

FREDERIC CHOPIN  
*Son of Poland*

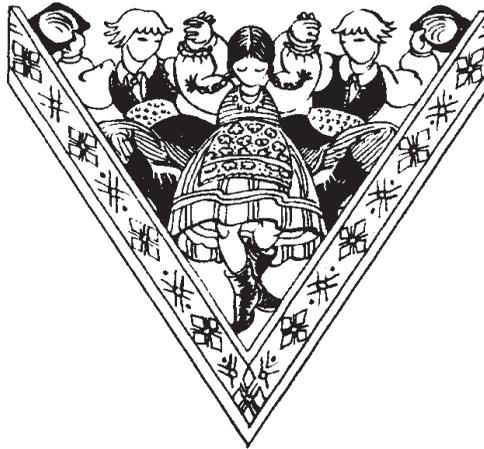
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*Later Years*

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*By*

*Opal Wheeler*



*Illustrated by* Christine Price

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# *Frederic Chopin: Son of Poland, Later Years*

Written by Opal Wheeler

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## CHAPTER ONE

THE EARLIEST MILK cart rumbled through the frosty streets of Warsaw, stopping with groaning brakes at the lamp-lit home of Nicolas Chopin. Stiff with the cold, the bearded driver climbed down to leave a tall bucket of precious liquid at the door.

“Special happenings in this household today,” he muttered, peering in at the window.

There, bobbing in the light were Louise and Isobel, the long stairs creaking under their flying footsteps as they darted from their brother’s room, arms laden with his belongings. And struggling through the doorway was Nicolas with the leather trunk, and with noisy clatter he deposited it on the shining waxed floor.

“There now, Justine, — your skillful hands can begin the packing,” said he, rubbing a kink in his aching shoulder.

But lovely Mother Chopin, her heart too full for speech, could not stay her tears as she folded the garments of her son, and in vain her husband tried to comfort her.

“Do not grieve so, my dear,” he urged gently. “We should

be happy that the boy is eager to seek his fortune in cities other than our own.”

“Hush, — here he comes!” warned Louise and Isobel as scurrying footsteps sounded outside the door.

In bounded Frederic, and with cries of delight his family gathered around him.

“Everyone in Warsaw is asking me to give more concerts!” he announced jubilantly. “As if the last three were not enough!”

Justine looked up hopefully. “Then you will stay, my son?”

An anxious frown made Frederic look years older.

“But the people of Vienna,” he began, his brown eyes serious. “I have promised to return and play for them again.”

“And you must keep your promise,” decided Nicolas, patting the slender shoulders.

The packing was at last finished and as Frederic stood at the door, ready to leave, he looked intently into each face, as if to mirror it forever in his mind.

“Be sure to send us word of your success in Vienna,” admonished his parents, gently.

“And keep your coat buttoned in damp weather!” His sisters hovered over him, rearranging his cravat with loving care.



Frederic laughed merrily, his arms encircling the two who had been so close to him all of his days.

“How shall I live without your constant care of me, my chickadees?” he cried gaily.

Then, the sudden knowledge that he was leaving the home where he had spent so many happy years made his throat tighten, and with a hurried good-bye he climbed into the carriage, waving from the frost-dimmed windows as long as he could see the little group in the doorway.

Out to Wola, the country place of his birth he jogged, never dreaming of what was in store for him there.