

# MAESTRO ORPHEUS AND THE WORLD CLOCK



CREATED BY JOANNE GRODZINSKI AND ROBERT PENNEE  
WRITTEN BY ROBERT PENNEE

**MAESTRO  
ORPHEUS  
AND THE  
WORLD CLOCK**

Written and Illustrated by

**ROBERT PENNEE**

Copyright © 2022 Maestro Orpheus Productions

All rights reserved.

ISBN: 9798425808370

## INTRODUCTION

In this dream-like tale, Fred is visiting his grandfather when time suddenly stops. Setting out to discover why, Fred meets Maestro Orpheus and his magical lyre. Together they begin a musical adventure along The Corridor of Time, on their way to wind The World Clock.

Drawing on a broad range of classical music, by composers from Bach and Haydn to Chopin and Strauss, Maestro Orpheus and The World Clock explores the intimate relationship between time, memory and music in a way that is intended to delight and fill with wonder.

The text in this book, without the benefit of the music or sound effects in the audiobook version of the story, has been adapted for the benefit of the reading experience.



# CONTENTS

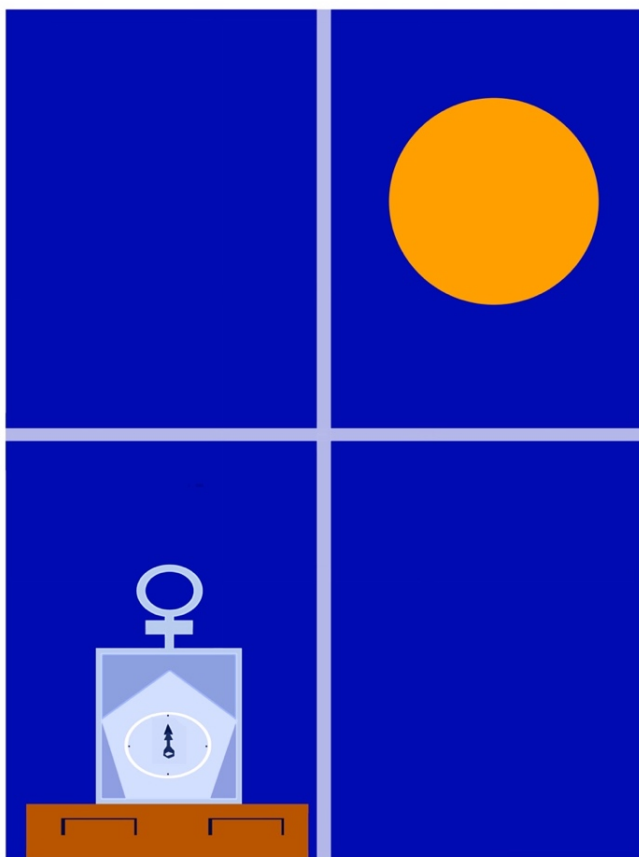
## INTRODUCTION

1	CHAPTER ONE. - MIDNIGHT	Page 1
2	CHAPTER TWO – MEETING MAESTRO ORPHEUS	Page 8
3	CHAPTER THREE – THE CORRIDOR OF TIME	Page 14
4	CHAPTER FOUR – THE TRUTHFUL LYRE	Page 18
5	CHAPTER FIVE – HUNDREDS OF DOORS	Page 22
6	CHAPTER SIX – UNDER THE STAIRS	Page 27
7	CHAPTER SEVEN – THE RUSHING SECONDS	Page 36
8	CHAPTER EIGHT – HAT AND CANE	Page 40
9	CHAPTER NINE – THE DOOR TO A TIMELESS WORLD	Page 49
10	CHAPTER 10 – LISTEN TO THE NIGHT	Page 57
11	CHAPTER ELEVEN - THE DOOR TO THE END OF TIME	Page 65
12	CHAPTER TWELVE – GOOD NIGHT, GRNADFATHER	Page 71
13	CHAPTER THIRTEEN – HOLDING ON TO TIME	Page 79
14	CHAPTER FOURTEEN – THE WORLD CLOCK	Page 85
15	CHAPTER FIFTEEN - MORNING	Page 89
16	ABOUT THE AUTHOR	Page 93



# CHAPTER ONE

## MIDNIGHT

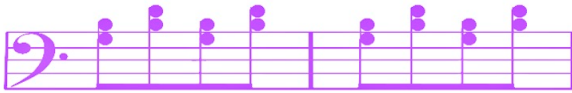


THE HANDS OF THE CLOCK



It started because Frederick couldn't sleep.

He lay in bed, staring at the ceiling, while a simple tune kept repeating, over and over in his head, like the ticking of an old-fashioned clock.



It was the same thing that happened whenever he visited his grandfather.

Frederick was staying with his grandfather for the weekend, which was something he hated to do.

“Do I have to go,” he had asked his parents when they said they were going away for a few days.

He used to love to go to his grandfather's house, but now that he was ten years old, he suddenly decided that he didn't want to go there anymore.

“All he has,” Frederick said, “are a bunch of old clocks. Everything is old there... especially him.”

Frederick's grandfather was a retired clockmaker. He kept a shed in back of his house where he still repaired old broken clocks, for people in the neighbourhood.

Frederick was not impressed.

“Who needs old clocks anyway? All they do is tell the time. And time isn't good for anything...”

But all his complaining was for nothing.

Frederick had to go to his grandfather's house, which is how he ended up in the big old bed in the guest room, lying on his back, staring at the ceiling, unable to sleep.

The moon was shining into his room and by its light he could read the hands of the old clock on the night-table.

It was almost twelve o'clock.

His head dropped back on the pillow and he let out a big sigh.

“I'm never going to get to sleep. I'm going to lie here forever, listening to an old clock... tick-tock, tick, tock...”

No sooner had he said this than the clock in the hallway began to chime. BONG.

“Oh great,” he thought, “more clock sounds.”

He started to count the number of chimes.

BONG.

“... two ...

BONNG.

“...threeee...

BONNNG.

“...fourrrrrrrr...

BONNNNNGGGG...

“ffiiiiiiii...ve....

BONNNNNNNGGGGGGGG

...siiiiXXXXXXXXXXXXX..

..... ?

The chiming had stopped.

Frederick rolled his eyes and shook his head.

“They really are old clocks. They don’t even work.”

Frederick was right. The clock which should have chimed twelve times had chimed only six times. Frederick looked at the ceiling, looked at the walls, he even looked at his toes wriggling under the bed covers, but when he

looked again at the clock on the night-table, it still said twelve o'clock.

"That's very strange," Fred thought to himself. "The clock has stopped... right at midnight! I wonder what time it really is?"

He stood up and looked out the window.

He'd never been awake this late before and everything seemed different somehow. He went to the door of his room, opened it and listened.

The house was very quiet.

He stepped into the hallway.

The grandfather clock at the top of the stairs had stopped right at midnight as well.

"I wonder," Frederick whispered, "if all of the clocks have stopped?"

In fact, it seemed to Frederick as if everything in the world had stopped.

He held his breath to listen. But he couldn't hear a sound.

Very slowly, he continued down the hall.

"Hello?"

He took another step.

"Grandfather?"

He was a bit nervous when he called out again, a bit louder “Grandfather?” Then more nervous, but softly, “Are you awake?”

From a window on the landing, he could see that there was a light on in the shed.

“Grandfather must be out there, working on his silly old clocks.”

He ran back to his room to put on his slippers and robe. Before leaving, he picked up the clock from his night-table. It was a carriage-clock. (Frederick’s grandfather had told him that it was called this because it had a handle on it and you could carry it, just like a lantern.)

“And I am going to carry it,” Frederick now said aloud, “I’m going to carry it and show Grandfather that it’s broken.”

He thought this would prove to his grandfather just how silly old clocks really were.

With the clock held tightly in one hand, he went down the stairs and out the back door.

He looked over to the shed... then up at the enormous sky, which was black and full of stars.

Everything was perfectly still. No wind. No sounds. Not even a whisper.

He started towards the shed.

He stopped twice to listen. But still, not a sound.

“Grandfather?”

He was standing right outside the shed and he placed his ear against the door to listen.

“Grandfather? Are you in there?”

## CHAPTER TWO

### MEETING MAESTRO ORPHEUS

Frederick knocked on the door of the shed and called out, “Grandfather... it’s me... it’s Frederick!”

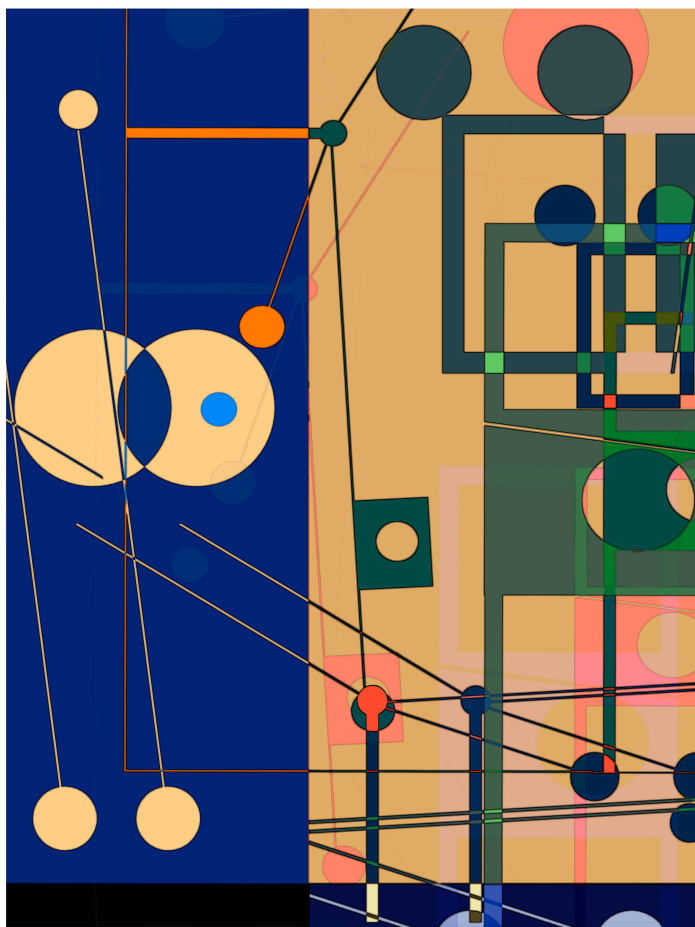
There was no answer.

He pushed open the door and was about to step inside when..

CUCKOO

A clock... yes, a cuckoo clock. But that wasn’t all.

Frederick nearly jumped out of his skin.



## HIS GRANDFATHER'S SHED

There were clocks and clocks, and then...  
there were *more clocks*. On tables and benches, on  
shelves and in cupboards, stuffed into corners



and piled on the floor. Big clocks and small clocks, round ones and square ones, all whirring and wheezing, some ticking, some tocking, but not one of them said the right time.

There was quarter past six, and half past eleven, nine thirty-eight, four minutes to seven...

As if all the clocks weren't enough to take Frederick's breath away, from between two long rows there stepped an old man.

He had a white beard and sad grey eyes. An old apron hung around his neck. His hands were like old, gnarled wood and he was holding a pair of long, thin calipers.

He was walking with his head down, and didn't notice Frederick until he had almost collided with him.

"Oh, um, my... my goodness... a young boy. I didn't hear you come in."

"No wonder," said Frederick, "with all the noise that these old clocks are making."

The old man reached into his apron pocket and pulled out a pair of thin wire glasses,

placed them on his nose and peered closely at Frederick.

“Clocks,” he now said, “yes, there certainly are a lot of them. And I see that you’re carrying one of them yourself -- a carriage clock. How nice. But *bold on...*” He leaned forward and looked closer. “This clock appears to have stopped. Is it broken? Have you’ve brought it to me to be repaired?”

“No. I came here to show my grandfather and... *hey... wait a minute*, who are you anyway? And what are you doing in grandfather’s shed? And where is my grandfather?”

“Well, to answer your first question... my name is Orpheus.”

“Or fee-us?”

“Maestro Orpheus. If you don’t mind? I know it’s silly, but I’m very fond of being called Maestro.”

“I’ll call you any name that you want,” Frederick said, “as long as you tell me what you’re doing here.”

Maestro Orpheus pushed his glasses further back on his nose, looked Frederick in the eye and said, “Well, before I answer that, since it’s almost certain to be a very long explanation, suppose you tell me *your* name first.”

As if he was about to explode, Frederick suddenly said in one burst, “I’m Frederick and I’m staying at my grandfather’s house and here repairs broken old clocks and this is my grandfather’s shed and...”

“WHOA, slow down, not so fast,” said Maestro Orpheus. “*Not --- so ---- fast.* I have old ears, and they’re not as quick as they used to be. So, you say your name is Frederick...”

“Yes. And I’m staying at my grandfather’s house...”

“*Yes, I heard that.* And that this is his shed. And I think I even heard you say that your name is *Frederick*. Would you mind very much if I call you Fred?”

“No. I guess not. Just don’t call me Freddy.”

“No,” said Orpheus, “I can see that you’re not a Freddy. No. You’re definitely a Fred! Well, *Fred*, you’re up awfully late aren’t you?”

“That’s because I couldn’t sleep. And no wonder. This clock kept going tick tock, tick tock... and then the clock in the hall started to chime midnight...”

“Did you say midnight? Is it really? Oh dear... Listen, Fred, I have some very important work to do. But I’d be delighted to have some company. If you don’t mind talking to me while I work.”

“Not more broken old clocks.” Fred looked around at all the shelves. “That’s all there is in here.” He pointed to an alarm clock that hadn’t any hands. “Who needs old clocks anyway?”

“*Who needs them?*” said Orpheus. “You must be joking!” He muttered to himself, “Clocks not needed. Imagine! Oh dear. A young man who thinks we don’t really need clocks.”

## CHAPTER THREE

### THE CORRIDOR OF TIME

Even as he mumbled and sputtered, Orpheus started walking toward the back of the shed, and Fred slowly followed him.

“Do you like music, Fred?”

“Sure. Who doesn’t?”

“Well,” said Orpheus, suddenly stopping in his tracks, “if you like music, then I think you *have* to like clocks.”

Fred nearly stepped on Orpheus’ heels.

“Clocks don’t have anything to do with music!” (Fred said this as if he was very certain of his facts.)

“Oh they don’t, do they?” said Orpheus. “If they didn’t, I’d soon be out of work. You see, Fred, it’s my job to make sure time keeps going.”

“You mean, you fix old clocks. Like my grandfather.”

Orpheus stood before a bench with a large golden key on it. He picked up the key and placed it in his apron pocket.

“Yes,” he said in a deep slow voice, “I suppose you could say I fix old clocks. You see...” his voice rose higher and he seemed very proud, as he said, “I’m the one responsible for winding *The World Clock*.”

“World Clock? What’s *The World Clock*?”

But Orpheus had already stepped into the shadows. And when he didn’t get an answer, Fred started following him, heading toward the back of the shed, which to his surprise now seemed like it went on forever.

“Maestro Orpheus?”

From the far end of what seemed like a very long tunnel, Fred heard Orpheus calling to him

“Are you coming. Fred?”

With a small shrug, and trying to put on his bravest face, Fred followed Maestro Orpheus into the darkness.

“Hurry, Fred,” Orpheus called to him, “This way...”

“I’m right behind you, Maestro Orpheus... at least, I think I am. But it’s awfully dark in here. I can’t see a thing.”

“You will, Fred. You will.”

They hadn’t gone very far when they turned a corner and came to a small alcove. A lamp was hanging on the wall. In the center of the room was a glass table, and on the table was a musical instrument.

Fred had never seen anything quite like it before. It looked like a harp, but the smallest and strangest looking harp he’d ever seen. But Maestro Orpheus wasn’t paying any attention to Fred nor to the thing that looked like a harp. He scuttled about the room, with his hands waving in the air.

“We have to stop here,” he said, speaking

more to himself than to Fred, “but only for a minute. And we’ll need to take this lamp with us, because the corridor is very dark. And we’ll have to remember the key...” he tapped the side of his apron, “yes, I’ve got it right here in my pocket...”



## CHAPTER FOUR

### THE TRUTHFUL LYRE

“Maestro Orpheus?”

“Yes, Fred, what is it?”

Fred pointed to the instrument on the table.

“Is this *your* harp?”

“Harp,” asked Orpheus, “what harp?”

*Zing zing zrr-ing*

Fred hadn't laid a finger on the strings of the instrument. They had started to vibrate all by themselves.

“Oh,” said Orpheus, “you mean the lyre,”

“But.... but ... but... it's talking...”

“Of course, she's talking. You hurt her feelings, Fred. You called her a harp.”



stood shaking his head. Finally, Orpheus explained, “A lyre is a very old musical instrument, Fred, in fact it’s one of the oldest. The first lyre was made almost 5000 years ago. Because of its great age, it occupies a very special place in the hearts of all musicians. Here, I’ll show you how to play it.”

Orpheus lifted the lyre and held it cradled in his left arm, and then gently stroked the strings with his left hand.



“That’s beautiful,” Fred said.

“Well then here,” Orpheus said, as he held the lyre out to Fred, “how would you like to try it?”

“Can I? Really?”

Fred was about to put the carriage clock down on the glass table when Maestro Orpheus noticed the time.

“O, my goodness! Look. It’s midnight. We have to hurry....”

“But.... but... what difference does it make?” Fred said. “All the clocks have stopped.”

“No time to talk. We’ve got to go. I’ve never been this late before.”

## CHAPTER FIVE

### HUNDREDS OF DOORS

Orpheus slung the lyre over his shoulder. He took the lamp from off the wall and started down the corridor.

“But... but...” Fred called out, “Maestro Orpheus...”

“Hurry up, Fred.”

Still holding the carriage clock, Fred ran to catch up to Orpheus and the lyre.

“I don’t understand,” he said, when he was once again by their side, “it’s been midnight for a long time now. All the clocks have stopped. What’s the big rush?”

Orpheus sighed.

“Oh Fred, if I don’t wind The World Clock, all the other clocks in the world will stay stopped forever.”

“Okay. So? What’s wrong with that?”

Orpheus was in a hurry, but he slammed on the brakes when he heard what Fred asked.

“You must be joking. Fred, you seem like a very clever young man. But that really is the silliest thing I’ve ever heard.”

“No, it’s not. Clocks aren’t good for anything,” he said, “except telling time. And who needs time anyway!”

Orpheus looked down, slowly shaking his head.

“Ah. I see. And I suppose you think the world would be the same if there were no more clocks... and no more time?”

“No,” said Fred, “I know it’d be different. It’d be better.”

“You think so, do you?”

“Sure. For one thing, you wouldn’t have to get up early in the morning, because it would never be *time for school*. And if you were visiting a friend, you could stay as long as you wanted, because it would never be *time to go*. And at night, you could stay up as late as you wanted, because it would never be *time for bed*. But best of all, no one would ever get old.”

“Oh Fred, you can’t really mean that.”

*Zing. Zing. Zin-zing, zin-zing!*

“Yes, Lyre. That’s exactly what I was planning to tell him. Fred, if there were no such thing as time, nothing would happen. Everything would stay just as it is.”

“I know,” Fred said. “that’s what so good about it.”

“Fred, without time, there would be no movement. There would be no before and after. No sooner-or-later. No now-and-then. There would be no *once upon a time*. No forever and ever.

“There would be nothing to remember, because there would be no yesterdays. And nothing to look forward to, because there would be no tomorrows. But most important of all, Fred... there would be no music.”

“No music?”

“That’s right. *No music!*”

“I don’t understand...”

But Maestro Orpheus was already, once again, hurrying down the long winding corridor.

Fred ran to keep up. As he ran, he kept looking from one side to the other.

On either side of the corridor, for as far as the eye could see, there were marvellous, ornate doors. Each one was tall and made of dark rosewood, and each of them had a golden doorknob. Above each door, something was carved into the wall. But Maestro Orpheus was walking so quickly that Fred didn't have time to read what was written there.

They had passed hundreds and hundreds of doors before they finally stopped so that Orpheus could catch his breath.

“Maestro Orpheus....”

“Yes, Fred?”

“Where are we?”

“Of course, what was I thinking? You've never been here before. You couldn't possibly know where we are. Well Fred.... this is 'The Corridor of Time.'”

Fred never even knew that such a place existed, and he repeated the words slowly, “*The Corridor-door of Time.*”

Then he turned and looked back along the



winding route they had come.

“But what are all these doors? And what’s behind them?”

*Zing...*

“No, Lyre, don’t tell him. Let him see for himself. Here, Fred... take a close look. What do you think they are?”



THE CORRIDOR OF TIME

## CHAPTER SIX

### UNDER THE STAIRS

Maestro Orpheus held up the light so that Fred could see what was written above the door nearest to where they were standing.

Fred stepped closer, looked up.

“It says... no, wait... it’s not a word... they’re numbers.” He could barely make them out.

“Maestro Orpheus, could you please hold the lamp closer? There. That’s better... I can see them... there’s a 1 and a 6...an 8...and a 5.” He paused, then he said, “One thousand, six hundred and eighty-five.”

He was about to ask him what the number was for, when it suddenly occurred to him...

“Is that the address?”

“In a way... I suppose you could say, it’s *the address*. Would you like to open the door and see what’s behind it?”

Fred nodded yes. He wanted to see, but he

reached out very slowly, as if he thought a jack-in-the-box might spring out when he opened the door.

With his left hand he lightly touched Maestro Orpheus's hand (that was for support, in case something weird happened) while with his right hand he took hold of the golden doorknob.

He turned the knob slowly. And slowly... very slowly... the door opened with a creak.

But nothing sprang out.

Instead, there, behind the door, on a small wooden shelf, was a silver clock, with silver hands, and silver feet, and the face of a silver angel.

“Is this your clock, Maestro Orpheus? Is this The World Clock?”

“No,” said Orpheus, “this clock belonged to someone named Johann Sebastian Bach.”

“Who was he?”

“He was a composer. Of music. Wonderful music. Johann was born hundreds of years ago. Remember the numbers above the door, the ones you thought might be an address? 1685 was the year of his birth. And in the same way that an address lets you know where someone lives in a city or a

town, the date lets you know where they lived in time.

“And look there. Do you see that key?”

Maestro Orpheus pointed to a small key which was on the shelf beside the clock.

“Is that to wind it?”

“Go ahead, Fred... you’ll find out.”

Fred picked up the key, and very gently, to be sure it wouldn’t break, he placed the key into one of the small holes in the clock and slowly started to turn it.

No sooner had Fred finished turning the key than the face of the clock lit up, its hands began to move, and the clock *began to speak*.

THE STORY YOU ARE ABOUT TO  
HEAR HAPPENED A LONG TIME  
AGO, WHEN JOHANN SEBASTIAN  
BACH WAS TEN YEARS OLD.

Fred tapped Orpheus on the arm.

“That’s how old I am.”

“Is that so? In that case, we’d better listen very carefully...”

JOHANN SEBASTIAN'S PARENTS HAD DIED AND HE HAD GONE TO LIVE WITH HIS OLDER BROTHER. EVEN THOUGH HIS BROTHER TREATED HIM KINDLY, JOHANN WAS VERY SAD AND VERY LONELY. HE HAD NO ONE TO PLAY WITH AND TO PLAY BY HIMSELF SEEMED LIKE SUCH A WASTE OF TIME.

Fred didn't think he could tap Orpheus on the arm again, so this time he tugged on his sleeve.

“Maestro Orpheus?” he whispered.

“Yes, Fred?”

“I think I can hear music. It sounds like someone is playing a piano. But far, far away.”

“Yes, Fred, the music is coming from inside the clock, just like the voice is... now ssshhhh.”

ONE DAY JOHANN'S GRANDFATHER WAS COMING TO VISIT. BUT INSTEAD OF LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, JOHANN WAS FRIGHTENED AND RAN TO HIDE IN THE CLOSET

UNDER THE STAIRCASE. IT WAS DARK BUT JOHANN FELT SAFE THERE.

WITH HIS EAR AGAINST THE CLOSET DOOR, JOHANN COULD HEAR HIS GRANDFATHER'S ARRIVAL. HE PEERED OUT AND SAW A TALL, GREY-HAIRED MAN WITH LONG ROBES AND A CANE AND HE DUCKED BACK INTO THE CLOSET WITH HIS KNEES DRAWN UP TO HIS CHEST AND HIS HANDS CLUTCHED TIGHTLY TOGETHER.

HE SAID TO HIMSELF, "I'M NEVER LEAVING THE CLOSET AGAIN. EVER." THE WORDS WERE HARDLY OUT OF HIS MOUTH WHEN HE HEARD A VOICE BEGIN TO CALL HIS NAME. "JOHANN SEBASTIAN... WHERE ARE YOU?"

BUT JOHANN DIDN'T ANSWER.

HE HEARD HIS GRANDFATHER SAY, "PERHAPS THE BOY IS UNDER THE STAIRCASE."

STILL, JOHANN DIDN'T SAY A WORD.

EVEN WHEN HIS GRANDFATHER KNOCKED ON THE CLOSET DOOR, JOHANN HELD HIS BREATH AND GRIPPED THE KNOB TIGHTLY WITH BOTH HANDS SO THAT NO ONE COULD OPEN IT. BUT HIS GRANDFATHER DIDN'T EVEN TRY. INSTEAD, HE CALLED OUT, "JOHANN SEBASTIAN, I'VE BROUGHT SOME FRIENDS FOR YOU TO PLAY WITH . . . SOME VERY SPECIAL FRIENDS."

JOHANN THOUGHT THIS MUST BE A TRICK BECAUSE HE COULDN'T HEAR ANY CHILDREN'S VOICES. BUT HIS GRANDFATHER SAID, "THEY'RE WAITING HERE FOR YOU. I'VE TOLD THEM THAT THEY MUST KEEP PERFECTLY QUIET UNTIL YOU DECIDE TO PLAY WITH THEM."

THEN JOHANN HEARD THE SLOW

SHUFFLE OF HIS GRANDFATHER'S  
FOOTSTEPS AS HE MOVED AWAY  
FROM THE CLOSET DOOR, AND  
HE HEARD HIM SAY VERY  
QUIETLY, "PERHAPS HE ISN'T IN  
THE CLOSET-UNDER-THE-STAIRS  
AFTER ALL."

AS SOON AS HE THOUGHT IT WAS  
SAFE, JOHANN OPENED THE  
DOOR. HE PEERED OUT. THERE,  
ON THE HALL TABLE, WAS A  
VIOLIN, A CELLO, AN OBOE . . .  
AND *A CLOCK*.

JOHANN COULD BARELY  
BELIEVE HIS EYES. HE FORGOT  
ALL ABOUT HIDING IN THE  
CLOSET AND RAN TO THE TABLE.  
HIS GRANDFATHER WAS SITTING  
ON THE STAIRS, WITH HIS CHIN  
RESTING ON THE HANDLE OF  
HIS CANE. "SO, JOHANN  
SEBASTIAN," HE SAID, "DO YOU  
LIKE THE FRIENDS I'VE  
BROUGHT FOR YOU TO PLAY  
WITH?"

"OH YES," SAID JOHANN, AS HE



TOUCHED EACH INSTRUMENT IN  
TURN – THE VIOLIN, THE CELLO,  
AND THE OBOE. “BUT,  
GRANDFATHER, WHY A CLOCK?”

“WELL,” SAID HIS GRANDFATHER  
WITH A SMILE, “TO HELP YOU  
KEEP TIME, OF COURSE. TO HELP  
YOU KEEP TIME.”

The voice stopped and the sound of the piano  
slowly faded.

“Is that the whole story?” Fred asked.

Orpheus nodded, “I think it might be. But  
there is another key. Why not try it?”

Fred did and this time, though the hands  
began to move and the face of clock again lit up, no  
voice began to speak... but there was the sound of a  
piano. And it was playing the same piece of music.

After a moment, Orpheus asked, “Well, Fred,  
what do you think?”

“It reminds me...”

“Yes.”

“Well... the music sounds like the story of Johann and his grandfather... just without any words.”

“Now that is very interesting,” Orpheus started to say when...

*Zing. Zing.*

“I’m afraid Lyre is right, Fred. We have to be going. Are you ready?”

## CHAPTER SEVEN

### THE RUSHING SECONDS

Maestro Orpheus closed the door to 1685 and was about to start down the corridor when Fred gave yet another tug on his sleeve.

“Are there clocks behind all these other doors too?”

Fred pointed to the nearest doors and then back along the length of the corridor.

“There are indeed,” Orpheus said. “All the different doors that you see open on to different clocks, each clock from a different year, going back to The Beginning of Time.”

Fred’s jaw dropped and his eyes opened wide with amazement. It suddenly seemed like there was *so much time*.

“And I’ll tell you something else.” Maestro Orpheus leaned closer as if he was about

to tell Fred a secret. “Each of the clocks, behind each of the doors, belonged to a different composer. To a composer who was born on the date that you see above the door. Would you like to try another one, Fred?”

“Another door! Can I?”

“Yes, you can. In fact, I think it would be a very good idea.”

Fred was about to choose a door, which was not an easy thing to do, because there were so many doors, and they all looked more or less the same, but each one contained a different story, when suddenly...

“What was that?”

Fred was certain he had felt something rush by.

“Here, Fred,” said Orpheus, “you better stand against the wall, if you don’t want to be run over.”

“Run over?”

The words were hardly out of Fred’s

mouth when there was a fluster, a commotion,  
and a great rush of wind.

“What is it, Maestro Orpheus?”

“It’s the seconds rushing by...”

Sure enough. It was the seconds. And  
they were racing past so quickly that Fred  
couldn’t possibly count them all.



IT WAS THE SECONDS RUSHING BY

“They’ve been clocked,” Orpheus said, “at a speed of thirty-six hundred seconds an hour.” He let out a big sigh. “I feel older just watching them. But we’d better hurry before they get away.”

*Zing...*

“You’re right, Lyre. We’ll have to make up for lost time. Come on, Fred. And *presto...*”

“But Maestro Orpheus, you said I could try another door.”

“Another door. Ah, yes. I’d completely forgotten! Imagine! Rushing off, without giving you a chance to see behind another door.”

Even as he said this, Maestro Orpheus gazed down the corridor, watching as the seconds vanished in the distance, and he whispered to the lyre, “There goes a few minutes we will never see again.”

## CHAPTER EIGHT

### HAT AND CANE

Meanwhile, Fred had chosen one of the doors.

“How about this one, Maestro Orpheus... 1732.”

“1732?” said Orpheus, as glanced over his shoulder “An excellent choice. It’s a favorite of mine. Go on, Fred. Go ahead. You can open the door.”

Fred expected to see another clock set upon a shelf. But instead, there was a tall clock, much taller than he was... a grandfather clock. With a long thin door beneath the face and attached by a tassel to the knob of the door was a key.

“The key you see there,” Maestro Orpheus explained, “will open the door of the clock. Go

ahead.”

Fred’s hand was shaking slightly as he opened the long thin door.

There behind it, was a golden pendulum.

“This,” said Orpheus, as he reached over Fred’s shoulder and pointed to the pendulum, “is the heart of a clock.”

Maestro Orpheus then very gently touched the pendulum, so that it started to swing from side to side.

TICK. TOCK. TICK. TOCK.

“And this, Fred. This... is its heartbeat.”

“When you wind a clock, its heart starts beating. And the clock starts to work. But if something gets in the way of the heart...” Orpheus reached in with his hand and prevented the pendulum from swinging, “well then, as you can see, the clock stops. And you know what happens when a clock stops, don’t you?”

Fred wasn’t a hundred percent sure that he knew the right answer. But he remembered the



conversation about now-and-then and no yesterdays, and so he said, as if guessing, “No music.”

“That’s right,” Orpheus said. “When the heart stops, the clock stops; when the clock stops, the music stops.”

Fred thought for a minute, and it seemed to him that this meant that when the heart stops, the music stops.

But before he had a chance to ask if this was true, Orpheus said, “I see there’s another key. Let’s give that one a try.”

Once again, the face of the clock lit up, the hands began to move and the clock began to speak.

THE STORY YOU ARE ABOUT TO  
HEAR HAPPENED A LONG TIME  
AGO, WHEN FRANZ JOSEF  
HAYDN WAS TEN YEARS OLD.

“Just like in the last story,” Fred whispered.

“And did you know,” Orpheus whispered

back, “that Franz Josef Haydn was born on the same day of the year as Johann Sebastian Bach...

“Maestro Orpheus – the story!”

ONE DAY, FRANZ JOSEF’S GRANDFATHER WAS VISITING HIS HOUSE. NOW FRANZ JOSEF LIKED HIS GRANDFATHER VERY MUCH AND HE NEVER WANTED HIS VISITS TO END. HE ALWAYS WANTED HIM TO STAY AND TELL ONE MORE STORY.

In the background, Fred could hear the faint sounds of a piano. A different piece of music was playing this time. But once again, it seemed to be part of the story.

NOW, ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY, HIS GRANDFATHER DID JUST AS HE ALWAYS DID – HE LOOKED AT THE TALL, STATELY GRANDFATHER CLOCK, SAID IN HIS DEEPEST VOICE, “MY GOODNESS, IS IT ALREADY FIVE

O'CLOCK", STOOD UP WITH A STRETCH, AND ASKED FOR HIS HAT AND CANE. BUT ON THIS PARTICULAR DAY, NO ONE COULD FIND HIS HAT AND CANE. "WHERE COULD THEY HAVE GOTTEN TO?" JOSEF'S GRANDFATHER ASKED. "IT'S NOT LIKE A HAT AND CANE TO WALK OFF BY THEMSELVES."

BUT NO ONE HAD THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHERE THE HAT AND CANE WERE.

FRANZ JOSEF'S MOTHER AND FATHER RAN UPSTAIRS AND DOWN, LOOKING IN EVERY ROOM, IN THE CLOSETS AND UNDER THE STAIRS. IN THE CELLAR AND ON THE ROOF. THEY WENT INTO THE BACKYARD AND ONTO THE FRONT PORCH. THEY EVEN LOOKED IN THE FRIDGE AND THE OVEN. BUT THERE WAS NO

SIGN OF THE HAT AND CANE.

HIS GRANDFATHER TURNED TO FRANZ JOSEF WHO WAS SITTING VERY QUIETLY ON A CHAIR BESIDE THE GRANDFATHER CLOCK AND SAID TO HIM, “I DON’T SUPPOSE YOU’VE SEEN THEM, HAVE YOU?” BUT FRANZ JOSEF SHOOK HIS HEAD. “NO, GRANDFATHER, I CAN’T IMAGINE WHERE THEY ARE.” HIS GRANDFATHER STOOD IN THE MIDDLE OF THE ROOM, SCRATCHING HIS HEAD. “WHERE COULD THEY BE? IT’S GETTING LATE...”

HE TURNED TO THE CLOCK AND SAW THAT IT STILL SAID FIVE O’CLOCK. “MY GOODNESS,” SAID HIS GRANDFATHER, “IT LOOKS LIKE TIME HAS COME TO A COMPLETE STANDSTILL. HOW VERY ODD! I WONDER IF THERE’S SOMETHING WRONG

WITH THE CLOCK'S HEART." HE  
TURNED TO FRANZ JOSEF.  
"SHALL WE HAVE A LOOK?"

HE CROSSED THE ROOM AND  
OPENED THE DOOR INTO THE  
CLOCK AND THERE INSIDE,  
PRESSED AGAINST THE  
PENDULUM WAS THE HAT AND  
CANE. HE TURNED ONCE AGAIN  
TO FRANZ JOSEF, "I WONDER  
HOW THEY GOT IN THERE," HE  
SAID, WITH HIS EYEBROWS  
RAISED.

BUT BEFORE FRANZ JOSEF  
COULD ANSWER, HIS PARENTS  
CAME RUSHING INTO THE ROOM.  
"WE STILL CAN'T FIND YOUR HAT  
AND CANE," THEY SAID.

FRANZ JOSEF'S GRANDFATHER  
QUICKLY CLOSED THE DOOR TO  
THE CLOCK. "NEITHER CAN I,"  
HE SAID,

THEN HE TURNED TO FRANZ

JOSEF, “MY GOODNESS,  
GRANDSON... IT IS STILL ONLY  
FIVE O’CLOCK. SINCE IT  
DOESN’T SEEM TO BE GETTING  
ANY LATER, PERHAPS I COULD  
STAY A LITTLE LONGER. AT  
LEAST ENOUGH TIME FOR ONE  
MORE STORY.”

The clock had hardly finished speaking,  
when Fred reached up and turned another key.

“I want to hear the music again.” His  
eyes, as he said this, were beaming. “Listen,  
Maestro Orpheus, listen... this is the part when  
Franz Josef’s grandfather can’t find his hat and  
cane.” He listened a moment longer and when  
he heard a run of notes, he said, “And this is  
when his parents went to look in the cellar and  
on the roof....”

*Zing. Zing.*

“Quite right, Lyre... quite right! Okay,  
Fred,” said Orpheus, “it’s time to be off.”

He was just about to shut the door of the year 1732, when Fred reached out his hand and very, very lightly, touched the golden pendulum.

Then Maestro Orpheus closed the door, and the two of them set off down the corridor again.

## CHAPTER NINE

### THE DOOR TO A TIMELESS WORLD

They hadn't gone very far when Fred spotted a door that looked very different from all the others.

“What about this door, Maestro Orpheus? It doesn't have a date on it? What story is behind this one?”

“Ah, that door! That's a door with a different kind of story.”

“You mean, there isn't a clock behind it.”

“No, Fred. There are no clocks in there. That's The Door to a Timeless World.”

Under his breath, so that neither Orpheus nor the lyre could hear, Fred said, “A timeless world! That sounds too good to be true.” Then, in a louder voice, he asked, “But can't we go in?”

“Go in? You must be joking. You can't go inside, Fred. Though I suppose it wouldn't



hurt to open the door. Just to look...”

Fred was so eager that he didn't wait for Maestro Orpheus to finish what he was going to say. He ran to the door and tugged at the handle. Just as the door was starting to open, Fred was sure that he could hear music. But this music wasn't like any music he'd ever heard before and the strangest thing was that it didn't seem to be coming from the other side of the door. It seemed to be coming *out of nowhere*.

And that wasn't all that was strange.

Although Fred had been told that there were no clocks here, he still expected to see a flat wall with a shelf. But instead, on the other side of this door, was a huge long room with a very high ceiling, so high it seemed to reach up to the clouds. The room was lined, from one end to the other, with glass cases, the kind that are found in a museum or aquarium. But there weren't fossils or fish inside. Inside these cases were musical instruments.

Everything about the room looked so inviting that Fred stepped across the threshold...

“Wait, Fred,” Orpheus called, “don’t go...”

The warning came too late. Fred had already begun to feel strange.

*“What’s happening to me, Maestro Orpheus?”*

There wasn’t a moment to lose. Maestro Orpheus ran to the door, quickly reached out his arms and, with a single, strong tug, pulled Fred back into the corridor.

“Maestro Orpheus,” Fred said, when he began to feel more like himself again, “what is that place? Why did I feel so strange? And the music? I was sure I could hear music, but it stopped the minute...”

He couldn’t finish his sentence. The sensation had been so unusual, he couldn’t find the right words to describe it. It was as if there had been music in the air, but when he stepped through the door, all the air had been sucked out of the world and taken the music away with it.

But Maestro Orpheus didn’t need to hear Fred describe what had happened. He already knew.

“I told you, Fred... it’s A Timeless World. And there’s no music in a timeless world. None at all. Not a single note. You can’t even hear a pin drop.”

“But it looked so peaceful...”

*Zing! Zing! Zing!*

“An excellent idea, Lyre. I should tell him your story.”

“What story is that?” Fred asked.

“Well,” said Orpheus, “this is a story that happened a long time ago...”

“Then it’s just like the clock stories.”

“Yes, it is *a bit* like them, because, like them, it happened a long time ago. But this story took place *a lot* longer ago. It happened like this: One day, while the lyre and I were travelling along The Corridor of Time, we came to a door we had never seen before. Because we were curious, we opened it, and there, inside, was a roomful of musical instruments.”

“It was The Timeless World,” said Fred.

“It certainly was. But we didn’t know that – not then. We saw the glass cases full of musical instruments and to us it seemed like a magical toyshop, full of wonderful things to play with. The lyre was especially excited, because she’d never seen so many of her relatives before... all in one place... and they looked as if they were just waiting for her to join them.

“We went inside. But the minute we crossed the threshold, the lyre lost her voice.”

“Lost her voice?”

“Yes, Fred.

*Zick, zick, zick.*

“Yes I know, Lyre... I thought it was terrible too.

“Well, Fred, I assumed she must have lost her voice somewhere inside the room. So, I started to look for it. But I couldn’t find it anywhere. I can tell you, it’s not easy trying to

find a small voice in such a big room.

“I thought the other instruments might know what had happened to the lyre’s voice, but when I tried them, they didn’t have voices either.



THE TIMELESS WORLD LOOKED SO PEACEFUL

“I kept looking further and further inside the room, but then a strange thing happened. I started to lose all sense of time. I didn’t know whether it was day or night. I didn’t know whether it was yesterday, today or tomorrow. I didn’t even know if six o’clock was bigger than five...”

“How did you find the lyre’s voice? And how did you get out of The Timeless World?” Fred couldn’t imagine how Orpheus had escaped if there wasn’t someone to help pull him out.

“Patience, Fred. I’m getting to that. But first...

“In one of the glass cases, I found a golden key. This key, in fact – the one I have here in my apron pocket. There was a note beside the key. It read,

**I AM THE KEY TO THE  
WORLD CLOCK. WHOEVER  
AGREES TO WIND THE WORLD  
CLOCK, WILL ALWAYS HAVE  
TIME ON HIS HANDS.**

“I thought to myself, That’s a very big responsibility. To have to wind The World Clock. To be the one responsible for making *enough time for everyone*. But I looked at the lyre, and I thought about her beautiful voice. I thought: I would do anything to have her voice back. So I agreed.

“And the minute I agreed to wind The World Clock, I found myself back in The Corridor of Time...”

*Zing! Zing! Zing!*

“And the lyre had her voice again?”

“Yes, the lyre had her voice again.”

## CHAPTER TEN

### LISTEN TO THE NIGHT

“But enough of all this shilly-shallying,” Maestro Orpheus said. “You have your clock. I have my key. The lyre has her voice. Time to be on our way.”

“But...”

“But what, Fred?”

“That wasn’t the kind of door I was hoping for. Can’t we try a different door. One with a clock?”

“Another door...hmmmmn?”

*ZING.???*

“I know, Lyre, I know... but The World Clock can wait for a few more minutes. There are priorities, after all.”

Fred was in such a hurry, he didn’t wait for



Maestro Orpheus or the lyre but ran to the door of the year 1810. He picked up the key and wound the clock. He was so eager for the story that he even started talking along with the voice...

The story you are about to hear  
happened a long time ago...

WHEN FRÉDÉRIC CHOPIN WAS  
TEN YEARS OLD.

Maestro Orpheus was only just arriving at the door now.

“You missed the start of the story, Maestro Orpheus. It happened long ago to a boy named Frédéric Chopin.”

“Is that so? A composer named Fred. And did you know that the music you can hear in the background...”

Maestro Orpheus was about to explain that this music had been written by Chopin, when...

*Zzzzzzz* (which, of course, is lyre for ssshhhh.)

FRÉDÉRIC'S GRANDFATHER WAS STAYING OVERNIGHT AT HIS PARENTS' HOUSE.

FRÉDÉRIC HAD GONE TO BED HOURS BEFORE. BUT HE HADN'T BEEN ABLE TO SLEEP AND AFTER LYING THERE FOR WHAT SEEMED LIKE A VERY LONG TIME, HE GOT UP AND WENT OVER TO HIS BEDROOM WINDOW.

IT WAS ALMOST MIDNIGHT AS HE LOOKED OUT AT THE SILVER SNOW ON THE GROUND, AT THE GREAT CLOCK IN THE TOWER ACROSS THE STREET, AND AT THE GOLDEN MOON AS IT TRAVELLED SLOWLY ACROSS THE SKY. . . WHEN SUDDENLY HE HEARD FOOTSTEPS IN THE HALL. HE WENT OVER TO THE DOOR OF HIS ROOM OPENED IT JUST A CRACK, AND THEN WATCHED AS HIS GRANDFATHER WALKED

SLOWLY DOWN THE HALLWAY.

“I WONDER WHAT HE’S DOING?”  
FRÉDÉRIC WHISPERED TO  
HIMSELF. CURIOUS TO FIND OUT,  
HE TIPTOED DOWN THE HALL  
AFTER HIM BUT CAME TO A  
SUDDEN STOP WHEN HE SAW  
THAT HIS GRANDFATHER WAS  
STANDING IN FRONT OF THE  
LARGE WINDOW AT THE END OF  
THE HALL.

FRÉDÉRIC’S GRANDFATHER  
LOOKED FIRST AT THE CLOCK IN  
THE TOWER, THEN HE  
CAREFULLY LEANT HIS CANE  
AGAINST THE SILL OF THE  
WINDOW, REACHED INTO HIS  
POCKET AND PULLED OUT HIS  
WATCH. FRÉDÉRIC WAS BEING  
VERY QUIET, BUT HIS  
GRANDFATHER SURPRISED HIM  
BY SAYING, “DON’T JUST STAND  
THERE LIKE A SILLY GOOSE.  
COME HERE BESIDE ME.”

FRÉDÉRIC THOUGHT THAT HIS GRANDFATHER WAS GOING TO BE ANGRY BECAUSE HE WAS OUT OF BED AT SUCH A LATE HOUR. BUT INSTEAD, HE SAID TO HIM, “DID YOU SEE THE MOON TONIGHT, FRÉDÉRIC? AND DID YOU KNOW THAT THE MOON WILL BE PERFECTLY FULL, IN JUST A FEW SECONDS. . .”

HE LOOKED AGAIN AT HIS WATCH AND AT THE CLOCK ACROSS THE STREET. “IN FACT,” HE SAID, “AT THIS VERY MOMENT . . . NOW.”

HE RUBBED HIS HANDS TOGETHER IN DELIGHT. “IT’S JUST LIKE WHEN A CLOCK STRIKES MIDNIGHT. THE MOON IS PERFECTLY ROUND FOR JUST ONE MOMENT BEFORE IT BEGINS TO GET SMALL AGAIN.”

THEN HE BENT DOWN AND SAID VERY QUIETLY, AS IF HE WERE

TELLING HIS GRANDSON A SECRET, “NOW FRÉDÉRIC, WHILE THE MOON IS PERFECTLY FULL . . . LISTEN TO THE SOUND OF THE NIGHT. TO THE STARS. AND TO THE SNOW. LISTEN TO THE FULL MOON, FRÉDÉRIC. LISTEN. CAN YOU HEAR IT? CAN YOU HEAR THE SOUND OF THE NIGHT?”

FRÉDÉRIC LISTENED VERY CAREFULLY. HE CLOSED HIS EYES AND LISTENED.

“YES, GRANDFATHER,” HE SAID. “I CAN HEAR IT. I MOST CERTAINLY CAN.”

FRÉDÉRIC’S GRANDFATHER PUT HIS ARM AROUND HIS SHOULDER AND SAID, “I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT, FRÉDÉRIC . . . I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT.”

The last words of the story had been spoken. The music had faded. The clock face was dark.

Fred turned the second key.

He was silent for a moment as he listened to the music and then he said, almost more to himself than to Orpheus, “I never knew the night could sound like that.”

And even though Fred had spoken very softly, Maestro Orpheus had heard him. (Sometimes, his old ears were surprisingly quick.)

He said nothing. He simply placed his hand gently on the boy’s shoulder.

But the lyre was not nearly as gentle.

*Zzingg. Zzinnnggg!*

“What’s the lyre saying, Maestro Orpheus?”

“She’s telling you to look at the carriage clock.”

Fred had forgotten about the clock he was carrying. “The lyre is right. Look.” He held it up for Maestro Orpheus to see. “It’s still midnight. You have to wind The World Clock.”

Maestro Orpheus was tempted to say, “That’s exactly what I’ve been telling you all along,” but instead he simply said, “Well then, I suppose if both you and the lyre think I should...”

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

### THE DOOR TO THE END OF TIME

As they went, Maestro Orpheus held the lamp up to guide them.

Even though Fred knew they were in a hurry, and he ran fast to keep up, he still found it hard to pass the doors without stopping to open all of them.

“I can’t believe,” he said, as his eyes looked from one side of the Corridor of Time to the other “that there’s a story behind all of these doors?”

“But there is,” Orpheus said. “A different story behind every door. Some are happy. But, unfortunately, some are sad.”

“Sad?”

Fred slowed right down and then stopped. With his chin almost touching his chest, he said, “I don’t like sad stories.”



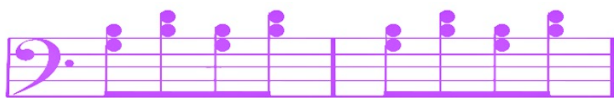
Maestro Orpheus had kept walking and now he looked back.

“What is it, Fred? Why have you stopped?”

“It’s nothing.” He ran to catch up and even ran ahead. “Come on... we have to hurry. Remember?”

Maestro Orpheus knew that something was wrong, but he also knew that Fred would only tell him what it was when he was ready to. And so he quietly fell into step beside him and the three of them continued along the corridor.

They had only travelled a short distance when Fred began to hum.



“What’s that you’re humming?” Maestro Orpheus asked him.

“I don’t know what it’s called. It’s just something I hear when I’m at my grandfather’s house.”

Maestro Orpheus scratched his chin.

“Something you hear when you’re at your grandfather’s house. Does it go like this?”

He raised the lyre and began to play the same tune that Fred had been humming.

“That’s it, Maestro Orpheus. That’s the song my grandfather whistles whenever he’s fixing a clock...”

“Hmmmnnnn. I see. That’s very, *very* interesting... Because I know what that piece of music is, Fred. It’s just a tiny little part of a very long symphony. It’s not usually played with a lyre... but by a big orchestra. The tune that your grandfather hums is one of the melodies... which is like a song without words. And you’ll never guess what the symphony is called, Fred. It’s called The Clock Symphony. Which is almost certainly why your grandfather likes it so much. And another thing you’ll never guess. It was written by Franz Josef Haydn... remember... back there, the second door that you opened... the one with the grandfather clock that was stopped right at five... FRED!”

Fred had suddenly turned and was running back along the corridor.

At first, Maestro Orpheus thought he might be running back to 1732.

“We don’t have time for that, Fred. The World Clock is this way.”

But Fred didn’t slow down, just called over his shoulder, “I’m going where there won’t be any sad stories. And no sad music either. I’m going back to A Timeless World.”

But Fred was in such a hurry to reach The Door to A Timeless World, that he wasn’t paying any attention to where he was going.

“NO,” Maestro Orpheus called out, when he saw where Fred had stopped. “That’s not The Door to A Timeless World. That’s The Door That Leads To The End of Time. DON’T OPEN...”

... it.”

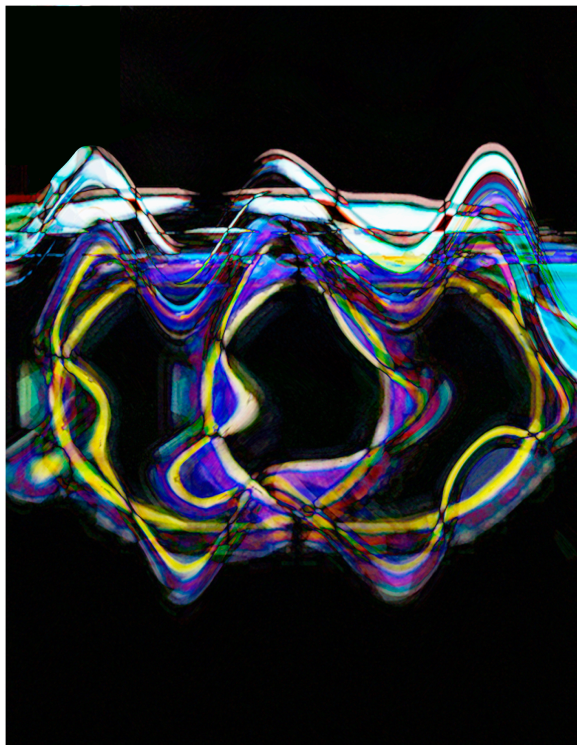
The warning had come too late.

The door was already wide open before

Fred realized that this was not the way to A  
Timeless World.

There were no glass cases. No musical  
instruments. There was nothing at all.

Or so Fred thought. Until he realized that,  
no... there was *something*. And this *something* was  
coming straight towards him.



THE END OF TIME WAS COMING

“Close the door, Fred. CLOSE THE DOOR.”

Fred wanted to close the door. He was certainly *trying to close it*.

“Hurry, Fred. Hurry. Before The End of Time reaches the doorway.”

“I can’t do it, Maestro Orpheus. I can’t...”

“You have to do it, Fred. While there’s still Time.”

Fred could see that The End of Time was very near. He closed his eyes. And he reached out his hand. He grabbed hold of the doorknob...

“It’s stuck.”

“Just pull, Freddy.... *PULL.*”

Fred gripped the knob with both hands and...

**SLAM**

## CHAPTER TWELVE

### GOOD NIGHT, GRANDFATHER

“Oh, thank goodness,” said Maestro Orpheus. “That was very close.” He stood in the middle of The Corridor of Time, puffing and panting as if he was the one who had done all the pulling.

“I’m sorry,” Fred said. “I didn’t mean for that to happen.”

“You’re.... you’re for... forgiven,” Maestro Orpheus said, as he tried to catch his breath, “For... fortunately... there are no other doors, not like *that one*.”

Fred’s eyes suddenly brightened.

“Then, I guess it’s safe for me to open another.”

“Another door? Oh no. That’s not possible, Fred. Time didn’t End. But...”

“Just this one. 1854.”

“Oh. That one. The door to the clock of Leos Janacek.”

“Just this one more, Maestro Orpheus. Only one. And I promise. I won’t ask again.”

*Zinggggggggggggggggggggggggggggggg*

“Calm down, Lyre. It will be all right. I need the extra time to catch my breath anyway. All right, Fred. Go ahead. One last door.”

Before Maestro Orpheus could change his mind, Fred ran quickly to the door, quickly opened it and even more quickly wound the clock.

THE STOR...

Y....

Tha...

CLUNK.

“What’s the matter, Maestro Orpheus. Why isn’t it working?”

“I don’t know. Try winding it again.”

CLINK. CRINK.  
GRRRRRRRRRR.... NNNNN...  
AGGgggg....

... O WHEN LEOS JANACEK  
WAS TEN YEARS OLD.

“It’s working now....”

LEOS’ GRANDFATHER WAS  
STAYING FOR A WHOLE MONTH  
AT HIS PARENTS’ HOUSE.

LEOS LOVED HIS GRANDFATHER,  
AND LOVED TO HEAR THE  
STORIES ABOUT WHEN HIS  
GRANDFATHER WAS ONLY TEN.

ALL DAY, WHILE LEOS WAS AT  
SCHOOL, HE COULD HARDLY  
WAIT TO GET HOME TO HEAR  
ANOTHER ONE OF HIS  
GRANDFATHER’S VERY SPECIAL  
BOYHOOD STORIES.

Once again, as had happened with each of  
the other Clock Stories, music began to play in



the background. But this time, the music seemed very faint, as if whoever was playing the piano was sitting very far away.

THE MOMENT THE SCHOOL BELL RANG, LEOS HURRIED FROM THE CLASSROOM AND RAN ALL THE WAY HOME. HE EXPECTED TO SEE HIS GRANDFATHER STANDING ON THE FRONT STAIRS WAITING FOR HIM, BUT TODAY HE WASN'T THERE. AND HE WASN'T IN THE FRONT HALL EITHER. INSTEAD, LEOS' MOTHER GREETED HIM, HOLDING HER FINGER TO HER LIPS AND TELLING HIM THAT HE MUST BE VERY QUIET. "YOUR GRANDFATHER ISN'T WELL."

"BUT CAN'T I SEE HIM ANYWAY?" LEOS ASKED.

"NOT NOW," HIS MOTHER SAID, "HE NEEDS TO BE LEFT ALONE."

LEOS WENT AND SAT IN THE

LIVING ROOM, STARING AT THE CLOCK ON THE MANTELPIECE, AS IT SLOWLY TICKED OFF THE MINUTES. WHEN THE CLOCK CHIMED FIVE, HE RAN TO HIS MOTHER AND ASKED, “CAN I SEE HIM NOW?”

“NO, DEAR,” SAID HIS MOTHER, “HE’S RESTING.”

AT SIX O’CLOCK, HE RAN TO HIS FATHER AND ASKED, “CAN I SEE HIM NOW?”

“NO,” SAID HIS FATHER, “YOUR GRANDFATHER IS HAVING A NAP.”

AT SEVEN O’CLOCK, THE DOCTOR CAME.

LEOS STOOD OUTSIDE THE ROOM, AND WHEN THE DOCTOR FINALLY STEPPED BACK INTO THE HALL, LEOS ASKED HIM, “CAN I SEE MY GRANDFATHER NOW?”

BUT THE DOCTOR SAID, “NO,  
YOUR GRANDFATHER IS  
SLEEPING. AND YOU MUSTN’T  
LET ANYTHING DISTURB HIM.”

LEOS WENT BACK INTO THE  
LIVING ROOM. HE WATCHED  
THE HANDS OF THE CLOCK  
MOVE SLOWLY TO EIGHT. BUT  
BEFORE THE CLOCK COULD  
CHIME, HE PUSHED THE MINUTE  
HAND BACK FIVE SPACES.

EVERY TIME THE CLOCK WAS  
ABOUT TO STRIKE EIGHT, LEOS  
PUSHED THE BIG HAND BACK.

FINALLY, HIS MOTHER CAME  
INTO THE ROOM.

“IT’S TIME FOR BED,” SHE SAID  
TO HIM, “IT’S VERY LATE.”

SADLY, BECAUSE HE STILL  
HADN’T BEEN ABLE TO SEE HIS  
GRANDFATHER, LEOS STARTED  
FOR BED. BUT BEFORE HE WENT  
INTO HIS ROOM, HE TIPTOED

BACK DOWN THE HALL, SAW  
THAT HIS GRANDFATHER'S DOOR  
WAS OPEN EVER SO SLIGHTLY,  
AND WITH A GENTLE PUSH, HE  
OPENED IT FURTHER, AND  
LEANING IN, HE WHISPERED,  
“GOOD NIGHT, GRANDFATHER”  
AND THEN. . .

FROM THE LIVING ROOM. . .

HE HEARD THE CLOCK BEGIN TO  
CHIME . . .

“That can’t be the end of the story,” Fred  
said. He stared at the clock, the face had gone  
dark. “Maybe it just needs to be wound again.”

CLICK... CLICK... CLICK.

“It’s not working, Maestro  
Orpheus.”

“I think it’s run out of time, Fred.”

*Zick, zick, zick.*

“Oh no, not you too, Lyre. Maestro Orpheus! The lyre hasn’t really lost her voice... has she? Not forever?” He stood staring at the dark face of the clock and even cupped his ear with his hand to hear if there was even the slightest bit of sound left. He was so upset that he could hardly get the next question past his lips. “Is there really no more time... and no more music?”

“There definitely won’t be if we don’t hurry,” said Orpheus. “So come on, Fred... and no dawdling... we’re going to have to run.”

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

### HOLDING ON TO TIME

Fred did run. As fast as his young legs could carry him. He ran fast until Maestro Orpheus said, “Not far to go now, Fred. And once we wind The World Clock, Time will start again and the lyre will have her voice ag...

Which is when Fred slowed down.

“Fred? Fred... what are you doing?”

Fred had stopped.

“Oh dear, oh dear, oh dear! Frederick... if I might call you Frederick just this once... if I didn’t know any better, I’d say you still don’t want me to wind The World Clock. Even though you know that if I don’t, there’ll be no time, no music...

*Zic...*

“That’s right. And the lyre won’t be able to speak. why don’t you want time to start again?”

Fred could barely look Maestro Orpheus in the eye.

“I don’t know. I mean... I want the lyre to be able to talk. And I want there to be music. I do. *Really*. But...it’s... just...”

“Here. Maybe this will change your mind.”

As he said this, Maestro Orpheus turned and pointed to an enormous crystal door.

He opened it and led Fred into a grand hall, with marvellous columns, and a floor of polished glass. In the very middle of the hall stood a massive clock. No. It was more than just a clock. It was like a hundred clocks rolled into one, with wheels and pendulums and hands spread across a hundred faces. But all the hands and wheels and pendulums were motionless. And although it was the biggest clock that Fred had ever seen, there wasn't a sound to heard from it.

“This, Fred,” said Orpheus, “is The World Clock.”

Fred was breathless.

“I didn’t know it would look like this. I’ve never seen anything like it.”

“I was sure that you wouldn’t have. Apart from me, you’re the only one who ever has.” Then Maestro Orpheus stepped closer to Fred and looking him in the eye, asked, “And now that you’ve seen it, are you ready to help me wind it?”

“Well... yes... I think I am. But...”

“No more buts, Fred”

“It’s not really a *but*. I just have to ask you a question first. As long as time has stopped, everyone stays the same age, right?”

“Yes. I suppose that’s true.”

“And once we wind The World Clock, then everyone will start getting older.”

“Yes, Fred. That is what will happen.”

“I knew it.”



Maestro Orpheus laid his hand on Fred's shoulder and with great tenderness asked, "Are you afraid of time, Fred? Are you afraid because time seems to make people older?"

"Time does make people older. And everyone keeps getting older and older..."

"True," Orpheus nodded, "*everyone* does get older."

"Including my grandfather."

"Yes, even your grandfather."

"Then that means that one day..." (Fred found it hard to say the words) "...one day he will be there, and then the next day, he won't be."

"Yes, Fred, one day your grandfather will be gone."

"No, he won't just be gone... he'll be..."

Fred turned his face to the side so that Maestro Orpheus wouldn't be able to see his eyes. His hands formed into small fists. And then, in a sad voice, he said very quietly, "There. Now you know why I don't like time."

“Oh Fred,” said Maestro Orpheus, “I understand. Believe me, I know what it means to lose someone that you love.

“But we have our memories, Fred. And our feelings. And you have that piece of music you keep humming. Don’t forget that.”

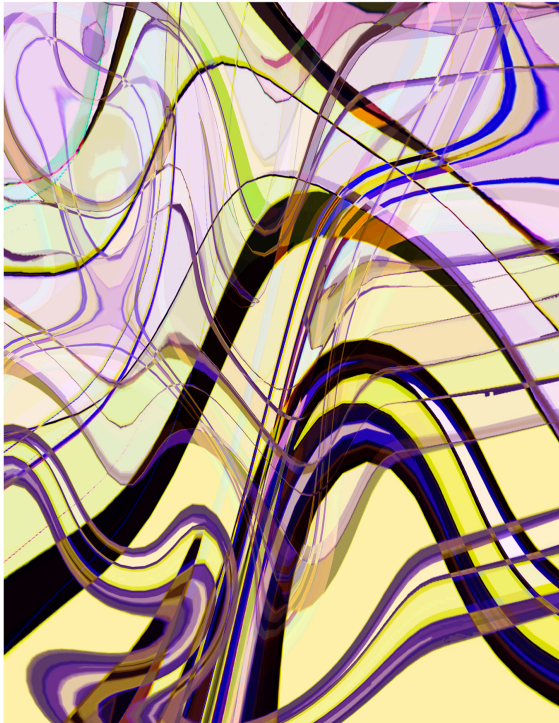
“You mean,” said Fred, “the one my grandfather whistles while he’s working on his clocks?”

“Yes, that one. The one your grandfather whistles. The one that a composer wrote a long time ago...

“Fred, every composer is in love with time, and they all try to catch it. They try to catch it in their hands and hold it down. But it’s like trying to hold on to sunlight or moonlight. It’s like trying to pull a rainbow from the sky. No matter how hard you try, you can’t hold on to it. But in music, Fred... in music, you can take hold of time. Music is a time-machine. Whenever you play or listen to music, you start time going all over again. All the memories, and all the feelings that have taken place in the past, return and come to

life again. Just like when you open a book and see a photograph of one of your friends...or your parents... or even your grandfather. We can't stop Time, Fred. But we can keep it in our hearts, and we can cherish it in our Music."

While Maestro Orpheus had been talking, a tear had formed in the corner of Fred's eye, and he turned away now to wipe it with his sleeve.



EVERY COMPOSER IS IN LOVE WITH TIME

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

### THE WORLD CLOCK

“Well, Fred, what do you say? Shall I start The World Clock?”

Fred took a deep breath... he screwed up his shoulders... placed his hands in his pockets... he let out a long, long sigh... bit his lip... rolled his eyes... then he finally said, “Yes, Maestro Orpheus. Go ahead. *Start The World Clock.*”

Orpheus took the golden key from his apron pocket.

“It’s awfully late, Fred. I’m going to need your help. You see that wheel... give it a spin. And the key above it... turn it to the right. And I’ll pull this lever... and turn the golden key... and then we’ve got to give the pendulum a push. It’s heavy though. Here, Fred... help me push it. That’s right. That’s right. Just a little more...”

The pendulum made a great whooshing sound and then, from somewhere deep inside the clock, a voice boomed out the words, “WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN, ORPHEUS? I THOUGHT YOU’D NEVER GET HERE.”

“It wasn’t Maestro Orpheus’ fault,” Fred said, “it was mine.”

“NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT THAT NOW, YOUNG MAN. I’VE GOT TO GET MOVING. ALL THE CLOCKS IN THE WORLD... ALL OF THEM... EVERY ONE... THE WATER CLOCKS AND WRIST WATCHES, ALARM CLOCKS AND SUNDIALS....GOOD HEAVENS, EVEN THE HOURGLASSES... ARE DEPENDING ON ME. AND THEN THERE’S ALL THE BALANCE WHEELS AND TUNING FORKS THAT I HAVE TO SET RIGHT AGAIN... PEOPLE’S PHONES, THEIR COMPUTERS, THEIR TABLETS...”

The World Clock took a deep, deep breath, it wheezed, it coughed... and Fred was sure that it wasn’t going to start. But then it drew in another even deeper breath and from deep



Orpheus smiled and said, “Just look at your clock, Fred.”

Fred had forgotten all about the carriage-clock in his hand. He turned to it and saw that the hands were going swiftly around...and as the hands spun faster, Fred began to feel strange. And it was almost as if Maestro Orpheus and the lyre weren't standing right beside him.

“What’s happening to me?”

“Good bye, Fred.”

“Good bye????”

“Yes, Fred... good bye.”

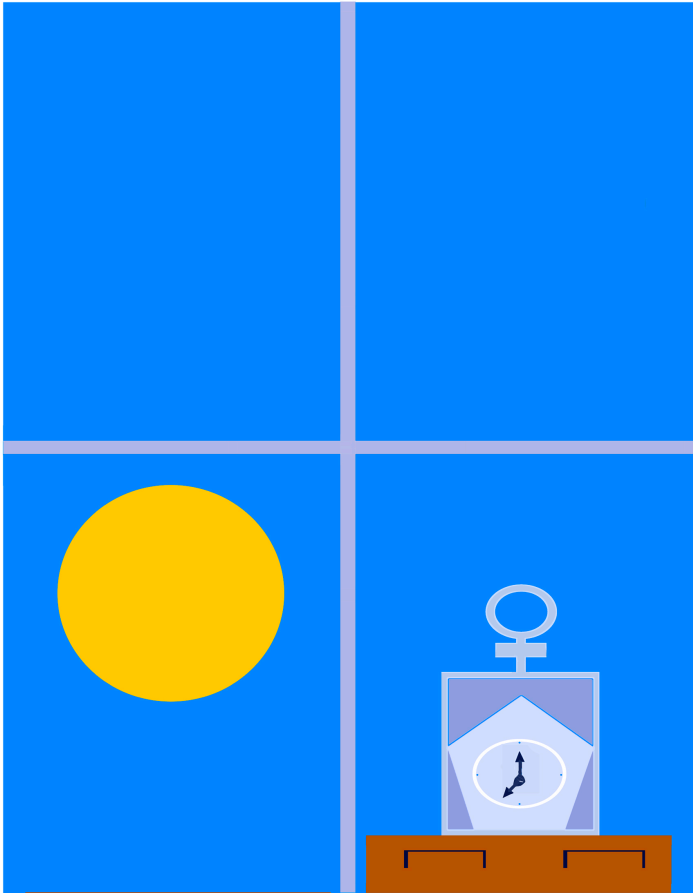
And as the hands of the clock moved faster and faster, Fred felt like Maestro Orpheus had moved even further away... and then he heard him call out, “And Fred, whenever you hear music, don't forget to remember...”

“I could never do that. I ... could... never... for... get...”

The hands of the clock were now going so fast, and Fred's eyes had grown heavy, and then even heavier, until finally they closed tight.

## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

### MORNING



### THE HANDS OF THE CLOCK



When Fred opened his eyes again, the hands of the carriage-clock on the table by the bedside said seven o'clock. It was morning. And Fred was back in his grandfather's house. He threw off the bedcovers and ran from the room.

“Grandfather... grandfather...”

His grandfather came running from the kitchen to see what the matter was.

“What is it, Fred? What is it?”

“You won't believe what happened last night. You really won't believe it. I met Maestro Orpheus. And the lyre. And we went along The Corridor of Time and we saw clocks that belonged to Johann Sebastian Bach and Franz Josef Haydn and ...”

“Whoa. Slow down, Fred. Slow down.”

“Oh, that's right, grandfather... you have old ears, I almost forgot”

“Old ears? Why yes, I suppose that I do. But here, let's go into the kitchen and you can tell me all about your adventure. Before you do, though, there's something I want to show you.”

His grandfather took Fred into the kitchen. There, on the table in the middle of the room, was a clock.

Fred's eyes nearly jumped from their sockets.

"It looks like the lyre. Grandfather, it looks just like Maestro Orpheus' lyre."

"Well, Fred, it is called a lyre-clock. It isn't working perfectly just yet. Its heart requires a bit of surgery. But once I get it running again, I thought you might like to have it."

"It's for me? My own lyre... I mean, my own *lyre-clock!*"

"Yes, Fred, it will be yours. And it will be a very good clock. It will help you *keep time...*

"... and it will never tell a lie!"

"Let's hope so, Fred. Let's hope that it never tells a lie."

Then Fred watched while his grandfather put on his wire-rimmed glasses and bent over the clock, gently touching the mechanism at the heart

of the clock.

And as he watched, he could hear the music in his head... the music that would always and forever remind him of his grandfather, of his clocks, and of his love of Time.



(which, of course, is lyre for THE END).

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Robert Pennee divides the time devoted to creative work between writing – mostly fiction -- and photography/computer-based art making. He lives in London, Ontario, Canada.



This edition of this free ebook was  
brought to you by -

<https://www.freekidsbooks.org>

Preschool, early grades, picture books, learning to read,  
early chapter books, middle grade, young adult

*Always Free – Always will be!*

### **Copyright – Legal Notice**

This book has a restricted copyright. The permission to publish this FKB version has been provided by the author or publisher to <https://www.FreeKidsBooks.org>. The book may be re-posted only in terms of the author's copyright restrictions.

Please contact the author or publisher for more information.