera had prepared them) and frankly wondering. In any case, our whole Frankfurt contingent shortly thereafter became pronounced Americanophiles, and it is a fact that almost every one of the wonderful Frankfurt Opera personnel can be found somewhere in America to-day—and not in every case owing to Hitler's *force majeure!*

During the days of Frankfurt I had become acquainted with a man who looked exactly like Picasso's twin. He was Henry Simon, editor in chief and half owner of the great *Frankfurter Zeitung*. The *Frankfurter Zeitung* was then one of the four or five greatest newspapers in the world; the others being (according to newspapermen themselves) the *London Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Buenos Aires Prensa*, and the *New York Times*. This acquaintance was now to blossom throughout the years, finally to grow into a firm friendship and a long correspondence which, because it was always so completely informed, would help me considerably with my future newspaper work in Los Angeles.

Henry Simon had come to the première of *Transatlantic* and liked it; and, as his great newspaper had not panned it to any great extent (in fact, to the contrary), Simon decided to invite me to go sailing with him on the nearby river.

I accepted, naturally, but wondered if I would have to row. My palms were soft and unused to oars.

Fortunately his boat turned out to be a one-pair-of-oars arrangement.

I asked him what he thought of *Transatlantic*.

"Enough," he said, "to make me want to come over to that U.S.A. country and settle down!"

I looked at him with explosive amazement.

"You—in America?" I shouted.

"No," he said, "it is not really your opera which makes me want to come to America, but the things that are going on inside of Germany to-day. We here in Germany are now near the end. In one, two, or three years more comes the flood! Last night, at your opera, we saw one of the last gestures of a Germany that could have been but which will soon be no more."

I sat there in the wobbly boat, thunderstruck. This was to be my first personal inkling of the bleak general disaster that lay ahead, and of the fact that my own work in Europe was soon to come to an end.

After the opera was (as we then all too wrongly and fatuously believed) *successfully* launched, Boski and I decided to celebrate June 13 "properly."

You may remember that this was the anniversary of our entry into Paris. So, naturally, we had to celebrate it in the proper locality. We timed our arrival back in Paris exactly on June 13, as it had been seven years ago. Again I planned it, notifying just a very few of our best friends in advance.

Paris had not been mine since that gloomy autumn day in 1926 when our train had left for Chamonix. But now it would receive Boski and me royally again, even if I had to plan it in advance.

Paris did receive us royally.

Leger, the painter, and Brancussi, the sculptor, came together to our hotel and took us out to dinner at a restaurant located right in the middle of the Vélodrome, where the six-day bicycle race was just then in progress. They beamed at us all during the dinner. Little was said.

It was our own Paris again! Boski and I looked at each other, and the tears welled in our eyes.

Speechless, we wandered back to our hotel that night, hand in hand, our hearts full of nostalgic memories. It was past midnight, but the balmy spring air made us both feel as if we were nineteen and twenty-three again. We who were only twenty-six and thirty!

We walked in the old streets we knew so well, every stone. We looked at the old street lamps. Here, on this corner, Boski and I had once quarrelled, and I had not gone home all night—roaming the streets until five and returning to find her equally sleepless, hollow-eyed.

We had flown into each other's arms then!

And now it was seven years later—and not much to show for it excepting that somewhere near the end of my opera I had at last written a music nearer "the dream" than ever before!

When we returned to our little hotel I found a special-delivery note from one of the Shubert brothers (darned if I know which!), asking me to visit him in his swanky Right Bank hotel the morning following.

Out of curiosity, I did so. (I am sorry to say that I do not remember which of the Shuberts it was.) He immediately congratulated me on the success of my "show" in Frankfurt, which had been most sympathetically reported by friend Billy Kaufman in the *Paris Times*.

Shubert was apparently interested in the twenty curtain calls.

He wanted to know whether I would "sell" my "show" to the Shuberts for immediate presentation in New York.

"But, Mr. Shubert," I said, "you are kidding! You've never put on a real opera. Would you allow me to stipulate who should direct—"

He interrupted me: "What did you say—an *opera*?"

"Yes," I said, "*Transatlantic* is an opera."

"You mean . . . a play where actors sing all the time instead of talk?"

"Yes, sir," I answered proudly, "a real *grand* opera, with giant choruses, grand symphony orchestra, everything. . . ."

"But the twenty curtain calls, the American election, the chorus girls . . .?" He simply didn't get it!

"All part of a modern opera," I said blithely. "Why shouldn't opera be as exciting as operetta? It used to be. Why, when opera first commenced they had everything, tight-rope walkers, girls, tumblers, hootchy-kootchy, and the kitchen sink."

"But opera, opera . . ." He mouthed the word at first flatly, then tragically. "And it was such a success, too." His face took on a funny look. He turned away.

It was all a great disappointment to him.

A few years later the Gershwins and their wonderful librettists put on a semi-opera called *Of Thee I Sing*. Like *Transatlantic*, it centred around an American election, and in much the same manner. But, as with my supposedly "Shostakovitch style," I should meekly like to re-emphasize here that *Transatlantic* did not come *after* but *before* *Of Thee I Sing*. I know that for doing so I shall doubtlessly be criticized, but as it is the truth and as every composer owes his "children" at least this much protective squawking, I must mention it just this once. (Otherwise why write an autobiography?)

After all, "Antheil Always Gets There First"—that is, of course, when he doesn't get there second; but even then he files off the engine numbers, alters the body, repaints so thoroughly that even its owner wouldn't know the stolen item.

Here we were in Paris again sitting daily at the Café du Dôme and everything; and, of course, the fields are always brighter where you aren't, so we now decided to go on to the Riviera.

There were several attractions in this section of France. For one, Heinsheimer would spend his vacation in the vicinity of Antibes,

having previously hired a house big enough for a whole family. He had invited Boski and me to come down for the summer if we wanted. He had also invited the Czech composer, Jaromir Weinberger, composer of *Schwanda*, and he had accepted, too.

Moreover, Linkey Gillespie, Jr., was holding court in Cagnes, near by.

At this moment of my life I was very uncertain about two things: first, whether or not the gathering Nazi clouds in Germany were going to continue; secondly, whether or not I should compose the music for the *Helen of Troy* opera libretto which I had now received *in toto* from Erskine.

I reasoned thus: Heinsheimer had a very keen mind on European politics, having demonstrated to me his uncanny ability to analyze current political situations on many previous occasions. Weinberger, on the other hand, had a very keen mind on opera. He had only recently written the most successful opera ever produced.

Now (1) if Hitler was really going to come into power in a year or two, Heinsheimer would know it—and so (2) I might *have* to write *Helen Retires* almost whether I liked it or not, in order to beat my capricious way back to America—for which unpleasant decision Weinberger's final opinion on the libretto might be most instructive.

Moreover, I was hindered by a personal myopia—a new myopia. I now rather fancied myself as a gifted embryo opera composer, and the idea of composing anything of less volume than grand opera nauseated me. (I do sell myself on ideas rather thoroughly at times.) I had to have “scope” in my new compositions.

If Hitler was going to ease himself into Europe, easing me out, I had better plan to ease myself back into America (where my name was still mud) by an opera that would be played in America!—via one of my only two remaining possibilities: (1) the Juilliard School or (2) the Curtis Institute. Both Juilliard and Curtis then performed new operas, often giving them quite decent send-offs—considering that these schools employed only non-professional students in their productions.

The Met, still under Gatti-Casazza, I considered immediately impossible for *Helen*—although it did not need to be for ever—and the possibility of ridding the Met of Italian government was also a thought ever uppermost in my mind!

The Curtis, under my friend Mrs. Bok, *might* have done a new opera of mine several years before 1927—but Mrs. Bok, having previously sent Josef Hofmann up to my *Ballet Mécanique* concert to report on it personally to her, and having received his report, was momentarily most suspicious of me artistically, if not personally.

I prayed (with many others) that Hitler would not get into power. I did my praying in midsummer 1930, but to no avail. I remember well

that Heinsheimer, Jaromir, Boski, and I sat over a dinner table one summer night, and Heinsheimer suddenly said:

"I'll be damned if I don't think that bastard is going to make it."

"What bastard?" I asked, although I knew.

"Hitler," he said, and plunged into dark silence.

The next morning I drew Jaromir Weinberger aside and asked him to do me a great favour. I wanted him to read the libretto of Erskine. I considered the Erskine libretto an ace in the hole, albeit a rather faded ace.

By this time, incidentally, the libretto had gotten utterly out of bounds, blown up into three hundred pages of very fancy poetry, in any case completely out of line with the original idea he had sent me.

Erskine had simply loosed his soul into these pages, written it in life-blood instead of ink. He had gone completely "artistic" on me!

I gave the libretto to Weinberger with the caution to tell Heinsheimer nothing about its existence.

Weinberger, suspicious of such bulk in an opera libretto, took the three hundred pages as if they had been dusted with the bubonic plague.

He read it the following day. Later, pushing it disgustedly into my hands, he said: "Send this back to John Erskine!" (The rest will be unprintable until a more open-minded era.)

As I seemed to have got myself into an awful jam, I again wrote to my dad. His advice (1) "always wear your best overcoat" had helped me to get over to Europe and made for a successful career as long as I stuck to it; (2) "never wash the dishes" made for a happy married life. Maybe his third bit of advice would get me out of my present predicament.

But his answer came saying he didn't remember, either.

Heinsheimer, knowing nothing of all this, wanted me to compose an opera to a libretto by Lion Feuchtwanger, leading German novelist and dramatist, and was in correspondence with Feuchtwanger on this subject.

It would have been a swell idea.

Wiggling as hard as I could in order not to make a final decision on *Helen Retires*, I once again bethought myself of my valuable paintings. They must be worth at least 10,000 dollars by now. I racked my brain trying to remember the name of the friend I had sent them to. Half-heartedly I wrote a letter to just one more possibility, but the answer was the same. He had never heard of them.

So the die was cast.

In autumn 1930 I began to work like a demon on the libretto of *Helen Retires*.



(I am sure that my goddess, Aphrodite, frowned upon my project, for Helen was her daughter. . . .)

I cut the script, rewrote my music, put in new stage directions, tried to gain action, sweated over the opera.

Sometimes it even seemed that I was succeeding.

But I was unrelaxed, over anxious. I defeated my own end. I overwrote instead of underwrote.

I wanted so much for the music to "save" the libretto, so to speak, to carry it over final hurdles by its sheer music, its sheer momentum, its sheer impetuosity. . . .

The thing simply accumulated too much music.

Operas, however, are made of words as well as music. Perhaps mostly of words, but at least the words come first, the music second. If the libretto doesn't have action, drama, the feel of theatre, then the music simply becomes an oratorio, a cantata, but not a real stage work.

*Helen Retires* was, in its basic structure, no stage work. At best it was a poem to be printed, read and laughed with, and enjoyed by those who love metrical spoofing at the ancient Greeks.

Had I but had the sense to compose to this amusing verse some Viennese waltzes!

So, naturally, when *Helen Retires* was given at the Juilliard School in New York in early 1934, it was a gigantic flop. During the rehearsals Erskine came in and insisted upon pruning away a lot of the orchestration because it obscured his words. He said that now, when he actually saw *Helen Retires* up there on the stage, he suddenly realized I had cut down his libretto wrongly.

I had left in, he said, the worst parts and cut out the best.

Just before *Helen Retires* was officially performed, I knew that the thing I had most worried about was true—the opera lacked action. People stood around on the stage like a load of bricks and yapped, yapped, yapped. No dialogue on earth could be *that* funny, especially when sung instead of spoken.

My stage director, the gifted but strong-minded Frederick Kiesler, came into the proposition too late, immediately put many of my already most immobile characters behind surrealist hunks of board, behind which they had, as best they could, to walk and sing. The opera, already seriously deficient in action, now had every remaining bit of action operated out of it.

Indeed, in the all-important last act Kiesler had even hung Helen on a suspended platform in the middle of the stage, where, if she so much as twitched her right toe, the platform would rock like an earthquake, threatening to spill her.

The result was inevitable. The opera had not a breath of action.

Later Erskine published *Helen Retires* as a long poem for all and sundry to judge as a piece of literature.

In all fairness, perhaps, I should some day publish my score of *Helen Retires* as music without words.

In any event, Gatti-Casazza and an exclusive management at the Metropolitan Opera were dismissed during this period.

I learned a good deal from *Helen Retires*.

And, so far, nobody can accuse me of not sticking to what I've learned. Some few years ago one of our most eminent and admired-by-me novelists practically begged me to set one of his novels to music—"It will be the first real American opera," he explained. In order to clinch his point he took me to the opening night of a stage dramatization of that novel, although I was very unsympathetic to "stage versions." I saw the thing through, however, and as the curtain fell on the last act, I turned to our great novelist and said:

"I'm sorry, but I'm certain your novel hasn't real stage value!"

The play Erskine Caldwell and I had just seen was *Tobacco Road!*

## CHAPTER XXV

### THE DISSOLVING FISH OF EUROPE

AND now? But first let's roll back the film to Antibes, summer 1930. Let's put it through the projector again, but this time a little slower.

Certain details might otherwise be lost and, accumulatively, they're important.

When Heinsheimer and Weinberger went back to Vienna, we decided to move to a nearby Riviera town, Cagnes-sur-mer. It was the town in which Linkey Gillespie, Jr., was currently holding his rather frowsy salon. Moreover, and to clinch matters, we discovered that "Cagnes-sur-mer" literally means "Bitchtown-on-the-sea," which seems such an attractive name. Boski said that it was the sort of place a girl would feel absolutely at home in.

To look at it from a distance, the town is as cute as a bug. It perches on a hill-top right alongside the Mediterranean. Little multi-coloured houses creep hopefully up it, only to be frightened and stopped at the very summit by the grimmest of castles; which is not peculiar, for the Grimaldis used to live there, whence the word "grim."

The town is also charming to enter, and we were absolutely gone on it when we were shown a house we could have, Le Planestel.

I shall always remember Le Planestel. The boys and girls who buy ancient Dutch farmhouses in Pennsylvania and renovate them would take one look at Le Planestel and jump into the Delaware. For nothing like that will they see again. Imagine a four-hundred-year-old stone house with a large garden surrounded by one-thousand-year-old walls nestling right up against a castle on a hill overlooking the blue, blue Mediterranean! The garden is full of fragrant orange and lemon trees. It has two views, one of the sea spread out below, and one to the side with a panorama of a snow-tipped chain of Alps. When the moon comes up in the twilight, it comes up plumb out of the sea. The climate is mild and sunny, even in winter. The town itself cannot be altered on the outside by law; it looks exactly as it did five hundred years ago—but inside wise foreigners (like ourselves) have installed bath-rooms, electric refrigerators, gas, electricity, short-wave radio. It is a dream of a place.

After we had moved in, I worked in the garden every day, writing on a new opera libretto based on Voltaire's *Candide*; I wanted to have something ready for a new opera for Germany—just in case Heinsheimer's hunch about Hitler's coming into power turned out wrong.

The other inhabitants of our new village came to see us: Linkey and his coterie, various well-known and less well-known English and American painters, writers of all nationalities but French, and just plain remittance men, from all the climes in the world, anxious to live in the proximity of art and artists. Renoir's sons, who lived near by in their father's old house, came over to see us, too. It all began to feel extraordinarily like Paris, only nice.

We gave a house-warming party. Peggy Hopkins Joyce came and immediately got into a heated argument with one of my guests, a bearded American painter. She ordered me to throw him out. I did not, because he was bigger than I. The argument had centred around whether he or Peggy had had the better education, in grade school. She finally forgave my lack of gallantry, however, and invited me to her own house on the sea. Now you can shoot me for a wooden duck if it wasn't called "The Doll's House." During the first half of the evening she played phonograph records. During the second half she relaxed into her famous royalty mood. This is an astute and apparently informed comparative analysis of the flirtatious instincts of some European royalties, past and present.

Which reminds me that you are now reading the words of a man who once carried the largest known diamond in the world. I even *touch*ed its beautiful owner, Peggy Joyce, not once but three times. I carried it (the diamond) for about five or six blocks. (Of course, there were a number of detectives on each side, just to make sure I didn't make off with it; I probably would have if I'd had the opportunity.)

It was in a little oblong box, about five by seven inches, encased in expensive pigskin. I can remember every detail, which just goes to prove what an impression this event made on me. I carried it very carefully, only dropping it twice and stumbling over a kerb-stone once. To my surprise we encountered no organized hold-up, no international crook attempting to seize the bauble.

Among other notables who used to come up to Le Planestel was Jimmy Walker, ex-mayor of New York. He and I used to play our compositions for each other. If anybody is interested, Jimmy Walker was particularly enthusiastic over Weill's surrealist opera, *Mahagonny*; he even learned to play its mad aria, the *Moon Over Alabama* song, and would sing and play it on occasion.

Otto Kahn came up several times, too, thereby pushing my Cagnois financial standing up considerably. Actually he came to see me only because he liked to talk about opera, not an international loan. He came up in a limousine that looked like a hearse, hopelessly tying up traffic on the extremely narrow Cagnois street leading up to my house; no Frenchman will move when he sees a moving hearse. When Kahn stepped out of the car, he looked every inch the famous international banker.

As for *Helen Retires*, I couldn't seem to get started. Cagnes is a difficult place to work in—it is so gay. Anything now served as excuse to postpone *Helen's* commencement. Joyce wrote and asked me to set "chamber music." I did. I felt I had to finish a libretto of *Candide* because, soon, I would have to go to Prague for the première of my new *Capriccio*, and on the way there I would stop over in Vienna to talk with Heinsheimer. I finished it in time for the trip, but when I arrived in Vienna, Heinsheimer was more despondent than ever about the future of Germany. It was only 1931, but he knew that the cards were now hopelessly stacked against us.

"I see only black, black," he said. "Plan to hole in over in your own America for the time being."

On the way back to Cagnes I stopped over in Vienna once more, where I encountered Emmy sitting at her customary table at the Museum café. But now she had with her a portfolio with a great sheaf of manuscript inside; she was, she said, in the process of writing her memoirs which, she hoped, would bring her a fortune.

"It will include the most famous names in Vienna," she said, and I gathered that the manuscript was already making a living for her; not in the including of names, but in the excluding.

"I am going to write about you, too," she said merrily.

I felt as if a music critic were suddenly threatening to review a mediocre concert of mine, played poorly and several years ago.

Finally I hit Cagnes again, and once more found myself faced with *Helen Retires—to Be or Not to Be?*

In further procrastination I tackled some other things in the meantime. I made a concert version of my old first half-finished opera, *Ivan the Terrible*—futile task! (It has never been played!) I wrote some more songs and a duet for violin and cello. The rumba rhythm began to strike my fancy, and I wrote a whole folio of South American and Antilles music, calling it *Archipelago*. A book of Max Ernst's pictures, called *The Woman with a Hundred Heads*, happened to become the book I would most often see at my bedside, so I wrote one hundred short piano preludes to illustrate it—later these were to be used by Martha Graham to make her *Dance in Four Paris*, a surrealist-psychoanalytical ballet—probably the first of another trend.

One evening in Cagnes I met an American painter by the name of Ross Sanders. Everybody called him "Sandy." He had been an ace in the Royal Flying Corps during the first World War and had a string of decorations that would give you a headache. (They gave Sandy a headache.)

Almost every Frenchman old enough to know anything about the last war knew his name; it was a household word in France.

He was long, lanky, quiet, mild, had a great scar across his forehead, and his skull was reputedly reinforced with metal—the result of some crash or another.

Sandy was the mildest person I've ever met. We got to be good friends one evening when he took me up to his shack ("the studio") to see his paintings. The paintings were, exclusively, of ectoplasmic creatures, miasmic ghosts, being floating in a half-formed spirit world. Sandy showed them to me by the light of a flickering candle. I almost fainted—my nerves are not too good after midnight anyway. I protested that the paintings were "absolute knockouts," which, indeed, they were. He construed this as the highest of compliments.

We constructed a telescope, spent a part of each evening in looking at the stars, the other tipping a table. Sandy liked to bring up various spirit conversationalists who were very good friends of his. He had one friend in particular who used to communicate with him in purest old Persian of the fifth century—all of it phonetic. Sandy took it down, sent it up to Paris to a very authentic Persian scholar he knew, from whom it came back as from the laundry, neatly translated into colloquial English.

Once the old Persian even instructed Sandy to send the Persian translator a larger remittance.

Sandy's paintings have their historical place. I've seen later Dali.

I believe that somewhere along the line of that past decade Dali must have seen Sandy's paintings.

Sandy and I occasionally took a trip northwards to the best restaurant in the world, Restaurant des Pyramides in Lyon, two hundred miles away. In Sandy's rattletrap antique Fiat, however, it was an all-day trip, but this sort of all-day bouncing gave us the appetite we needed at night. We used to go to this Restaurant des Pyramides two or three times a year, just for a single meal.

It boasted a menu as thick as an encyclopædia. If you had insisted upon broiled humming-birds' tongues I'm sure you could have got them—they must always have had a quart or two of them in the ice box.

They also possessed incredible wines. I am not specially a drinking man, for hard liquor does not easily make me drunk—but good wine does. Once I woke up in a strange room, and it took me the longest while to reassemble such simple facts as that my name is George Antheil, that I was in Europe, etc. Moreover, as I looked around me, I discovered an utterly strange female in the bed. Not bad-looking, either! However, I was so sleepy I might easily have dropped off to sleep again had it not been for that trunk near the bed—it *seemed to move!*

Of course, in that state of health this shouldn't have surprised me, as, for that matter, the ceiling was spinning like one of Dr. Graf's *décors*. But that trunk! Suddenly all of me became tense—the *movement was inside of it!* There was somebody inside! Shifting his or her weight! I was not too alarmed (oh no!)—only curious.

When curiosity grips me I cannot go back to sleep.

I had to open that trunk!

And I did! A huge real snake's head came out at me, gliding swiftly! Unnerved, I broke and ran, although I was rather *au naturel* at the moment. I ran out into the street, where the police caught me.

Sandy later rescued me by virtue of his famous name, enormous decorations, and (mostly) glib tongue.

Although the tail-end of this story does not properly belong here, I must hasten to tell you that I accidentally met this girl again in Paris, about a year later. She was not at all friendly.

"Do you know, idiot, that you were the cause of my being thrown out of that hotel! It is not permitted to keep a snake charmer's pythons in French hotels—but the patron would never have known, had you not been so inquisitive! Furthermore," she continued with mounting rage, "my husband was very indignant about your sleeping with me! If you hadn't run out on the street stark naked he would never have known!"

I said that I was very, very sorry and offered to do whatever I could to rectify things. She said that I could not do very much at present,

because she was riding in a girls' team at the current six-day bicycle race and was in strict training.

Seven days later I visited her and saw that she always kept her bicycle (when not in use) on the ceiling, drawn up there by a neat arrangement of ropes and pulleys. It was the first thing she looked at in the morning and the last at night; and she was a girl with very nice muscles and a very trim waist.

Boski left for America that winter on passport business, so Sandy and I determined to see whether there were secret passages from our cellar underneath the garden or not. As I walked in the garden, I had heard hollow reverberations beneath.

There were. One went down the hill we knew not where, and the other broke out into the cellar of a house just across from our back garden. This second passage interested me, as it led into the house of an elderly gent, a Frenchman, who resided in Cagnes with two absolutely delicious girls, one a blonde, the other a redhead, and anybody who has ever lived in Cagnes will vouch for it. He had enormous handle-bar mustachios and wore puttees, like De Mille. Sometimes he even carried a riding whip. Simon Legree never gave us ordinary Cagnois opportunity to meet his girls, although, on each and every occasion, he made supreme effort to lure our Cagnois belles to his house. Plainly, just a r-o-u-é.

My coming back to Trenton for the summer of 1931 was quite like old family times. As in 1917, I had a minimum of expendable cash. Boski and I lived with my parents. (The shoe store below us was still called "Antheil's—A Friendly Shoe Store.")

My brother and sister were now eighteen and sixteen years old respectively. They were charming, good-looking kids, utterly American. Up until this summer I had only known them as semi-grown-ups; I had noted them during my short visit in 1927, and the still shorter one in the winter of 1929. We now had a wonderful chance to really get acquainted, and we did.

I continued work on *Helen Retires*, for I wanted to have something to show Erskine by at least the late autumn. In between score pages Henry and I took long walks together, or drove about to all my old local haunts in his jalopy. We even went swimming in my old swimming hole. During these intervals we talked mightily. He pumped me avidly about all parts of Europe. How did I travel? How did I live? What were the mechanics?

We were both the sons of a travelling salesman!

Dad's first profession had been that of travelling shoe salesman; in 1900 he had covered a beat including New Jersey, Pennsylvania,

Delaware, and Maryland. He loved the job, but Mother had made him save his money, buy a shoe store, settle down. She didn't like him to be away so much, nights. But ever since 1907 Dad would break away, travel as far as possible at the slightest excuse. The wanderlust has always been in his blood, as it had been in the blood of his father and his grandfather before him. I guess everybody whose ancestors came over to far-away America must have some drop of wanderlust blood in him.

Henry did, and he had it bad.

Henry, sick of the growing depression and lack of opportunity for a young man, wanted to come over to Europe in the worst way; could he come over with me as my secretary? I assured him that this would, indeed, be the worst way, as Europe was slowly but surely closing up for the likes of me. Rather, I suggested, he should study for the diplomatic service—or, better, the Army or Navy. He thought it over, and in the early autumn he enrolled in a diplomatic course at nearby Rutgers.

These daily excursions over the native fields and beloved haunts of my childhood—these excursions to spots far enough afield to have remained out of the reach of local realty developers—produced a strange feeling: one of hearth and home, of “belonging” here on this native soil, my America. One evening, feeling quite “mystical” and in touch with the immediate universe about me, I began some sketches, hardly knowing what they were. The next morning I discovered (and this can happen to one) that they were the opening bars of my *Third Symphony*. Quickly, for the next several days, I sketched in the full first movement. Then a letter from Erskine arrived in Trenton, and I put the sketches away to plunge in haste into what I now called my “homework,” writing it on exactly the same table upon which I had done all of my homework during grade school and early high school.

Perhaps *that* was what was the matter with it!

In any case, Erskine liked what he heard—very much, as a matter of fact. He invited a good many people to various dinners he organized in order for them to hear me play it upon the piano. New Year, 1932, came and went and suddenly, one morning, I was notified that I had been given a Guggenheim scholarship for study abroad.

It was not entirely welcome. It was a *European* scholarship. We knew, now, that we should go back to Europe for at least a year longer, for, at my present speed, it would take at least that much longer to finish the actual composition of *Helen Retires*, put it into full orchestral score; yet now, after the beginning of the *Third Symphony*, we longed to live in New York for just once, even though it was only a few months before the time the Guggenheim award stipulated I must be in Europe.



We moved from Trenton to New York—specifically to Greenwich Village.

It was *bien américaine* enough. . . .

We were only in the Village for three months when some trouble concerning our house in Cagnes made Boski pack up and leave; I stayed and finished the piano score of *Helen Retires*, after which the Juilliard people more or less accepted it officially. Albert Stoessel was to direct. Also, he was going to stay the summer in Switzerland and suggested that I should meet him there, in order to go over the piano score with him; he wanted cuts. (Is there a director in this world who doesn't?)

I returned to Europe in early June, going directly to Bremerhaven. As Berlin was *en route* to Switzerland, I stayed there for several days, looking up my old friends. Georg Kirsta happened to be there, now married to the beautiful Salvotti; when I first shook hands with her I remembered all those nights Georg and I had passed her picture on the Ringstrasse in Vienna and stopped to admire her faultless visage. "*Die schöne Salvotti!*" We used to wonder whether she was real. But now she was very human, and even gave me a nice kiss because I was one of the best friends of her husband.

I also visited Hansjorg Dammert. Hans, no longer a young flippant German high-school boy, was older, lean, hard. He looked tough, determined. Things had changed greatly with him. He was no longer interested in his musical compositions. There were meetings, important ones, with other German youths who had banded together to fight the Nazis, the despised (then) "brownshirts." Practically every evening street fighting occurred somewhere in the city. Hans was mixed up in some of these.

But Berlin was not yet in the hands of the Nazis—that would follow in six months—now young Germans like Hans could still resist, not be gathered up by the Gestapo.

He was glad to see me, affable, offered to put me up at the Dammert palatial house on Tiergartenallee, a German version of Fifth Avenue.

I accepted because I had never been a genuine guest inside of a German household before.

In so far as luxurious well-being was concerned, I had never seen anything so well groomed as this Berlin! Everywhere I looked I saw evidence of a Germany prosperous beyond the bounds of recognition. Two billion dollars' worth (U.S.A.)! I walked down the Kurfürstendamm, stopped a moment at Markgrafalbrechtstrasse, where Boski had lived when I first met her, wondered whether I could be walking in a dream. I contrasted this 1932 Berlin with the Berlin of ten years ago, could find no similarities.

I, perhaps, had not changed so much. I was writing *Helen Retires*, it is true, but I had also written the first movement of a wonderful new

symphony! Unlike Hansjorg, I was still very much concerned with the writing of the best sort of music—just as I had always been concerned. I had always worn fairly good clothes. I had always combed my hair the way I combed it now.

But the others had changed all around me. Only Kirsta, Heinsheimer, Virgil, Vladimir never seemed to change—but, then, I had not known them for so long as I had known Berlin. I thought of Boski on the Riviera, of a newspaper clipping she had just sent me which had pronounced her “one of the best-dressed women on the Riviera.” I thought of my little unlipsticked Boski on this Markgrafalbrechtstrasse, the square card on her door marked “Boeske Markus, Stud. Phil.,” the dark tumultuous locks, the face devoid of powder or make-up, the plain black dress.

And now? Truly, Boski had changed greatly also; her letters made it clear that she was having a great time with the snappier set on the Riviera.

Back in our incredible house overlooking the Mediterranean I quickly relaxed. The place was well calculated to make one forget. The Riviera, in 1932, was a gorgeous soundproofed paradise, utterly oblivious of the darkness gathering over the rest of Europe. Here a synthetic sun shone on glittering synthetic beaches full of synthetically happy people. I said to myself, “I don’t care. This will be the last fling before I leave Europe for ever. In one, two, or five years there will be a war, after which the Europe I know will be no more. Excepting, of course, Paris—Paris will never, must never, perish. Paris sees only civilizations roll over and past her; she will forever remain the art city. But Europe, the Europe of my youth, it is finished for a long time. Here, then, the last orgies before the flood!”

I dreamed, one early morning before dawn, that I had won three times straight on “7” at Monte Carlo. I told this to Boski, Sandy, and a group of Cagnois; they all accompanied me to Monte Carlo to see whether there was anything in this remarkable dream stuff of mine—for I have always been more prone than not to pose as a prophetic dreamer, as the reader will have noticed. Well, friends, believe it or not, I walked into Monte Carlo Casino, played three times straight on “7” and won. I have several witnesses here in America, and it was no accident, because I told them all about it in advance.

Our life that summer was a round of parties, many of which we gave ourselves. One, to which the summering Berlin Opera Ballet was invited, found dawn approaching without their being able to find transportation back to Antibes, their abode. Accordingly they staged a marvellous ballet, with my phonograph loudspeaker system as orchestra, our garden

overlooking the sea as stage, and the newly risen sun as the stage-lighting system. They danced until breakfast time, then went over to a shady side of the lawn and slept in rows. I shall never forget that particular performance of *Le Sacre du Printemps* or *Afternoon of a Faun*; they seemed to have been performed under ideal conditions, especially as, towards the end, some of the girls and boys abandoned their clothes altogether.

Nudity, as a matter of fact, was almost a key word for the Riviera of that day. I stagger when I think of the amount of masculine grey matter which must once have been expended there in the effort to get the Riviera women to wear less and less clothes, for, so far as I could judge, the girls were only too anxious to get rid of them anyhow. The times were distinctly Hellenic. I remember, particularly, the big New York butter-and-egg man who came to Cagnes to give a string of remarkable parties, one of which was a beach party in mid-day. He provided the bathing suits for the girls himself, nice new ones. There was only one trouble with them—they dissolved during the first five minutes in the water. Some of the girls stayed in the water unusually late that day, but only some. The good-looking well-upholstered ones came out early and remained on the exclusive Cagnois beach all day. (Later, of course, there was a sort of half-hearted trouble with the police, but nobody ever paid any attention to the poor Cagnois police.)

The world about me was dissolving, too. Here, on the hot lovely beaches of Cagnes, Antibes, Juan-les-Pins, were lovely nudes who belonged to nobody, yet you knew them as the wives, mistresses, lone-wolverines of the Cagnois to whom you talked every day. One day somebody pulled a grand piano to the beach, and we danced. Who is there to say that the pictures of Dali are not true to the life of their times? . . .

## PART FOUR

### NEW YORK

#### CHAPTER XXVI

### NEW YORK IS NOT PARIS

YOU will have gathered that my final weeks in Europe were very dizzy indeed. But we felt it coming. I had worked all my adult life in Europe—which liked me—and now Europe was about to fall to pieces. My years of work were about, I thought, to go for nought. What use was the Guggenheim now? Years ago, when I needed it, it had been withheld. Now, when I wanted every worst way to get back to America, I was paid to stay over in Europe. I was disgusted with everything, and had it not been for that one fine movement of a new symphony in my portfolio I would very probably have jumped into the Mediterranean and stayed there.

New compositions, when they grip you sufficiently, are like crossword puzzles. You simply cannot rest until you work them out. Moreover, and before one completely works one out, another and even more interesting one comes along. It is this constant overlapping of crossword puzzles, called musical compositions, that has more than once saved me from abject suicide. I am just too interested in something that is beyond the ordinary ups and downs of life.

When Hitler came into power in early 1933 I left for Paris. It was as madly gay as the Riviera, but with the sound-proofing removed.

The Café du Dôme was filled to brimming with German refugee artists. I met many whom I had known, many whom I had only known of.

During this little jaunt I spent what remained of my Guggenheim and returned home to Cagnes. We wondered now how we would get back to America, when I suddenly bethought myself again of the collection of paintings I had bought in Berlin in 1923, the Picassos, Braques, Marcoussis, Kubins, and the Derain! I cabled to the man who I now thought was keeping them for me. Formerly he had been a close Parisian friend; now he was living in New York.

He answered:

YOU MUST BE DREAMING STOP PERHAPS YOU SENT THE PICTURES TO  
SOMEBODY ELSE STOP I HAVEN'T GOT THEM

So we borrowed the return money and came back to America. By autumn 1933 we were established in an apartment on the top floor of

51 East Fifty-fifth Street and the rehearsals for *Helen Retires* were already well advanced. The premiere was set for somewhere in early February, 1934. In the interim my brother Henry phoned me from Trenton and asked me to write him a letter of recommendation to my old friend, William C. Bullitt, who had just then been appointed our new ambassador to the Soviet Union. I discovered that Bill was down in Washington, phoned him, and Bill told me to send Henry down immediately. Henry went and talked Bill into taking him with him to Russia, although Henry had not yet finished whatever kind of diplomat's course he was taking at Rutgers.

He, Bill, and a whole coterie of young people left America before the premiere of *Helen Retires*, which was probably just as well.

*Helen Retires* flopped.

Then came Georges Balanchine. I commenced writing the first of my ballets for him. This took a considerable while and, in order to get it just right, I had to come to his dancing classes very often. One day I sat there when one of the little fourteen-year-olds, prettier than the others, shyly came up to me and asked me for my autograph. This, positively, was the first time any one of my countrywomen ever asked me for my autograph (and, until Washington, D.C., 1945, also almost the last), but you must admit it was not a bad start. The little girl was Joannie McCracken, of *Bloomer Girl*; only, of course, *Bloomer Girl* was then still ten years from being born and Joannie was not quite grown up. In fact, as I remember, she was still in bloomers. I was so agreeably flustered by anybody's asking for my autograph that I took Joannie down to the drug store below the American Ballet School and bought her a Great Big Sundae—which more or less closes our romance.

But I have *held* her little hand in *mine*!

During the time I wrote ballads for Balanchine (which extended through the next year and a half) I also earned an extra penny or two writing background motion-picture scores for Ben Hecht and Charlie MacArthur. They had just started their extravagant venture at Astoria, and at first they had engaged Oscar Levant as their music director. In the course of several months, however, Oscar quit; and Ben, remembering that I had laid a revolver on my piano at Budapest and yelled "Lock the doors," thought of phoning me and offering me the job. I was fairly broke around this period, so I accepted it.

When I arrived at Astoria I had never scored a motion picture or had anything whatsoever to do with motion-picture people except meeting Miriam Hopkins, who had married a good friend of mine. My introduction to the movie business was significant and symbolic. Ben talked to me in his office, but when the question of how much I was to get came up, he said, "Let me introduce you to our president. He and he alone decides all matters of this kind." So he took me to the room next

door, which was marked "PRESIDENT HUCHT-MAC-ARTHUR PICTURES, INC.," and told me to go in. I advanced to the desk, where a little pin-headed gentleman in a high wing collar was writing. He did not even look up. I advanced farther, right to the desk. He still did not look up. I looked at what he was writing.

He was doodling.

Then he looked up and jumped right over the desk at me! He was a pinhead, engaged from the local circus, and took his job seriously. He always jumped right over the desk at all visitors, jabbering incoherently.

Otherwise he was harmless.

Ben and Charlie employed him to divert people's minds from unpleasant questions. It was one of his special duties to frighten girl reporters off the premises. Ben and Charlie did not like girl reporters; perhaps that was because they were former newspaper men and Charlie's first wife had been a reporter. Anyway, in their own office they had four doors with four great big photographs of nudes blown up and placed upon these exits; the thing was, however, that the anatomies of the nudes were placed so that their patable parts were in the immediate vicinity of the door handles. Ben and Charlie always enjoyed it when a girl reporter tried to get out of their office. She'd go to the door, reach for the door handle, and then draw back quickly as if the door handle were red hot.

On the walls of Ben's and Charlie's office were huge signs, presumably to assist them in the writing of their scenarios: "IS THE PUBLIC IN ON OUR SECRET?" and "CUT TO THE CHASE," admirable advice to any writer.

My first assignment for them was a picture later to be advertised by a Boston theatre owner as "the worst picture in the world." Very possibly it was that, for, try as I would, I couldn't understand the plot; perhaps that was because Ben and Charlie changed it so often in mid-stream. Perhaps, too, it was because only one or two of the actors were American and spoke English without strong accent. Ben and Charlie had made the mistake of casting a Russian-locale picture with Russian-born actors.

But making the picture on location was a lot of fun. Boski and I spent most of that summer in upstate New York in a "Russian" village reproduced exactly from some original in Russia by our expert movie-set men. In the daytime we ground cameras, but at night our genuine troop of crack Cossack cavalry on salary made camp fires and sang around them until dawn—just as if they were still riding the Caucasus for the Czar. Balieff and Jimmy Savo were likewise present, making it one of the nicest vacations I've had.

And I got paid for it.

In spite of my now greatly increased income, we could not seem to make ends meet. I added a new venture, a co-operative effort to produce the opera *Faust* as a movie, to my list. This entailed listening to an enormous number of potential Marguerites, all of whom sang for me the *Jewel Song*. I eventually got to the point where I had to quit the venture because I just could not listen to that song once more. One of the girls who sang for me was Inez Harvout, a charming and beautiful young girl who had just graduated from Eastman School, and had a voice like a young goddess. Up at Rochester she had worked her way through by selling candy in a candy chain store. When she came down to see us, Inez fascinated Boski. Boski had previously met plenty of American girls in Paris, but no real ones. Inez was a real American girl, a clinical case. Boski studied her closely, inviting her to stay in our apartment to do so. She discovered that Inez had one pair of stockings, washed them every night, kept strict account of every expenditure, was as efficient in everyday life as an American telephone or a Westinghouse electric gadget.

Later on I was able to help her to her first start in Hollywood, where she became Irene Manning.

As our bank account grew smaller our apartment grew larger. One day it became so large that we automatically sub-let the large back room (a sort of "studio") to Irene Sharoff, the young stage designer. Irene proved to be a very wonderful person who worked day and night, soon filling up the studio room with the wealth of colour that was, and could only be, Irene's. (To-day she does a great deal of important designing for M.G.M., still a striking young woman in outlandish slacks whose merest walking across the M.G.M. lot creates astonishment where astonishment has become almost unknown.)

Irene, Boski, and I talked about art until all hours, Irene painting, I composing or orchestrating on my pad, and Boski providing us with coffee.

Georges Balanchine would occasionally join us, usually arriving at two or three in the morning—rather late afternoon for us.

Irene, who has never been one to hold her tongue, invariably gave him hell for not attempting to do more truly American ballets, in subject at least. He finally replied by engaging her to do the *décor* of Stravinsky's new ballet, *The Poker Game*.

One of these evenings provided me with the wherewithal to get out of New York. We had been discussing the subject of how most men are unwilling to believe their wives or mistresses unfaithful and are usually the last to stumble upon that fact. We were merrily racing

through the lists of our acquaintances when, suddenly, the thought occurred to me: "Why not write this up for *Esquire*?"

I did so immediately, twenty-five little squibs, each one an instance of how to detect unfaithfulness. I labelled them, "She Is No Longer Faithful IF," and sent them off to Arnold Gingrich, *Esquire's* editor.

He answered me immediately and said that he'd like to talk with me about them when he came to New York the following week.

I met him at the Plaza; he had invited me to breakfast. "Now about those 'Unfaithfuls?'" he commenced after breakfast. "We couldn't use twenty-five. But if we could bring out twenty-five of them every month, we might be interested. Do you think you could write, say, four hundred?"

"I'm sure I could," I said glibly. I had looked at the sketch of the first movement of my *Third Symphony* the night before and thought that it was about time to get out of New York, only I didn't quite like the idea of going as far as Hollywood. To write for *Esquire* would, indeed, be the perfect solution.

"How much would you want per each?" Gingrich asked.

I thought a long while. I was just about to say, "Oh, about a dollar apiece," when Gingrich interrupted.

"Do you think two hundred and fifty dollars apiece would be enough?" he asked.

"A piece?" I echoed, thunderstruck.

"I mean per batch of twenty-five."

"Oh," I said, "yes, I suppose so." I looked at him with the dawning realization that he was crazy. How many times did twenty-five go into four hundred anyway? Sixteen, wasn't it? Yes, it was. Sixteen times two hundred and fifty dollars was . . . let's see . . . let's see . . . FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS! Holy smoke, and I was just going to sell the lot for four hundred dollars!

"Is it enough?" Gingrich asked.

"I had hoped for more," I sighed, "but I accept. It's a deal." And I looked at him searchingly.

"It's a deal," he echoed. "And when can you have them ready?"

"Next month," I said weakly, and he answered:

"Good, *we'll pay you in advance!*"

(Now there may possibly be certain *Esquire* writers who, reading this, will commence hooting—but, fellows, *remember, please*, this was still in the *early days of Esquire*, in 1936!)

As, now, I obviously had to do with either an insane man or one hog-wild with financing, I quickly searched my mental attic. Was there anything else I could sell him? Quick! I had more than one piece of useless mental bric-a-brac hidden away. If the gentleman had just bought Grandma's old broken rocker at what seemed an outrageous



price, perhaps he would also buy the old useless settee, the hair-stuffed easy chair, the cracked moustache cup?

"By the way, Mr. Gingrich," I faltered, "would you also be interested in a series of articles on how to recognize which girls will and which girls won't? I have worked out a very scientific method, via endocrinology."

"Endocrinology? What do you know about endocrinology?"

"It's my hobby," I answered simply. "Years ago a room-mate of mine left me all his books, which happened to be on only one subject, endocrinology. Lacking reading matter at the time, I read them. I read them perhaps more thoroughly than he did himself. Then I applied my newly won knowledge to crime detection, greatly interesting the Parisian police. Finally I began to see that it would apply to girls, too. You'd be surprised to see how fantastically accurate it is."

"Give me a demonstration," he said. I could see that he was terribly interested. I did. I analyzed the next fifty girls who came down the Plaza staircase. Arnold happened, accidentally, to be acquainted with one of them.

I went home that morning with exactly five thousand six hundred dollars' worth of ordered articles.

I commenced work on them immediately.

If one dare use the word "pivotal" in connection with a choreographer, Georges Balanchine was the eventual fulcrum which tilted me out of New York.

Georges, as almost everybody knows, is the best living choreographer. He was once the right hand of Serge Diaghileff himself. When I met him, he was the choreographer and top finishing teacher of the School of American Ballet, located at the corner of Fifty-ninth and Madison. He was also artistic head of their theatre organization, the American Ballet.

At the time it seemed a little strange to call this troupe the American Ballet. It was composed of American girls, true enough, but here all justification of "American Ballet" stopped. Even though they did occasionally have American names, the ballets it presented were pure Paris à la Russe.

Balanchine, eventually sensing this, decided to put out a hurry call for American composers with ballets. Lots of them, anxious for a performance with royalties, showed up—all with nice little American ballets, and probably some of them very good.

But Balanchine accepted none of them. He was looking for an American ballet *sufficiently Parisian!*

I regret to say that he found exactly the combination of American-ness and Parisianess he wished in me. He had attended the première

of *Helen Retires*, liked it (he was probably the only one), and on the strength of that commissioned me to write him a ballet. I did. It was called *Dreams* and had a *décor* and book by Derain, explained by Balanchine in gorgeous Balanchinesque choreography. It was successful, too, so he asked me to arrange a second, a third. By early 1936 we were talking about a fourth—a really big ballet, a “Creation.”

I wish to emphasize, here, that all this was very, very Parisian, but it was taking place in New York. My motto, “New York Is Not Paris,” had not yet been formulated.

Now I am not one to knock the old salon or old Paris as such. In fact, I am rather too fond of them. I know that out of the salon and Paris we have got one of the greatest musicians of this century, Igor Stravinsky.

The salon, as it operated in pre-war Paris, was a whole lot of artistic-minded, rather sophisticated people. They passed judgment on a new artistic creation—instead of a few choice critics who, perhaps, were not so sophisticated at that, at least not in regard to very new music.

A whole big group of intelligent, sophisticated people, salons people, making constant intelligent or semi-intelligent musical small talk and chit-chat, is very beneficial to a man like Stravinsky.

It was all right in Paris, then.

But in New York, now?

First of all there was no great group of salons in the New York of 1934. The few there were was rather a would-be snob group—in my poor judgment they mostly repeated opinions I had heard ten years before in Paris. They were nostalgic—about as modern, up to date as an old shoelace.

They were just discovering Dali, for instance!

New York was not Paris.

But New York was not America, either! There must be more to America than the music critics or this tight little group of people.

I am an American composer. I did not grow up here, but I was born here. Everybody in Europe always said I was very American. Now everybody in America (at least in New York) said I was very European. I personally did not believe in either.

Something must be wrong.

Why should I start sneering at Georges Balanchine just because he was doing the thing he knew how to do best, Parisian ballets?

What was wrong, however, that of all the American composers I was the only one to fit in with his ideals?

I did not wish to be a Parisian in New York.

Therefore my meeting with Georges and working for him was, in

prime essence, pivotal. It fulcrumed me out of New York—when I comprehended.

I left New York, became a sort of American whirling dervish, earned my living in new and various American cities. I earned it with a good many different but honest American professions. My work very often took me among such various people as police captains, editors, columnists, actors, mechanics, milkmen, promoters, etc.

Therefore the failure of my second opera, *Helen Retires*, was not important. What was more important was that I recovered and commenced writing Parisian ballets, making a success of them. And then quitting them. It was a kind of final psycho-analysis of Paris.

Hemingway had once told me, "Unless you have geography, background, you have nothing."

PART FIVE

HOLLYWOOD

CHAPTER XXVII

NEW YORK IS NOT AMERICA

ARNOLD GINGRICH was as good as his word, and no sooner did my articles begin to filter into Chicago than nice new two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar cheques began to arrive in New York. We deposited our money in two separate banks—in case one should break—but not for long. I had worked so hard that I caught back one of my bad colds and coughs; during this interval I sat in bed with my new symphony again; Balanchine phoned about a new ballet; and I, remembering a request from Boris Morros, the music director, for a score for one of his many Hollywood pictures, said to Boski:

"Do you know, I've never been farther south than Dover or farther west than Harrisburg. Still, I am writing a new symphony intimately connected with the South and the West."

Boski, whose real ancestry is undoubtedly Hungarian gipsy—if she'd only relax about it—said:

"So what's keeping us?"

"So what indeed?" said I, and we went out and bought a nice little secondhand car. We piled it full of important baggage, such as a big five-inch telescope lashed to our tail, and out of New York City we went. Through the tunnel, out over Jersey, down to Delaware, Washington, D.C., Virginia. It was warm spring again, and there was a wonderful feeling in the air.

After a day or two we hit Charleston.

"What a wonderful city!" gasped Boski. "Let's not go any farther, but settle down here and live!" The houses along each strange old street fascinated her; they were each one different, yet all alike, as were the houses along the canals of Venice. "How come," Boski demanded angrily, "Charleston is not visited by everybody in the same spirit of reverence as, for instance, Venice, Italy?"

"Italian propaganda has had a longer operational period," I answered.

We walked along the docks of a distant outskirts—I couldn't place it for you on the map, but we were just happily wandering, drinking it all in. Some strange, vast old building, standing out over the flats, looked to me just exactly like the old South should look. At the instant I looked,

the germ of a new theme came to me, and I jotted it down for further workmanship later. When I looked up I saw an ancient Negro looking at me curiously.

He had a white beard and white hair, and he looked like Old Black Joe.

"Hello, boss," he said and smiled.

"Hello, Black Joe," I said, and hoped I didn't hurt his feelings; it was involuntary.

"Everything all right, boss?" he queried anxiously.

"Very much all right, Old Joe," I answered.

"O.K., boss," he said and walked away. If he had disappeared into thin air I would not have been surprised.

"I've found my own country again," I said to Boski.

"I wish we'd found Charleston long ago," Boski said. "I'd rather own a house in Charleston than in Cagnes."

But, in spite of this, we went on southwards. I wanted to see the Suwannee River, rest gently by its banks and be inspired. When we finally reached it, in Florida, it turned out to be a muddy creek. I suddenly remembered that Foster had never been in the South. Well, anyway, (1) *I* was going South *and* West, and (2) Swanee is such a nice singable word. So what? We turned farther southward, stopping at Clearwater, on Florida's western shore.

We stopped there about a month, writing to nobody but Gingrich where we were. I was working very hard, completely revising my first movement before going on to the next. I began to realize, for the first time in my life, that my technical equipment was far short of what it ought to be; I should know more about Brahms, later Beethoven, Mahler, even Sibelius. But I pressed the movement on, making an almost completely new version. I was not quite satisfied with it, but it was better than the first one I had completed in Trenton many months ago.

Ernest Hemingway, discovering my address by accident, wrote me from Miami:

"I have the feeling you are in a jam, George. Friends in New York tell me you left suddenly, on the crest of the wave, and without telling anybody where you were going. Now, if you are in a jam, don't be a fool. We'll help you, George. Just send me a wire signed . . ."

I had the feeling that Hem was dying to have an excuse to run his motor-boat up to Clearwater to sneak us away from pursuing police, and I regretted to disappoint him. I wrote Hem that because of a maniac friend of his up in Chicago, Arnold Gingrich, we had suddenly become hog-rich, possessing (by this time) something a little over four thousand five hundred **WHOLE** dollars! I said that with this incredible sum we intended to mosey slowly towards Santa Fe, where we would buy a large adobe hut with a flat roof upon which to place our telescope. There I

would live out the rest of my days looking at the cloudless skies at night and composing off the surrounding landscape in the daytime. We invited him to join us for the summer if he wished.

That early summer in Santa Fe, we did hear from Hem that he wished to join us, but then he suddenly changed his plans at the last moment, going to the Dakotas instead.

This Hemingwayesque incident put me in mind of wonderful Gingrich, and I wrote him another article, "So Smells Defeat," which he thought so well of that he immediately bought it, even though by now *Esquire* cupboards were surfeited with Antheilana and his employers were reproaching him with over-buying. This article, nevertheless, was later included in *Bedside Esquire* and continued to bring me in small royalties for many a pleasant year.

When we finally left Clearwater and Florida itself, the car's nose was pointed westwards at last. We spent days in many wonderful towns: Mobile, where the eagles fly high, New Orleans. *New Orleans!* We spent two weeks there, disagreeing entirely with those who say New Orleans is a broken-down version of Marseilles. New Orleans is Marseilles *preserved in its true form!* Some day I am going back there to write an opera.

Texas (I shall have to stop all this, for fear these pages will commence to drip—if, indeed, such already is not the case)! We went over Texas slowly, as if with a fine-toothed comb. We were fascinated by *everything*, but San Antonio particularly caught our fancy.

It is just another place that Boski wants to buy a house in some day and settle down—"for ever." (We could never be rich enough or live long enough to buy all the houses and live in them that we wanted to buy then, in Texas.)

Another item interested *me* particularly. It's true, fellows, *every* girl is beautiful in Texas! It is just plain torture to walk down a San Antonio street or shop in a San Antonio department store. . . .

But for the soul, to wander along the outskirts, to spend an evening in the open squares of the Mexican quarter with its smell of the open desert beyond—resembling so closely the wild, boundless smell of the Sahara! Boski and I wandered around, glistening-eyed, remembering that ten years before we had wandered just like this, in the smoky twilight of the streets of the Souk of Tunis.

We moved on, regretfully, to El Paso. We visited our first bull-fight across the border, came back to quench our thirst at a Walgreen drug store. While I was sitting there I noticed a very tough-looking cowboy eyeing me intently.

He stared so hard and so fiercely that I began to get uneasy. Finally he came over and tapped me on the shoulder. I say "tapped" poetically; "belted" would have been more apt. But his grammar was perfect.

"Say, you're George Antheil, aren't you?"

"Yes," I said, looking for the star on his vest and not finding it.

"Swell!" he bellowed. "Don't you remember me?"

"No," I faltered. "I do and I don't . . ."

"I danced in your ballet. Remember? Your *first* ballet with Balanchine!"

"What!"

"Yes, *Dreams*. I was the Evil Prince. Well, I guess you have a lot of people to remember from that ballet, but I remember you anyway."

"Of course I remember you," I said. "Just as clearly——"

"We have a ranch a short distance from here; why don't you come up and stay with us for a few days or so?"

Boski and I had never stayed on a real western ranch, so we accepted, and shortly thereafter drove up the "short distance" (some five hundred miles!) from El Paso. The ranch turned out to be a vast dry-as-dust territory only slightly smaller than Rhode Island, but with lovely adobe houses sprinkling the centre. My dancer was there, sure enough, and also his nice mother and sister. They welcomed us royally; and in the evening he rounded up all local musicians who, à la "Histoire du soldat américaine," played gorgeous American music until old rosy-fingered dawn began tickling the heavens.

It was a night I shall long remember.

We awoke at midday and looked out of our window. There, under the shade of a tree in the yard, was our host, dressed in his cowboy working clothes, going through the ballet-practice exercises which all ballet dancers go through first thing in the morning—pirouettes, arabesques, and so forth. It is a picture I shall retain: a tough cowboy in spurs, but stretching out like Pavlova tripping up to the footlights.

When he saw us looking he grinned and yelled:

"Hi'ya! Had breakfast?"

We said no, and inside of fifteen minutes he brought it to us himself—thick steak, pancakes, fried potatoes, cheese, milk, coffee, and muffins.

"Wait a minute," I protested, "we said breakfast."

"This," he stated gravely, "is a state where men are men, and breakfasts consist of something substantial. Eat it—you'll need it. We're going for a little walk around the place."

The little walk turned out to be seven miles, and I was almost dying by the time we returned. Our host, however, was still full of bounce. We were discussing the libretto of a new genuine western ballet, truly American, when he suddenly caught sight of a rattlesnake. Instantly he killed the thing with the heel of his boot. "I've been bitten a number of times doing that," he laughed, "but nothing much ever seemed to happen."

There, in that adobe hut, I started sketching the second movement of

my new symphony. New themes now seemed to pour out of me as if from an oil gusher; my only trouble was in organizing them properly.

At night the cowboys came over and sang, and in return I set up my telescope for them. Very fortunately there were some spectacular planets and comets in the skies of that summer, and they *oh'd* and *ah'd* and came back again the next night.

We stayed for at least a week before I thought we'd better shove off northwards, for Santa Fe. Our host accompanied us to the ranch gate. Up until now he had remained the very tough cowboy that his general appearance proclaimed him to be, but here, for a split second, he seemed to put aside that role for a gentler one.

"Do you see all this land?" he said dreamily, waving in the general direction of his adobe house. "Well, someday I'm going to have two lakes on each side of this road, little blue lakes *with swans on them!*" I bared my head before his dream and he stepped off the running-board.

We left him behind us, and the incredible dream he had spun, in a cloud of New Mexico dust. I have heard from him once more. Shortly after the Salerno invasion of Italy I had a letter from him. He was in the front line, growling mightily about being unable to enjoy an occasional Naples ballet performance!

We entered Santa Fe, rented our adobe house as planned. We immediately set our telescope on the roof, and I got out my music paper. The Anthems were thus ready to commence operations. I was able to get all the Brahms, Beethoven, and Mahler scores I wished at a Santa Fe music store.

I had hardly started working, however, before my composition pupil, young Henry Brant, and a whole coterie of his young New York musicians and artists descended upon us. We could not put them all up, so they rented another adobe shack near by. They were all very welcome; indeed, I believe, somewhere along our travels we had invited each one of them separately, but our predicament was that they had *all* accepted.

As time passed, however, I discovered they stopped me from working, so I proposed that we leave our adobe houses for a week or two and go down to Chihuahua, Mexico—in my car. I would drive. We almost got down there, too, except that somewhere out in the Mexican desert our car broke down, nearly killing the lot of us. I hesitate to think of what might have happened to young American art if this had been the case. The only parallel I can think of was the time that I drove Virgil Thomson, Aaron Copland, Paul Bowles, and Roy Harris from New Haven, Connecticut, to N.Y.C. I wanted to show my illustrious colleagues how nice and fast I could drive, and the car almost turned over five miles out of town.



For a while, however, I reconciled myself to Santa Fe and no work on the symphony; we preoccupied ourselves with "the kids." Henry Brant is a fantastic enough character to merit more than the few words I've given him. He had first come to me in 1934 in New York, and with a score as tall as himself. It was insufferably thick with senseless discord. Nevertheless, there was more than a glimmering of vast talent in all this, so I consented to teach him. John Tasker Howard has speculated in print that our lessons were probably the most peculiar in the world, and the eminently dusty but meticulously correct historian is right. They were. They mostly consisted of my sailing into Henry's compositions with a nice big rake, and raking and raking until I had raked out most of the unnecessary notes, not to say instruments, queer orchestrations, *recherché* stuff which could never burst through the tremendous doublings of the rest of his orchestra. What remained after my raking was mostly talented. My job was mainly a house-cleaning one; after I finished with Henry, the fresh air blew through him, so to speak. He was delighted with all this processing and became a very apt pupil. Because of an early vow which I had taken never to accept money from talented pupils (Bloch had eventually given me back all the money I had paid him, and Sternberg taught me free of charge), I naturally taught him gratis, just like all the others; he, in turn, copied out my music, did odd jobs, to say nothing of washing the dishes for Boski.

In turn again he was for a time practically our post-adolescent son; his ability to breathe, eat, dream, and drink in music, day and night, reminded me of myself when I was his age—then only twenty-one.

I only regretted the day when he would, as do all very talented pupils eventually, quarrel with his "master."

Henry, in New York, had been very cute, amusing, even fabulous. He was my protégé, so, in turn, he felt that he had to have a protégé too; he found one in the person of a young, gangling, six-foot, sixteen-year-old lad recently arrived from Palestine. Henry told me that he was a pianist, and that he was "better than Gieseking," the highest praise in his eyes. I doubted this vastly, so he brought the chap up to play for me. I have been amazed by young pianists, but never so amazed. This kid did, indeed, play as well as Gieseking. Or Horowitz, too, for that matter! I immediately became hell-bent to take him up to my old friend Judson, the concert manager, but Henry held me back. After all whose protégé was he? I had to introduce Henry to Judson first.

I was in this process of introducing Henry to Judson first when, suddenly, we heard that the young pianist lad was very ill. He was in the hospital, and he insisted that a bird had flown in his window, miraculously entering his brain. It was there now.

The hospital physicians did not know what to do. At last one of them had an idea. They told the boy they would operate. They would

put him under ether, open his head, take the bird out. Then he would be all right. The boy said, "Fine, go ahead." They gave him ether, made an incision on the side of his head as if they had opened his skull (they didn't really), where he could see it later—in the mirror. Naturally, they didn't go any deeper than the outside of his skull. When the boy came out of the ether, was shown the sewn-up incision on the side of his skull, he said he felt better, the bird was gone. He was perfectly normal for a while. Then suddenly again the "bird" came back. Henry found him one day sitting by his piano, holding his head and moaning. They had to take him to an institution upstate after that. But one night he broke out, carried the whole of his gigantic frame on foot to Henry's door—Henry lived in the upper eighties, on New York's west side. The tall, gangling lad had walked hundreds of miles to get there. When he arrived he collapsed. They took him back to the hospital, but he died. He had some sort of a strange, antepituitary disease which kept his long bones growing. It also made him a pianistic genius, but it kept his long bones growing, growing in, in, in on his brain until the skull casing around it crushed his brain to death. Henry afterwards told this strange story to his friend Manuel Komroff; and Manuel made a very fine and touching original story of it for *Esquire* magazine.

In New York, Henry Brant always seemed short of money. (What young composer isn't?) But in Henry it was visible; he often became so thin and hungry that we were afraid for him. Perhaps he was just naturally thin. But we knew that he, his widowed mother, and his younger brother were very often hard put to pay the rent. So, one day, I was very surprised when Henry said to me:

"Could you sell a fine Steinway grand piano for me?"

"But, Henry," I protested, "you mustn't sell your beloved piano!"

"Oh, it's all right," he said. "I've got another one."

And he did have, too, in a tiny apartment which barely housed the both of them dovetailed together. But all this was nothing. One day he said to me:

"Could you sell a fine Stradivarius violin for me?"

"A genuine Stradivarius?"

"Yes, it belonged to my father, who was first violin of the old Kneisel Quartet." (I think he said "Kneisel"; anyway, it was a very famous quartet.) Henry had never once in his life told me that his father had been a famous violinist. Like Boski, he never offered you more information than you asked for. Anyway, I demanded to see it. He went down to the bank vault and produced it—a Strad violin whose value was well over thirty thousand dollars.

Knowing that Henry was hard up for cash, and not being of a sentimental nature myself—at least, not towards inanimate objects—I immediately got in touch with Mrs. Bok and the Curtis Institute. They

were in the market for good violins and would pay generously if a good one came along. The head of the string department, Bailly, tested it and offered to buy it, when, suddenly, Henry withdrew the violin. He just could not bear to part with his father's instrument, he said.

So they all went back to being extremely poor, perfectly contented, two Steinways in the living-room and a Strad in the bank vault near by.

Later on, in 1939, Henry was to quarrel with me, but by that time I was braced. Once I had quarrelled with my several good, kind teachers, too, when I was ready for it. (Our old dog Brownie recently had a first litter of pups, and she tended them very kindly until, one fine day, they started playing very rough indeed, biting her in the back-end severely. At this she chased them all out of the yard and would not bother with them again. They had arrived at the proper age of maturity: they didn't need her any more; and so far as I have been able to check this morning, all of them are making notable careers, right now.)

In late summer, 1936, it started to rain in Santa Fe almost continuously, which, all the local inhabitants said, was most extraordinary. For, as everybody knows, Santa Fe is located right in the middle of a desert, or nearly so. This moisture was beginning to bring my bronchitis back again; we decided to go on to Hollywood. First of all, this would automatically amputate Henry and Co., who didn't have enough cash to accompany us, and permit me to get some work done. Secondly, if it was going to rain all the time, we would just as soon have it rain on us in interesting Hollywood as in dull Santa Fe.

There is no duller place in the world than a desert in the rain.

#### CHAPTER XXVIII

### KING OF THE SURREALISTS UNDER AN UMBRELLA

WHEN we first came to Hollywood, our first place of abode was the Hollywood-Franklin Hotel on Franklin Avenue. If, in the future, anyone wants to come to Hollywood in order to find out what Hollywood is like, I cannot advise him better than to live in a hotel as nearly similar as possible.

We happened upon it by sheer accident, but it looked neat and clean, within our pocket-book. It was a medium-sized three-storey structure (there are no very high buildings in Hollywood, because it is within the earthquake area) made of red brick faced with marble. A drug store nestles in one end.

We were at first amazed by the apparently haphazard yet quite efficient way in which it was run. Rumour has it that the Hollywood

Franklin was won by a group of racecourse bookies in some sort of a major crap game, but this is probably incorrect; however, if it were correct, it would explain a great many things which, previously, were deep mysteries.

In the years in between, I have returned to the Hollywood-Franklin any number of times, the last being in late 1940, when I had first made the acquaintance of Miss Hedy Lamarr and she was doing me the honour of phoning me daily concerning appointments to invent a radio-directed torpedo. Boski was then visiting in the East, and I was living at the Hollywood-Franklin alone. When the first of these quite authentic telephone messages came in to the desk, the whole hotel immediately got into an uproar. The hotel wags (several of whom were old Keystone Kops) came prancing up to the desk, loudly demanding to know whether their expected phone calls from Lana Turner or Betty Grable had materialized, and I was put to no end of embarrassment. Nothing was very secret in the Hollywood-Franklin, and anybody who wished could take his turn at the desk and switchboard. Jammed with genial movie "bit players", too-bright-eyed young actresses waiting for a break; movie mothers with ridiculously frumped children, writers, radio announcers, and such-like, the place had an atmosphere of the old Latin Quarter of Paris, and Boski and I felt at home from the very beginning.

The Hollywood-Franklin also has the extraordinary quality of being soundproof. One can play a piano in one room without being heard in the next—unless it is mid-summer and all windows are open. This fact has puzzled sound engineers extremely, for, in so far as they have been able to determine, the Hollywood-Franklin was built just like every other building of its time, with no trick acoustical features. Nevertheless, it is soundproof, and I believe that I was the first composer to discover this. Since then I have recommended the place to any number of composers, including Copland, who wrote *El Salon Mexico* there.

I contacted Boris Morros, music director of Paramount Studios, and after a number of conferences he assigned me to De Mille's new picture, *The Plainsman*. This picture was just being "shot" in the autumn of 1936, and I immediately comprehended that it was very important for me to be able to play my sketches for De Mille. Accordingly, I brought a piano into our hotel room, and this was the way the extraordinary soundproofness of the Hollywood-Franklin was discovered. (I have a theory about it which is not generally accepted: my theory is that the spirits of departed pixies who have lived in the hotel line the spaces between its walls, and that this stuff is a hundred per cent soundproof.)

We soon moved around the corner, to a small house in Argyle Avenue, which shall chiefly be remembered by me as the place in which Boski one day told me that she was going to have a baby. This news so

electrified me that we began to plan all sorts of things for the coming child.

Boski, who is very strong-willed and seldom brooks interference in matters that are very personal with her, immediately decided that it would be a boy, have blond hair and blue eyes like myself (Boski's hair is jet black and her eyes are brown), which, of course, enormously inflated my ego: I did not for a moment suppose that the child over which she now would have such tremendous control would look any other way.

Boski also decided that it would be called Peter. All this was positively arranged at least seven months before blond-haired and blue-eyed Peter was born, so I was completely prepared for it.

The fact that Peter was now on the way had an enormous effect upon my immediate activities.

In the first place, I must again draw attention to the fact that neither Boski nor myself had a family which could, in a pinch, supply us with much, if any, cash. We had also never been able to save money, because, although we did occasionally have fat periods when the money came rolling in, our lean periods were invariably longer, exhausting whatever we had previously been able to save. Now, however, a young son was on the way, and we could obviously not continue such a hand-to-mouth existence. We could not go bouncing around here and there in hotel rooms all over the world; the little fellow would need some semblance of a home.

The question of money once more absorbed me.

We still had quite a lot of the *Esquire* money, to which we added the money I now received from Paramount. In the meantime we lived as simply as possible. Our bank account was growing again, but still I felt that a single mishap, a single wrong decision, or an unexpected illness, might wipe it out. In other times that would not have disturbed me in the slightest. But now?

I considered making "a fortune" through the writing of motion-picture scores. Many composers had come to Hollywood and done so. A former friend of mine, for instance, now owned a vast villa, a swimming pool, a movie-starlet wife and two lovely children; once he had been a very promising but hungry composer in New York. To-day he was no longer promising, but his family ate and could look forward into the future with some measure of assurance.

But I became wary of the idea for several reasons. The first and most important was that I soon discovered that I could not write movie music all day and then write my own music (my *Third Symphony*) at night. Symphonic writing is just too organic a process. For instance, when I am working upon a knotty symphonic problem, I can often "put it to bed" at night and wake up in the morning with the entire problem

solved. But when, during the day, I also write movie music (which cannot possibly be up to the same standard, no matter what anybody tells you about the excellence of present-day movie music), the two various kinds of music are very apt to become entangled in my subconscious brain at night, with the result that I more often than not have the damndest time sorting them out again in the daytime. My symphonic writing incorporates corny movie-music solutions, while my movie music suddenly develops highbrow tendencies which please my director and producer not at all. (Unless it happens to be Ben Hecht.)

The most obvious solution to all this, of course, would seem to be to write one movie score for a goodly sum of money, then quit for four or five months to finish an orchestral work, then write another movie background, then quit for another four or five months, *ad infinitum*. This solution is good in theory only because, in the movie business, you must keep working to get future jobs. The movie studios, unable to grasp the idea that you may just be holding back in order to write some un lucrative music of your own, simply figure that you must be skidding if you are not constantly employed on some scoring job or another. In other words, once you start you must continue, otherwise you're a has-been—and Hollywood is the place *par excellence* for cruelty to has-beens.

To earn a fortune and secure a home for Peter, therefore, was not going to be such an easy matter, at least not through the movies. For, in order to do so, I fully realized that I should have to give up serious musical composition—my life work. Neither Boski nor I were willing for me to even contemplate such a thing, especially now, with the *Third Symphony* getting into high gear, so to speak. I felt that with the *Third Symphony* I was at last beginning to really find myself, by writing that dream music which had so long been my goal. Indeed, at this exact moment of my life, I had started to repair vast holes in my previous musical education: for instance, although I had always liked (and in some cases loved) the symphonies of Beethoven, Brahms, and particularly Mahler and Bruckner, I did not actually know them, note for note. In Santa Fe, sensing this great lack, I had sent for them and begun a most elaborate system of study and analysis which has lasted until to-day and, God grant, will last until the day I breathe no more.

I had begun to realize that no young artist starts the world all over again for himself, but merely continues (or tries hard to continue) the heritage of the past, pushing it if possible on a little farther.

During this late 1936 and early 1937, therefore, my artistic morale was of the highest. In leaving New York I had flung away the last of what I considered the unlucky remnants of Paris, Europe. I had now travelled over my own country, knew it to some extent. I had heard

strange, lovely music in New Orleans, on the vast "steppes" of New Mexico, in Indian villages and cowboy adobe huts. Even at the Paramount Studios I was writing a type of music not at all unsympathetic to me, music describing the saga of Wild Bill Hickok of the West's great romantic period. My own music was being deeply affected by all this; in the meantime I had discovered my structural weaknesses and was labouring to repair them.

I even recommenced the old fugal exercises I had once worked over with Von Sternberg. I got out my old James Higg's *Fugue* and went through a certain definite amount of mental musical gymnastics.

I was just flexing my musical muscles, getting them ready for the second complete rewriting of my *Third Symphony*. (Composers often recast a symphony many times—look at Beethoven's *Fifth*!) I felt very good about Peter's coming; I not only wanted him to be financially secure, but I also (and probably most of all) wanted him some day to be proud of the old man.

"If he turns out to be anything like us he will probably prefer his old man to be somebody rather than to leave him a lot of change," Boski said. Nevertheless she, too, was worried about the money situation. Although pregnant, she attempted, for three months, to run an art gallery with a girl-friend partner, the "Siegel-Antheil Art Galleries" of which Oscar Levant speaks in his book. But, as all of us lacked business experience, it soon lost money hand over fist, so that within a month of Peter's expected birth, we found ourselves, as usual—broke.

We noticed a most peculiar thing. Since we had arrived in Hollywood, it had rained. Everybody said, "This is most unusual weather we're having," but, of course, we expected Californians to say that.

The rain kept up, day after day, until my bronchitis was nearly driving me crazy. Indian summer arrived—a time when Hollywood is usually scorching hot; still it rained. It rained through November, December, January.

One day Boski said to me:

"George, do you think it could be because of that theme you are always playing?"

"What theme?" I asked.

"The rain theme—the one you took down that evening at San Ildefonso, when the Indians were closing up their annual rain dance?"

"Oh, that," I said disparagingly. "That wasn't anything. I probably didn't get it down right, anyhow."

"You didn't put it down, George, remember?" she said, fixing me with her eye. "Henry put it down for you. And, as you know, Henry has a rat-trap ear. He never misses a beat."

"Quite true," I said, beginning to take interest, "and it did rain, too, cats and dogs, right at the end of that theme."

And I played it, and it commenced to rain cats and dogs. "Boy, this is funny," I said; and Boski answered, "You said it."

"You've been playing it every day—for your symphony," Boski said significantly. "Now try *not* playing it for a whole day."

I did—and it didn't rain that day!

"For goodness' sake," I said to Boski.

"For goodness' sake," she said to me.

"Perhaps we've got something here," I said. "Just think, I could go around to all the desert places of the earth, playing this tune and singing it, and presto, they'll become garden cities. There's a million in it, my girl—perhaps even a billion."

"No, you don't," she said, walking over to the piano and taking that sheet of my symphony away. "You know that rainy places are no good for you. Every time a rain comes up you cough, cough, cough. Let's pass up the million and get you well again."

"Aw, Boski!" I protested, but she hid the manuscript, and I've never been able to find it since. I don't believe in the whole thing, understand, but it *is* rather queer. Once, in the Indian summer of 1939, it got so hot out here that we all thought we'd pass out—lots of people did. After the fifth day Boski faltered, and I thought she was going to get the manuscript out just to let me try it. But she caught hold of herself just in time.

But I'm ahead of my story again. This was still late 1936; I was still going every day over to Paramount (while composing my symphony on the side); and a fellow by the name of Salvador Dali was beginning to create a great deal of flurry in the Press columns of Hollywood.

The first moment a fellow like me looks at a fellow like Dali, he thinks, "I wonder if this guy is really on the level? A great painter, all right. The greatest surrealist painter, all right. But what about that surrealist acting of his? Is he publicity-stunting?"

So when, for the first time, I met Salvador Dali at his own request, I said to him, "Look here, Dali, you and I are two of a kind. The only thing is, I'm a little older, and at this exact moment of my destiny I'm endeavouring to make a good impression over at Paramount. C. B. de Mille thinks I'm crazy and is watching me like a hawk."

"Ah! C. B. de Mille! He is the greatest surrealist in all the world!" Dali said ecstatically.

"Too true," I murmured, "but will you behave yourself if I take you over to see him? He is also my boss."

"But I only wish to kiss his hands," Dali said reprovingly.

"In that case," I said, "we don't go over. Do you know what sort of a situation I'm in over there? Boris Morros, the music director, has



engaged me to write the music of C.B.'s latest masterpiece, *The Plainsman*. This was O.K. with De Mille, as he doesn't know my name from Adam, or that of any other musician. However, some of the yes-men around him did, and they told him that Boris Morros is out to get him by assigning to his new two-million-dollar picture a raving maniac by the name of Antheil who once wrote a mechanical ballet for nineteen linotype machines and performed it at Carnegie Hall. This, at the moment, does not set well with De Mille, and he is brooding about it. If he detects the least sign of insanity about me, out I go. If I bring you in now, you may be that least trace of insanity."

Dali reflected. My logic was unassailable. "O.K., pal," he said at last. "No surrealism."

So I took Dali over to Paramount, where he kissed C. B. de Mille's hands anyhow. Most fortunately De Mille saw nothing whatsoever amiss in this.

Dali immediately started cooing:

"Ah, Cecil B. de Mille! I have met you at last, *you*, the *greatest surrealist on earth!*" De Mille looked first charmed, then puzzled. He turned around, but none of his henchmen were present to interpret. "What is a surrealist?" he asked.

I explained. "It's a new European art movement, Mr. de Mille, a kind of realism but more real than realism—'super-realism,' so to speak."

"Oh," said De Mille, getting it, "a kind of super-colossal realism?"

"To put it lightly," I said, "yes."

"Very interesting," said De Mille. "I should like to know more about it."

"Ah," interrupted Dali, "but you *do* know all about it, C. B. de Mille. *You* are the veritable *king of the surrealists.*"

De Mille accepted this title in silence. He was now the king of the surrealists, and Dali said so in the next morning's papers. Incredulous newspaper reporters interviewed De Mille and asked him if this was so. De Mille said it was. The item was read by everybody in Paramount.

Boris Morros, who is a nice right fellow, but who possesses to the extreme degree the typical Hollywood weakness of judging all and sundry according to the inches of space they are daily able to wangle out of the Press, said to me, "George, you told me yesterday that your friend, Salvador Dali, would like to get a job with Paramount."

"That is correct," I said, "but he didn't say what kind of a job he wanted. He's a surrealist, you know. That might mean that he really has in mind the studio manager's job, or a producer's—which, incidentally, might not be a bad idea. Almost all the producers I know are surrealists at heart."

"Nonsense, nonsense!" Boris smiled his moon smile at me and brushed the idea of Dali's really being crazy aside. "Of course, what Dali wants is to design sets, dream sequences, and that sort of thing. He'd be marvellous at it, too, from what I've seen of his pictures printed in the newspapers. Now, I've got an idea, but first tell me, have you ever seen that picture, *Le Chien Andalou*? It's a silent moving picture which Dali made around 1929, and everybody says it's terrific. But nobody seems to have actually *seen* it. If I were sure it was terrific, super-colossal, I'd invite all the producers and executives of Paramount over to see it at Projection Room One, including C. B. de Mille——"

"I've seen it," I interrupted, "and it *is* terrific. It's wonderful! It's beautiful!"

Now this was no pose with me. One summer night, six or seven years back, Jean Cocteau had phoned my Montparnasse hotel and excitedly told me to come right over to the Right Bank, as he had discovered something of incredible interest and beauty. Knowing Jean to have the best nose in Paris, I quickly entered the local subway and met him in front of his hotel inside of twenty-five minutes. He immediately took me to a nearby moving-picture theatre, where, after the regular show, they were to run for him a private showing of a brand-new surrealist film, *Le Chien Andalou* (The Andalusian Dog). It was made by two Spanish surrealists, Salvador Dali and Luis Bunuel.

I knew of them but slightly. I had seen a picture of Dali's which Man Ray had tried to sell to me because Dali was broke and I (momentarily) wasn't—which is a logical enough argument in artistic Paris. I didn't buy the picture because Dali, although broke, asked some outrageous sum for it, and I said so to Man Ray. He agreed with me. Later, however, Dali proved that we had both been wrong; in thus setting his earliest prices so high that nobody could or would buy them—even though he were starving—he literally established the basis of his future success.

Bunuel, I had heard of as one of the wildest surrealists of all. He would work in no other medium than that of motion-picture film. Up until now nobody had seen any of his work.

Perhaps, here, I should explain that I was already fairly conditioned to view this new motion picture with appreciation and understanding. The surrealist movement had, from the very beginning, been my friend. In one of its manifestoes it had been declared that all music was unbearable—excepting, possibly, mine—a beautiful and appreciated condensation. I had even spent months in the writing of an opera libretto, called *Faust III*, with the two leaders of the first surrealist movement, Louis Aragon and André Breton; it was to be in five long acts, but when we arrived at the fourth, the surrealist movement split into two factions, Aragon leading one party and Breton the other. They

willed me the ruins of the manuscript, which I then took to a bookbinder to keep as a memento of a lost ideal. The bookbinder, an ancient Russian, falling in with the spirit of the thing, bound the book backwards, starting with the last page and ending at the first. I accepted his unasked-for editorial comment without arching an eyebrow, paid my bill, and the book now reposes on my book-shelf. I figured I had got out of the whole *Faust III* lightly.

As previously mentioned, the surrealists had even been present at most of my concerts, socking everybody who didn't like the music, and getting arrested for it. . . .

*Le Chien Andalou* started unrolling, and the first thing Cocteau and I comprehended was a man shaving with a very sharp razor. Suddenly he turns to a wide-eyed girl sitting right alongside, and he cuts her left eyeball right open, while she placidly sits there and lets him do it. The horrid interior of the eyeball slithers down her face. This is only the beginning.

It gets worse or—depending upon whether you are surrealistic-minded—more beautiful as it goes along. The young man with the razor pursues the girl, who, as she runs from room to room in a building with apparently endless rooms in it, has her clothes alternately dissolve and materialize as she runs along. One moment she is nude. The next moment she is clothed. And so on, clothes, nudity, clothes, nudity, clothes. She runs through one room to the next, closing doors all the while. Sometimes the fellow gets his hands caught in the closing doors, and one sees a close-up of a clenched fist apparently decaying, with ants running all over it. None of this stops him, however; he keeps on going. The going gets harder towards the end. The girl comes to the last room and is huddling, nude, in the farthest corner of the room while the fellow strains towards her with two big cables attached to his shoulders. He strains and strains, hardly making more than an inch headway at a time. We pan along the cables, backwards, to see what's holding him up. Two pianos, grand pianos, are holding him up. They are filled with dead donkeys and crocodiles, their heads sticking out over the piano desk and the blood from their mouths dripping upon the white keys. There are two other cables attached to the two pianos, and these drag a number of priests who, as they slide along the floor on their backs, hold open prayer-books as their lips move. . . .

When, seven years later, we ran the picture at Projection Room One, Paramount Studios, Hollywood, the first thing that happened was that one of the biggest producers on the lot got violently ill. He had to leave very suddenly. The rest were nailed to their seats as if hypnotized by a king cobra.

Boris turned to me and hissed, "I thought you said this was the most beautiful picture you ever saw!"

Cecil B. de Mille, king of the surrealists (American branch) was a pale green when the lights went up. He got up and left without a word.

So did the others, when they recovered.

Dali ran out to a phone immediately. He called his wife, Gala.

"Gala," he said breathlessly, "it was the *greatest* success imaginable. *They were speechless!*"

The next day there were repercussions. De Mille sent word to the music department that he'd like to hear whatever Antheil had finished of the score of *The Plainsman*. We had a date in one of the music rooms for four o'clock. I was to be there promptly, and Boris sent word to De Mille that he might be a trifle late but would be sure to come.

He was going to let me face the music alone, coming in only for finalities, such as they might be!

When De Mille came into the music room he was in no mood to dicker. Knowing the end was plainly in sight, I resolved to play him the most dissonant sections of my score (on the piano) and go down with colours flying. I got out my Indian War Dance Torture Scene, the sequence where the Indians hang Gary Cooper to a sort of roasting stake and light a fire under him. Singing such melodies as there were, I accompanied them with a furious bedlam of discords on the piano. When I had finished the scene I turned around, ready to go.

"Go on, play the rest of the sequences," De Mille said. An astonished but not totally displeased look had come over De Mille's face. I played the rest of the sequences, most of them very simple and melodic, and I could see that De Mille was becoming more pleased with each one. Finally, after half an hour of this, Boris suddenly burst into the room.

"I've got it, I've got it!" he whispered hoarsely.

"Got what?" asked De Mille, who slightly resented interruption at this point.

"Why, the theme for the Indian War Dance Torture Scene, of course!" And, without allowing De Mille to answer, Boris produced a copy of Rimsky-Korsakov's *Song of India* and began to whistle it. De Mille had quite a time convincing Boris that Indians from India and Indians in America were not at all ethnographically or ethnologically the same.

"And besides," C. B. de Mille insisted, "Antheil's music for *The Plainsman* Indian War Dance Torture Scene is fine, just what I wanted."

I never saw a man look so doubting or thunderstruck as Boris at this instant. He left the room mumbling, and somehow I felt that all in all I had sown the seeds of future trouble in the Paramount music

department. This hunch turned out to be one hundred per cent correct, but not immediately.

In any case, when, finally, I brought Dali into the office of Paramount's chief executive, I did not feel any too safely entrenched. But in the meantime, Dali's publicity in the daily Los Angeles Press had been so terrific, pages of it, that the producers who had previously turned green at his *Chien Andalou* thought they had been mistaken. The word got up to the front office: Dali was seeking a job as a set designer, and the front office decided to snap him up with a generous contract. I was appointed to bring him in tow.

"Mr. Dali," said the All Highest, "we, Paramount Incorporated, are prepared to make you a set designer on this lot!"

Dali looked distressed. "Alas, Mr. President, I'm afraid there's been a ghastly mistake."

"A mistake? There can't be any mistake. You wanted to get yourself a position at Paramount, didn't you?"

"Yes, Mr. President, that is true. But *not* as an artist, a set designer. It is the job of scenario writer for which I am applying."

At which moment the interview was terminated. Fortunately, C. B. de Mille was "sold" on me for my composing merits alone; otherwise I should have flown out of Paramount Studios that day.

That evening Dali and his wife Gala tried to make up for their little strategy of not letting me in on their secret until the last possible moment by inviting Boski and myself to a round of the Hollywood night clubs. We went, and Dali proceeded to order champagne without, first, looking at the right-hand side of the wine card—an unwise procedure anywhere, but in Hollywood particularly. The bill came, and one bottle of extra-special champagne had cost seventy dollars alone. As Dali dug into his pocket and Gala glumly checked the total, I almost fancied for a split second that I had at long last caught them both in a completely normal moment—or, at least, in a moment of temporarily suspended surrealism.

Several years later Luis Bunuel, Dali's co-author of *Le Chien Andalou*, came to Hollywood and looked me up. He had just come from fighting the Spanish fascists and had left in the last days of the Franco triumph. Inasmuch as he, his wife, and his little boy seemed to be such absolutely normal, solid persons, as totally un-surrealist in the Dali tradition as one could possibly imagine, I asked him whether Dali "puts it on."

"Yes," Luis Bunuel said, "he juts it on. It's good business."

However, lest anyone misunderstand, I should like to point out that

all this has absolutely nothing to do with Dali's being, or not being, a very great artist. Few painters alive can master paint, form, conception of the whole, as can Dali. He is a kind of madman combined with charlatan; but he is also a *genius of the brush*. There have been many such in history. That he now rather fancies himself as a writer also need worry nobody—just so long as he also continues to paint.

## CHAPTER XXIX

### PETER ENTERS FAMILY—AND CONSEQUENCES

WHEN Peter was born, on June 8, 1937, the situation posed an entirely new question—new to me, in any case. I felt that I had to make his financial future assured.

I was just about to work for C. B. de Mille again, but I had spent months of unremunerative idleness in between. During this latter period I had attempted to pick up the threads of my article-writing boom period, but by this time Gingrich had apparently become interested in other writers, or perhaps my writing was less good, less suited to his needs. Possibly, as a potential father, I could no longer coin the wise-cracks which had previously made me so attractive to *Esquire* readers.

I was frankly scared—for the first time, really, in my life.

However, I liked the idea of writing for a living. I had just tasted enough blood with *Esquire* in this direction to believe that if I applied myself I could somehow write. Writing words, moreover, was not like writing music for the movies; I could write words all day—however corny—and these words would in no manner interfere with my writing music at night.

It is always better for one to do one's artistic whoring in some other art than the one which is one's real talent. Thus one's love and effort in the field of one's true talent never become deflowered until "the right idea comes along."

However, as with the movie-music field, one could not get in and out of commercial writing just like that. It was a business, just like any other.

I studied the writing field very exactly.

The result of my studies: I discovered that of all fields of writing, the successful syndicated columnist is the most highly paid. And of all the syndicated column departments, the most likely for me to succeed in was the love column.

Love columns, I also discovered, practically go on for ever. They

are gilt-edged securities in the writing field. Their advice is easy to formulate. It must simply be conventionalized into: "Girls are never, never to consent without the wedding ring, and boys never, never to ask without offering one."

Boski and I felt that we knew a lot about love's problems, what with my father's second piece of advice, our having lived in the Paris Latin Quarter all those years, and my even having spent a number of months in Africa with Aphrodite herself—to say nothing of all the love problems of my various pupils with which they had invariably harassed us for advice.

The new Esquire Syndicate was just starting out, and as I already had an "in" with *Esquire*, it was rather easy to convince them that a new kind of love column, "Boy Advises Girl" (for a change), might be a very cute idea indeed. (As you probably have noticed, I *can* become very cute and thymocentric on occasion.)

It never occurred to us then that anybody, in democratic America in particular, would ever arch an eyebrow at any artist for attempting to earn an honest living, even if it were by very corny means. Bennett Cerf, for instance, in *Try and Stop Me* says that my writing a love column, especially after perpetrating the *Ballet Mécanique*, is probably the most incredible transformation since the late Harold Stearns stopped being a brilliant Harvard intellectual and author of a treatise on American culture to become "Peter Pickum," a horse-race dopestier for the *Paris Tribune*.

I must admit that my becoming a love columnist must have seemed strange to anyone who had known me previously.

Actually, I must confess now, I have personally done very little writing on this supposed column of mine. For shortly after I had started working for the Esquire Syndicate, its editor, Howard Denby, rejected one column after the other until, at last, I was so weary with the writing of endless new ones (to take their place) that I only too willingly listened to his follow-up offer to continue the column, but with his own staff—but this under my name and under the title I had discovered, "Boy Advises Girl."

This early abandoning of the *actual* writing of the column, of course, gave me a very small end of the percentage; but I no longer had to work for it; and many's the day since then that this startlingly small amount nevertheless had literally saved our lives.

We always spoke of it as "our income," as if it were from gilt-edge bonds, mortgages. . . .

Two months ago I discontinued the column under my name altogether.

In the meantime I had finished, with considerable success, two major

pictures for De Mille. I was now even launched on my third, an epic to be called *Union Pacific*.

Up until now, let me emphasize that I had had no trouble with the Paramount music department. But, too, up until now, Boris Morros had been in charge. Now he left Paramount in order to become a producer at another studio, and I was suddenly to learn how difficult it is to make a few extra dollars via movie scoring.

When I brought my first sketches for *Union Pacific* to Projection Room Number One of Paramount Studios, I noticed something very strange. Previously I could have played any amount of sketches for De Mille without ever encountering a single other movie composer in that projection room; now, however, every movie composer or arranger working at Paramount at the time was mysteriously present! Now C. B. de Mille is a man, if he will forgive my saying so, who likes to keep in touch with the public's pulse; to cut to the chase, he likes to make his pictures by popular vote.

He is much influenced by everything everybody tells him—especially *en masse*.

Everyone knew this, and, therefore, when I saw the whole music department, which had previously never been too cordially inclined towards a musical radical like myself, I became exceedingly apprehensive—and, as it proved, not without due cause. I knew they were there to turn in a record vote, and that vote would be against me.

I played one of my sketches for *Union Pacific*.

"Fine! Fine!" said De Mille, beaming, for he had grown to like my music, especially after the very successful scores of *The Plainsman* and *The Buccaneer*. Then he bethought himself.

He looked around to see how the rest of the music department liked it.

Their faces were a study.

I looked at De Mille. I could see him thinking.

"Good God, if even his own music department doesn't like it . . ."

"What do you think of it?" he asked them, point-blank.

The jury hemmed and hawed. You could see they really didn't like to say, really. . . .

De Mille turned around to me and said, not unkindly, "Well, George, perhaps you weren't feeling too well last night. Go home and try again." I was still ace-high with him.

The next day I found the projection room filled again. The same jury. They didn't like my sketches again, not really. . . . "They're not bad, you know, but *really*, Mr. de Mille. . . ."

So I went home that night and rewrote everything again. I worked myself silly. Ditto the next night, and the next.

Inside of one week I was ready to say "uncle."



I did not score *Union Pacific*.

After this I decided that perhaps the Hollywood music departments considered me too aloof, snobbish, stand-offish. Whereupon we rented ourselves a larger house, invited various movie composers, movie arrangers, and music directors to our fireside. Things now went better at the studios, but it all demanded precious time off from my own personal composition; it also greatly increased our expenses. One could never serve anything but the best liquor to these gents, and one had, of course, to keep two maids, to say nothing of Peter's nurse.

Constant dinners, night after night, ran into formidable sums—even though the movie-music business continued to provide me with interesting amounts of lucre.

Before long we saw that we could not continue in the movie business without losing practically everything, including first of all our self-respect.

One day we simply quit. We moved out of our large house into a very, very small one in a less fashionable section of Hollywood. I told the music departments that I planned to devote myself entirely to writing words and a new commercial proposition I called "SEE-Note." This was in early 1939, approximately April.

In early 1938 I had published in *Esquire* two articles on popular piano playing, called "Chopin in Two Lessons." It taught one how to play piano music immediately, but not by ear. It taught you to read music by eye, through a new music notation which I was afterwards to call "SEE-Note." (Although why I happened to call it exactly this I cannot remember.)

But before we left our big, palatial house, and I the movie business entirely, Ben and Charlie suddenly came to Hollywood, both on separate commissions. Jointly they called me up and, in great glee, kept yelling over the phone that Ben was going to establish a chamber-music society called "The Ben Hecht Symphonietta," and they wanted me to be their pianist. (In his book, *A Smattering of Ignorance*, Oscar Levant has already explained that Ben plays the violin fairly well, likes to play it on every possible occasion.)

Ben would play first violin, and Charlie "clarinet in B flat major." Others were going to join the "symphonietta," too. Charlie Lederer for one, and Harpo Marx. Rehearsals would be held each Thursday night after dinner in Ben's recently rented Hollywood hill-top palace.

I accepted. The nucleus of the orchestra established, Ben now gave an interview to the movie trade papers, in which he violently attacked "the general crass and low level of Hollywood musical taste," placing the budding "Ben Hecht Symphonietta" on record as intending to remedy it.

When he appended the symphonietta's personnel, Hollywood guffawed and knew it was being ribbed.

The "orchestra" commenced rehearsals. During our very first rehearsal we were together in a little quiet upstairs room of Ben's enormous rented house when, all uninvited, Groucho Marx suddenly opened the door and yelled:

"Quiet, please!"

We looked at one another, thunderstruck. Harpo managed to say, "Groucho's jealous." Ben said, "I wonder what the hell Groucho's up to—I've been hearing our front door open and close all evening."

The mystery remained a mystery until the door, with Groucho behind it, opened again.

"Quiet! You lousy amateurs!"

We took no notice. Previously we had discussed whether or not we should take Groucho into our group and had decided against it because the only instrument he played was the mandolin—which was considered vulgar and undignified for our "chamber music." We sat there in painful, austere silence until Groucho disappeared. We heard him thumping his indignant way down the stairs.

Then, after a minute, there was a sound which raised the rafters. . .

It was the *Tannhäuser* Overture played by a full, real symphony orchestra. Thunderstruck again, we all crawled down the stairway to look. There was Groucho directing, with great bat-like gestures, the Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra. At least one hundred men had been squeezed into the living-room.

Groucho had hired them because (as he later explained) he had been hurt at our not taking him into our symphonietta.

We took him in.

Others were added later. Among these were Harry Kurnitz, the writer, Ernst Lubitch, the director. For a time Madeleine Carroll thought of joining us, but desisted when she heard (erroneously) that our every rehearsal was a mad orgy to which dozens of budding Hollywood starlets came arrayed only in diaphanous materials.

But the situation soon arose between Charlie and Harpo which caused Ben (our leader) to criticize both of them harshly. . . .

Ben and I were the only two of the orchestra who could really read music fluently. Kurnitz could only read a little, while Harpo could read and play music only in A major. Harpo, for some depraved Harpoian reason, played the A clarinet instead of his accustomed harp (probably because Charlie MacArthur played a B clarinet, and this would raise an everlasting argument as to whether we should play pieces only in A major or in B flat major). Harpo now played every piece, regardless of its original key, as if it were written in A major. Charlie would spoil every piece by playing it as if it were written in B flat major.

Neither could play in any other key than the natural key of his own clarinet.

It all contributed to the interesting effects which so hurt Ben's sensitive ear that he ended up by spending much rehearsal time carping at them, thus giving us other players plenty of time out—which was one hundred per cent O.K. with us. Eventually, however, Harpo (who was the more equal-tempered of the two) won out over Charlie, and we began to play pieces only in A major. This made Charlie so indignant that he pretended to quit the orchestra altogether. When, after one or two non-appearances, Harpo began to believe Charlie wasn't coming back, he switched back to his harp—but when Charlie once tentatively stuck his nose through the rehearsal-room door he instantly whisked back to his A clarinet.

I am occasionally reminded of the fact that many of my fellow musicians live wholly and completely in a world of their own. During the period of the Ben Hecht Symphonietta I met on a Hollywood street corner an old friend, Adolf Weiss, the composer. In those days (I do not know how he will feel about it now) Adolf was a devoted friend of my music and (I believe) thought highly of me.

Adolf is also one of the world's best bassoonists. He has a temperament and appearance to match—tall, pale, brooding, in true musician style. His eyes burn with devotion to his ideals, which are high. He is just like all other fine bassoon players I know—a fanatic.

I said, "Say, Adolf, have you ever heard of the Ben Hecht Symphonietta?"

Adolf said he hadn't.

"Well, would you like to go up to Ben's house with me to-night to have some fun? Bring your bassoon along."

"I'll come," said Adolf. (Obviously, if George Antheil the composer invited a world-famous bassoonist for an evening's "fun" in a "chamber organization," that fun could only be, as Adolf would see fun, the playing of Bach, Stravinsky, or Schönberg.)

He came to Ben's house that evening with his bassoon and set up his stand. Before we passed out the parts (which, alas, were of the *Emperor Waltz*, which we had not learned properly after four whole months of intensive practice!), I introduced Adolf to everybody, Ben, Harpo, Groucho, Harry, Ernst, and Charlie Lederer. Adolf, the aloof musician, did not recognize any of them as celebrated public characters, and retained his attitude, which was, simply, "Well, I've been in crazier orchestras than this."

Bassoonists, in particular, will never be thrown off centre by the mere proximity of extraordinary characters.

He was, nevertheless, a little nonplussed when I placed before him

on his stand the *trombone* part of the *Emperor Waltz*. (There was no bassoon part in this humble orchestration.) All evening long, now, he sat there and played these humble little notes—which any first-year student on the bassoon could have played. I shall see his mystification in my mind's eye for a good many years!

He didn't get it.

After the rehearsal he packed his bassoon, and we drove home together.

"I'm glad we didn't try any Bach, Stravinsky, or Schönberg, at that," he said finally. "I don't think they were up to it."

When Ernst Krenek, the composer, came to town, Ben and I decided that Sam Goldwyn would have to hire him to write the score of a picture which Sam was then planning, one with a Czech background. As Krenek was Czech, had just arrived from Europe (where he had been persecuted by the Nazis), because he was an old and very good friend of mine, and finally because he was out of a job, Ben and I immediately went to Sam and started screaming at him that the greatest composer in the world was in town.

"Is that so?" said Goldwyn, without falling off his chair. "What's his name?"

"Krenek, Ernst Krenek!"

"Never heard of him! What has he written?"

"What's he written, what's he written!" screamed Ben. "Listen to that!"

"Well, what *has* he written? I never heard tell of the guy before."

"You tell him, Georgie," said Ben. I took over.

"He wrote one of the world's most successful operas, *Jonny Spielt Auf*. It made over a million in Germany before Hitler came in."

"Never heard of it."

"Well," I said, reaching, "he wrote *Threepenny Opera*." (Actually, Kurt Weill wrote it, and I knew it, but all of Krenek's operas, symphonies, and other pieces seemed so feeble now.)

"Never heard of it."

"And *Rosenkavalier*, interrupted Ben. "He wrote *Rosenkavalier*. It grossed over two million dollars last year on the Continent."

Goldwyn brightened up a bit. He thought he might have heard of *Rosenkavalier*.

"And *Faust*, too; Krenek wrote that."

"No kiddin'!" said Goldwyn speculatively. I could see Krenek was going to get the job.

"And *La Traviata*, too," said Ben, to clinch it.

"So he wrote *La Traviata* did he!" Goldwyn's smiling face suddenly turned black. "Just bring that guy around here so's I can get my hands

on him. Why, his publishers almost ruined me with a suit just because we used a few bars of that lousy opera. We had to retake half of the picture for a few lousy bars.”

As we quickly withdrew from his wrath, both Ben and I sadly realized that we over-sold our product.

## CHAPTER XXX

### I AM NOT A BUSINESS MAN

I AM very pleased that Peter promises to become a strong individualist, that he now shows he is very likely to choose the kind of life he's going to lead without too much assistance or even advice from me. It throws me into greater repose.

But when Peter was born I first felt very masculine and protective. I was the father of a family. *Ergo*, I had to earn a fortune in order to send Peter through college. I was very intent on getting together a couple of estates, a swimming pool or two, and a vault of gilt-edged securities.

Hence more movie music after the first splash with *The Plainsman*.

In order to do that I had to temporarily put my *Third Symphony* on the shelf.

But unless you attempt to do so with a really talented man like Ben Hecht or one of his large calibre, the trouble with trying to earn a fortune by writing movie music is that it's such an awful darned nuisance. Earning money is always a nuisance, but earning it through several not-to-be-mentioned-here Hollywood music directors is really the most irritating way one can imagine, particularly when (am I, perhaps, a bit too boastful?) one is a *known* composer with one's name in almost every musical encyclopædia, and the music directors are without their names in same. It just becomes a question of whether their inferiority complex or your superiority complex holds out the longest. Even so they, holding the whip hand, usually manage to outguess you.

But the over-all question of to be or not to be in the movie music departments is not only a question of music directors, but of one's studio colleagues in music; mostly they are "composers" who are afraid that maybe you will come in and upset the whole technique of scoring pictures as once you've been reputed to have upset the technique of writing serious music, and where would they be then? (I mean in case you're Stravinsky, Copland, Toch, Schönberg, or somebody like that; they have these same troubles.)

The ensconced movie composers are mostly not alert enough, quick enough to learn a really new scoring wrinkle; in short, to move a new

composer of reputation into a Hollywood music studio is murder, a matter of survival of the fittest, both for them and for you. And they know the ropes.

In 1936-37 two or three "modern" composers entered Hollywood studios, including myself. Our scores were very successful, giving all the directors and producers a new idea. The directors started demanding to know why all the scores of Hollywood were not at least as fresh, if not as expert. Oscar Levant tells the amusing story of how, during the latter end of this exact period, most of the old stuffy routine composers of Hollywood suddenly ran out to Arnold Schönberg in order to take "a few lessons in discords," this presumably to "modernize" their work, to make it as "up to date" as ours. (Horrors, what terminology!) As this, naturally, didn't work, the only other method of protection they could adopt was to gang up against newcomers.

There were more of them than there were of us, so it is redundant to observe that, mostly, they won.

This is not to say that I don't like Hollywood, or the motion-picture business. I very much do. I think that it is one of the few so-called "art colonies" of the world *which actually works*. It is a lot of fun to live here and be connected with the movies. Fresh air blows through them. But not around the music departments.

Around the movie lots there is a saying that the music departments are the last kicked-around dog of the motion pictures. For one thing they have the lowest budgets—important here. They also get the footage last and have less time to do their stunt with it than any other department, not even excepting the cutting. Nobody gives a damn about them.

It is really too bad. After all, Hollywood music is very nearly a public communication, like radio. If you are a movie fan (and who isn't?) you may sit in a movie theatre three times a week listening to the symphonic background scores which Hollywood composers concoct. What happens? Your musical tastes become moulded by these scores, heard without knowing it. You *see* love, and you *hear* it. *Simultaneously*. It makes sense. Music suddenly becomes a language for you, without your knowing it. You cannot see and hear such stuff week in and year out without forming some kind of taste for it. You do not have to listen to a radio programme of stupid, banal music. But you cannot see your movies without being compelled to listen.

In this special regard I sometimes wonder greatly at music critics. They take infinite pains with the moulding of public taste, at least in so far as the concert hall and the symphonic radio programme is concerned, but they absolutely ignore the most important thing of all, the background movie score. It is here that the great larger public taste is being slowly but surely formed. As I said before, the radio is something

you can turn off. But you cannot turn this stuff off unless you refuse to go to the movies.

I am very worried about this state of affairs in American music, and I was very worried about it when I went to Hollywood, only then I thought I could do something about it. Now, at least, I know I can't; and so do my colleagues. With the exception of Waxman, Hollander, and possibly Rozsa, and my old squawking friend, Benny Hermann, not a single composer of new vitality has appeared in Hollywood in years, and Benny entered Hollywood via radio and the great prestige of Orson Welles, so he doesn't quite count.

Hollywood music is a closed proposition for the likes of us.

When, in late spring, 1939, we retired from the aforementioned palatial Hollywoodland house down to a small, humble, one-storey bungalow in Hollywood proper, we did not only retire as a family of three, but we took two friends along with us. My idea in retreating from the huge Hollywoodland house had been, of course, to retreat down from unreality to *life*, from slavery-for-nothing to an inexpensive place which I could then use as a base of operations towards earning a fairly quick fortune with "SEE-Note." The ignominy of having to write more movie music was not going to be for me.

I somehow or other had the idea that this would not take very long.

The rent of our new bungalow was only one-third of the rent of the Hollywoodland house, but it was also only one third as large. It also possessed another disadvantage: it was unfurnished.

The first piece of mail received in this bungalow was explosive enough:

DEAR GEORGE:

*I am moving from my large Merion house to a smaller establishment in the city. In the process of moving we discovered a large box in the cellar marked "Hold for George Antheil." I recall now that you sent it to me in 1923; you asked me to keep it for you. From Berlin, I think. It looks as though it might contain paintings. Do you still want it? If you do, I wish that you would send for it right away, as my new cellar in Philadelphia is really too small. . . .*

MARY LOUISE BOK

I sent her a telegram, and within two weeks the precious paintings arrived. As I opened the huge box and saw all of those lovely, precious paintings again I knew that I could not purchase them again at ten times the prices I had originally paid for them.

I wondered how in the world I could have forgotten that I had sent them to Mrs. Bok to keep for me. Of course, now, I remembered writing the letter to her clearly, "Dear Mary Louise, will you please keep these

paintings for me until I come back? . . ." And now, goodness knows how many of my other friends I had insulted by asking them to disgorge the box of precious paintings I had entrusted to them!

I also realized that in regaining these valuable pictures I had already taken a step towards that fortune which I was determined to have. (In order to be able to sit back and devote all the rest of my life to serious musical composition without worrying as to whether Boski and Peter would be able to eat.) But the war had made the modern-painting market very dull; we could not hope to sell any of these fine pictures for a long while at anything near their true value.

So we hung these pictures on the walls of the sitting-room. The people who came to see us at that time were astonished to see the Antheils living there in a bare house without furniture (excepting a table and four kitchen chairs in the kitchen and four beds in the bedrooms, into which they were not invited), but with approximately ten thousand dollars' worth of Picassos, Marcoussis, Derains, Kubins, Miro, and Legers on the walls. This was rather useful at that. It immediately gave us excellent financial rating. A number of our movie friends, some of them drawing high movie salaries, were now only too happy to give us their cast-off furniture, which we accepted gratefully.

It was not very long before the little bungalow at 1628 North Stanley Avenue looked very nice indeed, especially after five packing cases of books which I had collected all over Europe (and stored in New York) arrived and were duly exhibited.

The gifts of furniture arrived not a moment too soon. Up until then our rather large sitting-room had literally been stark empty of furniture, but for a single collapsible card table. Visitors arriving before our influx of gift furniture had simply been shown pillows on our cleanly swept floor.

One of these, incidentally, was Professor Warren D. Allen, professor of music at Stanford University; he came one day to offer me a teaching position at the university. He sat down on the cushions like the rest, discussing the teaching situation with me, glancing at the walls full of expensive pictures.

We agreed that I would come to Stanford the following summer, the early summer of 1940.

The two friends whom we had brought with us were two girls. One was our former nurse, who had lived with us on salary ever since Peter had been brought back from the hospital, and the other a night-club singer whom we had sort of taken under our wing. Both were temporarily out of a job, the nurse's job having ceased when we moved out of Hollywoodland, and the night-club singer's job even before that. The idea of us all living together in one house was that we would chip in on



the rent, do our own cooking, marketing, etc. It was very jolly. Boski was very fond of both of them.

It did finally become a little cramped. No furniture at first, then too much. We could hardly get ourselves into the house with a shoehorn. So, at last, our former nurse got herself another job, leaving only our night-club singer, Nina Luce.

Boski and I still always readily agree that Nina is one of the most extraordinary yet utterly lovable characters we've ever met, possibly only the smallest notch below Linkey Gillespie. She had come originally from Texas, spoke with a typically Texan accent.

Nina had come up through a harder school than Boski or I; our school had been hard enough. Night-club singing is not the easiest job in the world. But she had managed to keep a certain calm serenity, utter integrity.

In her Texan way, too, she was beautiful. (Most Texan girls are beautiful!) She reminded us of Lucille Ball, whom she resembled both facially and in manner.

She was also kind-hearted to a fault, but played poker like a gangster, even better than Martha Foley, close to the vest.

We often played rummy and poker (but not for money, of course!), and it always perplexed us that we could never beat her.

One of Boski's hobbies that still remains is to remember the things Nina said. Nina's pronouncements on all and various aspects of life were invariably brilliantly illuminative. For instance (among a million of them), her master comment on love:

"I wouldn't know; I only work here!"

Or her calm, unruffled comment to a Hollywood wolf (our guest). One night he sat playing cards with us, but under the table attempted to play with Nina's shapely leg.

She said only: "You're running up an awful bill!"

During our first several months of the bungalow I wrote an article destined to have a rather far-reaching effect upon my future occupation—even upon my *Fourth Symphony*. This was an article called "Germany Never Had a Chance."

I wrote it in early June, 1939, sending it off immediately to *Esquire*. They published it in October, 1939, with an editorial by Gingrich on the editorial page explaining that he had received the article in mid-June, paid for it in late June, set it up in *Esquire* type in mid-July.

The article prophesied that the second world war would (1) start around September 1, 1939; (2) that it would start with the Germans attacking Poland; (3) that Germany would conquer Poland in three weeks; (4) that Germany would eventually attack Russia, penetrating deep into that country while the Russians fought guerrilla warfare

behind the German lines; (5) that the United States would eventually be drawn into the conflict.

In his editorial, apparently written near the end of September, 1939, Gingrich seemed quite excited that my first three prophecies had come out absolutely correct, for he called special attention to the fact that in June, 1939, when they were written, few persons believed war so imminent, or that its exact starting point would be Germany attacking Poland, or, if she did, that Poland would collapse so easily. He said (correctly) that not even our generals in the War Department had believed all this—and that, therefore, I was a very good guesser indeed, and would *Esquire* readers please pay attention to the rest of my prophecies?

The secret of the extraordinary accuracy of this article was that during the last five years my brother Henry and I had become closer friends than ever. His constant and voluminous correspondence from abroad had caused me to study world politics with a keener realization of values than I had ever been able to accumulate from my correspondence with Dr. Henry Simon or Dr. Hans Heinsheimer.

Because, musically, the situation will become important in my *Fourth Symphony*, I should here perhaps begin to make it clear that my interest in international affairs was expanding daily, even without the stimulus of Henry's correspondence. But then, was there anybody in America, or the rest of the world, whose interest in international affairs did not expand greatly during this most explosive of all political eras? With the exception of a few isolationists and artists who were hopeless ivory-towerists, everybody branched out into more or less of a diplomat and strategist; I was only a little better-informed member of the avalanche. My information stemmed from many things: first of all, Henry's letters; secondly, he forwarded to me many German military journals which could be purchased on any street corner in Germany; thirdly, my long association and correspondence with one of the world's greatest newspaper editors, Dr. Henry Simon; and fourthly, Dr. Heinsheimer.

Henry was in Moscow now, young attaché of the United States Embassy and, in reality, one of our foremost war experts. He was then the "brilliant young man" of the State Department; he had a sort of roving commission. His quest for more knowledge took him all over Europe.

He often returned to America to report directly to the President himself.

Only a short half-year before war had broken out—while Boski, Peter, and I still lived in the big mansion in Hollywoodland—Mother had written me from Trenton asking me please to come home for Easter Sunday. She had just got word from Henry in Moscow that he would

be home for Easter Sunday services. (He had to come home, anyway, to report on events of tremendous importance to the State Department.)

She also said she just could not explain it, but somehow this special Easter she wanted her two sons standing there side by side at our familiar old church altar again.

Without knowing quite why, I felt the matter urgent. I now made the trip across the whole of America simply to be present at this Easter Service with Mother, Dad, and Henry.

I could not afford it, but I went, and as cheaply as possible.

Henry and I talked long into the night on Easter Sunday. A single electric bulb burned in Dad's little shoe store; we both sat on those familiar old shoe-fitting stools on which first I and then Henry had spent many years of our adolescence fitting Dad's customers with shoes.

Dad was there, too. He was proud particularly of our Henry, who the previous day had interviewed President Roosevelt.

He listened until he became sleepy, then went up to bed.

After Dad had gone to bed, Henry told me that on or around September 1 the world would burst into flames. "The Germans," he said, "aren't kidding; they mean it."

Then we sat there for hours until the dawn and analyzed.

I now remembered all of those excellent German military journals he had sent me from Germany during these past several years, official magazines in which the Germans had stated exactly and in detail what they intended to do. I asked him about them. Henry then told me to read them again, for they weren't kidding. I asked him whether I could write an article about all this, and he said sure, why not, it had all been printed before, only our general staff wouldn't read it; perhaps if it were reduced into English they would.

With a bunch of such magazines to refer to, and with all the rest of American military thought still plunged into the doldrums, it was not, of course, very difficult to become a "military expert." I thought again of all the German military magazines I had piled up at home in Hollywood, which I had not even opened, although by this time in life I read German almost as easily as my native American.

At the end of our long talk I asked Henry:

"Will Hitler win?" For many of the things he had told me that long, desperate night were very frightening.

I had rather gathered the impression from his attitude that he thought Germany had a better than good chance of winning.

"He'll get his teeth kicked in!" Henry said vehemently. "But he'll win for a time."

This gave me the title of the article I was finally to write: "Germany Never Had a Chance." The article, written as if from a viewpoint of 1950, pretended to analyze World War II in terms of future knowledge

The analyst (myself) concluded that despite everything, every primary advantage, Germany still never had a real chance of winning, that she was stupid to have started the war in the first place.

When I saw Henry off to his ship I noticed that, like myself of long ago, he carried an automatic under his left armpit, only his holster was of leather and his automatic big and businesslike.

I remember him to-night as I last saw him there, standing high up on the deck of the liner which was to carry him back to Europe and death. I worried about him then. He was still my "little" brother, too good-natured, too charming, too willing to do favours for others too willing to take advantage of him.

He had, despite everything, not yet learned enough about life in the hard school which I had graduated from. I realized somehow, in some way, that he was living too dangerous a life, a life beyond his depth—even though it was for his country.

I never saw him alive again.

In off moments we used to call our bungalow "the House of Laughter."

We—Boski, Peter, and I—laughed constantly in the new house. It seemed wonderful, even to Peter, that I was at last freed of the studios, commercial music writing, the nightmare of paying out vast sums for rent, servants' salaries, and all sorts of things which were, in the final analysis, not even remotely essential.

All that was really essential now was my music, my study, and that was very eminently within my grasp.

I bought myself the Tovey Symphonic Analysis books, and anything else of similar nature I could put my hands upon. I was determined to learn more and more about symphonic music, to break utterly away from the ivory-towerists with which this country has been infested since the days of Charles Martin Loeffler.

I now developed the habit of turning the radio on every time a full-length symphony was scheduled, it mattered not by whom it was written.

This enabled me to get rid of many old prejudices.

I discovered, for instance, that Sibelius was not so bad after all. Previously, in Europe, I had heard Sibelius once or twice and thought him impossibly padded; now, however, every note seemed to count. This discovery upset me terribly, for it caused me to think that perhaps I had been utterly off the right track for too many years to ever recover. How effete my tastes had become in Paris! How effete still were the tastes of my colleagues, who had dragged too much of their Paris studies and tastes home with them!

I still could not stomach Sibelius's *First Symphony*, what with its insipid Tchaikovskyisms, but I did like his *Fifth*.

I now bought myself a recording machine. It was expensive, but I considered it ultra-essential. Around about this time the Roy Harris symphonies were being premièreed, and so I made my own recordings of them long before they came out professionally—that is, in the regular gramophone catalogues. This gave me an advantage over a great many persons who had to wait for years before being able to study Harris adequately.

I now played them over and over, and with the most open of minds, but they remained as great mysteries to me as ever.

One evening Aaron Copland came to see me. In so far as public performance was concerned, I had had nothing performed since 1935, and Aaron chided me.

“You used to set the lead, the direction,” he said, “and now they tell me that you are only interested in writing articles about glands, crime, sex—anything but music!”

“I am studying the symphony organism,” I said. “I feel that the symphonic form is still the most important phase of music and that it is being neglected. Nobody writes symphonies any more, only long pieces which, just because they are appropriately long, they call symphonies for lack of a better name. But they are not symphonies.”

“What about Roy Harris’s new symphony?” Aaron asked. (I had just played it for him, in my own recording.)

“He has qualities,” I said, “but in general he escapes me. For one thing his structural methods are primitive, naïve—and whatever else one may call a symphony, one cannot call the most complex advanced form of musical composition naïve. The result for me, alas, is boredom. I know Roy has a large public, and that proves I am wrong, but I can only speak for myself.

“It often sounds like Sibelius to me, at least in construction,” Aaron said, “quite too much in fact. But I must confess to liking his music——”

“Why?” I interrupted.

“It is honest, sincere. Even though a good deal of the new symphony is as ‘fat’ as Sibelius, nevertheless you can open any page of it and say, ‘Here is Roy Harris.’ His music is always written in his own style, nobody else’s.”

“Is individual style as important as all that?” I asked, astonished. It had never occurred to me that anything in music was more important than the form, *la grande ligne*, and the success or non-success of its eventual expression.

“Yes,” said Aaron, “you must always know whether or not this page of music belongs to this or that composer; that comes before everything—excepting, of course, sincerity.”

In so far as the word “sincerity” is concerned, I discarded it immedi-

ately—every composer, no matter how bewildered his ideals, considers himself absolutely sincere.

But this matter of style coming before all else! I shook my head. I thought of the many ways in which many American composers believe they must, from bar to bar, “trade-mark” their music. They all seem to believe they must initial each bar with their own musical idiosyncrasies (or “idiom” if you prefer) in order that, before all else, they can establish their “musical personality”—whatever that is.

It reminded me of those radio programmes where, just as one begins to get interested in the story, the name of the sponsor’s product intrudes.

## CHAPTER XXXI

### MY BROTHER’S UNTIMELY DEATH

IN early 1939 Henry and I had walked together in Trenton that Easter Sunday night. I had, you will remember, asked him anxiously:

“Will Hitler win?”

“No, he’ll have his teeth kicked in,” Henry had replied. “The reason is that the damned fool will attack Russia. That’s his idea, first and last. This may finish him right off, but I’m afraid not. I think we’ll eventually have to get in. Russia is strong, but not quite strong enough. Hitler is going to go a long way into Europe and Russia before we start rolling him back. But he’s going to get his teeth kicked in.”

We agreed between us that we would continue to correspond, but partially in code. I saw him off to New York and his steamship, shook his hand and turned away. That, as previously stated, was the last I ever saw of my brother.

On June 14, 1940, his plane exploded in mid-air ten minutes after leaving Tallinn, Estonia, for Helsingfors.

After Henry’s death I could think of nothing else but war and death. It seemed silly to attempt to write music while the entire world was going up in flames—or was just about to do so. To spend my best efforts, now, in trying to write “American music,” whether of the soil, factories, or what not, seemed trifling—isolationist even.

I temporarily abandoned my daily musical composition, became a teacher of music at the summer session of Stanford University. I wanted to change my environment completely.

I now quickly wrote a short anonymous book, *The Shape of the War to Come* (Longmans, Green), which pretended to be written from the angle of A.D. 1950.

This book appeared in the autumn of 1940, just as I returned home to Hollywood from Stanford. In it I utilized the political fact-gathering

of a decade: Bullitt, Heinsheimer, Dr. Henry Simon, the German military journals, and finally, but most important, my brother's letters and conversations—the latter having been more helpful than anything preceding.

Subsequently, as anyone who cares to read the anonymously written book can see, a good many of its predictions turned out to be extraordinarily correct. It contains several tremendous mistakes, of course, but, immodestly, I must admit these are more often the exception than the rule. One of my greatest mistakes (in common with the U.S. War Department of that day) was to vastly under-estimate the strength and determination of Russia—a mistake I had previously avoided in "Germany Never Had a Chance."

I deeply regretted it shortly after my prophecy concerning Germany's attacking Russia came true, for no one has a greater respect than I for our great Russian ally.

However, now that the war in Europe is at an end, it was interesting for me to note that Von Rundstedt gave the same reasons as I did for the eventual German defeat—his main reason being that Germany failed to provide an adequate navy in order to cover the invasion of England.

I published this book anonymously because I did not honestly feel I could take the credit for it. The credit, if any, belonged to my brother. I wanted to get his ideas before the world.

Although the book did not sell well (for who ever heard of a book of prophecies selling before they were proven by history!), it eventually did bring me to the attention of Manchester Boddy, editor and owner of the Los Angeles *Daily News*, and thereby greatly alter my future.

## CHAPTER XXXII

### HEDY LAMARR AND I INVENT AND PATENT A RADIO TORPEDO

ADRIAN, the dress designer, and his wife Janet Gaynor are very good friends of ours. One day around this time, late summer 1940, they said to me:

"Hedy Lamarr wants to see you about her glands."

I said, "Uh-huh."

They repeated, "Hedy Lamarr wants to see you."

"It's funny," I said, "but I keep hearing you both say, 'Hedy Lamarr wants to see you.'"

"That's what we said," they chorused.

"That's nothing," I said indifferently. "Lana Turner, Betty Grable.

Carole Landis, and the Snow Queen want to see me also. I just haven't the——"

"But she does, she really does!" they insisted.

"You mean," I faltered, "that Hedy Lamarr wants to see . . . little me?"

"Yes," they said, "and moreover we're going to arrange it for next week. Now don't protest."

"Who's protesting?" I said, bewildered. So next week I knew that Hedy wanted to see me about her glandular type, and I came to dinner at the Adrians': I was a little late.

They were already sitting at the dining table, one of green onyx splashed with golden tableware.

I sat down and turned my eyes upon Hedy Lamarr. My eyeballs sizzled, but I could not take them away. Here, undoubtedly, was the most beautiful woman on earth. Most movie queens don't look so good when you see them in the flesh, but this one looked infinitely better than on the screen. Her breasts were fine, too, real postpituitary.

The black silken ringlets fell softly down around her throat, and . . . oh well, why go on? You can get the same effect by going to your favourite movie theatre and pretend you're looking across the dinner table, just like lucky me.

And—remember!—this picture is in technicolour!

So I looked at her and looked at her, and finally I permitted my eyes to look down a little from her face. I felt a terrible flush spreading over my face.

"But your breasts," I stuttered, "your breasts——"

I could not go on.

She whipped out a notebook and a pencil. "Yes, yes," she said breathlessly, "my breasts?"

"Your breasts . . ." I repeated aimlessly, but my mind commenced to wander. I could not go on. I knew that in a moment I would swoon, but Adrian shoved a glass of water into my hand just in the nick of time. I wolfed it and said:

"They are too small." (I just said that to lead her on; every movie star wants larger bosoms.)

Hedy made a note in her book. "Go on," she said, not unkindly.

"Well," I said, wanting to get up and rush right out of the United States, "well, they don't really *have* to be, you know."

She made another note, taking some time to do it. The butler took away my untouched hors d'œuvres. Silence reigned, and I knew that more was expected of me.

"You are a thymocentric, or the anterior-pituitary variety, what I call a 'prepit-thymus,'" I volunteered.

Hedy Lamarr kept on writing for a moment, and then said, "I know



it, I've studied your charts in *Esquire*. Now what I want to know is, what shall I do about it? Adrian says you're wonderful. . . ."

"Well," I said, "your breasts . . . they . . . so to speak . . . if you're short on postpituitary . . . thing to do is . . . er, activating substance . . . breasts can be controlled by . . ."

(Oh God, I wanted to *die* of shame!)

"Go on, go on," Hedy said, becoming a bit restless. "The thing is, can they be made *bigger*?"

"Bigger than this——" I was afraid for a moment to look, but saw that she did not intend to take off her beautiful Hungarian blouse. She was just thrusting out her chest.

"Yes, yes, yes, yes, YES!" I cried.

And that, no kidding, is the way I first got acquainted with our very good friend, Hedy Lamarr. Boski wasn't present, as she was visiting Mother and Dad in Trenton, cheering them up after the death of Henry.

The next day I looked at the telephone number (unlisted) which she had scrawled in lipstick over the front of my car window the evening before. I called her up, and she said that our conversation had been most stimulating, and would I come to dinner that evening?

I would.

So I did, and that evening I found myself looking across a dinner table at Hedy Lamarr, high up in her Benedict Canyon retreat. This time there was no Adrian or Janet to help me, and I felt very nervous. However, I had on my best suit and had washed my hands and face very carefully. Her butler served us, just like in the movies. I looked around and could see no piano; in a pinch I can always leap to a piano and pretend I've just got a marvellous idea and play the rest of the evening. . . . In short, I was very nervous.

Hedy didn't even wait for the main dish, to come to the point.

"About my breasts," she said, shoving them slightly, just a jolt farther forward.

So I spent a good deal of that evening explaining about various glandular extracts, and why activating substance is better, as it does not substitute for the lazy gland, but kicks the lazy old gland back into doing its own work. "It's like this," I explained. "Your postpituitary gland, which controls the size of, er, your bosoms, is lying down on the job, let's say just a little bit. So, let's suppose you take injections of postpituitary. That will do the job, but it won't stay. The postpituitary gland says to itself, 'Why should I work when somebody else is doing my work for me? I'm tired anyhow.' So when the injections stop, the postpituitary can't continue the job. So down come the bosoms which have been so nicely inflated."

"Oh," she said.

"But activating substance goes right up to the lazy gland and gives

it a good kick, saying, 'Get up and work, you lazy, good-for-nothing tramp,' or something like that. It makes an honest gland out of it, and so the bosoms stay up. By the way, you can sue me for this, but from where I sit you look about perfect. Why do you want to know all this?"

"Oh, just for a friend," she said.

Later on that evening we began talking about the war, which, in the late summer of 1940, was looking most extremely black. Hedy said that she did not feel very comfortable, sitting there in Hollywood and making lots of money when things were in such a state. She said that she knew a good deal about new munitions and various secret weapons, some of which she had invented herself, and that she was thinking seriously of quitting M.G.M. and going to Washington, D.C., to offer her services to the newly established Inventors' Council.

"They could just have me around," she explained, "and ask me questions."

I said no, that wouldn't be so good, she'd help public morale better by remaining in Hollywood. But I had already heard enough to know that she wasn't kidding about her inventions. The fact of the matter was that Hedy had a flair for inventing new war weapons—a flair she had acquired years ago when she was the wife of Fritz Mandel, who used to own the largest munition works in Austria. Time and time again she had overheard him and his experts discussing new devices, and she had retained these ideas in basic form in her beautiful beaming head—while all the time clever Fritz Mandel didn't think she knew A from Z.

One of her ideas was so good that I suggested she patent it and give it to the United States Government.

For many weeks thereafter we worked on this invention, discussing it until we were both blue in the face; I constantly made notes.

In the meantime Boski came back from Trenton most unexpectedly, and so the next night after she returned I told her that I was sorry but that I had to go up to Hedy Lamarr's for dinner, and it would be better if she didn't come along, as we were busy.

"Oh, so you're going to be busy!" Boski exclaimed. "What doing, dare I ask?" She was a trifle sarcastic.

"We are inventing a radio-directed torpedo," I said.

"Indeed," said Boski frigidly.

"Yes," said I. (Anybody who knows me will tell you that I would not tell a lie to Boski.)

"I am less than convinced," Boski said.

"Well," I said, smiling easily, "I know it sounds rather improbable. I'll explain it later." So I kissed her on the forehead and went up to Benedict Canyon, and the next day Boski was so indignant that I had to bring Hedy down to our house just to show Boski what a nice girl Hedy really was. Boski was not immediately convinced, as she said

that Hedy was too beautiful to be friends with any husband of hers anyway. There was some difficulty for a time, but Hedy was innocently unaware of it. She just kept on inventing our torpedo; and to-day we have a United States patent on it.

*Number 2,292,387 United States Patent Office Application, June 10, 1941, Serial No. 397,412.*

Anyone who wishes can get a copy of it by just mailing ten cents to the United States Patent Office at Washington, D.C. Both our names are on it.

As time went by, Boski and Hedy became good friends anyway. They are really very much alike basically; both are Hungarian-Austrian and have many tastes in common.

To-day Hedy is more often than not at our house, and we at hers—but there have been moments in between then and now which have been a little difficult.

Once was when Hedy moved down into Beverly Hills proper and discovered that the so-called “play” house at the back of her swimming pool was fully equipped and furnished. She wanted us to move in, free of charge. It was a pretty big house.

“Why should you pay rent when you can live right here, next to me, for nothing? I wouldn’t know what to do with that house anyway. Come on—move in.”

“Do you go swimming every day?” asked Boski.

“Certainly,” said Hedy, “but nobody else comes, excepting Ann Sothern.”

Boski went into the house, saw that every window looked out on the swimming pool.

“No, thanks,” she said. So we stayed down at the beach house, which I’m later going to tell you about, a mite more expensive but worth it in so far as concentration was concerned.

I must, however, hold a brief here for Hedy, which she very richly deserves. The Hedy whom we know is not the Hedy you know. You know something which the M.G.M. publicity department has, in all its cunning, dreamed up. There is no such Hedy. They have long ago decided that, in order to give her sufficient sex appeal, they will make her just faintly stupid. But Hedy is very, very bright. Compared with most Hollywood actresses we know, Hedy is an intellectual giant. I know I’m crabbing the M.G.M. publicity department’s act, but it is true.

Hedy is not much interested in acting, in an actress career. She is a good actress, but she is just not interested.

She is, like ourselves, a dreamer. She is also a sensitive, wonderful, human person, one whom we love very much, as you would, too, if you really knew her!

TURKEY TALK BY BOSKI INTO  
SYMPHONY NUMBER FOUR

By 1941 the last few of our get-rich-quick financial ventures had disappeared into nothingness. For instance:

A music-notation system had got nowhere, eaten up a good Braque and Picasso, and finally completely emptied our bank account.

A proposed radio programme with Dr. Sayl Taylor, better known, perhaps, to radio listeners as the original "Voice of Experience"—had, alas! only wasted time, eaten up still another fine painting—and at cut-throat prices.

The book on the war, not really within my get-rich-quick schemes, had had little success because nobody knew then whether its prophecies would come out correctly or not; moreover, when they eventually did, the public felt they no longer mattered, and nobody was interested in buying my book.

We had now sent our last good Picassos, Braques, Miros to New York in order to obtain, if possible, a better sale. But our pictures suddenly had to compete with the mass of modern pictures hard-stricken European refugees were trying to sell in New York. We were offered only a fraction of their real worth.

Utterly dejected about everything in the world, I sent my New York dealers a telegram and told them to box up the rest of our paintings and hold them until further notice.

One day Boski cornered me and made me sit down and listen.

She was in her most formidable "turkey-talking" mood.

"George," she said, "what's the use of kidding ourselves? I know that you can't write your serious music when you work in a movie studio all day long. However, the way things have been going, you might just as well go back there. At least we'd have some money in the bank. Now I wouldn't let you go back for the world, understand, but I'm saying you might just as well be back there—for all the composing you've been doing these past several years. Do you know you haven't touched a page of your half-finished *Third Symphony*! It's a terrible shame! Moreover, I'm frightened of you nowadays. I don't really know you any more. I know what you're up to—you want to earn a lot of money all at once and in something that you don't consider prostitution—but don't you see you're not doing it, can never do it? You're just not the business type. You don't write your own love column, so what happens? You make almost no money at all—in the meantime everybody sees your name at the top of that column and thinks, 'Well, if that Antheil

isn't writing any more music, he at least is making money.' And you *aren't* making money, George. It isn't in you to make money this way. Theoretically your ideas are perfect. But somewhere in the practice they go astray. I'm almost glad that the programme with 'Voice of Experience' has fallen through—you'd have lost out on that, too. George, the thing which most frightens me about you nowadays is that you never talk about small sums. Everything you are going to do is couched in terms of hundreds of thousands of dollars. Still, do you know how much we have in the bank?"

"No," I answered, thinking it'd be about five hundred dollars.

"We have just thirty-six dollars!"

What was there to say? Now here in early 1941, I could at last label myself a complete failure. Oh, yes, I'd meant well all right. I'd started out well, even brilliantly. I even didn't mind too much all the knocks I'd received. It was fun fighting; all part of finding "the dream." But this was slow, small, degrading death—death by sickening spiritual starvation in a concentration camp of my own making. Where was "the dream" now?

This was a pretty frowsy life, really.

Still, every thing had been my fault. Mine had been every decision.

Yet the world in general—outside of Hollywood's small movie world—did not hold me in such contempt.

Only several days before Igor Stravinsky had met and recognized Boski at our local market. She was surprised that he had been so friendly and had immediately asked him to come up and see me.

He did!

This, at least, is the way Boski tells me that it happened. But sometimes, when I get to thinking more closely about it, I suspect that Stravinsky's sudden appearance at our house—this after almost two decades—must have been the result of some long, secret, and brilliant manipulations on Boski's part. Certainly nothing could have been better calculated to lift my morale.

In any case he came, with the new and utterly charming Mrs. Stravinsky, and he also left several tickets to the Los Angeles première of his new *Symphony in C*.

He specially asked me to come, and I had gone, returning with a greatly reinforced ambition to return to my music at all costs—if for no other reason than that I fundamentally disagreed with Stravinsky's new music, which, nevertheless, I still loved very much.

I thought of Stravinsky at this instant almost as a drowning man flings his arm at a sliver of wood. How many years had I dreamed of becoming friendly with Stravinsky again! How often, in my wish-fulfillment dreams, had I seen myself talking to him, discussing musical problems with him! It had been one of the major wounds of my life when, in 1923 Paris, he had drawn himself up coldly, fixed his monocle

in his eye, and cut me dead. Now, only several days ago, he had come to my house, spoken to me as jovially as in the old Berlin days of 1922!

Perhaps everything was not so bad after all. To some, specifically to at least *one* composer, I was still "George Antheil." Perhaps the things I had once *tried* to do counted after all. . . .

"How much money did you say we had?" I asked Boski now.

"Thirty-six dollars."

"O.K.," I said. "Let's move away. I'm in a rut."

Boski was overjoyed. She knew, from experience, that going away from an old place to a new place indicated a change of mind and strategy with me. Nothing could be worse than staying here. A change might be for the better.

We went. We got the smallest house on Manhattan Beach, California, into which three humans can crowd. And, all of a sudden, we were all very happy. We didn't have five dollars to buy groceries with, but we were happy.

Our house had a wonderful view of the Pacific!

I walked down to the post office, to which I had directed my mail from Hollywood. It was two miles there, two miles back. In my new post-office box was one single letter. It was from my dead brother Henry's estate and contained a cheque for four hundred and fifty dollars. "O.K., Henry," I said into the air, "I'm not so dumb but that I can't get this. You want me to go on with my work, and I'm going on."

I walked back to our new house on the high sand dune and showed Boski the cheque and the letter.

"His arm out of the grave!" she said.

We did not get a piano immediately. I had never needed a piano to compose. This was almost like Paris again, 12 Rue de l'Odéon. I finished the *Third Symphony*, wrote some articles, started pestering all the magazines with my manuscripts. I made a few sales. It was hard work.

But it was also fun. Every day we'd go down on the beach for a little while. I took my two notebooks, one for music and one for articles. It wasn't easy getting started with articles again. I'd been out of touch. Gingrich didn't like my articles any more. *Esquire* had gone on to something new, and it wasn't anything I could do.

The four hundred and fifty from Henry's estate lasted until autumn.

In the meantime one of the major prophecies of my war-prophecy book, *The Shape of the War to Come*, came true: the invasion of Russia by Germany. I had predicted this, almost exactly. This brought me to the attention of one of Los Angeles's top editors and newspaper owners, Manchester Boddy, of the *Daily News*.

Boddy had first read my article, "Germany Never Had a Chance," then my book, and decided that I must be a top-ranking military expert.

Discovering that I lived in Los Angeles, he got in touch with me. He did not employ me immediately, but he did seem to enjoy talking over all current war problems with me. He never once asked me what profession I was in; he assumed that I was a war expert.

During this interval I often went out to his ranch; we spent much time together and became very close friends I had already known one great newspaper editor, Henry Simon, and knew how to get along with newspaper editors!

On December 7, 1941, the Japanese attacked our fleet. In my book I had set this event for a month later: in January, 1942.

From this point on, I think, Manchester Boddy listened to me with increasing care and even with respect.

Nevertheless, at home, I took up my musical composition again, putting final touches to the composition and orchestration of the *Third Symphony*. I also commenced the preliminary sketches of what has now turned out to be my *Fifth Symphony*. Let me hasten to explain here that I wrote only very preliminary sketches, and also that when I wrote these sketches I thought they were going to be my *Fourth Symphony*—only the real *Fourth Symphony* double-crossed me and somehow got itself born first.

The *Fifth* was planned to be a requiem-like symphony. It would be a memorial for my brother and all those who, too young, have had to die in this great war. I felt very tragic in those days, as if the whole world were going to smash. But also, at long last, I seemed to have got back to my old stride of 1928; I found it almost impossible to give attention to what I called "my article business" or anything else except the state of the war.

My present attempts to earn money for rent and eating purposes became more and more sporadic, lacking basic plan.

I even tried now—but for only a very short time, I admit—to become a radio commentator. I did do some broadcasting of news events for a local sponsor, but my voice was not sufficiently impressive, so I flopped here again—although, I believe, my news analyses were a great deal more accurate than those of some of the more golden-voiced lads, who continued to broadcast locally.

In this new experience, however, I learned a good deal about news analysis that would become very helpful soon.

As the German armies swung simultaneously towards Stalingrad and Cairo, perplexed Manchester Boddy called me up one fine June afternoon and asked me to become his personal assistant.

Boski and I were again down to our last five dollars. My frantic, unsuccessful attempts to earn a living had resulted in our selling for pennies our fine paintings, but even these would not last for ever.

I consented.

The work of being an assistant to Manchester Boddy was very

pleasant; it consisted mostly (at first) of preparing background analysis material for his three-times-weekly radio programme. Later it consisted of daily talking the war situation entirely out with him. For this little work he paid me sixty-dollars a week, a veritable fortune!

During this time Manchester Boddy made the most extraordinary predictions. One of the most sensational was made near the beginning of his autumn radio series.

"We will," he said over the radio in September, 1942, "not invade Europe first. We will invade Africa—to be specific, Morocco."

He even gave the approximate date.

When the actual invasion of Morocco happened according to his schedule, Manchester got his picture in *Time* magazine and was quite pleased with me, because I really did have something to do with this particular piece of prognostication.

Washington now began to watch Boddy's predictions with eagle eye. We simply became too accurate!

Accordingly, in the forthcoming spring of 1943, my worth to Manchester Boddy decreased in just such proportion as the accuracy of my daily background analysis increased; and I knew that he was too good a business man to continue paying me sixty-five dollars a week for something which daily became more and more unsaleable. With the increasing tightness of censorship, I decided to cash in elsewhere on this new talent for fairly accurate news analysis, while the cashing in was still possible.

When John Nesbitt's "Passing Parade" radio programme needed such an analyst as I, and was willing to pay a much higher salary, I quit Boddy (with his blessing) and took the new job.

But, by now, I had finished a brand-new symphony, my *Fourth*.

I had started my *Fourth Symphony* on the day the British first turned the tide at El Alamein.

For me this point of the war still remains as pivotal as the day upon which the Germans were finally stopped in Stalingrad.

I commenced this new symphony with some very old material—ten pages from near the end of the last act of *Transatlantic*. In attempting to disentangle my mental processes now, I am not quite sure as to whether the tail wagged the dog or vice versa; I may have conceived the thematic material to the first movement before returning to *Transatlantic*.

It does not matter, anyway, as the ten pages of *Transatlantic* are "development" of the first movement, perfectly synthesizing the whole symphony—for, of course, the rest of the work grows out of this first movement.

Since the days of its actual composition I have heard my *Fourth Symphony* a number of times. But whenever I hear it nowadays, I



always remember our little beach house near Los Angeles, the nightly blackouts after Pearl Harbour, when the entire coast was constantly alerted against possible Japanese invasion, the constant, never-ending aeroplanes overhead from the nearby Santa Monica factory, the Navy planes which dive-bombed a supposed Jap submarine in our harbour, our "front yard," a spectacle which we saw taking place right out of our front window.

I remember, too, the time Al Capp, of "Li'l Abner" fame, was staying with us overnight, and suddenly, at 3.10 A.M., all the anti-aircraft guns for miles around us went off while the searchlights hunted for a supposed Jap plane in the skies directly overhead.

I remember, too—while I was writing the first movement—my constant fear that America might not wake up fast enough. I remember in the fourth movement that now, finally, I was sure of eventual victory at least, that it would now be ours, however long in coming.

The last movement was written during the lifting of the siege of Stalingrad.

I remember my feeling of a new world coming after the war.

By early 1943 my *Fourth Symphony* was finished. Its final notes were scarcely dry when I wrapped it in a nice, neat package, wrote a note of explanation on the outside, and took it up to Leopold Stokowski's house, where I deposited it.

Then I went home and started shaking.

I had really only met Leopold Stokowski four or five times in my life, and he had seen none of my recent work. Years ago, in 1934, I had made a vow that I would not show any conductor, let alone Stokowski or Koussevitsky, my work again until I was ready.

I was ready now. I had put everything I knew into this new symphony: three years' study of the great symphonists, not excluding Sibelius; seven years of staying away from everything in my serious musical composition but that which was true; complete indifference to that which the public or the critics were publicly demonstrating they would or might like; my financial independence from the foibles and idiosyncrasies of the world of music especially the present ivory-tower set; my grief over the loss of my brother Henry; my long correspondence with Dr. Henry Simon, once editor-in-chief of the great *Frankfurter Zeitung*, and a friend and counsellor up until the time that he was killed in Washington, D.C.; my growing feeling against isolationism, chauvinism, spread-eagle-ism; the natural composer reaction against my last or *Third Symphony*, which, although I loved it still with all my heart, had not thoroughly digested American colour—I wanted the American colour in my future symphonies to be more organic, better synthesized. (Later, incidentally, I completely rewrote my *Third Symphony* once again; this time its synthesis "jelled," and Kindler will play it in Washington, D.C., next season.)

But into my *Fourth Symphony*, mostly, had gone El Alamein, Stalingrad, and the new America I saw awakening. The feeling of it. You can put these big abstractions into music.

For to-day, a new America was arising, one not at all the old sentimental, isolationist, pretty-pretty, "don't-shock-me-please!" America of yesterday.

It was *America of the world*, without the old corny trade-marks, misleading sign posts!

Or so, at least, I now hoped and planned—into my *Fourth Symphony*.

I had left the score with Stokowski only a few hours before he called me up. With enthusiasm in his voice!

He said that he would play my new symphony and asked me when he could see me!

#### CHAPTER XXXIV

### SYMPHONY PERFORMANCE AGAIN!

THERE is not so terribly much more to the merely pedestrian events of my autobiography. Stokowski, after fighting all N.B.C. to give it a coast-to-coast broadcast, gave my *Fourth Symphony* a most magnificent première over the whole N.B.C. network on February 13, 1944.

In general the New York critics received it better than I had expected, in some all-important cases even enthusiastically.

(Indeed when I received their critiques I was more than amazed and pleased!)

Boski, Hedy Lamarr, and myself heard the performance over our radio up in Laurel Canyon. We heard it while we were all walking around our small living-room, smoking innumerable cigarettes (Hedy too) and going nearly mad—at least in the beginning.

We were all very nervous because, until the very last moment, none of us was sure the symphony would actually come out of the loud-speaker at the appointed moment. A good deal had gone on behind the scenes during the past week; Stokowski had to make a magnificent and truly gallant fight to première this *Fourth Symphony* of mine, and I know now, to my grief, that it was undoubtedly one of the several new "radical" compositions to which, more than anything else, may be attributed the failure of N.B.C. to renew his radio contract for the following season. (However, in justice to myself, I do believe it was rather the Schönberg *Piano Concerto* than my symphony which really caused it.)

Boski, Hedy, and I were very nervous, but as the performance over our home radio proceeded, I, at least, began to realize that things were going extremely well. Stokowski was giving it all of his very best, and better conducting does not exist in this world when Stokowski is at his best. I knew now, at last, that his fight for my symphony's performance and his present superlative conducting of it betokened that he was utterly "sold" on it; and, as everybody knows, when "Stokey" is "sold," a new work must be at least good or perhaps even better than that.

At its end a great burst of public applause and bravos seemed to come in over my radio. Boski, Hedy, and I sank to our chairs exhausted.

I now definitely knew that the public liked it, too—evidently genuinely.

Breathlessly I awaited the arrival of the New York critiques. Also Heinsheimer's opinion.

Perhaps I should explain that by this time my old friend Heinsheimer was not only over here in the U.S.A., but that he was now sewn into a very bright, glossy patch indeed. He occupied the managerial post at the new American branch of Boosey-Hawkes. Boosey-Hawkes is one of the finest and biggest British music-publishing houses.

Heinsheimer, with his canny intuition of events to come, had left Vienna just one month before the Nazis took over Austria. He had written us just as soon as he arrived in America, and from this moment on the two of us had taken up our friendship and correspondence where we had left it off in Europe, via air mail between Los Angeles and New York.

In this interim Heinsheimer had become a tremendously patriotic American citizen, air-raid warden, blood donor. He had also worked at every sort of music-publishing or concert-manager job, however lowly, until, finally, he had arrived at very much the same important post as when I had first met him in 1928.

Which just goes to show that you can't get a really good man down, and in his profession Heinsheimer is among the best.

Among other recent musical miracles, Heinsheimer had been at least partially responsible for the new frequency of performances by many orchestras of the new Copland pieces during the previous season. And so, quite naturally, I, too, was anxious to have Heinsheimer "handle" me—that is, to publish my new *Fourth Symphony* and push its performance via his splendid Boosey-Hawkes catalogue.

So when, finally, Heinsheimer did write, even though it was in a somewhat cautious but typical publisher manner, that he'd like to handle it via Boosey-Hawkes, I was highly elated. I knew that my symphony was not going to rest in the one-performance category, as most new symphonies do.

I felt that I had at least made my new musical start in life. I knew that it was going to be played by at least *one* other orchestra. This

*second* hearing was all that I asked. The New York performance was very flattering, very wonderful, but I knew that no public on earth can "get" something quite new all at once. It needs at least one more hearing, perhaps even two.

If the piece is no good after all this, the public will slowly but surely comprehend—unless the composer's propagandists have been too well and too long organized.

Heinsheimer sent the new score out. Two fine conductors, Hans Kindler, of the Washington, D.C., National Symphony Orchestra, and Pierre Monteux, of the San Francisco Orchestra, accepted it immediately.

At the same time Vladimir Golschmann, conductor of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, accepted a new *Nocturne for Orchestra*, a piece written around Stephen Decatur's cleaning up of the Barbary pirates in the early 1800s. I must explain the latter:

Vladimir, all these past years in St. Louis, had written me many times: "George, you are the only composer I know who, when asked, never sends scores. Please send me a new score so I can play it at St. Louis.

I had invariably answered: "Vladimir, when I again write music worthy of you and me, I will send it to you first of all."

But now, since I had given my *Fourth Symphony* to Stokowski, I worried that Vladimir would be offended.

I wrote a separate new, but good, piece for him especially, a piece which he should have on hand that very day on which the première of my new symphony was announced. The new piece would be my latest.

Vladimir, incidentally, actually played this new work soon afterwards with apparent great success. He sent me the St. Louis critiques, which were really splendid and better than I or the piece deserved.

Later Hans Kindler played my *Fourth Symphony* twice in Washington and once in Baltimore. This occurred on January 7, 8, and 10, 1945. I went East to attend the performances.

But before going to Washington, I had occasion to attend several rehearsals which the eminent Brazilian composer, Villa-Lobos, was holding with the Los Angeles Orchestra in preparation for a gala Villa-Lobos Festival.

Before Villa-Lobos had arrived, the orchestra had been well rehearsed in what it was to play; consequently when Villa-Lobos had stepped to the stand they were nearly letter perfect. He, nevertheless, insisted on going through with the two allotted rehearsals; indeed, he even insisted upon two more.

"But what on earth for?" asked the orchestra manager. "The orchestra already plays your pieces perfectly."

“Yes,” screamed Villa-Lobos, “*they* do not need rehearsing. But *I* have to rehearse in order to learn how to conduct my pieces!”

In Washington I heard my symphony for the first time, this without the “interference” of radio and its accompanying indistinct blurs.

Kindler, a really magnificent conductor and certainly among our very greatest, is, I am convinced, not given nearly the credit due to him as a top-hole conductor. This, in all probability, is due to his excessive modesty. He gave my *Fourth Symphony* an absolutely superlative performance, one which I shall remember for ever.

The Washington Press, usually quite cold to modern music, also gave it a splendid reception. I read the criticisms in the Washington papers the next day, again with utter disbelief.

I, who all these years had been called every unmusical thing under the sun, was hailed as a true representative of our modern music, a “master”! (One even called me a genius.)

For a moment I was tempted to be smug about it, but now, at last, all these years of ups and downs had their effect. Although it *did* feel good to read these notices, I remembered all these many years of searching, falling down, picking myself up again, getting out on the wrong trail, beating my way blindly, confusedly, but nevertheless instinctively back—no outside rehabilitation meant more to me than *the chance* to become a real part of musical life again. A *chance* was the only thing I wanted, but a *real* chance. These good, kind critiques from a notoriously “cold,” critical city meant just that.

I trembled with joy. I would, I knew, still need to study very much in order to get anywhere at all. If all these recent years of work had taught me anything at all, they had at least taught me how little, really, I knew; how much I should still have to know if I wished even to dare to attempt to compare with the great past symphonists!

Yet it was good, but in a purely earthy way, to be able to send such fine propaganda to Heinsheimer. He was my friend, so I permitted myself a gloating letter: said that these new critiques would help enormously in placing the symphony with other orchestras.

Since the Washington performance quite a substantial number of great American orchestras have accepted this very same *Fourth Symphony* of mine, written partially in a newspaper office in wartime.

From Washington I went on to New York, where I found Heinsheimer very pleasantly impressed, restraining himself by gigantic effort from an unseemly show of jubilancy (“unseemly” in a publisher). He spent a good deal of time together, some of it just as at Laxenburg.

Then I went home to Trenton to compose a new concert overture which Stokowski had asked for, called *Heroes of To-day*, and dedicated to Hedy Lamarr and all the living heroes of all countries. Perhaps I

should explain that first of all I dedicated it to all the living heroes, but later, when I came back home to Hollywood, I additionally dedicated it to Hedy Lamarr, because I now suddenly remembered that I had promised to dedicate my very next piece to her, and now I had failed to do so. Hedy, however sweet, is not a person to take slights like this without squawking; so, saying a silent prayer to all the living heroes of this war, I slipped her name on the dedication page, hoping that our heroes would please not too much mind sharing the dedication.

Speaking of dedications, my *Fifth Symphony* will be dedicated to the young dead of this war, the young dead of all countries, who, like my young brother, have sacrificed everything. The most desperate death is the young death.

Into this new symphony I have put, without shame, all of my tears, my anger. It is the best music of which I have been, so far, capable.

I am very glad that I have travelled over the entire length of my own country again, in wartime. It has done something very important to me.

#### CHAPTER XXXV

### MOTHER KNOWS BEST

BACK home in Trenton in January, 1945, I had opportunity to check my impressions with other previous return trips home.

I had really left my father's and mother's home in 1918, when I was eighteen, for the Army.

I had never definitely returned since, although I've spent lengthy intervals at "home" meantime.

For instance, I had counted it only as a "visit" when I went back home from Philadelphia in 1922 to practise for Hanson—just prior to my trip to London. My several days back in Trenton during my *Ballet Mécanique* concert in New York in April, 1927, had given me a weird impression because of Mother's letters to Paris. During this interval, too, I had made first real acquaintance with my teen-aged brother and sister, Henry and Justine. In 1930 Christmas week I had had another contact with my family and home; this was the time I had come to visit Erskine to talk over for the first time *Helen Retires*; the kids were grown now, big enough for me to take real notice of them; and Henry and I began a correspondence not to be interrupted until his untimely death in 1940.

But Mother had always wanted me to come back to Trenton. During my early years in Paris, Mother had kept up a constant barrage of letters to 12 Rue de l'Odéon, Paris, all dedicated to one and the same idea: I should get out of Paris as quickly as possible, come home to Mother, purity, and safety.

Paris, she insisted, was "an evil city," full of sin waiting on every hand to grab me, drag me down to unspeakably loathsome depths.

Mother's ideas are always highly coloured by what she has last read. Her reading, also, need not necessarily be very up to date. When I went to Paris in 1923, Mother went right to the local Trenton Public Library and got out a lot of books on Paris. She had heard something about the kind of a city Paris was, and if her precious little Georgie was going to live there she was going to know all the background. However, the library books had not completely satisfied her. Something was being concealed. Eventually somebody slipped her copies of *Mlle. de Maupin*, *Mme. Bovary*, and *Education Sentimental*. These she read carefully, but in electrified alarm. From that moment on she had commenced her barrage of letters.

Paris, of course, has a long-standing and probably very well-deserved reputation for sin. Later on, in 1933, I researched Paris sin and can herewith state positively that it exists and that I'm agin' it.

But the Paris which Boski and I knew, especially between 1923 and 1927, was one so utterly childlike and pure that its purity could only be equalled by Charlie MacArthur's three-times-filtered Nyack swimming pool (once by nature at the spring, once by the State, once by Charlie). Boski and I were too absorbed in each other for me to realize that almost immediately next door nestled a bustling little house of ill fame, that most of the girls to whom we spoke at the Café du Dôme were purchasable *filles de joie*, or that just around the Carrefour de l'Odéon were two full-time enormous brothels, the largest in Paris!

My early years in Paris were exclusively devoted to Boski and ideals.

It was with some astonishment, therefore, that in earliest April, 1927, I sat again in my mother's kitchen in Trenton, listening to her latest arguments against my returning to Paris after the Carnegie Hall concert of my *Ballet Mécanique* should be concluded. She was cooking and telling me for the hundredth time that I must absolutely not dream of going back to that evil, brothel-lined city of Paris again.

"Come back home to Trenton, sweetness, light, and Mother," she pleaded.

An idea struck me.

"Where is that young chap you always used to like so much? He worked in the shoe store on the corner on Saturdays," I asked.

Mother blushed.

"Oh, he's become the leading bootlegger of Trenton."

"And, Mother, what ever became of our great family friend, Steve—he wasn't at church last Sunday?"

"Oh, Steve shot a man in self-defence, and now he's sitting out a term in prison. Too bad, too, he's *such* a nice man!"

"And what ever became of Wilbur, Mother?" (Wilbur was a kid I had gone to Sunday school with.)

“He’s in prison, too. Burglary! Oh dear!”

“And Alicia, that girl I used to be so sweet on?”

“She’s dead; she was killed in an automobile accident.”

“What kind of an automobile accident?”

“A wild joy ride! Now, George, stop asking such questions!”

Trenton had its sin and vice, too. On a smaller scale, but there it was, nevertheless. I now devoted the rest of the afternoon to convincing Mother that I led an absolutely spotless life in Paris.

She looked at me but half-convinced. I could see her thinking, “But George is the son of a silver-tongued travelling salesman.” Anyway, from now on she cut down her “Come back to home and Mother” letters to half their former quantity and insistency.

I love my mother very much because, first of all, she is my mother, and also because she possesses to extreme degree all of those qualities which I most admire and detest in myself. In other words we invariably get along like a million dollars, or else squawk at one another like two Donald Ducks—which usually agitates my gentle and cavalier-like father very much, as he is not congenitally organized to understand that we rather prefer this sort of relationship. Throughout her life, for instance, my mother has been nobody to hold her tongue. From earliest childhood the subject of whether I was writing the correct sort of music or not was a painful one between us, all the more so in that I am congenitally not organized for having persons tell me to my face that my music is unpalatable to them—they usually only print it, and at a safe distance. After my 1927 *Ballet Mécanique* concert, therefore, my mother upbraided me severely and in a more thorough fashion than did any critic in 1927 New York; she gave me a real tongue-lashing, certain colourful phrases of which I retain even to to-day—although I’ll be horsewhipped before I write them down here: they’re just a bit too penetrating.

That’s the trouble with Mother: she’s always had the most disconcerting gift for discovering my deepest wound, and then putting a red-hot iron on it.

But she also has the gift of knowing my virtues, although she always admits these by the longest possible way around. I probably have very few virtues; but by this time in life I am rather fatuously convinced that one of them is the fact that I am determined to write my own music and make it as good as possible. At the *Ballet Mécanique* concert it was not the composition itself which Mother detested, but the manner in which it was given. This penetration, almost the only contemporary one, led me to wonder what of my music my mother liked or did not like; and once—much later, in 1933—I gave a concert of my works in Trenton for the benefit of a local hospital in which I ran the gamut of my compositional endeavours, from early 1914 to 1933. Among these I



played my *Airplane Sonata* and the *Mechanisms*. After the concert I asked Mother candidly which of my pieces she had liked best.

"Well," she said, "I didn't like those discordant pieces so much, nor those which lacked melody—but, Georgie, I did so much like that *Airplane Sonata*! Now why can't you write nice melodies like that all the time?"

Nobody can appreciate this remark unless he has before him a printed copy of that sonata, or a recording—incidentally, both are available. Anyway, take my word for it, the *Airplane Sonata* is undoubtedly the most radical and discordant work I've ever written; it still makes my notorious *Ballet Mécanique* seem rather tame in comparison.

I decided that Mother understood "discordant" or "melodic" to be something else than did the general public. I could even sympathize with her. Up until then this had been very much the case with me, too.

Although I am probably the one American composer who has suffered less through over-praise (at least during the last thirteen years) than any other, Mother's greatest fear is, and always has been, that favourable criticism will utterly turn my head. She constantly preoccupies herself with this detail. At the recent Washington performance of my *Fourth Symphony* she and Dad attended in state, and immediately after the concert I hunted her up to ask her what she thought of my newest work.

When I found her I first reminded her quickly (a little too quickly, perhaps) that the public had cheered it very tumultuously, and Washington is supposedly a "cold public."

"Oh, it was all right," she admitted with a show of heavy indifference.

I pressed her for a more detailed opinion.

"Oh, it was fair," she continued, "but you'll have to try harder in your next symphony if you ever want to get anywhere. Just mark my words, the critics won't like to-day's performance."

The next morning, however, the Washington critics did like it. Mother and Dad were staying in the same hotel as I, in a nearby room. Triumphant, my arms full of newspapers, I knocked on their door early in the morning of the day following the concert.

"Look, Mommy!" I shouted, dumping them into her lap. She put on her specs and read them slowly, becoming more and more dumb-founded. Behind her bewilderment I think I detected an air of maternal pride, but she concealed it with admirable fortitude.

The face she now turned to me was full of motherly concern.

"The critics are crazy!" she said. "I will write to each one personally. They must not spoil my boy!"

She meant it well. But I knew that she was perfectly capable of writing to every one of them, so after a good deal of pro-and-con

argument I managed to talk her out of the idea finally, promising among other things to spend a few weeks with her and Dad in Trenton.

I had to finish the new overture for Stokowski, and I also wanted to further advance this present autobiography, whose first third was already completed and sizzling in my suitcase.

All of which reminds me that it is as much as my life is worth to introduce Mother to any critic or conductor. I once made the acquaintance of Carlotta and Fritz Reiner, and during 1934-36 Boski and Carlotta and Fritz and I became very firm friends. Fritz, of course, is a great "conductor's conductor"; as Oscar Levant has so aptly described, he is that one conductor whom conductors themselves consider superlative; in any case, there cannot be a doubt in the world that he is one of the world's greatest.

This towering musicianship, especially during those days, when my own musicianship was still very much a moot question in the U.S.A., prevented me from talking much music to Reiner. Our friendship, rather, was based upon other mutual interests.

This does not mean, however, that I was not Machiavellian enough to plan to slip the *Third Symphony* under his eyes, just as soon as it was finished. Mother often came over to New York to stay a few days with us, and during one of these visits Fritz and Carlotta came over to dinner.

"Ah, Mr. Reiner," Mother cooed during dinner, "I'm so happy that you are taking my George under your wing. I have noticed such a *great* improvement in his music since you've been exerting your fine influence upon him. Now before he came under your influence most of his music was terrible, excepting only the *Airplane Sonata*, some of *Transatlantic*, and a few other small things. Now, thank Heaven, you've set him on the track again. Now when you play his *Third Symphony* . . ."

Boski and I managed quickly to change the topic. Fritz and Carlotta shook violently with suppressed glee. (Recently I wrote to Fritz and asked him if I could use this anecdote, and he said he didn't mind, but what about the *Third Symphony*?)

In short, Mother and I still have such constant upsets, just as in 1913, when I first began to compose. In a way, however, it is all very reassuring; it shows that nothing really ever changes very much, that despite everything my world is anchored on a firm rock.

One of Mother's great sorrows is that I do not go to church as often as she would like. As she is very religious, this causes her to suspect that, all things considered (especially the *Ballet Mécanique*), I might in some past demoralized moment have sold my soul to the Evil One. This suspicion was heightened when on my bookshelf in our New York apartment she discovered a book I had bought at a local drug store—from among their cheap reprints.

It was Louis Coulange's *Life of the Devil*.

This unfortunate discovery caused her to pack her things immediately and exit back to Trenton in high dudgeon. (What is high dudgeon, anyhow?)

It took me quite a while to convince her that the book had not been authored by His Satanic Majesty.

It is perhaps only fair to the reader to state that Mother (who is a great one to check on any loose papers of mine) discovered the front end of this autobiography one evening and read it completely through. She is now very indignant that I haven't told more of my earlier life at home, and she also makes mention that such early life as I do incorporate in these earlier chapters is rife with grievous errors. For instance, she says that when we moved to Second Street (on which is located the Trenton State Penitentiary that I wrote about), the prison wasn't right across the street, but several blocks down. Therefore, she demands, how could I have received my first musical impressions this way?

I replied that, as she well knows, my ears have been exceptionally good ever since I was born, and what seems a half a mile away to most people can often seem right next door to me.

"Moreover," she protested further, "all that stuff about our relatives near Marienburg being Prussians isn't true at all; and besides, why didn't you say anything about my cello playing?"

"Your cello playing!" I gasped. "Why, dearest little mother, do you know that all of these years I've simply been dying to talk about your cello playing. Everybody always asks me, 'Do you come from a musical family?' and I must always say, 'No, not especially,' and then they say, 'What, is there not even a cello player in your family?' And I always have to answer, 'No, not even a cello player'—and *now* you tell me that you've played the cello! When was that?"

"Oh," she said, somewhat embarrassed now, "I was only about fourteen or fifteen. But I played it rather well. You undoubtedly get all of your musical talent—such as it is—from me."

My final illuminative note about Mother stems from a recent incident: Mother has always been haunted with the theory that perhaps, after all, composers are just a bunch of tramps. Such, more or less, was the theory in Trenton when she was a young girl, and, for all I know, perhaps the air hovering over old Trenton is rather conducive to this idea, for, as I have frequently noticed, most of my old high-school cronies envy me tremendously on the theory that I have lived a mad, sumptuous artist's life abroad—and am probably still doing so in Hollywood (while, on the other hand, they must *work* for a living). However, very recently Mother saw that I usually got up before anybody else in Trenton and closed shop after everybody else in Trenton; during my recent January, 1945, Trenton episode I just lived the average life of

the average serious composer, which is to sit at your work table all day long and write thousands of little black notes. "Life amongst the Little Notes" I call it, and more often than not this process extends deeply into the night as well.

After my third week of solid sitting it commenced to be February, 1945, and Mother began to become anxious. I was getting no exercise, no relaxation whatsoever. One afternoon she came up to my table and pressed a dollar into my hand. (Bribery has been her method with me since I was seven.)

"Go to the movies this afternoon," she ordered. "You've been working too long."

"The movies!" I said, thunderstruck. "But, Mother, you said you consider the movies hellholes, and do you remember what a matter of terrible concern it was to you when I took that job at Hellhole Paramount Studios?"

"Yes," she continued. "There's a nice movie at the Grand, *To Have and Have Not*, and with your favourite actor, Bogart. Yes, I've even heard it has a new star in it called Lauren Bacall! Now go on and be off with you!"

I went, saw, and returned refreshed. It would have hurt her had I refused to spend her dollar. I dutifully gave her back the change.

"And how was the movie?" she asked.

"Oh," I said, "Lauren Bacall was wonderful. She is, beyond doubt, the Premier Brassière of Hollywood."

"That's nice," said Mother, "yes, she is a nice, sweet-faced girl."

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### I'VE LEARNED . . . A LITTLE

I HAD a pupil last summer, Tom Scott. Tom is a very talented young American composer, about six feet tall, and very, very serious. He walked up Laurel Canyon because he figured I knew what I was doing.

"I'll probably learn more than you," I told him. "I haven't learned so much, and the longer I live, the more I know it."

This didn't deter him, so we started.

Usually we hovered over music paper, but occasionally we'd take a walk.

I had just been playing Mahler on my radiogram, so I mentioned how wonderful I found a certain Mahler movement. Tom made a face.

"I just can't imagine you liking Mahler," he said. "Mahler bores me to death."

"I like him because he teaches me so many things," I said. "I like Bruckner, too. Moreover, after all these years I'm beginning to like Sibelius—although, previously, he's been one of my pet dislikes."

"Do you only like music which teaches you things?" Tom asked.

"I like a great deal of music," I said, "but I specially like music which teaches me things, because the older I grow the more I realize I don't know very much."

Tom was loyal. "It seems to me that you know more, technically, than most."

"Listen, Tom," I said seriously, "I am forty-four years old. I can give you the sum and essence of what I've learned in two sentences. When I was twenty-two I thought I knew it all. To-day, when I've doubled that age, I realize that I know very little, that others had something on the ball, too."

(I realized I couldn't kow-tow too utterly before the works of Mahler, Bruckner, Sibelius, and later Beethoven—it was not expected of me, and it wouldn't do any good.)

"I cannot learn very much more from the music of the present living moderns because, first of all, I've studied them up to the hilt. Whatever was to be learned, whatever I could absorb, has been learned, absorbed. I really studied them very much. When you study people too much you get to know too much about them. I began to discover that much of our so-called 'modern music,' the 'music between the wars,' as one excellent critic has put it, is a matter of style, of capping a line for the sake of the rhyme, so to speak; well, and as Stendhal said of the writers immediately preceding him, the capping of these lines occupies the place that should properly be filled by little actual facts. The truth of the matter is that we have just emerged from a great stylist period, where style was everything and content nothing—in so far as human meaning is concerned. Let us take the *Symphony in C* of Stravinsky. I love this music very much; it is fine and great music of its period; yet, compared to the great later symphonies of Beethoven, or even those of Mozart, with which it pretends to be spiritually aligned, it is cold veal, unemotional as a well-made clock mechanism. That is the trouble with the entire between-the-wars period; it has been too terribly preoccupied with what the French very appropriately call 'façade' and we less effectively call 'window dressing.' Everything depends upon the exterior *décor*. Nothing depends on the inner heart. And now, to-day, having almost passed through two of the greatest wars in history, the human heart is beginning to find the music of this period singularly lacking. It is difficult to become deeply interested in a Parisian style show—even though it be held in London or New York—while the rest of the world goes up in flames. We have emerged from a dressmaker period in music—yes, we have emerged." I stopped for breath.

"Yes," Tom said, "I somehow do not feel that Mahler or Bruckner will help me to find myself."

"To find yourself!" I echoed. "Fatal phrase! I have been using it all of my life, and I have been wrong. Can you imagine Beethoven plodding

along and saying, 'My God, I've got to find myself'? If he had kept filling his notebooks with this sentence, we would have known that he was not after his great masterworks at all, but a matter of style, of Beethovenesque façade, the coating on an otherwise indifferently baked cake that would give it its label. But he didn't. What he did say was, in essence, 'I have to try harder.' He did not mean to find his style, his medium of expression. He meant to learn, to do, to construct with power and tenderness and yet have all balance with that Machiavellian cunning which is true art."

"But," said Tom in despair, "how is all this going to help me with my composition? The intricate devices of Mahler and Bruckner are beyond me; I should have to study a long while; even then the chances that I would get anything from them are less than good. What I need is my own harmony, my own counterpoint; how, then, can I commence at the other end of the ladder?"

"Beethoven did," I said. "I doubt whether he went rag-picking among the modern composers of his day for any special or synthetic method of harmony—after, of course, he had completed his normal school-book harmonic studies. He arrived at what became distinctively Beethoven by writing a lot of pieces, each piece driving at a forwarding of the formal pattern, its spiritual strength, its larger meaning. In the course of writing all of these pieces, the distinctive method of harmony, or counterpoint, came by itself; both were not one-tenth as important as that which he eventually managed to say with them. However, I have no intention whatsoever of advising you to study Mahler or Bruckner. At this stage they are probably somewhat beyond your needs, for both expanded the symphonic form beyond the bounds of student recognition. But, for that matter, neither would I advise you to study Mozart's symphonies, for you have already studied them and there is nothing to be gained except, possibly, to write another *Classical Symphony à la Prokofieff*, which, in the last analysis, is nothing but a persiflage on Mozart: Prokofieff is saying to us, 'Look, folks, I can do it—and with my modern harmonies and counterpoints, too!' What you need most, Tom, is to study Beethoven's symphonies from Two to Nine, and to study them from a single special angle: to see how he progresses from a purely Mozartian form to the colossal Michelangellesque expression of the Ninth and how, in this greatest processing of the arts, he accumulates the various techniques *en route*. Considered individually, the Beethoven symphonies are not one-tenth as important as when considered as a gigantic graph, step-by-step progress. Nothing so well permits us to look inside of *man*. Come to think about it, that's all I've learned at that. I will be a hell of a useless teacher for you."

"I get one thing from all this," said Tom. "I will have to write a lot of pieces."

"Yes, Tom," I said. "You will have to write a lot of pieces. That is the only way to learn how to write music. Let's start with a Symphony Number One."

"Well, that disposes of the technical side," Tom said. "Now, how about a composer's life?"

"I can tell you more about that," I admitted. "Now that I am forty-four, I think I have learned a good deal, and in a hard school. What would be the most important? The first, I think, is to be able to procure a living, but in some manner that will not destroy you. The subsidy business is good only when you marry the subsidizer, which, the chances are, will make the subsidy more or less permanent. Impermanent subsidies, or subsidies which last only for a year or two, are worse than valueless, for, first of all, they destroy your ability to make your own living, put you out of touch with reality for a little while, so that in the final analysis you spend much more time recovering from such subsidies than you spend in using them. On and off I've been subsidized, but, except for my Guggenheims, which lasted over a designated period, I never slept a good night upon them; my thought at twilight was, 'What ever shall I do if my subsidizer quits?' I died a thousand deaths with this unreality, whereas, when I was really broke and without a friend in the world, I rather enjoyed coping with the situation; at least I knew exactly where I was at. My advice to you is—take all the subsidies you can get, but don't take them seriously, keep right on trying to figure out a way by which you can live on a steady, equitable basis without them. That disposes, I think, of this matter of subsidies, and by that I mean all sorts of subsidies, however camouflaged as, for instance, 'composer-in-residence' of great universities, or whatever other form the future may bring. But it still does not dispose of the question of developing a permanent income in some manner that will not destroy you."

"Yes," said Tom, "I wanted to ask you about that."

It is a very great problem," I answered, "and one that breaks itself down into two separate entities. The first is that the earned income must leave you time enough and physical energy enough to compose. You cannot, for instance, work at an intellectual job which you cannot lock up in your desk for the night; you must not use your brain and heart on anything other than music for more than a stated number of hours a day, a regulation amount. Also, you cannot work at digging ditches all day; that will leave you physically exhausted at night, and music writing needs physical fitness as well as intellectual pep. Your second question is a question of overlapping spiritual values. I find, for instance, that I cannot talk with a lot of silly people all day and write serious music at night. But, still worse, I cannot write bad commercial music all day and serious music at night. Music, for me, is an organic process, extending over months. I cannot mix bad music with good, or that which I consider good, in my subconscious mind—for it is the latter which often

works as hard as my subconscious mind in the creation of musical scores. I tend, therefore, to at least attempt to earn my living in some other way than with music; I do not teach commercially because that would all too often involve teaching pupils without any talent; I could not learn from them as I can learn from you or Henry Brant. I do not do commercial scoring because, finally, I find that I begin to take it seriously; I want to do something extraordinarily good where all the odds are against me and where it is foredoomed that I will break my musician's heart once more—or else, which would be infinitely worse, begin to think that something was good which was not good. I have seen many fine musicians come to Hollywood and break themselves against this impossible barrier. If you must whore, best to do your prostituting in some other department of the arts, and save your true, true love for music, at night."

"I am a professional orchestrator," said Tom. "Do you think that would hurt?"

"Not if you refuse to take it seriously. Professional orchestration, as we know it to-day, is not an art but a craft. Practically all of the music one hears in motion-picture sound track or behind the action in radio is orchestrated in one way. Or, to be generous, in two ways. There is no use in going into these; you know them, and all that is interesting about it is that there are only two ways at the very utmost. Professional orchestration, therefore, ought not to disturb you too much—just so long as you do not conceive the idea that you're doing something great, something artistic. A good many of the boys in the professional orchestration-arrangement business eventually begin to take it seriously. They begin to think that they are doing something quite as good in their way as Michelangelo or Benvenuto Cellini—they're commissioned, too, aren't they? In other words, once you've found a special way of earning your living with music, whether by teaching or writing, you are apt to discharge some of the accumulating electricity that you'll need for your own composition at night—moreover, working at your own music at night will in turn harm your commercial work. I can tell you of one orchestrator after another in Hollywood who has been thrown out of a job because, eventually, he began to develop into what Hollywood music directors call 'too uncommercial.' Don't forget that radio broadcasting and motion-picture making is not art, it's a business, a very hard-hard-boiled business at that. All the movie studios in Hollywood are big factories filled with people who used to be artists and still like to think they have some vague connection with the arts—but no more than a 'commercial' one. You'll hear this word everywhere here, caressed and spoken with genuine love. It will not hurt us unless we mistake its meaning."

"I should like to earn my living some day with something other than music," said Tom, "but at present I cannot."



"Which reminds me of what I wanted to say in the first place," I said. "The quadruple essence of what I've learned is to do the best you can under the given circumstances."

We worked a lot more last autumn and this winter, and very recently I received a score, *Symphony Number One*, by Tom Scott. It is a good first symphony, full of vigorous life, honest, compelling, youthful music, and I am beginning to envy Tom for that first moment in which he will hear a major symphony orchestra begin to unravel that work in rehearsal, the first magical notes *which are all his own!*

#### CHAPTER XXXVII

### YESTERDAY AND TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW

PETER is now almost eight.

Peter and I had a rather sharp exchange of words yesterday. Yesterday morning was Sunday, the time of his favourite radio programmes.

Quixotically, as always, I elected to play something I had in mind on the piano. It was rather loud. Suddenly I found him beside me. He was in a towering rage.

"Noisemaker!" he shouted, quite forgetting (as he does frequently) that I am his father.

"Music critic!" I shouted back. He departed, slamming the door of the sitting-room, then of his bedroom, and turned up his radio.

With a few notable exceptions, Peter has a rather "dime-a-dozen" opinion of "great" musicians. During his time he has been introduced to many and now rather considers them run-of-the-mill. He has a great respect for Stravinsky, however, quite in the Antheil tradition. This stems from Walt Disney's movie, *Fantasia*, which we took him to see when he was four. We almost fell over when, a day later, he sang flawlessly the opening theme of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, which, he explained, was the music to the beginning of the earth planet. Since then, on days that he was especially good, he has been permitted to hear our records of *Le Sacre du Printemps*, with the result that the records are entirely worn out and he can sing the score from beginning to end.

When Stravinsky came over to dinner last summer, Peter sang the *Sacre* for him without difficulty. Stravinsky, totally bowled over, and believing this a true indication of the trend of future music publics, gave Peter a half dollar. Since then Stravinsky, using Peter's performance as

a club wherewith to belabour the present, states simply, "I do not write music for to-day."

Peter, who immediately saw that Stravinsky is a madman with his money, has been learning how to sing *Petrouchka* and begs us to invite Stravinsky over once again.

Peter has a great respect for Stokowski, too—he having directed *Fantasia*. But Stokowski comes here more often, and the other night when he asked Peter please to sing *Le Sacre* (which he does with ear-splitting whoops in the appropriate parts), Peter merely draped himself in the doorway and said:

"I'm very sorry, but I'm not in the mood."

This comes from his having overheard Stokowski say that you must never do anything artistic unless you are in the proper mood. Peter really has a great respect for Stokowski, has entered into some kind of a correspondence with him, and boasts at school that he and Stokowski are great friends—although his present school friends might be much more impressed with his very real friendship with Hedy Lamarr, whom he never mentions. (Hedy comes here more frequently than Stokowski.)

Yesterday at lunch Peter, remembering the incident of the morning, asked me why I hadn't been playing the piano so much lately—and pounding the typewriter so much.

"I am writing the story of my life, Peter," I answered.

"Up to now?"

"Yes, up to now."

"Am I in it?"

"Well, you're my son, aren't you? How can I keep you out?"

An hour later Peter came to me with a great sheaf of papers upon which, in his large hand, he had been writing. "I am starting my own autobiography," he announced.

"Am I in it?" I asked.

"You're my father, aren't you?"

"I believe so."

"So you're in it."

"What are you writing about me?"

"Oh . . . good . . . and bad."

An hour later Peter's friend George came over to spend the afternoon and the night. George is the same age as Peter, of Russian-French descent. He is typically American. He brought his equipment, and the two of them spent the afternoon as miniature American soldiers, digging foxholes near the garage and imitating machine-guns.

At seven-thirty both of them were in their beds in Peter's room, and Stokowski and his new bride, the former Gloria Vanderbilt, drove up to the back of the house and came down the steps past the foxholes. We, Boski and I, had never seen Gloria before and watched the tall, slender, but utterly beautiful Gloria descend the steps. Whatever else,

we agreed, Gloria, the new Mrs. Stokowski, was certainly one of the two most beautiful women we had ever seen, the other being Hedy Lamarr.

Peter had asked if Stokowski would please come into his bedroom, just to say good-night. So Stokowski and Gloria made their way immediately to the boys' bedroom. On the way we heard the boys singing:

*Onward, Christian soldiers,*

*Marching as to war . . . ack! ack! ack! ack!"*

When Gloria entered, however, they were hushed.

"Oh boy!" said George at last.

Gloria, Stokowski, Boski, and I had dinner. During the dinner I caught the boys peeking around the dining-room door twice . . . to look at Gloria. At last Stokowski saw them and said:

"Come on in, boys, and take a good look."

They did, and kept looking at Gloria. They looked straight and blushed. Gloria blushed, too. Then they went back into their room, and I heard them whistling in admiration.

"That's funny," I said to Gloria. "I've never seen them do that before."

"Can I dance my Russian dance for her?" George yelled from the bedroom.

"Go to sleep, both of you," commanded Boski. They both went to sleep.

Boski and I now looked at Gloria ourselves. She had a youthful, grave beauty, the sensitive face of one who, over a long period, has been hurt and hushed. I could not reconcile the young girl sitting there to her newspaper publicity: once again in my life I decided that newspaper publicity just creates a person who is never there, as in the case of Hedy Lamarr—she, certainly, is as unlike her newspaper publicity as anybody in the world!

We both looked at Stokowski. After many years Boski and I can almost read each other's mind—in fact, I believe we really do. He, too, lately, had been hurt and hushed. The antagonistic—and totally incorrect—publicity about the cancelled Mexican concerts. The growing difficulties with the new orchestra in New York. The cancellation of his N.B.C. broadcasting contract the year previous. Boski sent me a mental flash:

"These two have found each other because both are being constantly and unreasonably wounded by the world. They are a refuge to each other. For, certainly, any fool can see that they are deeply in love."

Boski does not think in glandular type, so I tuned her out and focused my attention on Stokowski. As he sat there I thought of the first time I had seen him, in Philadelphia, when I was a student and he was conducting the Philadelphia Orchestra. He was a hero of mine then.

and was scarcely less so now. Here was one of the two greatest orchestral conductors in the world, from many points of view the greatest. Properly academic when that quality was demanded, he nevertheless was one of the few conductors who always found what the French called *la grande ligne* of a composition, and his conducting was never dull.

Moreover, as a man he was a very great man. He was never satisfied with one accomplishment, but always went on to something else once a goal had been accomplished. He had created, in succession, the Philadelphia Orchestra and then the American Youth Orchestra, two of the finest orchestral units in the world. He had lifted the technique of radio-broadcasting, movie-film, and wax recording from a lowly to a fine art. He had discovered countless composers. He was even now in the process of forming a new orchestra—which in the end would, I felt, become even greater than his previous creations, provided that he did not leave the country before then.

For, undeniably, a certain element of the Press, amused over the years by what must have seemed to them quixotic manœuvres (but manœuvres which have quietly and unsensationally paid off just the same), have fallen into a certain manner of baiting Stokowski. Even now they were giggling up their sleeves about his marriage to young Gloria. . . .

"But why?" I wondered. Gloria, only twenty-one, I admit, was nevertheless much older and more grave than any other girl of twenty-one I'd ever known. I remembered reading about her unhappy childhood, her appearances (but hardly ever with "the breaks") in the lime-light since; not quite enough to explain her, but at least a start.

Stokowski, sixty-three according to the newspaper stories, fifty-nine according to his own new marriage certificate, was in reality about forty-five—for it is my habit not to count age from the date of actual birth, but in terms of one's visible endocrine balance. Some men—a great many, in fact—are glandularly old by the time they hit thirty. Others (musicians in particular?) age quite slowly—Verdi, for instance, wrote his greatest opera at the age of *eighty!* Think of Goethe, Maeterlinck, Schönberg, too! I do not know whether Stokowski is actually sixty-three or not; in any case, his constant appearing before the great public makes him, in a certain sense, a professional beauty—and what professional beauty doesn't alter his or her age a trifle? In other words, I haven't asked Stokowski whether he is sixty-three or not, and I'm not going to, but to this I would wish to testify as a more or less endocrine authority: Stokowski is barely forty-five years old. I watched him over a long time, at close range. He is the most extraordinary case of prolonged youth on my personal-observation record.

After dinner we talked. I made bold to ask him about the rumpus in Mexico last year, to hear about it from his lips. The old story of musicians of the orchestra being late or absent from rehearsal reminded

me of a story I had heard about a Philadelphia Orchestra player twenty-five years ago—and I thought this a splendid opportunity to check on it.

There was a player in Stokowski's orchestra who was remarkable for the fact that never once in all the long years had he been five minutes late or missed a rehearsal. But now, at last, all the other members of the Philadelphia Orchestra thought he would be late because he was just about to become the father of his first child, the child to be born during the morning rehearsal.

Everyone knew that his wife would not stand for his not being present for that event.

However, that morning he was present as always; moreover, he did not miss a single cue. His stainless record remained stainless.

The mystery (as I heard the story) was explained later by the fact that the wife's hospital was near the Academy of Music and that the piece rehearsed that morning had a five-hundred-bar rest. The chap had simply laid down his instrument, kept counting bars all the way to the hospital, kissed his new baby (still counting bars) kissed his wife (still counting), and returned to the Academy just in time to take up his instrument and come in on the split second of the downbeat of the 501st bar.

I asked Stokowski if it was true, and he said, "Yes."

Stokowski had, apparently, selected just this piece for rehearsal because he had known of the man's dilemma, wanted him to keep his record. A year later the man got a beautiful gold cup award of some sort, and I understand that to-day it remains among his most prized possessions.

We talked of other things. Stokowski said that he believed that now that the war was finished in Europe, artistic Europe would come alive more keenly, more tremendously than in 1919—when it had one of the greatest of its artistic renaissances. He mentioned, in particular, France, Paris. Paris once more, he thought, would become the artistic hub of the universe. (This opinion coincides curiously with that of another very astute observer, Virgil Thomson.) He thought that the young French composers would shortly break away from their present imitations of Stravinsky's *Psalms Symphony* (which has been very much à la mode during the war as a model).

He spoke of Paris with nostalgia, almost as if he'd like to go there and live, in a sense to commence life all over again. Boski and I, too, thought of Paris, of the first day he had come to our door, knocked, introduced himself:

"I am Leopold Stokowski. . . ."

We talked of household matters, of our milkman who was intellectually inclined and who had the other day inherited two million dollars but decided to keep on serving milk anyhow, at least until the end of the war with Japan. Also of the young carpenter who, while fixing our

door, reminded me so strongly of Bronislaw Nijinsky that I could not help asking him:

"Have you ever been to a ballet?"

"I used to be with the Monte Carlo Company," he answered, "until I discovered I had a heart ailment."

He is a mere Hollywood carpenter now.

We also talked about our dogs on the roof. Several years ago Peter brought home a yellow mongrel puppy from somewhere and immediately put up the stoutest argument for Boski's keeping it as the house dog. To this Boski was very much adverse, all the more so because it was a bitch. However, finally, she permitted the flea-infested, hungry mite to remain, and she became "Brownie," now an important personality in the Antheil household.

Peter, whenever asked about her breed, would always answer "Mongrel," in about the same intonation and with the same pride as another boy might (of another, finer dog) say, "Thoroughbred."

Brownie early displayed a miraculous tendency to climb up a steep embankment to our roof. Our roof is a series of steep gables, ending in a sheer drop to the ground. Upon this mountainous roof she would leap around like a goat, always putting on the brakes just before the edge. In the course of time Brownie had several litters of puppies, whom she promptly trained to do the same thing. A new litter now slides all over the gables of the roof.

The spectacle invariably stops traffic, and people here in the Canyon refer to our place as "the home with the dogs on the roof"—in the same sense as you'd say of a person that he had bats in his belfry.

"California," Stokowski said, finally, "is the most wonderful place in the world—best climate, best everything—and I hope I can stay here. But if I cannot, if unjust criticism continues, we may leave America."

I thought of one of our greatest men leaving our country—for what? For having dared so much, done so much for American music, for all music?

I saw them to their car, and they drove off, two persons very much in love. It was only after she'd left that I realized Gloria had said almost nothing at all. But her warm eyes and her smile had told us that she was our friend.

"A damned swell girl," said Boski, when I came back to the house. "I get so mad, sometimes."

This morning the two blond maniacs in the bedroom woke up shouting, "Gloria, Gloria, Gloria! We want to see Gloria!"

## INDEX

---

### A

- Abbey Theatre, Dublin, produces *Fighting the Waves*, with author's music, 181
- Adrian, dress designer, 254-56
- Afternoon of a Faun*, sunrise performance by Berlin Opera Ballet, 105, 210
- Age of Steel* (Prokofieff), 13
- Airplane Sonata*, 12, 23, 108, 111, 187, 272, 273
- Allen, Prof. Warren D., 247
- American Ballet, 216
- "American school" of music, 56
- American Youth Orchestra, 283
- Anderson, Margaret, editor of *Little Review*, 21; her book *My Thirty Years' War*, 21; 23, 95, 97, 107, 119
- Anderson, Sherwood, 95
- Ansermet, Ernest, 70
- Antheil, George (referred to as Author), effect of his music on a listener, 10; in aviation corps in World War I, 10; goes to Europe as concert pianist, 14; boyish compositions, 18; *First Symphony*, 19; played by Berlin Philharmonic, 46-52, 57; manner of composing music, 90-92; experience with an Olga, 135-37; marries Boski, 137; *First String Quartet* played at Natalie Barney's salon in Paris, 139; first full performance of *Ballet Mecanique*, in Paris, 148-49; its performance in Carnegie Hall, New York, 152-56; played at Museum of Modern Art, 157; wins three times straight on 7 at Monte Carlo Casino, 209; writes for *Esquire*, 215, 221; goes to Hollywood, 226; article "Chopin in Two Lessons" in *Esquire*, 240; becomes teacher of music at Stanford University, 247
- Antheil, Henry, brother of the above, goes to Russia with Ambassador Bullitt, 212; killed in aeroplane accident, 253
- Antheil, Justine, sister of George, 175, 269
- Antheil, Peter, the baby, 230, 237, 244, 247, 249, 251, 280-82
- Antheil, William, uncle of George, 18
- Antheil and the Theory on Harmony*, an Ezra Pound production, 97
- Aphrodite, her part in marriage of Author and Boski, 133-35, 138
- Aragon, Louis, 172, 233
- Archipelago*, South American music by the Author, 204
- "Arcueil, the," 107
- Asafieff, Boris (pen name Igor Gleboff), 174
- Atonalism, 78, 92, 145-46
- Aunt Kolinski, Author's chaperone in Poland, 63-65, 68
- Auric, Georges, 12

### B

- Bacall, Lauren, 275
- Bach, Johann Sebastian, his *Fugue in E Minor*, 12; 84, 242
- Bailly, Louis, 226
- Balakirev, Mili Alexeivich, 55-56
- Balanchine, Georges, ballets by the Author, 212; 214, 216, 219
- Balieff, Nikita, 213
- Ball, Lucille, 248
- Ballet dancer in Texas meets Author, 221-23
- Ballet Mecanique* (Antheil), for orchestra, its original title *Message to Mars*, 113; its first full performance, 148-49; performed in Carnegie Hall, New York, 152-57; performed at Museum of Modern Art, 157; 77, 89, 110, 111, 112, 140, 187
- Ballet Mecanique*, motion picture, 13
- Ballets Suedois*, riot at Author's concert, 111; 12, 107, 110, 122
- Barney, Natalie, Author's *First String Quartet* played at her salon in Paris, 139, 156
- Bartok, Béla, 16, 137, 151
- Bat, The*, by Johann Strauss, directed by Dr. Graf, 191

- Bauer, Leda, 116  
 Beach, Sylvia, her "Shakespeare Bookshop," published Joyce's *Ulysses*, 89; her wire to Author, 138; 187  
*Bedside Esquire*, 221  
 Beethoven, Ludwig van, analysis of the emotions in playing a sonata, 60-61; stealing from himself, 74; 82, 83, 103, 277  
*Ben Hecht Symphonietta, The*, 240-42  
 Benny, Jack, 109  
 Benoist-Mechin, Jacques, 114-16, 140  
 Berg, Alban, his opera *Wozzeck*, 165  
 Berlin Opera Ballet, sunrise performance of *Le Sacre du Printemps* and *Afternoon of a Faun*, 210  
 Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra, plays Author's *First Symphony*, 47; 26, 43  
 Berlin State Opera, 177  
 Berlin State Theatre, 176, 177  
 Bird, William, 96, 195  
 Bizet, Georges, 53  
 Bliss, Arthur, 25  
 Bloch, Ernest, accepts Author as a pupil, 16, 20; returns tuition fee, 21, 224  
 Blood, Bill, 127  
*Bloomer Girl*, 212  
*Blutwurst*, 66  
 Bodanzky, Artur, resigns from Metropolitan Opera, 178; returns, 186  
 Boddy, Manchester, editor Los Angeles *Daily News*, 254, 261-63  
 Bodenheim, Maxwell, 126, 131  
 Bogart, Humphrey, 119, 275  
 Bok, Edward William, 21  
 Bok, Mrs. Mary Louise (Mrs. Efreim Zimbalist), and the Curtis Institute, 21; returns the Author's box of paintings, 246; 198, 225  
*Bolero* (Ravel), 112  
 Boosey-Hawkes, their score of Author's *Fourth Symphony*, 174, 266  
 Borishov, Natascha, 117  
 Boski, *see* Markus  
 Boston Symphony Orchestra, 121  
 Boulanger, Nadia, her musical opinions, 120-122  
 Bowles, Paul, 223  
 "Boy Advises Girl," 238  
 Boyle, George, 21  
 Brahms, Johannes, *First Symphony* conducted by Golschmann, 123; 83, 121  
 Brancussi, sculptor, 196  
 Brant, Henry, pupil of the Author's, 223-4; offers Steinway grand for sale, then a Stradivarius, 224-25  
 Breton, André, 172, 233  
 Bruce, Nigel, 119  
 Bruckner, Anton, 54, 114, 121-22, 150, 229, 275  
*Buccaneer, The*, motion picture, 239  
 Bullitt, Louise, 141  
 Bullitt, William Christian, turns novelist with *It's Not Done*, 141; takes Henry Antheil to Russia, 212  
 Bunuel, Luis, Spanish surrealist, 233, 236

## C

- C Sharp Minor Prelude* (Rachmaninoff), 112  
 Cain, James, makes newspaper apology to Author, 153  
 Caldwell, Erskine, 201  
*Candide* (Voltaire), new opera libretto, 202-3  
 Capp, Al (Alfred Gerald Caplin), 264  
*Capriccio* (Stravinsky), 85; (Antheil), 203  
 Carnegie Hall, New York, riot over Author's *Ballet Mecanique*, 109, 113, 153, 178  
 Carroll, Madeleine, 241  
 Cerf, Bennett, and his *Try and Stop Me*, 238  
 Champs Elysées Theatre, Author's *Second Symphony* played, 146  
 Chanler, Theodore, and the mystery of the third-floor entry, 86-88  
*Charterhouse of Parma, The* (Stendhal), 124  
*Chien Andalou, Le*, silent picture, 233, 234, 236  
 Chirico, Giorgio de, 18, 22  
 Chopin, Frédéric François, effect of his music on a listener, 10; 83, 134  
 "Chopin in Two Lessons," by the Author, in *Esquire*, 240  
 Chotzinoff, Samuel, 155  
 Ciafflin, Avery, 32  
 Clair, René, 110  
 Clermont-Tonnere, Duchesse de, 146; 148  
 Cocteau, Jean, explains critics, 53; 95, 99, 113, 130, 233  
 Concerts Golschmann, 142, 143, 166  
 Copland, Aaron, played one of the pianos in *Ballet Mecanique* in Carnegie Hall, 155, 167; 68, 120, 227, 252



Copland-Sessions Concerts, Author composes *Second String Quartet* for them, 167

Copyists and their ways, 104

Coulange, Louis, his *Life of the Devil*, 274

Covarrubias, Mr. and Mrs. Miguel, 161

Crapsey, Adelaide, 20

"Creation," proposed ballet, 217

Crooks, Alexander, 19; becomes "Richard Crooks," 19

Cunard, Nancy, 195

Curtis Institute, Philadelphia, 13, 21, 88, 126, 198, 225

Czibulka, Baroness Li, 117, 140, 144

## D

*Daily News* (Los Angeles), 254, 261

Dali, Salvador, meets C. B. de Mille and kisses his hand, 231; 84, 204, 210, 217; his wife Gala, 235, 236

Dammert, Hansjorg, German composer, 144; fought against Franco in Spain, changed his name to Robert Jordan, 145; 208

Damrosch, Walter, 19

*Dance in Four Parts*, ballet by Martha Graham, from Author's piano preludes, 204

Da Vinci, Leonardo, 150

*Death in the Dark*, Author's novel under the name "Stacey Bishop," 180

*Death of the Machines*, 24, 77-78, 111

Debussy, Achille-Claude, 30, 57, 84, 105, 107

Decatur, Stephen, and the Barbary pirates in a *Nocturne for Orchestra*, by the Author, 267

De Mare, Rolf, 12

De Mille, Cecil Blount, his picture *The Plainsman*, 227; as a surrealist, 231; meets Dali, who kisses his hand, 231-32; his *Union Pacific*, 239

Denby, Howard, editor of *Esquire*, rejects Author's column, 238

Derain, André, does *decor* for ballet *Dreams*, 217

Diaghileff, Sergei Pavlovich, his *Ballet Russe*, 107; 12, 216

Disney, Walter E., his *Fantasia*, 280

Dornberg, Schultz von, plays Author's *First Symphony*, 47-52; 26, 27, 38, 43, 66, 159

*Dreams*, ballet by the Author for Balanchine, 217, 222

*Dreigroschenoper* (Weill), 165, 176

Duchamps, Marcel, 12

## E

*Eine Kleine Nachtmusik* (Mozart), 26

Eliot, Thomas Stearns, 99, 118, 180

Elouard, 172

"Embarkation for Cythera," 24

Emmy, and her library, 190, 203

Erlanger, Baron Frédéric d', 101-02

Ernst, Max, his pictures musically illustrated by the Author, 204

Erskine, John, prospect of writing an opera with him, 182; agrees to Author's proposal, 184; opera *Helen Retires* given at Juilliard School, 200; published as a poem, 201; 182

*Esquire*, Author engaged to write squibs on "unfaithfulness," 215; 101, 221, 225, 228, 237, 238, 240, 248, 256, 261

## F

Faber & Faber, 180

Fanelli, Ernest, his probable influence on Debussy, Ravel, Satie, 105

*Fantasia*, picture directed by Stokowski, 280

*Faust*, proposal to make a motion picture of it, 214

*Faust III*, opera libretto, 233

Feuchtwanger, Lion, 199

*Fifth Symphony* (Antheil), preliminary sketches, 262; to be dedicated to the young dead of Second World War, 262, 269

*Fighting the Waves* (Yeats), play with Author's music, 181

*Fireworks and the Profane Walzers* (Antheil), 12

"First International Festival of Modern Music," 16, 25

*First String Quartet* (Antheil), 90; played at Natalie Barney's salon in Paris, 139; at Carnegie Hall concert with *Ballet Mecanique*, 156

*First Symphony* (Antheil), 16, 19, 24, 26, 47, 51, 53, 114, 142, 155

*First Violin Sonata* (Antheil), 99, 103, 113, 142  
 "Five Hundred Favourite Salon Melodies," 17  
 Flaubert, Gustave (*Salambo*), 101  
 Foley, Martha, 248  
*For Whom the Bell Tolls*, 145  
 Ford, Ford Maddox, his *Transatlantic Review*, 76, 106; 12, 113, 118-19  
 Foster, Stephen, 18, 220  
*Fourth Symphony* (Antheil), reminds critics of Shostakovich, 174; resemblances to *Transatlantic*, 174; 169; played by Kindler, 268; 262  
 Franco, Francisco, of Spain, 145, 236  
 Frankfurt Opera produces *Transatlantic*, 189, 191-5  
 Freitag-Loringhoven, Baroness Elsa von, 131  
 Friede, Donald, gives performance of *Ballet Mecanique* in Carnegie Hall, 152-57; 167  
 Furstenburg, Prince of, 16, 24  
 Fux, Johann Josef, his *Gradus ad Parnassum* quoted, 83

#### G

Gatti-Casazza, Giulio, 186, 198  
 Gaynor, Janet, 254, 256  
 "Germany Never Had a Chance," article by the Author, in *Esquire*, 248, 250, 254, 261  
 Gershwin, George, story of his *Rhapsody in Blue*, 144; his *Of Thee I Sing*, produced, 57, 197  
 Gide, André, 190  
 Gieseke, Walter, 15, 224  
 Gillespie, Abraham Lincoln, Jr., 126-32, 198, 201-2, 248  
 Gingrich, Arnold, editor of *Esquire*, 215, 219, 220, 248, 261  
 Ginsberg, composer, 34  
 Gleboff, Igor, see Asafieff  
 Gluck, Christoph Willibald, 82  
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 283  
 Goldwyn, Samuel, learns about Krenek, 243  
 Golschmann, Vladimir, conductor of the Concerts Golschmann in Paris, 142, 143; a fifty-dollar luncheon with the Author, 142; conducts first full performance of Author's *Ballet Mecanique*, 148; plays Author's *Nocturne for Orchestra* in St. Louis, 267

*Gone with the Wind*, 120  
 Goossens, Eugene, conducts *Ballet Mecanique* at Carnegie Hall, 156  
 Gourmont, Remy de, his "Letters to an Amazon," 139  
 Grable, Betty, 13, 227, 254  
*Gradus ad Parnassum* (Fux), 83  
 Graf, Dr. Herbert, accepts *Transatlantic*, 183-84; produces it in Frankfurt, 191; directed a performance of *The Bat*, 191; 173, 179  
 Graham, Martha, does ballet *Dance in Four Parts* from Author's piano preludes, 204  
 Greenstreet, Sidney, a comparison, 10  
*Guardian, Manchester* (England), 195  
 Guggenheim scholarship awarded to the Author, 207, 211, 278  
 Gunther, John, 195

#### H

Handel, George Frederick, 84  
 Hanson, Martin H., becomes Author's manager, 14; dies, 152  
 Harris, Roy, his symphonies a mystery to the Author, 252; 120-21, 223  
 Harvout, Inez (becomes Irene Manning), 214  
 Hauer, Josef Matthias, and his atonal system, 145  
 Hauptmann, Gerhart, 180  
 Haydn, Franz Josef, 83  
 Hecht, Ben, his *Symphonietta*, 240; touts Krenek to Sam Goldwyn, 243; 95, 126, 212, 229  
 Heinsheimer, Dr. Hans, of Universal Edition, 164; accepts Author's opera *Transatlantic*, 166; declares Berlin Opera people interested in it, 173; made manager of American branch of Boosey-Hawkes, 266  
 Helen of Troy cited, 135; as a subject for a comic opera, 182, 184, 198  
*Helen Retires*, opera by Erskine, with music by the Author, 186; given at Juilliard School, 200; published as a poem, 201; 189  
 Hemingway, Ernest, his *In Our Time* published in German magazine, 120; 113, 118-119, 218, 220  
 Hermann, Benjamin, 246  
*Heroes of To-day*, a concert overture by the Author, dedicated to Hedy Lamarr, for Stokowski, 268

Hertzka, Emil, 169  
 Hickok, Wild Bill, 230  
 Higg's (James) *Fugue*, 230  
 Hindemith, Paul, 26, 70-71, 166  
*Histoire du Soldat* (Stravinsky), 30, 68  
 Hitler, Adolf, "Austrian maniac," 12;  
 first putsch in Munich, 77; comes into  
 power, 192, 211  
 Hofmann, Josef, 19, 198  
 Hollander, Victor, 246  
 Holst, Gustav Theodore (*The Planets*), 22  
 Honegger, Arthur, 12, 25, 110, 113-114  
 Hopkins, Miriam, 133, 135, 212  
 Horowitz, Vladimir, 143, 224  
 Howard, John Tasker, 224  
 Hurok, Sol, offers \$40,000 for tour of  
*Ballet Mecanique*, is refused, 157

### I

Imbs, Bravig, book on the Author, 135  
*Inhumaine, L'*, silent movie that showed a  
 riot in Paris at Author's concert, 110  
*In Our Time*, anonymous script by  
 Hemingway, published in a German  
 magazine, 120  
 International Brigade of the French  
 Foreign Legion, 145  
 Inventors' Council, 257  
 "Island of the Lotus Eaters," 137  
 Iturbi, José, 15  
*Ivan the Terrible*, title for an opera, started  
 by the Author, 163, 204  
*I've Got a Girl in Baltimore*, 18

### J

*Jazz Sonata* (Antheil), 12  
*Jazz Symphonietta* (Antheil), at Carnegie  
 Hall concert, 155  
 Johnson, Herbert, 186  
*Jonny Spielt Auf*, opera by Krenek, 160,  
 163, 243  
 Jordan, Robert, *see* Dammert  
 Joyce, James, his *Ulysses* published, 89;  
 his *Chamber Music* printed, 120; his love  
 of music and encyclopædic knowledge of  
 it, 122; 99, 118-19, 129; and Mrs. Joyce,  
 123  
 Joyce, Peggy Hopkins, 202  
 Judson, Arthur, 224  
 Juilliard Foundation, 182, 186, 198, 208;  
 gives *Helen Retires*, 200

### K

Kahn, Otto Hermann, 203  
 Kaufman, William, 195, 197  
 Kiesler, Frederick, directed *Helen Retires*,  
 200  
 Kindler, Hans, plays Author's *Fourth  
 Symphony* in Washington and Baltimore,  
 264, 267-68  
 King, Mr. and Mrs. Alexander, 161  
 King, Andrea, 124  
 Kirsta, Georg, divorces Kobalov and  
 marries Vera Salvotti, 191; 190  
 Kneisel Quartet, 225  
 Kobalov, Georg Kirsta's wife, 190;  
 divorced from him, 191  
 Komroff, Manuel, 225  
 Koussevitzky, Serge, 121, 264  
 Krenek, Ernst, success of his *Jonny Spielt  
 Auf*, 160; calls on the Author, 163-4; is  
 touted to Sam Goldwyn, 243; 26  
*Kunstblatt, Der*, Berlin magazine, 78  
 Kurnitz, Harry, 126, 241

### L

Lamarr, Hedy, her motherly feelings  
 aroused by Georg Kirsta, 191-92;  
 Author's *Heroes of To-day* dedicated to  
 her, 268; 143, 227, 254, 281  
 Landis, Carole, 254  
 Laval, Pierre, 115-116  
 Lazarus, Daniel, his job to chase women  
 away from Golschmann in Paris, 143  
 League of Composers, offer to present  
*Ballet Mecanique* turned down, 152  
 Le Blanc, Georgette, 95, 110  
 Lederer, Charles, 240, 242  
 Leger, Fernand, 13, 110, 196  
 Leginska, Ethel, 32, 34-35  
 Leinsdorf, Erich, conductor of the Cleve-  
 land Orchestra, 143  
 Levant, Oscar, his book *A Smattering of  
 Ignorance*, 240; 212; 230, 245, 273  
 Lewis, Wyndham, 118-119, 130  
*Life of the Devil* (Coulange), 274  
 Liszt, Franz, 19, 74  
*Little Review*, first to publish Joyce's  
*Ulysses*, 95; 21, 119  
 Loeffler, Charles Martin, 251  
 Lorre, Peter, 14  
 Los Angeles Symphony Orchestra directed  
 by Groucho Marx, 241

Lubitsch, Ernst, 241  
Luce, Nina, 248  
Ludwig, Emil, 180

## M

MacArthur, Charles, 11, 130, 133, 135, 212, 240, 241  
Machiavelli, 15  
Maeterlinck, Maurice, 283  
*Mahagonny*, Kurt Weill's surrealist opera, 203  
Mahler, Gustav, 54, 114, 121, 150, 220, 229, 275  
Mandel, Fritz, 257  
Manning, Irene, *see* Harvout  
Margules, De Hirsch, 161  
Marienbad, Germany, 65-67  
Markus, Boski, meets Author, 45-46; marries him, 137-39; announces prospective baby, decides on name Peter, 227-28  
Marx, Arthur (Harpo), 240-42  
Marx, Julius (Groucho), conducts the Los Angeles Symphony, 241  
*Mavra* (Stravinsky), 70  
Maxwell, Elsa, cited, 141  
McCracken, Joannie, 212  
McKinley Grammar School, 68  
*Mechanisms* (Antheil), 12, 24, 77, 108, 110, 111, 272  
Medtner, Nicolas, 19  
*Message to Mars*, original title of *Ballet Mecanique*, 113  
Metropolitan Opera turns down *Transatlantic*, 184; 198  
*Midnight Fire Alarm* (Paul), 17  
Milhaud, Darius, 12, 25, 90-91, 108-09, 116, 160  
Miro, Joan, 12, 190  
Monaco, Prince of, 111  
Money in Central Europe, 77  
Monnier, Mlle. Adrienne, goes to the Moulin Rouge with Joyce and the Author, 125  
Monte Carlo Casino, Author wins three times straight on 7, 209  
Monte Carlo Company, and the carpenter who looked like Nijinsky, 285  
Monte Carlo Opera, 34  
Monteux, Pierre, accepts Author's *Fourth Symphony* for San Francisco, 21-22, 267  
*Moon Over Alabama* song, 203  
Morros, Boris, 219, 227, 231-33, 235, 239  
Mossolov, Alexander, 113-114

Moussorgsky, Modest Petrovich, 55  
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, effect of his music on a listener, 10; 37, 82-83, 121  
"Mr. Awfully Nice," *see* Wedderkop  
*Murder, Hope of Womankind*, by Paul Hindemith, 70-71  
Murphy, Dudley, agrees to make movie of Author's *Ballet Mecanique*, 110  
Museum of Modern Art, performance of *Ballet Mecanique*, 157  
*Musical Chronicle* (Rosenfeld), 21  
Musical critics in Paris, their price list, 97  
*My Pretty Redwing*, 18  
*My Thirty Years' War* (Anderson), 21, 95

## N

National Socialist party, a "bunch of hoodlums," 12  
National Symphony Orchestra, 267  
Neoclassicism defined, 84-85  
Nesbitt, John, broadcaster of "The Passing Parade," 133, 136; takes on the Author as war analyst, 263  
Nijinsky, Bronislav, 285  
*Noces, Les* (Stravinsky), its premiere, 81, 85, 113  
*Nocturne for Orchestra* (Antheil), to be played by Golschmann in St. Louis, 267  
Norodeth, Crown Prince of Cambodia, 187  
Norris, Charles and Kathleen, visit Author, 140

## O

*Odyssey* mentioned, 182  
Oeberg, music publisher, 33, 36  
*Oedipus Rex*, play based on Sophocles, 176, 179  
Offenbach, Jacques, 122  
*Of Thee I Sing*, 197  
*Oiseau de Feu* ("Firebird"), by Stravinsky, 30, 35, 112  
O'Neil, Barbara, 120  
O'Neil, George, 120  
Ornstein, Leo, 12, 14

## P

*Pacific* 239 (Honegger), 13, 110  
Paris, Author's reactions, 80; his impressions embodied in a quintet, 98; riot over Author's *Mechanisms*, 107-109

Paris Opera, 124  
 Paris World Fair, 117  
 Parnach, Russian dancer, 38-40  
 "Passing Parade, The," broadcasts, 133, 263  
 Paul, E. T. (*The Midnight Fire Alarm*), 17  
 Paul, Elliot, 125  
 Pavlova, Anna Matveyevna, 222  
 Pergolesi, Giovanni Battista, 82, 84  
 Pétain, Henri-Philippe, 116  
*Petrouchka* (Stravinsky), 30, 70, 112, 281  
 Petyrek, Felix, 26  
 Philadelphia Orchestra, 21, 282-83  
 Philharmonic-Symphony Orchestra (New York), 50  
 Pianist, his life in concert, 9-10, 76  
 Pianos, psychic differences, 57-58  
 Picabia, writes book of Satie's ballet *Relache*, 110  
 Picasso, Pablo Ruiz, 12, 34, 55, 109, 111, 190  
 Pierre, Guy de la, his review of the Author's *Second Symphony*, 151  
*Plainsman, The*, motion picture with Author's score, 227, 232, 235, 244  
*Planets, The* (Holst), 22  
 Playel, piano manufacturer, 70, 86  
 Poiret, Paul, 140  
*Poker Game, The*, ballet by Stravinsky, 214  
*Pony Boy*, 18  
*Postman Always Rings Twice, The* (Cain), 153  
 Pound, Ezra, 95-100, 107, 118, 130, 170  
 Prokofieff, Serge, 13, 110, 174, 277  
*Psalms* symphony (Stravinsky), 85, 284  
*Pulcinella* (Stravinsky), 82, 84-85  
 Purcell, Henry, 122-124  
 Putsch in Munich, Hitler group's first uprising, 77

## Q

*Querschnitt, Der*, magazine, 119  
*Quintet* (Antheil), 89

## R

Rachmaninoff, Sergei Vasilievich, his *C Sharp Minor Prelude*, 112  
 Rain a phenomenon of the Author's piano-playing, 230-31  
 Rameau, Jean Philippe, 122  
 Rathaus, Karol, 26

Ravel, Maurice Joseph, 16, 25, 30, 57, 84, 90, 105, 107, 112  
 Ray, Man, to make surrealist film with René Clair, 110; 12, 111, 233  
*Red and the Black, The* (Stendhal), 124  
 Reed, John, hero of the Russian revolution, 141  
 Reiner, Fritz and Carlotta, 273  
*Relache*, mechanized ballet by Erik Satie, 110  
*Renard* (Stravinsky), 30  
 Renoirs, 202  
 Rickenbacker, Edward Vernon (Eddie), 50  
 Rimsky-Korsakov, Nicolas Andreievich, 43, 55-56, 235  
 Rioting at Author's concerts, 11-13, 108-09, 111, 122  
 Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, President of the U.S., 250  
 Rosenfeld, Paul, his book *Musical Chronicle*, 21; 22  
 Rosenstock, Josef, 178, 183, 186  
 Rozsa, Miklos, 246  
 Rubinstein, Artur, 12  
 Rudge, Olga, 89, 97, 99-100, 107, 111, 135  
 Rundstedt, Field Marshal Karl Rudolf Gerd von, 254  
 "Russian Five," 55

## S

*Sacre du Printemps, Le* (Stravinsky), a sunrise performance by Berlin Opera Ballet, 210; 57, 109, 280  
 St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, 143, 267  
 Sakhar, Valentine, Russian actress, 39  
*Salambo* (Flaubert), 101  
*Salon Mexico, El* (Copland), 227  
 Salvottù, Vera, marries Georg Kirsta, 191; 208  
 Sand, George, 134  
 Sanders, Ross, painter, 204-5  
 San Francisco Orchestra, 267  
 Satie, Erik, announces writing of a mechanical ballet, *Relache*, 110; dies, 110; 95-98, 105, 107, 130  
 Savo, Jimmy, 213  
 Schirmer, Robert and Mabel, 144  
 Schnabel, Artur, 15  
 Schnitzler, Arthur, Author visits him with Pound, 170-72, 189  
 Schnitzler, Julius, 170

- Schonberg, Arnold, effect of his music on a listener, 10; his Piano Concerto possibly responsible for cancellation of Stokowski's contract by N.B.C., 265; 38, 84, 92, 242, 283
- School of American Ballet, 216
- Schott & Sons, German music publishers, 160, 165
- Schumann, Robert Alexander, his *A Major Concerto*, 17; 83-84
- Schuster, Merle, 116
- Schwabach, Dr. Paul von, Kaiser Wilhelm's personal banker, 79
- Schwanda* (Weinberger), 165, 198
- Scott, Thomas, 275-80
- Scriabine, Alexander Nicolai, 36-37
- Scriabine, Ariadne, daughter of the preceding, 143
- Searchinger, Caesar, 26, 31, 36, 38-39, 42
- Second String Quartet* (Antheil), composed for the Copland-Sessions Concerts, 167
- Second Symphony* (Antheil), 90, 114, 140, 143; played at the Champs Elysées Theatre, 146
- Second Violin Sonata* (Antheil), on programme with *Ballet Mecanique* at Carnegie Hall, 156; 104
- "SEE-Note," a new form of music notation devised by the Author, 240
- Sessions, Roger, 32, 167
- "Shakespeare Bookshop" of Sylvia Beach in Paris, 118, 125
- Shape of the War to Come, The*, written anonymously by the Author, 253, 261
- Sharoff, Irene, stage designer, 214
- Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 180
- Shostakovich, Dmitri, Author's *Fourth Symphony* reminds critics of the Russian composer, 174
- Shubert, wants to buy Author's "show"—but opera—, 196-7
- Sibelius, Jan, Author's estimate of him, 251, 275; 122, 220, 276
- Siegel-Antheil Art Galleries, 230
- Siegfried* (Wagner), 124
- Simon, Henry, editor of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*, 195, 249, 254, 262; killed in Washington, 264
- Sinatra, Frank, 28, 82
- Six, Les, 103, 107, 111, 151
- Smattering of Ignorance, A* (Levant), 240
- Socrate* (Satie), 107
- Sonata Sauvage* (Antheil), 12, 24, 77, 108, 111
- Song of India* (Rimsky-Korsakov), 235
- "So Smells Defeat," bought by *Esquire* from the Author, 221
- Sothorn, Ann, 258
- "Stacey Bishop," Author's nom de plume for *Death in the Dark*, 180
- Stanford University, engages Author as teacher of music, 253, 247
- Star of the Sea*, 17
- Stearns, Harold Edmund, "Peter Pickum" of the *Paris Tribune*, 238
- Steel Step*, ballet by Prokofieff, 110
- Stein, Gertrude, 122, 127, 129
- Steinberg, William, musical director of Frankfurt Opera, 188, 194
- Steinway's, 14
- Stendhal (Marie Henri Beyle), his *The Red and the Black* and *The Charterhouse of Parma* recommended to the Author, 124; 276
- Sternberg, Constantine von, Author's teacher, 14, 19-20, 21, 105, 224
- Stoessel, Albert, to direct *Helen Retires*, 208
- Stokowski, Leopold, his reception by Stravinsky, 33; calls on Author in Paris, 118; sets Author's Fourth Symphony, 264; plays it over N.B.C. network, 265; 22, 33, 87, 260, 266, 268, 273, 281-85
- Strauss, Johann, and the Danube, 24; his *Bat* played, 191
- Strauss, Richard, 29, 189
- Stravinsky, Igor, manner of composing, 37; premiere of *Les Noces*, 81; 43, 280
- Stravinsky, Mrs., mother of the composer, her devotion to Scriabine's music, 36-37; 31
- Stuckenschmidt, Hans von, peculiarity of his allowance checks, 78-79; 26, 38, 119, 144, 145, 158, 181, 188
- Superman complex in Berlin, 177
- Symphonic Classique* (Prokofieff), dedicated to Shostakovich, 174
- Symphony for Five Instruments* (Antheil), 32
- Symphony in C* (Stravinsky), 85, 260, 276
- Symphony for Wind Instruments* (Stravinsky), 32

## T

- Tableaux Symphoniques*, 105
- Taylor, Dr. Sayl, original "Voice of Experience" on radio, 259

Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilich, his *B Flat Minor Concerto*, 17; 55-56  
 Tchelitchev, Pavel, 36, 117, 190  
 Teutonic Knights, Order of, 66  
*Third Symphony* (Antheil), rewritten, 207, 229, 264  
 Thomson, Virgil, music critic of N.Y. *Herald Tribune*, 146; his new quintet, 147; 113, 120, 284  
*Threepenny Opera* (Weill), 165, 176, 243  
*Times* (London), 195; (N.Y.), 195; (Paris), 197  
 Tisserant, Mme., concierge at 12 Rue de l'Odéon, 127  
*Tobacco Road*, 201  
 Toch, Ernst, 244  
 Toulouse-Lautree, Henri de, 122  
 Tovey, Sir Donald Francis, his symphonic analysis books, 251  
*Transatlantic*, a projected opera by the Author, 163; accepted by Heinsheimer, 166; manuscript delivered and printed, 164, 173; resemblances to *Fourth Symphony*, 174; turned down by Metropolitan Opera, 184; produced in Frankfurt, 191-4  
*Transatlantic Review*, Ford Maddox Ford's, 76, 106  
*Tristan and Isolde*, 179, 186  
*Try and Stop Me*, by Bennett Cerf, 238  
 Turner, Lana, 13, 227, 254

## U

*Ulysses* (Joyce), 89, 95, 122, 125, 128  
*Union Pacific*, motion picture, 239  
 Universal Edition, German music publishers, 160, 164, 173

## V

Vanderbilt, Gloria (Mrs. Leopold Stokowski), 281-83, 285  
*Vanity Fair* magazine, 119, 146, 171  
 Veidt, Conrad, movie actor, 43  
 Verdi, Giuseppe, 283  
 Vermeer, Jan, 84  
 Villa-Lobos, Heitor, rehearses an orchestra, 267  
*Violin Sonata No. 1* (Antheil), 99

"Voice of Experience," radio programme, 259  
 Voltaire, François Marie Arouet de, 202

## W

Wagner (Wilhelm), Richard, 19, 83-84, 124  
 Walker, James J., 203  
 Watteau, Jean Antoine, his *Embarkation for Cythera*, 24  
 Waxman, Franz, 246  
 Weber, Karl Maria von, 85  
 Webern, Anton von, 26  
 Wedderkop, Count von ("Mr. Awfully Nice"), 119  
 Weill, Kurt, his *Dreigroschenoper* [Threepenny Opera], 165, 176  
 Weinberger, Jaromir, composer of *Schwanda*, 165, 198-99, 201  
 Weinurstel, Eva, 44-46, 52, 62-63, 75, 96  
 Weiss, Adolf, bassoonist, 242  
 Welles, Orson, 246  
 Werfel, Franz, 180  
*Wheels and Butterflies* (Yeats), 181  
 Wigman, Mary, her dance school in Dresden, 135  
 Wigmore Hall, London, 10, 15  
 Wilhelm, German Crown Prince, 181  
 Williams, Anne, Author goes in search of her, 13; turns up in Dresden, 72  
*Woman with 100 Heads*, pictures by Max Ernst, musically illustrated by the Author, 112, 204  
*Work in Progress* (Joyce), 125  
*Wozzeck* (Berg), 165

## Y

Yeats, William Butler, his *Fighting the Waves* produced with a score by the Author, 181; 99, 180

## Z

Zimbalist, Mrs. Efrem, 21, 132