# WORLD'S END

Upton Sinclair

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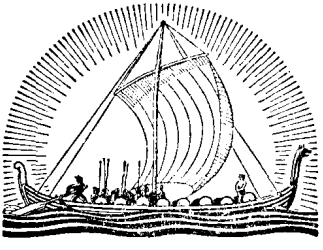

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# *Author's Note*

In the course of this novel a number of well-known persons make their appearance, some of them living, some dead; they appear under their own names, and what is said about them is factually correct.

There are other characters which are fictitious, and in these cases the author has gone out of his way to avoid seeming to point at real persons. He has given them unlikely names, and hopes that no persons bearing such names exist. But it is impossible to make sure; therefore the writer states that, if any such coincidence occurs, it is accidental. This is not the customary "hedge clause" which the author of a *roman à clef* publishes for legal protection; it means what it says and is intended to be so taken.

Various European concerns engaged in the manufacture of munitions have been named in the story, and what has been said about them is also according to the records. There is one American firm, and that, with all its affairs, is imaginary. The writer has done his best to avoid seeming to indicate any actual American firm or family.

# BOOK ONE

# God's in His Heaven

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# 1

# *Music Made Visible*

## I

THE American boy's name was Lanning Budd; people called him Lanny, an agreeable name, easy to say. He had been born in Switzerland, and spent most of his life on the French Riviera; he had never crossed the ocean, but considered himself American because his mother and father were that. He had traveled a lot, and just now was in a little village in the suburbs of Dresden, his mother having left him while she went off on a yachting trip to the fiords of Norway. Lanny didn't mind, for he was used to being left in places, and knew how to get along with people from other parts of the world. He would eat their foods, pick up a smattering of their languages, and hear stories about strange ways of life.

Lanny was thirteen, and growing fast, but much dancing had kept his figure slender and graceful. His wavy brown hair was worn long, that being the fashion for boys; when it dropped into his eyes, he gave a toss of the head. His eyes also were brown, and looked out with eagerness on whatever part of Europe he was in. Just now he was sure that Hellerau was the most delightful of places, and surely this day of the Festspiel was the most delightful of days.

Upon a high plateau stood a tall white temple with smooth round pillars in front, and to it were drifting throngs of people who had journeyed from places all over the earth where art was loved and cherished; fashionable ones among them, but mostly art people, writers and critics, musicians, actors, producers—celebrities in such numbers that it was impossible to keep track of them. All Lanny's life he had heard their names, and here they were in the flesh. With

two friends, a German boy slightly older than himself and an English boy older still, he wandered among the crowd in a state of eager delight.

"There he is!" one would whisper.

"Which?"

"The one with the pink flower."

"Who is he?"

One of the older boys would explain. Perhaps it was a great blond Russian named Stanislavsky; perhaps a carelessly dressed Englishman, Granville Barker. The boys would stare, but not too openly or too long. It was a place of courtesy, and celebrities were worshiped but not disturbed. To ask for an autograph was a crudity undreamed of in the Dalcroze school.

The three were on the alert for the king of celebrities, who had promised to be present. They spied him at some distance, talking with two ladies. Others also had spied him, and were doing as the boys did, walking slowly past, inclining their ears in the hope of catching a stray pearl of wit or wisdom; then stopping a little way off, watching with half-averted gaze.

"His whiskers look like gold," murmured Lanny.

"Whiskers?" queried Kurt, the German boy, who spoke English carefully and precisely. "I thought you say beard."

"Whiskers are beard and mustaches both," ventured Lanny, and then inquired: "Aren't they, Rick?"

"Whiskers stick out," opined the English boy, and added: "His are the color of the soil of Hellerau." It was true, for the ground was reddish yellow, and had glints of sunlight in it. "Hellerau means bright meadow," Kurt explained.

## II

The king of celebrities was then in his middle fifties, and the breeze that blew on that elevated spot tossed his whiskers, which stuck out. Tall and erect, he had eyes as gay as the bluebells on the meadow and teeth like the petals of the daisies. He wore an English

tweed suit of brown with reddish threads in it, and when he threw his head back and laughed—which he did every time he made a joke —all the flowers on the bright meadow danced.

The trio stared until they thought maybe it wasn't polite any more, and then turned their eyes away. "Do you suppose he'd answer if we spoke to him?" ventured Lanny.

"Oh, no!" exclaimed Kurt, the most strictly brought up of the three.

"What would we say?" demanded Rick.

"We might think up something. You try; you're English."

"English people don't ever speak without being introduced."

"Think of something anyhow," persisted Lanny. "It can't hurt to pretend."

Rick was fifteen, and his father was a baronet who preferred to be known as a designer of stage sets. "Mr. Shaw," he suggested, with Oxford accent and polished manner, "may I take the liberty of telling you how much I have enjoyed the reading of your prefaces?"

"That's what everybody says," declared Lanny. "He's sick of it. You try, Kurt."

Kurt clicked his heels and bowed; he was the son of an official in Silesia, and couldn't even imagine addressing anyone without doing that. "Mr. Shaw, we Germans count ourselves your discoverers, and it does us honor to welcome you to our soil."

"That's better," judged the American. "But maybe the Bürgermeister has already said it."

"You try it then," said Rick.

Lanny knew from his father and others that Americans said what they wanted to, and without too much ceremony. "Mr. Shaw," he announced, "we three boys are going to dance for you in a few minutes, and we're tickled to death about it."

"He'll know that's American, all right," admitted Rick. "Would you dare to do it?"

"I don't know," said Lanny. "He looks quite kind."

The king of celebrities had started to move toward the tall white temple, and Kurt glanced quickly at his watch. "*Herrgott!* Three minutes to curtain!"

He bolted, with the other two at his heels. Breathless, they dashed into the robing room, where the chorus master gazed at them sternly. "It is disgraceful to be late for the Festspiel," he declared.

But it didn't take three boys long to slip out of shirts and trousers, B.V.D.'s and sandals, and into their light dancing tunics. That they were out of breath was no matter, for there was the overture. They stole to their assigned positions on the darkened stage and squatted on the floor to wait until it was time for the rising of the curtain.

## III

Orpheus, the singer, had descended into hell. He stood, his lyre in hand, confronting a host of furies with a baleful glare in their eyes. Infernal music pounded forth their protest. "Who is this mortal one now drawing near, bold to intrude on these awful abodes?"

Furies, it is well known, are dangerous; these trembled with their peculiar excitement, and could hardly be restrained. Their feet trod with eagerness to leap at the intruder, their hands reached out with longing to seize and rend him. The music crashed and rushed upward in a frenzied presto, it crashed and rushed down again, and bodies shook and swayed with the drive of it.

The spirits stood upon a slope within the entrance gates of Hell; tier upon tier of them, and in the dim blue light of infernal fires their naked arms and legs made, as it were, a mountain of motion. Their anger wove itself into patterns of menace, so that the gentle musician could hardly keep from shrinking. He touched his lyre, and soft strains floated forth; tinkling triplets like the shimmering of little waves in the moonlight. But the fiends would not hear. "No!" they thundered, with the hammer-strokes of arms and the trampling of feet. In vain the melodious pleading of the lyre! "Furies, specters, phantoms terrific, let your hearts have pity on my soul-tormenting pain."

The musician sang his story. He had lost his beloved Eurydice, who was somewhere in these realms of grief, and he must win her release. His strains poured forth until the hardest hearts were melted.

It was a triumph of love over anger, of beauty and grace over the evil forces which beset the lives of men.

The mountain of motion burst forth into silent song. The denizens of Hell were transformed into shades of the Elysian fields, and showers of blessings fell upon them out of the music. "On these meadows all are happy-hearted; only peace and rest are known." In the midst of the rejoicing came the shy Eurydice to meet her spouse. Rapture seized the limbs now shining in bright light; they wove patterns as intricate as the music, portraying not merely melody but complicated harmonies. Beautiful designs were brought before the eye, counterpoint was heightened through another sense. It was music made visible; and when the curtain had fallen upon the bliss of Orpheus and his bride, a storm of applause shook the auditorium. Men and women stood shouting their delight at the revelation of a new form of art.

Outside, upon the steps of the temple, they crowded about the creator of "Eurythmics." Emile Jaques-Dalcroze was his name, a stocky, solidly built man with the sharply pointed black beard and mustache of a Frenchman and the black Windsor tie which marked the artist of those days. He had taken the musical patterns of Gluck's *Orpheus* and reproduced them with the bodies and bare arms and legs of children; the art lovers would go forth to tell the world that here was something not only beautiful but healing, a way to train the young in grace and happiness, in efficiency and co-ordination of body and mind.

Critics, producers, teachers, all of them were devotees of an old religion, the worship of the Muses. They believed that humanity could be saved by beauty and grace; and what better symbol than the fable of the Greek singer who descended into Hell and with voice and golden lyre tamed the furies and the fiends? Sooner or later among the children at Hellerau would appear another Orpheus to charm the senses, inspire the soul, and tame the furies of greed and hate. Wars would be banished—and not merely those among nations, but that bitter struggle of the classes which was threatening to rend Europe. In the Dalcroze school children of the well-to-do classes

danced side by side with those of workers from the factory suburbs. In the temple of the Muses were no classes, nations, or races; only humanity with its dream of beauty and joy.

Such was the faith of all art lovers of the year 1913; such was the creed being taught in the tall white temple upon the bright meadow. In these fortunate modern days the spread of civilization had become automatic and irresistible. Forty-two years had passed since Europe had had a major war, and it was evident to all that love and brotherhood were stealing into the hearts of the furies, and that Orpheus was conquering with his heaven-sent voice and golden lyre.

## IV

All Lanny Budd's young life he had played around with music. Wherever he was taken, there was always a piano, and he had begun picking at the keys as soon as he was old enough to climb upon a stool. He remembered snatches of everything he heard, and as soon as he got home would lose himself in the task of reproducing them. Now he had discovered a place where he could play music with arms and legs and all the rest of him; where he could stand in front of a mirror and see music with his eyes! He was so excited about it that he could hardly wait to jump into his clothes in the morning before dancing downstairs.

At Hellerau they taught you an alphabet and a grammar of movement. With your arms you kept the time; a set of movements for three-part time, another for four, and so on. With your feet and body you indicated the duration of notes. It was a kind of rhythmic gymnastics, planned to train the body in quick and exact response to mental impressions. When you had mastered the movements for the different tempi, you went on to more complex problems; you would mark three-part time with your feet and four-part time with your arms. You would learn to analyze and reproduce complicated musical structures; expressing the rhythms of a three-part canon by singing one part, acting another with the arms, and a third with the feet.

To Lanny the lovely part about this school was that nobody

thought you were queer because you wanted to dance; everybody understood that music and motion went together. At home people danced, of course, but it was a formal procedure, for which you dressed especially and hired musicians who played a special kind of music, the least interesting, and everybody danced as nearly the same way as possible. If a little boy danced all over the lawn, or through the pine woods, or down on the beach—well, people might think it was "cute," but they wouldn't join him.

Lanny was getting to an age where people would be expecting him to acquire dignity. He couldn't go on capering around, at least not unless he was going to take it up as a career and make money out of it. But here was this school, to provide him with a label and a warrant, so to speak. His mother would say: "There's Lanny, doing his Dalcroze." Lady Eversham-Watson would put up her ivory and gold lorgnette and drawl: "Oh, chawming!" The Baroness de la Tourette would lift her hands with a dozen diamonds and emeralds on them and exclaim: "*Ravissant!*" "Dalcroze" was the rage.

So Lanny worked hard and learned all he could during these precious weeks while his mother was away on the yacht of the gentleman who had invented Bluebird Soap and introduced it into several million American kitchens. Lanny would steal into a room where a group of boys and girls were practicing; nobody objected if a graceful and slender lad fell in and tried the steps. If he had ideas of his own he would go off into a corner and work them out, and nobody would pay any attention, unless he was doing it unusually well. There was dancing all over the place, in bedrooms and through corridors and out on the grounds; everybody was so wrapped up in his work that there would have been no special excitement if Queen Titania and her court had appeared, marking with their fairy feet the swift measures of the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* overture.

## V

Lanny Budd had made two special friendships that summer. Kurt Meissner came from Silesia, where his father was comptroller-general

of a great estate, a responsible and honorable post. Kurt was the youngest of four sons, so he did not have to become a government official or an officer in the army; his wish to conduct and possibly to compose music was respected, and he was learning in the thorough German way all the instruments which he would have to use. He was a year older than Lanny and half a head taller; he had straw-colored hair clipped close, wore pince-nez, and was serious in disposition and formal in manners. If a lady so much as walked by he rose from his chair, and if she smiled he would click his heels and bow from the waist. What he liked about the Dalcroze system was that it *was* a system; something you could analyze and understand thoroughly. Kurt would always obey the rules, and be troubled by Lanny's free and easy American way of changing anything if he thought he could make it better.

The English boy had a complicated name, Eric Vivian Pomeroy-Nielson; but people had made it easy by changing it to Rick. He was going to be a baronet some day, and said it was deuced uncomfortable, being a sort of halfway stage between a gentleman and a member of the nobility. It was Rick's idea of manners never to take anything seriously, or rather never to admit that he did; he dressed casually, made jokes, spoke of "ridin' " and "shootin'," forgot to finish many of his sentences, and had chosen "putrid" as his favorite adjective. He had dark hair with a tendency to curl, which he explained by the remark: "I suppose a Jew left his visiting card on my family." But with all his pose, you would make a mistake about Eric Pomeroy-Nielson if you did not realize that he was learning everything he could about his chosen profession of theater: music, dancing, poetry, acting, elocution, stage decoration, painting—even that art, which he said was his father's claim to greatness, of getting introduced to rich persons and wangling their cash for the support of "little theaters."

Each of these boys had a contribution to make to the others. Kurt knew German music, from Bach to Mahler. Lanny knew a little of everything, from old sarabands to "Alexander's Ragtime Band," a recent "hit" from overseas. As for Rick, he had been to some newfangled arts-and-crafts school and learned a repertoire of old Eng-

lish folk songs and dances. When he sang and the others danced the songs of Purcell, with so many trills and turns, and sometimes a score of notes to a syllable, it became just what the song proclaimed—"sweet Flora's holiday."

All three of these lads had been brought up in contact with older persons and were mature beyond their years. To Americans they would have seemed like little old men. All three were the product of ripe cultures, which took art seriously, using it to replace other forms of adventure. All were planning art careers; their parents were rich enough—not so rich as to be "putrid," but so that they could choose their own activities. All three looked forward to a future in which art would go on expanding like some miraculous flower. New "sensations" would be rumored, and crowds of eager and curious folk would rush from Paris to Munich to Vienna, from Prague to Berlin to London—just as now they had come flocking to the tall white temple on the bright meadow, to learn how children could be taught efficiency of mind and body and prepared for that society of cultivated and gracious aesthetes in which they were expecting to pass their days.

On a wide plain just below Hellerau was an exercise ground of the German army. Here almost every day large bodies of men marched and wheeled, ran and fell down and got up again. Horses galloped, guns and caissons rumbled and were swung about, unlimbered, and pointed at an imaginary foe. The sounds of all this floated up to the tall white temple, and when the wind was right, the dust came also. But the dancers and musicians paid little attention to it. Men had marched and drilled upon the soil of Europe ever since history began; but now there had been forty-two years of peace, and only the old people remembered war. So much progress had been made in science and in international relations that few men could contemplate the possibility of wholesale bloodshed in Europe. The art lovers were not among those few.

## VI

When the summer season at the school was over, Lanny went to join his mother. He had tears in his eyes when he left Hellerau; such a lovely place, the only church in which he had ever worshiped. He told himself that he would never forget it; he promised his teachers to come back, and in the end to become a teacher himself. He promised Rick to see him in England, because his mother went there every "season," and if he tried hard he could persuade her to take him along.

As for Kurt, he was traveling with Lanny to the French Riviera; for the German lad had an aunt who lived there, and he had suggested paying her a visit of a couple of weeks before his school began. He had said nothing to her about an American boy who lived near by, for it was possible that his stiff and formal relative would not approve of such a friend. There were many stratifications among the upper classes of Europe, and these furies had never yielded to the lure of Orpheus and his lute.

Kurt was like an older brother to Lanny, taking charge of the travel arrangements and the tickets, and showing off his country to the visitor. They had to change trains at Leipzig, and had supper in a sidewalk café, ordering cabbage soup and finding that the vegetable had been inhabited before it was cooked. "Better a worm in the cabbage than no meat," said Kurt, quoting the peasants of his country.

Lanny forgot his dismay when they heard a humming sound overhead and saw people looking up. There in the reddish light of the sinking sun was a giant silver fish, gliding slowly and majestically across the sky. A Zeppelin! It was an achievement dreamed of by man for thousands of years, and now at last brought to reality in an age of miracles. German ingenuity had done it, and Kurt talked about it proudly. That very year German airliners had begun speeding from one city to another, and soon they promised air traffic across all the seas. No end to the triumphs of invention, the spread of science and culture in the great capitals of Europe!