

AUDITIONS THIS WAY.

SEIZE THE DAY, SEIZE THE DAY  
AND THE REST IS HISTORY AS THEY SAY.  
THREE SIMPLE WORDS  
IF WHEN IN DOUBT SURELY SAY  
SEIZE THE DAY, SEIZE THE DAY  
AND THE REST IS HISTORY,  
HISTORY AS THEY SAY.

ANNA

You have a little sister?

JOSEPH

Elizabeth. She's ten. She wants to be an opera singer too.

ANNA

My competition gets younger every year.

JOSEPH

(Slapping LUDWIG on shoulder; looking  
around)

Well, if you would both excuse me. I seem to have misplaced my sword.

*JOSEPH exits.*

LUDWIG

What a troublesome tenor.

ANNA

And yet he goes around completely untroubled.

LUDWIG

The other night, at his behest, I wrote two grand arias; each to the same text, but he still wasn't happy. So I wrote a third of which he finally seemed to approve.

ANNA

You composed three arias for him?

LUDWIG

I showed him to the door. We said our farewells. I closed the door and went back to work on my symphony.

ANNA

Oh dear, don't tell me.

LUDWIG

It had not been a half hour when Joseph knocked on my door looking to importune me into more changes.

ANNA

I admit, he can be a little obtuse.

LUDWIG

Obtuse? I fell to my knees and pleaded, "You heedless varlet, go away I beg of you!"

ANNA

You're not quitting are you?

LUDWIG

Schikaneder has me by the throat.

ANNA

Just so you are aware; the theater is in arrears.

LUDWIG

You mean the theater is facing insolvency?

ANNA

Not if Herr Direktor negotiates a deferment.

LUDWIG

He's so pigheaded. If he would just show a willingness to talk.

ANNA

Sage advice. So tell me, what's going on?

LUDWIG

What do you mean?

ANNA

You're having issues with your hearing aren't you.

LUDWIG

(reluctantly)

It started out as a loud buzzing, but it still comes on once in a while. It's less frequent than before and it doesn't last as long. Before I couldn't compose. I couldn't even think until it passed. At one point it was so maddening I was close to taking my own life.

ANNA

You sought professional council?

LUDWIG

Professor Schmidt suggested I convalesce in the country. I really don't feel comfortable talking about this. I express myself best in music.

ANNA

Then express it to me in music.

## 15.- LUDWIG'S SONG

TWO YEARS AGO IN APRIL I ARRIVED AT  
DOBLING COUNTY HEILIGENSTADT;  
WAS GREETED BY THE SWEET SUNSHINE  
AND THE GENTLE RURAL BREEZES.  
I FELT OVERJOY, AT EASE BUT,  
MY JOY WOULD SOON TURN TO DESPAIR;  
WHILE STROLLING WITH MY STUDENT THERE  
HE STOPPED AND ASKED ME "WHAT IS THAT?"

OFF IN THE DISTANCE HE COULD HEAR A  
SHEPHERD  
PLAYING HIS FIFE CARVED OF ELDER.  
I NODDED AS THE TIME DRAGGED ON  
FOR ALMOST THIRTY MINUTES  
IN THE EMPTINESS OF SILENCE.  
IN VAIN I BEGGED, BARGAINED, AND CRIED  
BUT GOD IS DEAFENED WORSE THAN I  
I REMAINED UNTIL MID-OCTOBER.

AND AS THE LEAVES OF AUTUMN WITHERED ON  
LIMB