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The Stone Cutter: A Japanese Legend

Elizabeth Harrison

Francis M. Arnold

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THE STONE-CUTTER

A JAPANESE LEGEND

ADAPTED BY
ELIZABETH HARRISON

WITH

MUSICAL ACCOMPANIMENT
ARRANGED BY
FRANCIS M. ARNOLD

Published by
CENTRAL PUBLISHING COMPANY
258 Wabash Ave.
Chicago, Ill.

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EXPLANATION

Three years ago my friend, Francis M. Arnold, suggested to me that we should use music in connection with symbolic stories for children much as it was being used by modern composers, i. e., to deepen the inner significance of the story without undue pressure or pedantic moralizing. I saw at once the added art value which appropriate music would give to a story, but did not realize until after the experiment had been tried, the added interest in music which the story would give. I happened at the time to be rewriting and giving a modern content to a Japanese legend which McCutcheon had cartooned for the Chicago Tribune and proposed that we should try a musical setting for it. The result is given in the following pages. The experiment proved so successful that Mr. Arnold has since adapted music to "The Legend of the Christ-Child," "The Story of Persephine" and several other stories.

It goes without saying that the musician must be in sympathy with the story-teller and be able to modulate the music to the details of the story as well as to her voice, oftentimes improvising a connection between one motif and another. When rightly done the result is very beautiful and the effect remarkable.

ELIZABETH HARRISON.

Chicago, Ill.

Fortunately one is not called on to defend the use of leading motifs to emphasize situations and characters in story-telling with music, since Richard Wagner's mighty exposition in his music-dramas.

In arranging music for Miss Harrison's stories I have adopted this idea, and do not attempt to suggest scenes so much as soul conditions.

In this story we have to deal with the discontent of Hashnu, his seeming satisfaction and the return to discontent, until through experience life reveals its secret.

I have taken as the motif of Discontent the second part of Chopin's Prelude No. 15; the constantly recurring tone in the upper part suggests at once the stone-cutting, and at the same time the monotony of his work to Hashnu, while the sombre melody in the lower part points to his discontent.

For the Temple of Buddha I have used the Walhalla motif from Rhinegold, as it has the calm, confident, religious character necessary to suggest a great temple.

The motif of the Wind, which forms so prominent a part in the story, is taken from the accompaniment to the Erl-king by Schubert; but a change is necessary. Schubert used the octave figure in the upper part to suggest the beating of horses hoofs. I have ventured to change this by using a rapid tremolo effect of the same notes to suggest wind and retained the storm motif in the lower part to emphasize its rise and fall. Two uses of this motif are possible; before the answer to his prayer, it can be played as if approaching, and after the prayer the process may be reversed to suggest the return "to the farthest star."

The voice of Buddha, I have not attempted to portray, even music has its limit.

For riches I use the first part of the 3rd movement of Beethoven's Sonata Op. 31, No. 2. It is bright and sparkling, and by playing it rapidly with

quick changes of piano and forte can be made to suggest the glitter and sparkle of the jewels Hashnu wore to attract attention.

For the Emperor, the March from Aida may be used, beginning after the Introduction.

For the power and majesty of the Sun I use the "Invocation to the Sun" as given in the introduction to "Thus Spake Zarathustra," by Richard Strauss.

For the Storm the first part of the Vorspiel to "Die Walkure," but first employing the motif of Thor.

The change to the block of granite may be suggested by playing the second part of the Chopin Prelude, emphasizing the lower part and playing slowly and ponderously to bring out the idea of the unchanging and immovable so attractive to Hashnu.

When Hashnu returns to the stone-cutter after all his experiences, the first part of the Chopin Prelude (in d flat major) may be used and then as the completed Temple of Buddha is described, the wonderfully beautiful Walhalla Music from Rhinegold (page 57 of the Klindworth edition), beginning at the words "Achieved the Eternal Work."

FRANCIS MARION ARNOLD.

HASHNU, THE STONE-CUTTER.

By ELIZABETH HARRISON.

Adapted from an old Japanese legend.
Set to music by Francis M. Arnold.

*Prelude including Hashnu motif of discontent.
The wind motif and the calm majestic
Walhalla music or temple motif.*

Hashnu sat beside the huge stone on which he had been hewing for weeks, aye, even for months.

Hashnu motif.

It seemed to him as he looked back upon the past, as if most of his life had been spent in the quarry chiselling this huge stone, shaping it for its place in the Temple of Buddha.

Hashnu motif continued throughout the next two paragraphs as a low undertone.

Click! click! click! went his small hammer. Click! click! click! and a bit of the rough surface gave way and the shining granite within glittered at the point from which he had hewn the rough exterior. It is true that part of the rock, even now showed the effect of his patient labor. One corner of it shone smooth and sparkling. This he had already shaped for its

place in the great Temple of Buddha. But this was not enough, the whole stone must be dressed and polished as well as hewn into shape, and the task seemed a long and weary one to Hashnu. Sometimes the dust on the roadside almost choked him, and again the sun poured down its sharp rays upon his head until he was dizzy. People came and went along the road nearby and took no note of him. What was he? Nothing but an obscure stone cutter, hewing and shaping a stone for its place in the Temple of Buddha.

One day a rich man rode by in his luxurious carriage. The harness on his horses jingled and their hoofs raised such a dust that the stone cutter was hidden from sight for the time being.

Hashnu motif ceases.

Then Hashnu threw down his hammer, and rising to his feet he lifted up his arms to heaven and cried aloud. "Oh, Buddha! Thou wise and great one! I am thy child! Hear thou my cry! I am tired of being only a stone cutter; I would be rich and ride in mine own carriage as does yon proud grandee! Help Thou, me, Oh Buddha!" He dropped his hands, his head sank upon his breast and he closed his eyes.

Wind motif begins soft and low then rises in volume and continues for a moment or two after the next sentence ends.

Then from the farthest star came sweeping down a mighty wind.

Music ceases.

And with the wind came a voice deep and low, unlike any voice that Hashnu had ever heard; for there was in it a tone which made all other sounds cease. And the deep, low voice whispered unto Hashnu, "Oh, blind one! thy prayer has been granted thee!"

Wind motif gradually dying away as if receding into immeasurable distance.

Motif signifying riches begins and continues through the next two paragraphs.

Then Hashnu opened his eyes. And beheld that he was arrayed in rich and gorgeous apparel; and divans with rich cushions were round about him. The walls and roof of a handsome mansion surrounded him; while slaves bowed obsequiously before him. "Ah," cried Hashnu, "Now I am rich. Now shall I be happy!" and he thought no more of the huge stone by the roadside which he had been slowly shaping for its place in the Temple of Buddha.

One day as he sat on his veranda a messenger came running by, shouting aloud, "The emperor! The emperor comes! Prepare ye the way!" Then Hashnu spread out his silken robes and stretched forth his feet, for his slippers were em-

broidered with precious jewels; looking proudly around him at his costly surroundings he said to himself, "Ah, now will the great emperor see Hashnu and will notice him for his riches!" But the emperor and his cavalcade of nobles and priests and foreign ambassadors rode past and none saw Hashnu nor his riches, for all eyes were fixed upon the great emperor that each one might be ready to obey the slightest nod of his head or beck of his hand.

Music changes to Hashnu's motif of discontent.

Then Hashnu rose from the carved chair upon which he had been sitting, and buried his face in his hands, and cried aloud, "Oh, Buddha, thou art wise and great, I am thy child! Hear thou my cry! My riches have not satisfied me, I would be an emperor! Help me, oh Buddha!"

Wind motif as before.

And again from the farthest stars came sweeping down a mighty wind.

Music ceases.

And with the sound of the wind came a voice deep and low, but there was in the voice that which made all other sounds on earth cease, and the deep low voice whispered to Hashnu, "Oh, blind one! Thy prayer has been granted thee."

*Wind motif receding and slowly dying out.
Emperor motif begins, continuing through next
two paragraphs.*

Then Hashnu opened his eyes and beheld that he was an emperor seated on a throne of gold, and the throne of gold stood upon a floor of mother-of-pearl; and before him stood officers and nobles, and priests, and foreign ambassadors, arrayed in gorgeous apparel, each and every one of them anxiously watching him that they might know his will by the slightest nod of his head or beck of his hand. Then Hashnu said unto himself, "Now am I great, and I shall be happy!"

After a time the summer came; with it came fierce heat, so great that Hashnu, the emperor, could find no relief from the fiery rays of the sun in any room of his palace, nor in any part of the gardens which surrounded his palace. Then he sent for the head steward of his household and said unto him, "Tell the sun to withdraw his rays from my palace and from my gardens! For I, Hashnu, the emperor, so command!" Then the head steward fell upon his face before Hashnu, the emperor and cried aloud, "All that a faithful steward can do have I done for thee!" "But the sun is mightier than all the emperors and kings of the earth and no mortal man can con-

trol him. He shineth where he chooseth and drinketh up the waters of the brooks and parcheth the face of the earth when he will; even an emperor's palace may not escape his burning rays!"

Music changes to Hashnu's motif of discontent.

Then Hashnu buried his face in his royal mantle and wept, and cried out, "Oh Buddha, Thou wise and great one, I am thy child! Hear Thou my cry! I would be the powerful sun who cares not for the anger of an emperor. Help thou me, oh, Buddha."

Wind motif as before.

Then from the farthest star came sweeping down a mighty wind.

Music dies away.

And with the wind came a voice so deep and low that all other sounds on earth ceased as it spoke, and it whispered to Hashnu, the emperor, "Oh blind one! Thy prayer has been granted thee!"

Wind motif receding and dying away.

Sun motif played through the next two paragraphs.

And lo and behold! Hashnu was changed into the sun, and rolled through the heavens with a power such as was never dreamed of by mortal

man. Each morning he rose in the east and drank up the waters in the brooks and scorched the fields and caused the trees and flowers in the garden of the emperor to wither and droop. Then the heart of Hashnu, which was alive in the center of the sun, exulted and said unto itself, "Ah, now that emperors and kings must bow down before me and flee from my fierce rays, I shall be happy!"

One day, however, the sun noticed a dark, sullen cloud rising slowly from the face of the sea and he sent his strongest rays down to pierce the cloud and scatter it, but the dark sullen cloud swallowed up the ray and it was lost, while the cloud continued to grow larger and darker, and to spread out over the face of the heavens until it shut the earth away from the light of the sun. In vain the sun sent down ray after ray, even hundreds of rays to pierce the cloud. It merely opened its mouth and swallowed them all and continued to grow darker and heavier than before.

Music changes to Hashnu's discontent.

Then the heart of Hashnu, which was in the center of the sun, cried out, "Oh Buddha, Thou wise and great one! I am thy child! Hear Thou my cry! Make me to be the cloud which is stronger than the sun. Hear Thou my cry, oh, Buddha!"

Wind motif as before.

Then from the farthest star came sweeping down a mighty wind.

Music dies away.

And with the wind came a voice deep and low, yet at the sound of that voice the thunder of the storm cloud and the flash of its lightnings were hushed while all sounds on earth ceased as it whispered, "Oh blind one! Thy prayer has been granted thee!"

Storm motif continues through next two paragraphs.

And lo and behold Hashnu was no longer in the center of the sun. He had become the dark, sullen storm-cloud which kept the rays of the sun from reaching the surface of the earth. Then the storm-cloud poured down torrents of rain that swelled the brooks and overflowed the fields and tore up the trees by their roots. And the heart of Hashnu, which had entered the storm-cloud, cried out exultantly, "Now am I the strongest of all things in heaven or on earth! Even the sun cannot conquer me! And all things on earth quail and flee before my wrath!"

But beside the road was a huge rock of granite which moved not as the rain beat upon it. When the storm cloud saw this it poured forth

such a flood of rain as had never been seen before, and it darted great flashes of lightning down upon the stone, and thundered until the heavens shook, but the rock lay quiet and undisturbed.

Music changes to motif of Hashnu's discontent.

Then Hashnu cried out from the dark, sullen rain-cloud, "Oh, Buddha, Thou great and wise one, I am Thy child! Hear Thou my cry! I have been deceived! That rock by the roadside is greater than I! I would be the huge stone which even the storm cannot move. Hear Thou my cry! oh, Buddha!"

Wind motif as before.

Then came the sound of a mighty wind sweeping down from the farthest star.

Music ceases.

And with the wind came a voice deep and low. But at the sound of the voice the storm cloud hushed, and all things on earth ceased to stir. Then the voice whispered, "Oh, blind one! Thy prayer has been granted thee!"

Wind motif dies away.

Rock motif continuing through the next two paragraphs.

And lo and behold! the dark, sullen, storm cloud was changed into a huge piece of granite rock that lay on the roadside, and the heart of

Hashnu entered into the silent rock and rejoiced exultantly and exclaimed, "Now am I the greatest of all! The unmoved! Nothing can change me! I am stronger than the storms of heaven!"

One day, however, the huge rock felt a pricking in its side, and again another pricking, prick, prick, prick came the sharp little pain, and with it came the sound, click! click! click! and a bit of the huge surface fell off and the rock silently groaned.

Music changes to Hashnu's motif of discontent.

And the heart of Hashnu, which was within the rock, cried out, "Oh, Buddha, Thou wise and great one! I am Thy child! Hear Thou my cry! I am not all-powerful as I had thought. I would that I were the tiny man who is hewing this rock into such shape as he chooses. I am powerless in his hands. Help Thou me, oh Buddha!"

Wind motif as before.

Then once again sweeping down from the farthest star came the mighty wind.

Music ceases.

And with it came a voice deep and low, yet at the sound of that voice the sun, the moon and all the stars stood still, and all other sounds on earth ceased while it whispered, "Oh, blind one!

At last thou scest! Be thou Hashnu, the stone cutter! And sit by the roadside hewing and shaping the great rock for its place in the Temple of Buddha!"

The music gradually changes from the motif of Hashnu reconciled to the Temple motif which is played slowly and softly for a minute or two before the words of the story are resumed.

And a thousand years passed by; and strangers came into the land where emperors and kings had once ruled, but who had long since been buried; where rich men had accumulated vast fortunes which were now scattered and forgotten; over there were the fields which the sun had parched, and they were once more green and fertile; and the ravages which the storms had made were once more healed. But the Temple of Buddha stood grand and glorious in the midst of the valley! As the strangers gazed upon it their hearts were stirred, for they saw how perfectly fitted into its place was each glittering block of granite which the unknown stone cutters had hewn, day after day, that they might be fitted each for its place in the great Temple of Buddha.

The Temple music continues several moments after the story closes. Then dies softly away into silence.

