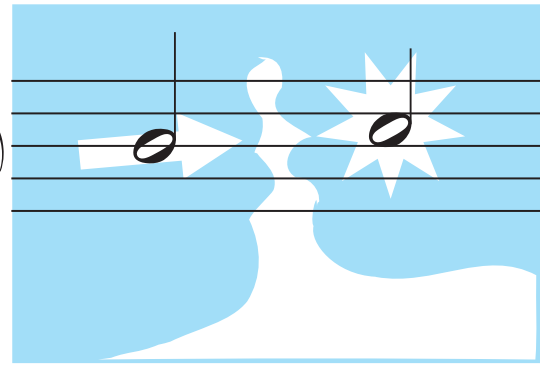


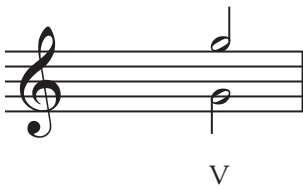
# Augmented Sixth Chords

LIKE THAT MOMENT OF **INCREDIBLE TENSION** JUST BEFORE THE **HERO** FINALLY KISSES THE **LEADING LADY**, THE **SEMITONE** IS THE **GO-TO INTERVAL** FOR CREATING **TENSION** IN MUSIC OF THE COMMON PRACTICE PERIOD. IT **DRIVES** THE **ENTIRE STYLE**!

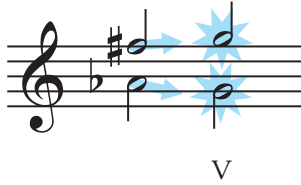


IF **ONE** SEMITONE CAN CREATE SUCH STRONG TENSION, HOW ABOUT **TWO** SEMITONES SOUNDING **SIMULTANEOUSLY**? LET'S GET CREATIVE HERE FOR A MINUTE TO FIND A COOL NEW WAY TO APPROACH A DIATONIC CHORD. IN THIS CASE, WE'LL USE THEM TO APPROACH THE **DOMINANT TRIAD**.

FIRST, WE'LL START WITH THE DOUBLED ROOT OF A **V CHORD**...



...AND **APPROACH** THAT OCTAVE WITH A SEMITONE **BELOW** THE TOP NOTE,



...AND A SEMITONE **ABOVE** THE BOTTOM NOTE...



...AND, FINALLY, ADD THE TONIC AS THE THIRD NOTE.

THE RESULT IS A NEW CHORD, ONE WE CALL THE **AUGMENTED SIXTH CHORD**, AFTER THE INTERVAL CREATED BY THE TOP AND BOTTOM NOTES.

IF WE JUST USE THREE NOTES AND DOUBLE THE TONIC, WE GET THE **ITALIAN AUGMENTED SIXTH**.



AUGMENTED SIXTH CHORDS ARE **PREDOMINANT** CHORDS, MEANING THEY ARE USED TO APPROACH DOMINANT CHORDS. THEY ARE USUALLY USED TO APPROACH DOMINANT **TRIADS**, NOT DOMINANT **SEVENTHS**, BECAUSE OF THE **DOUBLED ROOTS** PRESENT IN DOMINANT TRIADS.

HOWEVER, THEY ALSO OFTEN APPROACH **TONIC CHORDS** IN **SECOND INVERSION**, WHICH ALSO CONTAIN A **DOUBLED FIFTH SCALE DEGREE**.



IF WE ADD THE SECOND SCALE DEGREE INSTEAD OF DOUBLING THE TONIC, WE GET THE **FRENCH AUGMENTED SIXTH**.



RARELY, AUGMENTED SIXTH CHORDS ARE FOUND **TRANSPOSSED DOWN A PERFECT FIFTH**, ANALYZED AS "**ON FLAT TWO**," AND USED TO APPROACH A TONIC CHORD IN **ROOT POSITION**.

AND IF WE REPLACE THE SECOND SCALE DEGREE WITH THE LOWERED THIRD SCALE DEGREE, WE GET THE **GERMAN AUGMENTED SIXTH**.



AND, FINALLY, WHEN RESOLVING THE GERMAN AUGMENTED SIXTH CHORD TO A DOMINANT TRIAD, YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF WRITING **PARALLEL FIFTHS**... BUT IT'S **PERFECTLY OKAY!** **MOZART DID IT ALL THE TIME!**

