



# Rachmaninoff's Cape: A Nostalgia Memoir

*George Rousseau*

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## **Rachmaninoff's Cape: A Nostalgia Memoir** George Rousseau

New York City in 1949. A poor, Jewish, eight-year old boy named George, who has shown remarkable talent on the piano, accidentally breaks his rich friend's cello. The mother, Evelyn Amster, a former aspiring concert pianist, makes light of the accident. The eight-year old boy grows up to become a professional academic historian, and develops a keen friendship with his friend's mother, a generation older than he is. But multiple tragedies alter her life course. This memoir describes her despair and conflicts, especially her strange infatuation with composer-pianist Sergei Rachmaninoff (1873-1943). It also reconstructs Rachmaninoff's life by offering a new way of interpreting it. Rachmaninoff's Cape captures the musical worlds of Silver Age Russia at the end of the nineteenth century and New York City in the twentieth. The author himself was immersed in this musical culture in New York after World War Two.

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