

JOSEPH
HAYDN

*The
Merry Little
Peasant*



BY OPAL WHEELER AND SYBIL DEUCHER

Illustrated by MARY GREENWALT

 **Zeezok**[™]
PUBLISHING

Joseph Haydn, The Merry Little Peasant

Written by Opal Wheeler and Sybil Deucher

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ISBN 978-1-933573-00-7

Republished November, 2007

Printed in the United States of America

Zeezok Publishing, LLC

PO Box 1960 • Elyria, OH 44036

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www.Zeezok.com

INTRODUCTION

In this story you will learn to know the little boy, Joseph Haydn, who loved music so much that he was willing to give up anything for it, and you will follow him through his struggles and successes until he becomes the great master. It will help you to play Haydn's music better when you know the man who created all this beauty.

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A PEASANT BOY IN ROHRAU





A PEASANT BOY IN ROHRAU

The great red sun was just beginning to light the narrow streets of the little Croatian market town of Rohrau. Over the rough cobblestones heavy carts were rumbling by the low thatched roof cottage where Matthias Haydn, the wheelwright, lived with his happy family.

Everyone was asleep in the Haydn cottage but little Sepperl, as Franz Joseph was often called. With the first rumbling outside his window, he sat up in bed and rubbed his eyes. It was time for the market!

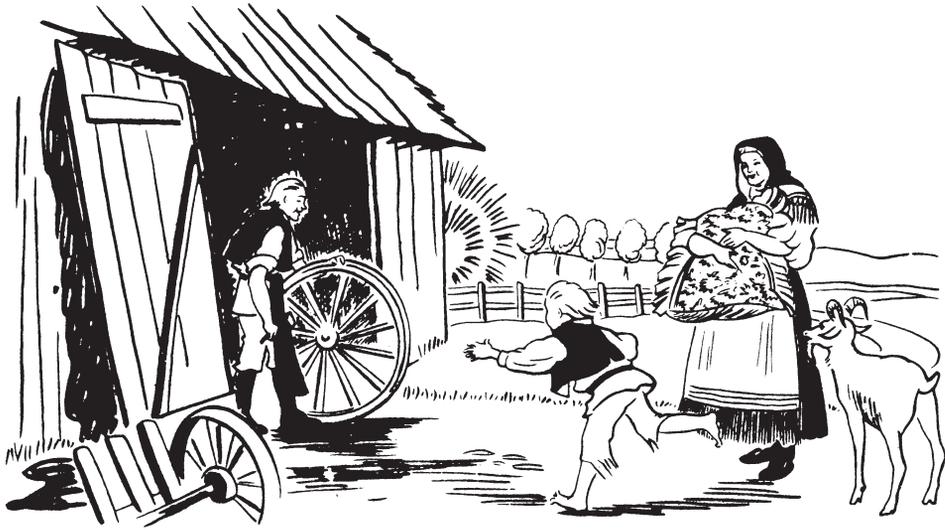
Quickly putting on his clothes, he hurried out into the early morning light and ran to the market square just at the end of the street. Dodging the horses' hoofs, he watched the great carts being unloaded and the stalls piled high with ripe fruits and vegetables.

“Ho there, young Sepperl! You are always up with the sun. Come and have a bit of breakfast here with me,” called Kreutter, the fruit man, as he piled the wares higher on his stall.

Perched on an old barrel with his bare feet dangling, Sepperl munched bright red apples, while old Kreutter told him marketing tales of long ago.

The sun climbed higher in the sky and soon housewives with baskets on their arms were busy buying food for their large families.

“We are to have a concert tonight, Herr Kreutter. You must come to hear us for Cousin Matthias Frankh is coming from Hainburg to play on his violin. Perhaps he is here now — I must go and see! Good-bye, good-bye, Herr Kreutter.”



Sepperl ran to the shop next to the simple cottage that Matthias Haydn had built for his good wife, Frau Marie, and the children.

There was Matthias hard at work making a new wagon for neighbor Hendl. He sang as he fitted the parts together and it was not long before Sepperl was singing too in his high clear voice.

“Cousin Frankh! Here he comes! We shall surely have a concert tonight,” cried Sepperl, running to the doorway.

The schoolmaster from Hainburg came striding down the street, carrying his violin case under his arm.

“Well, well, Matthias! Singing — always singing you are — even at work.”

“Come in, come in, Frankh! Indeed we are glad to see you!” cried Matthias.

The Haydns were always delighted with cousin Frankh’s visits for he knew much about music.

There were many concerts in the humble little home. Often father Haydn sat in the vine-covered doorway, plucking the strings of his much loved harp. With Mother Haydn and the children they sang together merry old Croatian folk songs.

Little Sepperl always sat on a wooden stool near



his father and with two smooth pieces of wood held firmly in his hands, played his own make-believe violin. His parents watched the boy drawing one stick slowly across the other as he played away so seriously, keeping perfect time.

Matthias, though he loved to sing and play, did not know one note from another. He played the harp by ear and on Sundays his fine tenor voice could be heard above all the others in the choir of the little church where he was the sexton.

Little Sepperl was the first one ready for the evening concert, with his make-believe violin. Herr Frankh watched the boy closely as he sat playing, bending and swaying to the music.

“I would like to play on a real violin like yours, Cousin Frankh. Will you teach me?” asked the boy.

“Well, my little man, a violin is a difficult instrument to play, you know. But would you like to come to Hainburg with me? I could teach you to play on the clavier and the violin and you would learn to sing, too.”