

Do
You
Sleep
in
the
Nude
?

BY REX REED



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The pieces on Peter Fonda, Ava Gardner, Warren Beatty,
and Governor Lester Maddox first appeared in *Esquire*;
Marianne Moore and Lotte Lenya in *Queen*;
Mike Nichols and Bill Cosby in *Cosmopolitan*;
and Jean Paul Belmondo and The Living Theatre
in the *New York Magazine* of the *Herald Tribune*.
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Lotte Lenya

SHE WAS FULL OF BEANS IN BOSTON.

Outside the Shubert Theatre, orange leaves blew through the street as an autumn chill licked the frosty New England night. Inside, a well-dressed audience rustled its programs nervously through the first public preview of Harold Prince's Broadway-bound musical, *Cabaret*. Everything was going wrong. The sets refused to fall into place. The microphones hummed with feedbacks. The actors missed their cues. Typical tryout-in-Boston problems. Then, suddenly, before the first act was three scenes old, a whisper rose through the crowd that started like the rustle of taffeta and ended like the sound of water through a hose.

Lenya!

And there, up on the stage, glowing like a Halloween pumpkin under the hot lights of honky-tonk Berlin was the legend herself: face like a clock without a second hand, a red slash of lipstick across the mouth, dressed in a tacky maroon wrapper with big yellow flowers, a

gold medallion on a black velvet ribbon around her neck, one hand on her hip and the other waving gently toward imaginary stars, singing in that voice like a musical mixmaster:

*The sun will rise and the moon will set,
And you learn how to settle for what you get,
It'll all go on if we're here or not,
So who cares, so what,
So who cares, so what?*

Then and there, isolated from the reality of taxes and Vietnam, that audience in Boston knew it was hit between the eyes. The people came to see a musical about Germany in the Jazz Age, based on Christopher Isherwood's *Berlin Stories*, and they got the real thing. They also got a preview of an important new chapter in the life of one of the few genuine legends still left in show business. At 66—when most ladies her age are out buying cemetery plots or phoning up about Medicare—Lotte Lenya is embarking on a whole new musical-comedy career with enough energy to send the first missile to the moon and back. "For sixteen years," she says, smiling her crooked-tooth jack-o'-lantern grin, "I've been the widow of Kurt Weill. Now I'm *me*!"

Oh, the legend is still there, of course. You hear about her, if you're lucky, when you're still a kid. If not, you learn pretty fast while you're still fresh off the train in New York from wherever it is you came from. You hear about her in the booths at Downey's, late at night, listening to Those Who Know talk about Things That Matter, or in Sardi's when you have the price of a drink, or you see her name up on the posters at Carnegie Hall. And you listen, too, to the record collection of someone with taste, and like Scotch and avocados and most of the other things in life that are special, you learn to cultivate a taste for the way she sounds.

But today, after all those years of singing Kurt Weill's songs and playing Bertolt Brecht's women, the legend is letting its hair down. They still print pictures of her beautifully ravaged face leaning wistfully against vine-covered stone walls, or looking out sadly across the railroad tracks of war-torn Berlin. But those are the wrong legends. The real one sits in slacks with the chorus boys in *Cabaret* and laughs her warm, throaty croak and jokes about the past: "I've learned a lot since I arrived an immigrant from the Nazis in 1935. I went to Saks Fifth Avenue and bought a sweater and in my horrible English I

asked the clerk, 'Would you rape it for me?' 'Sorry miss,' he said, 'but it isn't my type.' "

That's Lenya. In *Cabaret* she dances with a trio of sailors and sings a song about a pineapple and brings the house down. She does it all, for the very first time in a musical, without the aid of Kurt Weill. Still, there seems to be a ghost in the wings. If the songs sound like Weill, as they often do when Lenya sings them, it is because she can sing them no other way. Under other circumstances, the comparison could be disastrous, but John Kander, a handsome, boyish young man who composed the music for the show, says: "A lot of people are comparing my music to Weill. The image Lenya brings to this show makes it hard to break out of the mold. She says kindly, 'No, it doesn't sound like Weill, it sounds like Germany,' but the feeling is still there." Lenya pooh-poohs the idea. "I feel comfortable in this show. After all, it is about the world I knew with Weill. Everyone is influenced by somebody else in this world. Weill himself was influenced by Stravinsky and a Philadelphia critic once called him a tired Puccini. 'Puccini', he said, 'so what? He wasn't such a bad composer, was he?' So if people say the songs written for me now sound like Weill, I just say, so what? Is it so bad to be influenced by someone so wonderful?"

Like most legends, she creates her own special aura. Joe Masteroff, author of the book for *Cabaret*, hit the nail on the head when he admitted that "the role she plays was written for Lenya, the songs were composed for Lenya, there was never anybody under consideration but Lenya. We are trying to re-create the Berlin of 1930, and when you think of that era, you think of Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenya. Weill is dead but Lenya is still with us. When she walks onstage she brings it all with her."

Offstage, too. For three days before the Boston opening, through the rehearsals and the miserable hotel food and the running out for cold coffee and stale sandwiches and the nerves exploding on the air, she brought to it all an air of another time, another place. Relaxing after the show in black leotards and a little pink shirt, she reached out for a tall, iced drink in a suite at the Ritz Carlton looking like a shining Teutonic sun, and memories flashed by. "It was this same hotel that we were sitting in—Ira Gershwin, Gertrude Lawrence, and Moss Hart were with us—when Sam Harris came in after the opening of *Lady in the Dark*. Harris never made contracts. A handshake was

the deal. Everyone was busily talking and Sam came in and over the roar said, 'Gentlemen, I'm leaving. The show is half an hour too long. Good night.' What a producer. Those were the good times. People really cared in those days. The theater was more than just a business."

But she was getting ahead of her story. According to *Who's Who*, Lenya (nobody ever calls her Lotte) was born in 1900 in a working-class section of Vienna called Hitzing. Her mother was a laundress, her father a coachman, and she was one of four hungry children. It seems she could always dance. When she was only a baby her father would often summon her from the coal bin where she slept and make her dance for him. By the age of four, she had learned to stand on her head and walk a tightrope with an umbrella in a tiny neighborhood circus where she also danced the czardas. During World War I she studied ballet in Zurich and later left home and toured the suburbs of Berlin. "I lived with another dancer and we worked out a ballet evening—made all our own costumes, printed our own programs. We were only teen-agers but we were sure we'd take Berlin by storm. Nobody came, no agents signed us. My friend left, but I stayed on." She was earning an inflationary three-billion marks a week (about \$5) as an actress in Shakespeare and Molière plays when playwright Georg Kaiser took pity on her and invited her to live with his family on a lake near Berlin. One Sunday, the family told her they were expecting a young composer to drop by. Would she take the boat across the lake and meet him? Her eyes cloud with mist when she tells the story: "I took the rowboat and went to the station and there was this funny-looking little man in great thick glasses and a little blue suit. 'Would you mind entering our transportation?' I asked him. Our eyes met. We lived together for two years and then I married Kurt Weill."

Although she now insists they "did not live in an ivory tower," that period in music has nevertheless become romantic history. Weill and Lenya were leaders in a movement to revolutionize the German theater. It was an era of black satin and dancing gorillas and female impersonators and black-market cigarettes and jazz and they used it all. Weill was a composer with a strictly highbrow compositional style and strongly atonal tendencies. Bertolt Brecht was a poet who was writing for the German theater the sort of black, smoky pieces Kafka wrote in books. They met and collaborated on a short song sketch called *Little Mahagonny*, and Weill's music began to

take on the jazz influences that affected him the rest of his life. The work was premiered in Baden-Baden in 1927. "Never," recalls Lenya, "will I forget the riot it caused. The entire audience stood to cheer and boo and whistle all at the same time. Brecht had provided all of us with little whistles of our own and we just whistled right back." This marked the singing debut of Lenya. To this day she still cannot read music.

Back from Baden-Baden, they all lived in Berlin in near poverty. The first time Brecht came to visit the Weills in their pension, he was so shabby the landlady slammed the door in his face. Undaunted, they set about enlarging *Little Mahagonny* into a full-scale work, taking time out in 1928 to polish off a "trifle" commissioned by a rich avant-garde producer named Ernst-Josef Aufricht. They didn't want to waste badly needed time, but they were broke and Aufricht was offering them real money, so they took the job. The trifle was *The Threepenny Opera*. "Weill was twenty-four and we had a small theater at the end of a dark alley. To get to it, you had to cross a canal and there it was, hidden away so nobody could see it. Today that spot lies across the wall in East Berlin. All the big Berlin producers said it would be a 'smash flop.' Even our friends warned us not to get involved in such a disaster. The dress rehearsal lasted until five A.M. and we opened cold the same night. They nearly stoned us because we broke all the rules of musicals up to that point. Nobody knew me. When Weill suggested me for the role of Jenny the prostitute they didn't want me. I was nobody. The producer said, 'We'll give her three days out of courtesy to the composer, then fire her.' On opening night they even forgot to put my name on the program. This was before the days of press agents. That's an American invention. 'I won't let you go on,' Weill said. 'Dalink,' I said, 'I've waited so long for this break they'll know who I am tomorrow.' And they did, they did." The next morning a top Berlin critic wrote in headlines: "Who was she? She was good. She was very good. Soon she'll be on the top." That discovery was the most exciting moment in Lenya's life. The show ran for several years before the Nazis took over and turned the glittering theater capital into an ash heap.

Success followed success as Weill and Lenya and Brecht turned out vintage rotgut about whores and pimps and Alabama mamas in songs full of the yeast and desperate barroom gaiety that made the last days of the Weimar Republic a corrosive commentary on human corrup-

tion. In 1930 they produced *The Rise and Fall of the City of Mahagonny*, a jazz opera about a legendary town where trains never stop, set on the gold coast of Florida. None of them had ever been to America and hadn't the slightest idea where anything was, but they turned out a masterpiece that was half beer-cellar Berlin, half New Orleans Dixieland. Its anti-Nazi sentiments, its decidedly Left Wing theme, and a growing hatred for its Jewish composer (Weill's father was a cantor) caused one of the bloodiest riots in the history of the German theater the night it premiered in Leipzig.

Sitting on the sofa in the Ritz, declining a slice of cantaloupe, and puffing on ragged menthol cigarettes from a well-mashed package, Lenya remembered it all: "All of us were fascinated by America as we knew it from books, movies, popular songs, headlines. Weill loved Sophie Tucker's records. This was the America of the garish Twenties with its Capones, Texas Guinans, Aimee Semple MacPhersons, Ponzis, the Florida boom, and the stock-market crash. Also the disastrous Florida hurricane, which we used in *Mahagonny*, and a ghastly photograph reproduced in every German newspaper of murderess Ruth Snyder in the electric chair, Hollywood films about the Wild West and the Yukon, Tin Pan Alley songs. We all dreamed of going there."

Lenya sat in the audience that night with Weill's parents as the brownshirts filled the square around the theater carrying placards. By the final curtain, when God appears to tell the sinners He cannot send them to hell because "we were *always* in hell," fist fights had already started in the aisles, the audience was screaming and the turmoil overflowed onto the stage. The next night it played with all the houselights on. Lenya appeared in it when it played Berlin for the first time in 1931 in Max Reinhardt's theater on the Kurfürstendamm. It became the first opera in history presented for a continuous run in a commercial theater. "Even today I have but to meet a true Berliner of that time, a survivor of that truly glorious public, to hear him say 'Yes, yes, *Threepenny Opera* was wonderful of course, but *Mahagonny*. . . .'"

Also in 1930, two years after sound came in, the great German film director G. W. Pabst asked Lenya to re-create her Jenny Diver role for his film of *Threepenny Opera*. Singing the "Pirate Jenny" song in her lachrymose style, she became the rage of the German intellectuals. But things were happening behind the scenes. Brecht had gotten

involved with Karl Marx. Weill was interested in music, not politics. One night in 1933 word arrived from a publisher friend who had infiltrated into the Nazi party that Weill and Lenya were on the Nazi black list. "When we learned we were to be arrested, we left Berlin the very same night. One more day and we would have been in a concentration camp and I would not be appearing in *Cabaret* today. Still, you must understand that it was not because Weill was Jewish. In '33 it had not come to that yet. Hitler was attacking originality. Composers, actors, writers, anyone who had the nerve to speak out against the inflation and bigotry. We were called *culture bolsheviks*. It was because of the art, not anti-Semitism. That came after we were gone."

They fled to Paris, met Brecht there, and the three of them sat around gloomily in the sidewalk cafés, sipping Moselle, worrying about Berlin, and—worse—speaking no French. But they produced, too. Weill wrote a ballet called *Seven Deadly Sins* about a haunted girl named Anna, sung and danced by her split personality. The role was acted by Lenya, danced by the great Tillie Losch, and choreographed by a young newcomer named George Balanchine. "Everybody spoke a different language," says Lenya. "Years later Balanchine said to me, 'Lenya, if I'd understood it at the time I'd never have done it.' " But he did, and Anna has become almost as famous a Weill-Brecht character as Mack the Knife.

After that, an American producer approached the Weills to do a Biblical musical called *The Eternal Road* with Lenya playing both Miriam, the sister of Moses, and the Witch of Endor, and Max Reinhardt directing. *The Eternal Road* almost collapsed four times before they even got on the ship. It had an enormous cast and was a dismal failure, but it didn't matter. They were really in America, and as starry-eyed as chorus girls. "We were not afraid," says Lenya, eyes shining. "The New York skyline was as familiar as Berlin. We'd seen it so many times in the movies. Riding up in our first elevator at the St. Moritz Hotel was the biggest thrill of our lives. There were no skyscrapers with elevators in Germany. We dropped our bags and headed straight for the movies. It was *The Dark Angel* and I think it starred Ronald Colman and Vilma Banky. I'll never forget my first bus ride. I was a penniless immigrant and spoke practically no English, so every dollar counted. I handed the driver a dollar bill and he had no change. I rode all the way down Sixth Avenue terrified he wouldn't give it back. 'How courteous Americans are,' I said to myself when he ac-

tually gave me my change at the end of my trip. We learned English fast and never spoke German again. Do you know," she said, staring out of the window, "the last words he said to me before he died were not in German at all, but in English."

From the beginning, they were accepted. *Johnny Johnson*, Weill's second show, got a rave from Brooks Atkinson and Lenya has never forgotten it. George Gershwin invited them as his guests to the opening night of *Porgy and Bess*. "It was a terrible flop, only ran six weeks. Heartbroken, Gershwin came to our tiny apartment on 72nd Street and Kurt Weill told him, 'It will survive.' He was right. Gershwin always said, 'Lenya sing' and after I sang he would tell me, 'You sing like a hillbilly.' I didn't even know what that was until years later. Ira Gershwin was another friend. Still is, though he never moves out of his red chair in California anymore."

The greats came and went: Moss Hart and Maxwell Anderson and Larry Hart and Walter Huston and Gertrude Lawrence and Marc Blitzstein. All of them gone today but Lenya. And the shows came and went, too: *Knickerbocker Holiday*, *Lady in the Dark*, *One Touch of Venus*, *Down in the Valley*, and *The Firebrand of Florence*, a major disaster that starved Lenya. Tired of performing, she decided to retire and turn the spotlight over to her husband. With the money from *Lady in the Dark* they bought an old farmhouse on the South Mountain Road in New City, where Lenya still lives today. "It looks upside down. You can sit in the field in the back and it looks like the front. The entrance is on the side. It's a crazy house, very old. The year 1878 is carved on one of the stones." Brecht visited them there in 1946, before he locked himself behind the Iron Curtain forever.

In that little farmhouse, Weill turned out *Street Scene* (1947) and his last work, *Lost in the Stars* (1949). His mood turned to nostalgia and he was accused of writing cotton-candy music that was soft, sentimental, and—worst of all—sophisticated. But life was happier in Rockland County, softer—and more sophisticated. On April 3, 1950, Kurt Weill died of a heart attack and Lenya's world collapsed. "When he died I wanted to crawl into a hole and never come out." She buried him in his favorite white turtle-neck sweater and a simple pair of slacks, explaining, "He's going to be very busy up there and I want him to be comfortable."

In 1951, happiness came briefly back in the form of her second

husband, George Davis, a former *Harper's Bazaar* editor who had photographed the Weills as immigrants years before and had remained close to Lenya through her grief. "Davis," she says now, "taught me like you teach a child to walk again. 'Lenya,' he would say, 'there are thousands of people who want you back. Establish your own name as Lotte Lenya, not just the 'widow of Kurt Weill.' I remembered our past and Berlin and Brecht and Georg Kaiser and I knew what I had to do. Except to a few, Weill was known only for what he had done in America. But what of his youth and the way he had captured the bitter, insecure Germany of the Twenties? I wanted to make people know about that, too."

Together they set upon a campaign to revive Weill's music the way he always meant for it to be sung—by Lenya herself. ("I hear all my melodies," Weill always said, "sung in my inner ear by Lenya.") About this time Ernst-Josef Aufricht, the original producer of *Threepenny Opera* in Berlin, asked Lenya to appear in Town Hall. She was terrified. She hadn't appeared on a stage in six years, but somehow George Davis managed to get her there. "I felt like I was strangling. At eight o'clock I could not go on. I was very emotional, shaking all over. Then I looked out at that packed house and I thought, 'This is what *he* would've wanted!'" The applause lasted fifteen minutes. It was the beginning of a new career.

Everyone wanted Lenya. In 1953, Leonard Bernstein conducted her in an outdoor concert version of *Threepenny* at Brandeis University before 4,000 screaming fans. "They all knew the music and sat in their seats whistling it before we even started." What was the applause like? Deafening? "I don't know. I couldn't hear it because a train went by." In 1954, Marc Blitzstein's off-Broadway version in English opened at the Theatre de Lys in Greenwich Village. Every note was supervised by Lenya, who wouldn't allow a single change. It ran for six years and 2,611 performances. Even after she left the show, she would go back and help sharpen it up. "I would go backstage and tell the cast how good they were and they would say, 'But Lenya, it's because we knew you were in the audience.' I couldn't go back every night—no show is that good."

Through Davis' help, she began slowly to record Weill's music—the Berlin theater songs, the American theater songs, and many of his early works. A new religion was springing up and Lenya was its high priestess. College kids from all over the world wrote her fan let-

ters. In 1955 she returned to Berlin for the first time in twenty-two years in search of biographical material on Kurt Weill. "I didn't want to go. I stood on the train and looked out over Berlin and I didn't recognize it. The war destruction was devastating. I felt weak. I didn't go out of the hotel. I wanted to leave right away." But she did stay and people mobbed her in the streets. At the first German performance of *Street Scene* in Dusseldorf she was given a standing ovation.

In 1957 she returned again. While she was in Hamburg recording Weill's *Mahagonny* score, George Davis suffered a heart attack, but recovered in time to accompany her to Berlin to handpick and train singers and direct a 30th anniversary recording of the complete *Threepenny Opera* for the first time in German. They were collaborating on a biography of Weill to be called *September Song* and Davis was eating nitroglycerine pills like popcorn. She telephoned the widow of her old friend Georg Kaiser to come and live with them in their sublet apartment in Berlin. The day Lenya received West Berlin's "Freedom Bell" award for peace, Davis entered the hospital for a week's rest. He never came home.

With two husbands dead of the identical disease, Lenya collapsed totally. Friends, however, persuaded her that George would have wanted her to carry through the plans that had brought them to Berlin. A week after his death, sighing "This I must do for him," she supervised in Berlin the recording of *Threepenny Opera* which today is considered a collector's item.

She returned from Germany in March, 1959, to a new life. She starred in an off-Broadway production of *Brecht on Brecht* (which she doesn't even like to discuss) and the movies discovered her again after twenty-seven years. In Tennessee Williams' *The Roman Spring of Mrs. Stone* she played a barracuda called La Contessa Magda Terribili-Gonzales, who procures boys for crumbling older women, and in *From Russia With Love* she was a homicidal lesbian charlady who tried to murder James Bond by kicking him in the shins with a poisoned dagger planted in the toe of her shoes. (A trick that she ably demonstrated in the Ritz, taking care not to damage the carpet.) A whole new generation claimed Lenya for its own and even bought her records, too. "One night," she recalls, "I was at the ballet and these two kids came up to me looking so sad. The boy was about seventeen and his little girl friend couldn't have been more than fifteen. 'Oh, Miss Lenya,' they said, 'we're so worried.' 'Why?' I asked.

'We don't know who's gonna sing these songs you sing so beautifully ten years from now.' 'Please, darlings,' I said, 'I'm not dead yet.' That was 1959 and I'm still kicking!"

Indeed she is. Today she is married to an American painter named Russ Detwiler, who is only slightly more than half her age. ("When you are in love," she confides wisely, "age just becomes something stamped on your passport.") They live in the old house in New City and in a tiny apartment on East 55th Street in the same building as Van Johnson and Noel Coward. They still print those sad photographs, but the real Lenya is more fun than most of the girls who are young enough to be her grandchildren. She doesn't need the lights of a Broadway stage to get her message across, either. The day after the preview in Boston, she leaned against a drugstore chair in pants and an old sweater, on a drafty stage in an empty theater. No lights. No violins. She just sang. Even the man in the box office out front came in to applaud. Then she sat down in a coffee shop across the alley and told everybody jokes.

Today most of the sadness is gone, and she can talk about her life with the joy of a woman who is proud of the way she lived it. "I'm overjoyed about the way people finally accept Weill for the genius he was. *Threepenny Opera* will be good a hundred years from now. Corruption and poverty don't go out of fashion. I think he had a tremendous influence on American music, too. On the opening night of *Knickerbocker Holiday* in New York Larry Hart sat in front of us in the third row and at intermission he turned around and said, 'Kurt, because of you we're gonna have to write better books from now on.' That was 1938. Musicals got better after that. *Pal Joey* was Weill's favorite. Irving Berlin told him, 'You're new in this country. Just remember one thing—you're only as good as your last success!' But he was wrong. Weill was timeless. He had the capacity to appeal to all ages. He had only fifteen years in this country, but he absorbed it all."

She doesn't mind the way everybody distorts Weill's songs and tells a funny anecdote about the day she came across a recording of "September Song" by Stan Kenton and took it home. "I put the record on and said, 'Kurt, I want you to hear something.' 'That was very interesting,' he said when the record stopped, 'what was it?' After that we both followed the German saying, *Es Geht Auch Anders Doch*

So Geht Es Auch—"It's possible this way, but it's also possible another way."

And Brecht? "Brecht was my mother's milk. Today his future lies with the college kids. I toured 25 colleges with *Brecht on Brecht* and those students had read everything. They're full of the same defiance he had in himself. Also, he wrote about things which Broadway audiences are not educated to understand. *Mother Courage* is about the Thirty Years' War. Who knows anything about that in America except college students? If you did a play about Daniel Boone in Berlin you'd have to explain it to the Germans. It's the same thing. Still, Brecht will never die. The very day after Weill died, he sent me a telegram saying 'Come immediately to East Berlin and work with me' but I couldn't. America was my home and I was still bitter. I feel different now about Germany. Last year when I played *Mother Courage* there I met the young people and they are very hip. They are ashamed of what happened in the war. They don't want to hear about past disasters, they want to look into the future positively. Also, in Germany today there is very little to attack. At the time of Brecht and Weill it was the zero hour. They do not put Brecht into a category by saying his work was an expression of Communism. Anyway, I don't think he took his work too seriously. He was very religious. He loved Christmas and always had two trees, one for his children and one for himself.

"I went into the eastern zone to see Brecht before he died in 1956. I hadn't seen him in ten years. He had an endearing quality, he could really blush. He sat in a huge Gothic chair and asked me to sing. I sang 'Surabaya Johnny' with no piano. Halfway through, I stopped because the setting was too simple and I was afraid it was not epic enough, the way he had remembered it. He patted my cheek and said, 'Lenya darling, whatever you do is epic enough for me.' The next day I recorded a song for his acting class at the Berliner Ensemble and I remember he couldn't raise the asbestos curtain on the stage. He tried and tried and finally I said, 'Brecht, after all you *are* behind the Iron Curtain!' He broke into a wide smile, then he looked around quickly to make sure nobody had seen him. I never saw him again."

Today Lenya has enough money to do as she likes. She never has to work again out of necessity. Her one regret is that she has so few

tangible remembrances of Weill's work. "Dalink, when you have to scam from the Nazis in the middle of the night you can't take paintings. We took two scores—*Carmen* and *The Magic Flute*. Years later Weill gave everything away, saying 'What do I need with my own scores? I have them in my ears.'"

She never cooks ("I'd rather go to Riker's and eat beans"), is terrible at gardening ("Some people have a green thumb, I have a black one—everything wilts"), refuses to employ servants ("I won't live by their rules, especially in the country—they're so spoiled"). She runs a "loose household" and loves quiet evenings with friends like Milton Caniff (who draws Steve Canyon in the comics) or Al Andriola (who draws Kerry Drake). "No actresses—heavens! I'd rather talk to my doorman—my Irish Jimmy—than actresses!" When she entertains, she sends out for Chinese food. She recently traded in her Thunderbird for a new Jaguar and loves to race around the countryside. ("I can't speed much since they put in that 45-mile speed limit in Rockland County," she grumbles.) She still loves music, but regrets that not enough good songs are being sung today. Who does she like in the way of singers? "Barbra Streisand excites me, Judy Garland makes me cry. Otherwise nobody."

On the opening night of *Cabaret* in Boston, Lenya showed up after the show at Harold Prince's party at the Playboy Club, eyes glistening like sequins on a garter. The first reviews arrived. "I never read critics. I don't want to hear them. What do they say?" Harold Prince read the first rave through a microphone and everyone applauded and hugged each other. "Still," she said, "I've seen shows with grand notices in Boston fall on their noses in New York. I must continue to work." She danced a jitterbug with one of her sailors from the show, kissed all the chorus boys for luck, and at two A.M. stood surrounded by bunnies, saying good-bye in the door of the Playboy Club. It had been thirty-three years since she stood on the Kurfurstendamm and waved good-bye to Berlin. Now she was waving good-bye again, on her way to Broadway. And now, as before, good-bye was only the beginning.