

Kurt Weill
Suffern, N.Y.

March 8, 1941

Dear Ira,

I guess you got my letter the same day that I got yours and you will have found the answer to most of your questions in my letter. It was awfully nice to hear from you, but I am sorry that you didn't feel well. I had a lot of troubles with Lenya's health. Her pains in the back got worse and worse and we finally had to take her to a sanatorium to get regular treatments. It is a muscular rheumatism and very painful and hard to cure. She is back home now, but she has to stay in bed most of the time. Also the weather has been terrible here and since yesterday we are completely snowed in. All this I just mention to show you that life is not pure fun.

But on the other hand it is lots of fun to have a smash hit. The show is doing wonderful business (as you know from your statements). We have between 20 and 100 standees in every performance and the audience reaction is wonderful. Even "My Ship" gets a good hand, probably because the song is getting a little more popular. I go about twice a week to check on music and lyrics. It is in very good shape. I guess you've got most of the records (~~Mitchell Kaye's~~ Benny Goodman excellent!, Reisman good, Sammy Kay not so good, Hildegard very good). I haven't heard the Duchin record yet. It came out yesterday. The Lawrence album is musically very good, but her voice sounds a little shaky. I hear Danny Kaye's records are wonderful, but it seems he has changed quite a lot; they'll probably go very big with the jitterbugs. She takes them very relaxed and that is good for the lyrics and the music. All the record shops have big signs in the windows "The song hits from Lady in the Dark". Max Dreyfus says the sale of records (especially Hildegard) is far above average.

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The piano is just finished printing and I am reading the proofs of the first dream (or is it "proves"?) today. You will get the first dream. Please correct them carefully and as quick as possible!!!! Moss will write a preface to the piano score. He asked me if I would rather have a musician write the preface, but I think it is better when he writes it and explains what we have tried to do. I didn't see much of Moss'. He is completely relaxed and very busy enjoying life, going to parties and nightclubs and in wonderful spirits. You've probably read his very witty article "The Saga of Gertie". He will write some more theatre anecdotes like that and publish them in a book. He doesn't want to talk about a new show yet. - We had quite a shock on Wednesday when we heard that Sam Harris got very sick. He was taken to the hospital for an appendix operation, but they found some complications and it seems the doctors were not sure if it is cancer or not. Thank God, since Wednesday the reports are very encouraging and we hope he will pull through.

The lawyers are still working out the contracts for the picture sale. You know that Moss wants us to take the entire first payment (60,000) and Reinheimer told me it's okay with you. - I had a letter from Arthur Lyons. He writes that you haven't seen Sidney Franklin yet, but that he is trying to work out a deal for us to do the score for "The Play's the thing" with the Spewacks. That would be a very nice job.

William King, musical editor of the "Sun" wrote me, he saw the show and thought it was "one of the most delightful evenings in the theatre" he's ever had and that the score has an "immeasurable" part in the success. Virgil Thompson wrote a violent attack against me. It was all very personal and his main point was that I am no good any more since I stopped working with Brecht and that I ~~was~~ "constantly avoiding" collaborating with "major poets" (a rather bold statement, don't you think so?). Well, I am used to this kind of attacks from the part of jealous composers. In some form or another it happens every time I do a new show.

We bought a Buick Convertible to-day and it seems pretty sure now that we will buy the house we told you about.

That's all for this time.

A kiss for Lee and love to you two from Lenya and me,



Kurt