IRINA – narrative, and back story

He was a “Depression Baby”— that is, he was born in the 30’s. But Danny’s father had a good job. He was public relations head for the most important concert manager of the time, S. Hurok. Hurok managed the Ballet Russe. Danny’s father because of his work, knew many of the company.

Danny at four and a half was taken to the Ballet’s production of “Petrushka.” In the final scene, Petrushka and the Moor fight over the Ballerina. The crowd surrounds them. A loud, startling shot is heard, and a full-length rag doll of Petrushka is thrown over the crowd’s head and lands on the front of the stage: a dead body! Petrushka is dead! (Danny’s first experience of death.)

Sometime after this, Danny is walking with his parents and they ask: [“What do you want for your birthday, Danny.” He answers instantly: “A ballerina.”]

Months pass. His family moves to a country farmhouse fifty miles from the city. His father commutes. On the day of his birthday, he is put down for nap. When he wakes up he sees at the foot of his bed, a young woman who looks like his mother, but has on stage make-up and large eyelashes. It is his birthday gift: the ballerina whom his father has driven out from New York for this moment. But Danny has long since forgotten his birthday wish. His mother who is standing off to the side realizes his incomprehension because Danny merely says “hello.”

Danny is brought down to the living room where the ballerina—it was the famous dancer, Irina Baronova who performed the “Ballerina” in Petrushka—was, dressed in street clothes. Danny is suddenly overwhelmed with an attraction to Irina. [He offers to dance for her.]

Afterwards, Danny’s father drives the ballerina (and her husband) back to the city.

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