



# The Man That Got Away: The Life and Songs of Harold Arlen (Music in American Life)

*Walter Rimler*

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**The Man That Got Away: The Life and Songs of Harold Arlen (Music in American Life)** Walter Rimler "Over the Rainbow," "Stormy Weather," and "One for My Baby" are just a few of Harold Arlen's well-loved compositions. Yet his name is hardly known--except to the musicians who venerate him. At a gathering of songwriters George Gershwin called him "the best of us." Irving Berlin agreed. Paul McCartney sent him a fan letter and became his publisher. Bob Dylan wrote of his fascination with Arlen's "bittersweet, lonely world."

A cantor's son, Arlen believed his music was from a place outside himself, a place that also sent tragedy. When his wife became mentally ill and was institutionalized he turned to alcohol. It nearly killed him. But the beautiful songs kept coming: "Blues in the Night," "My Shining Hour," "Come Rain or Come Shine," and "The Man That Got Away."

Walter Rimler drew on interviews with friends and associates of Arlen and on newly available archives to write this intimate portrait of a genius whose work is a pillar of the Great American Songbook.

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