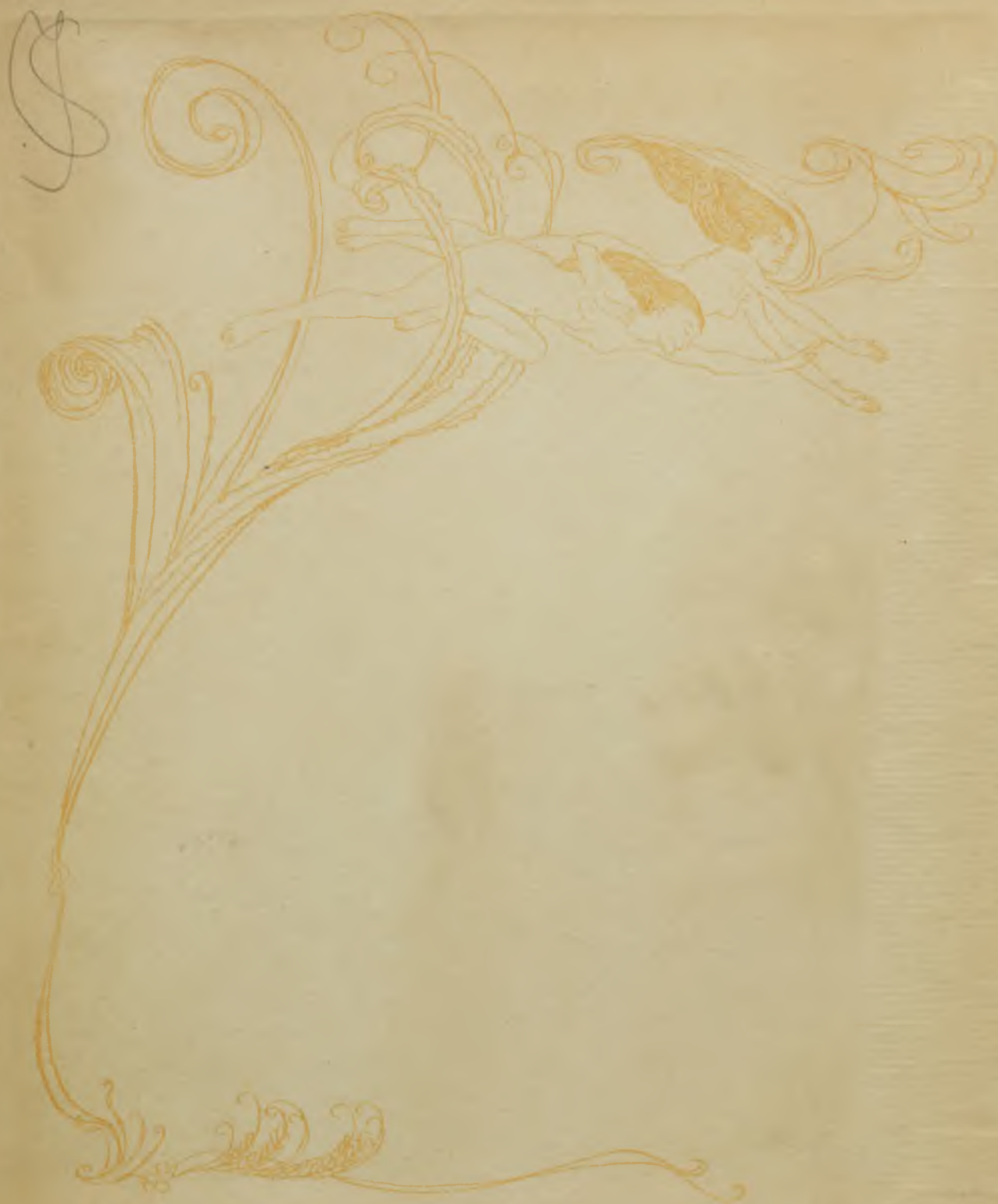


REITH  
V 16 b

# SIEGFRIED · & · THE TWILIGHT · OF · THE · GODS



ILLUSTRATED · BY ·  
ARTHUR · RACKHAM





**THE RING  
OF THE NIBLUNG  
A TRILOGY WITH A PRE-  
LUDE BY RICHARD WAGNER**

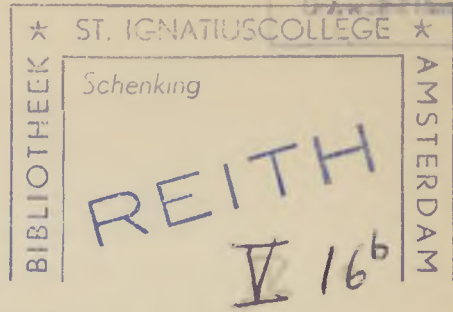
TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH BY  
MARGARET ARMOUR



PRELUDE: THE RHINEGOLD  
FIRST DAY OF THE TRILOGY: THE VALKYRIE  
SECOND DAY OF THE TRILOGY: SIEGFRIED  
THIRD DAY OF THE TRILOGY: THE TWILIGHT  
OF THE GODS

21.473<sup>6</sup>

243394667



34  
II

SIEGFRIED AND  
THE TWILIGHT  
OF THE GODS

*Books Illustrated by Arthur Rackham*

*Uniform with this volume,*

*15s. net each.*

A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM. By  
William Shakespeare.

RIP VAN WINKLE. By Washington Irving.

THE INGOLDSBY LEGENDS OF MIRTH AND  
MARVELS. By Thomas Ingoldsby, Esq.

THE RING OF THE NIBLUNG. By Richard  
Wagner. Translated by Margaret Armour.  
I. THE RHINEGOLD AND THE VAL-  
KYRIE.

*Also*

UNDINE. By De la Motte Fouqué. Adapted  
from the German by W. L. Courtney.

*With 15 Coloured and many Text Illustrations,  
crown 4to. Price 7s. 6d. net.*

ALICE'S ADVENTURES IN WONDERLAND.  
By Lewis Carroll. With a Proem by  
Austin Dobson.

*With 12 Coloured and several Text Illustrations,  
crown 8vo. Price 6s. net.*

LONDON : WILLIAM HEINEMANN, 21 BEDFORD STREET, W.C.



"Nothung! Nothung!  
Conquering sword!"  
See p. 40



MS  
EBA  
497

# SIEGFRIED & THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

BY RICHARD WAGNER  
WITH ILLUSTRATIONS  
BY ARTHUR RACKHAM



TRANSLATED BY MARGARET ARMOUR

LONDON  WILLIAM HEINEMANN  
NEW YORK  DOUBLEDAY PAGE & CO

1911



All rights reserved

# LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	To face page
"Nothung! Nothung! Conquering sword!"	Frontispiece
Mime at the anvil	4
Mime and the infant Siegfried	8
"And there I learned What love was like"	10
Siegfried sees himself in the stream	12
Mime finds the mother of Siegfried in the forest	14
"In dragon's form Fafner now watches the hoard"	22
Mime and the Wanderer	24
The forging of Nothung	34
Siegfried kills Fafner	56
"The hot blood burns like fire!"	58
The dwarfs quarrelling over the body of Fafner	62
"Magical rapture Pierces my heart; Fixed is my gaze, Burning with terror; I reel, my heart faints and fails!"	86
"Sun, I hail thee! Hail, O light! Hail, O glorious day!"	88

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	To face page
Brünnhilde throws herself into Siegfried's arms	98
The three Norns	104
The Norns vanish	108
Siegfried leaves Brünnhilde in search of adventure	110
Siegfried hands the drinking-horn back to Gutrune, and gazes at her with sudden passion	120
Brünnhilde kisses the ring that Siegfried has left with her	124
The ravens of Wotan	128
" The ring upon thy hand— . . . ah, be implored ! For Wotan fling it away ! "	130
The wooing of Grimhilde, the mother of Hagen	136
" Swear to me, Hagen, my son ! "	138
" O wife betrayed, I will avenge Thy trust deceived "	154
" Though gaily ye may laugh, In grief ye shall be left, For, mocking maids, this ring Ye ask shall never be yours "	162
" Siegfried ! Siegfried ! Our warning is true : Flee, oh, flee from the curse ! "	164

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	To face page
Siegfried's death	172
Brünnhilde on Grane leaps on to the funeral pyre of Siegfried	180
The Rhine-Maidens obtain possession of the ring and bear it off in triumph	182





## CHARACTERS

SIEGFRIED

MIME

THE WANDERER

ALBERICH

FAFNER

ERDA

BRÜNNHILDE

## SCENES OF ACTION

ACT I. A CAVE IN A WOOD

ACT II. DEPTHS OF THE WOOD

ACT III. WILD REGION AT THE FOOT OF A ROCKY MOUNTAIN ;  
AFTERWARDS : SUMMIT OF " BRÜNNHILDE'S ROCK "





## THE FIRST ACT

*A rocky cavern in a wood, in which stands a naturally formed smith's forge, with big bellows. Mime sits in front of the anvil, busily hammering at a sword.*

**Mime**

*Who has been  
hammering with a  
small hammer,  
stops working.*

Slavery! worry!  
Labour all lost!  
The strongest sword  
That ever I forged,  
That the hands of giants  
Fitly might wield,  
This insolent urchin  
For whom it is fashioned  
Can snap in two at one stroke,  
As if the thing were a toy!

*[Mime throws the sword on the anvil ill-  
humouredly, and with his arms akimbo  
gazes thoughtfully on the ground.]*

There is one sword  
That he could not shatter:  
Nothung's splinters  
Would baffle his strength,  
Could I but forge  
Those doughty fragments  
That all my skill  
Cannot weld anew.  
Could I but forge the weapon,  
Shame and toil would win their reward!

*[He sinks further back, his head bowed in thought.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Fafner, the dragon grim,  
Dwells in the gloomy wood ;  
With his gruesome and grisly bulk  
The Nibelung hoard  
Yonder he guards.  
Siegfried, lusty and young,  
Would slay him without ado ;  
The Nibelung's ring  
Would then become mine.  
The only sword for the deed  
Were Nothung, if it were swung  
By Siegfried's conquering arm ;  
And I cannot fashion  
Nothung, the sword !

*[He lays the sword in position again, and goes  
on hammering in deep dejection.]*

Slavery ! worry !  
Labour all lost !  
The strongest sword  
That ever I forged  
Will never serve  
For that difficult deed.  
I beat and I hammer  
Only to humour the boy ;  
He snaps in two what I make,  
And scolds if I cease from work.

*[He drops his hammer.]*

Siegfried

*In rough forester's  
dress, with a silver  
horn hung by a  
chain, bursts in  
boisterously from  
the wood. He is  
leading a big bear  
by a rope of bast,  
and urges him  
towards Mime in wanton fun.*

Hoiho ! Hoiho !

*[Entering.]*

Come on ! Come on !  
Tear him ! Tear him !  
The silly smith !

*[Mime drops the sword in terror, and takes  
refuge behind the forge ; while Siegfried,  
shouting with laughter, keeps driving the  
bear after him.]*



Mime at the anvil  
See p. 2



## SIEGFRIED

Hime

Hence with the beast !  
I want not the bear !

Siegfried

I come thus paired  
The better to pinch thee ;  
Bruin, ask for the sword !

Hime

Hey ! Let him go !  
There lies the weapon ;  
It was finished to-day.

Siegfried

Then thou art safe for to-day !

*[He lets the bear loose and strikes him on the  
back with the rope.]*

Off, Bruin !  
I need thee no more.

*[The bear runs back into the wood.]*

Hime

*Comes trembling  
from behind the  
forge.*

Slay all the bears  
Thou canst, and welcome ;  
But why thus bring the beasts  
Home alive ?

Siegfried

*Sits down to  
recover from his  
laughter.*

For better companions seeking  
Than the one who sits at home,  
I blew my horn in the wood,  
Till the forest glades resounded.  
What I asked with the note  
Was if some good friend  
My glad companion would be.  
From the covert came a bear  
Who listened to me with growls,  
And I liked him better than thee,  
Though better friends I shall find.

With a trusty rope  
I bridled the beast,  
To ask thee, rogue, for the weapon.

*[He jumps up and goes towards the anvil.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Mime

*Takes up the  
sword to hand  
it to Siegfried.*

I made the sword keen-edged ;  
In its sharpness thou wilt rejoice.

*[He holds the sword anxiously in his hand ;  
Siegfried snatches it from him.]*

Siegfried

What matters an edge keen sharpened,  
Unless hard and true the steel ?

*[Testing the sword.]*

Hei ! What an idle,  
Foolish toy !  
Wouldst have this pin  
Pass for a sword ?

*[He strikes it on the anvil, so that the  
splinters fly about. Mime shrinks back in  
terror.]*

There, take back the pieces,  
Pitiful bungler !  
'Tis on thy skull  
It should have been broken !  
Shall such a braggart  
Still go on boasting,  
Telling of giants  
And prowess in battle,  
Of deeds of valour,  
And dauntless defence ?—  
A sword true and trusty  
Try to forge me,  
Praising the skill  
He does not possess ?  
When I take hold  
Of what he has hammered,  
The rubbish crumbles  
At a mere touch !  
Were not the wretch  
Too mean for my wrath,  
I would break him in bits  
As well as his work—

## SIEGFRIED

The doting fool of a gnome !—  
And end the annoyance at once !

*[Siegfried throws himself on to a stone seat  
in a rage. Mime all the time has been  
cautiously keeping out of his way.]*

Mime

Again thou ravest like mad,  
Ungrateful and perverse.  
If what for him I forge  
Is not perfect on the spot,  
Too soon the boy forgets  
The good things I have made !  
Wilt never learn the lesson  
Of gratitude, I wonder ?  
Thou shouldst be glad to obey him  
Who always treated thee well.

*[Siegfried turns his back on Mime in a bad  
temper, and sits with his face to the  
wall.]*

Thou dost not like to be told that !

*[He stands perplexed, then goes to the hearth  
in the kitchen.]*

But thou wouldst fain be fed.  
Wilt eat the meat I have roasted,  
Or wouldst thou prefer the broth ?  
'Twas boiled solely for thee.

*[He brings food to Siegfried, who, without  
turning round, knocks both bowl and meat  
out of his hand.]*

Siegfried

Meat I roast for myself ;  
Sup thy filthy broth alone !

Mime

*In a wailing  
voice, as if hurt.*

This is the reward  
Of all my love !  
All my care  
Is paid for with scorn.

## SIEGFRIED

When thou wert a babe  
I was thy nurse,  
Made the mite clothing  
To keep him warm,  
Brought thee thy food,  
Gave thee to drink,  
Kept thee as safe  
As I keep my skin ;  
And when thou wert grown  
I waited on thee,  
And made a bed  
For thy slumber soft.  
I fashioned thee toys  
And a sounding horn,  
Grudging no pains,  
Wert thou but pleased.  
With counsel wise  
I guided thee well,  
With mellow wisdom  
Training thy mind.  
Sitting at home,  
I toil and moil ;  
To heart's desire  
Wander thy feet.  
Through thee alone worried,  
And working for thee,  
I wear myself out,  
A poor old dwarf !

*[Sobbing.]*

And for my trouble  
The sole reward is  
By a hot-tempered boy

*[Sobbing.]*

To be hated and plagued !

Mime and the infant Siegfried  
See p. 8





## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

*Has turned round  
again and has  
quietly watched  
Mime's face,  
while the latter,  
meeting the look,  
tries timidly to  
hide his own.*

Thou hast taught me much, Mime,  
And many things I have learned ;  
But what thou most gladly hadst taught  
me

A lesson too hard has proved—  
How to endure thy sight.

When with my food  
Or drink thou dost come,

I sup off loathing alone ;  
When thou dost softly

Make me a bed,

My sleep is broken and bad ;  
When thou wouldst teach me

How to be wise,

Fain were I deaf and dumb.

If my eyes happen

To fall on thee,

I find all thou doest

Amiss and ill-done ;

When thou dost stand,

Waddle and walk,

Shamble and shuffle,

With thine eyelids blinking,

By the neck I want

To take the nodder,

And choke the life

From the hateful twitcher.

So much, O Mime, I love thee !

Hast thou such wisdom,

Explain, I pray thee,

A thing I have wondered at :

Though I go roaming

Just to avoid thee,

Why do I always return ?

Though I love the beasts

All better than thee—

## SIEGFRIED

Tree and bird  
And the fish in the brook,  
One and all

They are dearer than thou—  
How is it I always return ?  
Of thy wisdom tell me that.

**Mime**

*Tries to approach  
him affectionately.*

My child, that ought to show thee  
That Mime is dear to thy heart.

**Siegfried**

I said I could not bear thee ;  
Forget not that so soon.

**Mime**

*Recoils, and sits  
down again apart,  
opposite Siegfried.*

The wildness that thou shouldst tame  
Is the cause, bad boy, of that.  
Young ones are always longing  
After their parents' nest ;  
What we love we all long for,  
And so thou dost yearn for me ;  
'Tis plain thou lovest thy Mime,  
And always must love him.  
What the old bird is to the young one,  
Feeding it in its nest  
Ere the fledgling can flutter,  
That is what careful, clever Mime  
To thy young life is,  
And always must be.

**Siegfried**

Well, Mime, being so clever,  
This one thing more also tell me :

*[Simply.]*

The birds sang together  
So gaily in spring,

*[Tenderly.]*

The one alluring the other ;  
And thou didst say,  
When I asked thee why,  
That they were wives with their husbands.

"And there I learned  
What love was like"  
See p. 11



## SIEGFRIED

Wime

Hence with the beast !  
I want not the bear !

Siegfried

I come thus paired  
The better to pinch thee ;  
Bruin, ask for the sword !

Wime

Hey ! Let him go !  
There lies the weapon ;  
It was finished to-day.

Siegfried

Then thou art safe for to-day !

*[He lets the bear loose and strikes him on the  
back with the rope.]*

Off, Bruin !  
I need thee no more.

*[The bear runs back into the wood.]*

Wime

*Comes trembling  
from behind the  
forge.*

Slay all the bears  
Thou canst, and welcome ;  
But why thus bring the beasts  
Home alive ?

Siegfried

*Sits down to  
recover from his  
laughter.*

For better companions seeking  
Than the one who sits at home,  
I blew my horn in the wood,  
Till the forest glades resounded.  
What I asked with the note  
Was if some good friend  
My glad companion would be.  
From the covert came a bear  
Who listened to me with growls,  
And I liked him better than thee,  
Though better friends I shall find.  
With a trusty rope  
I bridled the beast,  
To ask thee, rogue, for the weapon.

*[He jumps up and goes towards the anvil.]*

## SIEGFRIED

They chattered so sweetly,  
Were never apart ;  
They builded a nest  
In which they might brood ;  
The fluttering young ones  
Came flying out,  
And both took care of the young.  
The roes in the woods, too,  
Rested in pairs,  
The wild wolves even, and foxes.  
Food was found them and brought  
By the father,  
The mother suckled the young ones.  
And there I learned  
What love was like ;  
A whelp from its mother  
I never took.

But where hast thou, Mime,  
A wife dear and loving,  
That I may call her mother ?

Mime  
*Angrily.*

What dost thou mean ?  
Fool, thou art mad !  
Art thou then a bird or a fox ?

Siegfried

When I was a babe  
Thou wert my nurse,  
Made the mite clothing  
To keep him warm ;  
But tell me, whence  
Did the tiny mite come ?  
Could babe without mother  
Be born to thee ?

Mime  
*Greatly  
embarrassed.*

Thou must always  
Trust what I tell thee.  
I am thy father  
And mother in one.

Siegfried sees himself in the stream

See p. 12





## SIEGFRIED

Thou givest nothing  
Unless forced to.  
How to talk  
I hardly had learned  
Had it not by force  
Been wrung from the wretch.  
Come, out with it,  
Mangy old scamp !  
Who are my father and mother ?

*Time*


*After making signs  
with his head and  
hands, is released  
by Siegfried.*

Dost want to kill me outright !  
Hands off, and the facts thou shalt hear,  
As far as known to myself.  
O ungrateful  
And graceless child,  
Now learn the cause of thy hatred !  
Neither thy father  
Nor kinsman I,  
And yet thou dost owe me thy life !  
To me, thy one friend,  
A stranger wert thou ;  
It was pity alone  
Sheltered thee here ;  
And this is all my reward.  
And I hoped for thanks like a fool !

A woman once I found  
Who wept in the forest wild ;  
I helped her here to the cave,  
That by the fire I might warm her.  
The woman bore a child here ;  
Sadly she gave it birth.  
She writhed about in pain ;  
I helped her as I could.  
Bitter her plight ; she died.  
But Siegfried lived and throve.

## SIEGFRIED

- Siegfried  
*Slowly.* My poor mother died, then, through me ?
- Mime To my care she commended thee ;  
'Twas willingly bestowed.  
The trouble Mime would take !  
The worry kind Mime endured !  
" When thou wert a babe  
I was thy nurse " . . .
- Siegfried That story I often have heard.  
Now say, whence came the name  
Siegfried ?
- Mime 'Twas thus that thy mother  
Told me to name thee,  
That thou mightst grow  
To be strong and fair.  
" I made the mite clothing  
To keep it warm " . . .
- Siegfried Now tell me, what name was my mother's ?
- Mime In truth I hardly know.  
" Brought thee thy food,  
Gave thee to drink " . . .
- Siegfried My mother's name thou must tell me.
- Mime Her name I forget. Yet wait !  
Sieglinde, that was the name borne  
By her who gave thee to me.  
" I kept thee as safe  
As I keep my skin " . . .
- Siegfried Next tell me, who was my father ?  
*With increasing urgency.*
- Mime  
*Roughly.* Him I have never seen.



Mime finds the mother of Siegfried in the forest  
See p. 13



John Ruskin - 1871

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried            But my mother told it thee, surely.

Mime                 He fell in combat  
                         Was all that she said.  
                         She left the fatherless  
                         Babe to my care.  
                         " And when thou wert grown  
                         I waited on thee,  
                         And made a bed  
                         For thy slumber soft " . . .

Siegfried            Still, with thy tiresome  
                         Starling song !  
                         That I may trust thy story,  
                         Convinced thou art not lying,  
                         Thou must produce some proof.

Mime                 But what proof will convince thee ?

Siegfried            I trust thee not with my ears,  
                         I trust thee but with mine eyes :  
                         What witness speaks for thee ?

Mime                 I got this from thy mother :  
*After some thought*    For trouble, food, and service  
*takes from the*        This was my sole reward.  
*place where they*     Behold, 'tis a splintered sword !  
*are concealed*        She said 'twas borne by thy father  
*the two pieces of*    In the fatal fight when he fell.  
*a broken sword.*

Siegfried            And thou shalt forge  
*Enthusiastically.*    These fragments together,  
                         And furnish my rightful sword !  
                         Up ! Tarry not, Mime ;  
                         Quick to thy task !  
                         If thou hast skill,  
                         Thy cunning display.

## SIEGFRIED

Cheat me no more  
With worthless trash ;  
These fragments alone  
Henceforth I trust.  
Lounge o'er thy work,  
Weld it not true,  
Trickily patching  
The goodly steel,  
And thou shalt learn on thy limbs  
How metal best should be beat !  
I swear that this day  
The sword shall be mine ;  
My weapon to-day I shall win !

Mime  
*Alarmed.*

What wouldst thou to-day with the  
sword ?

Siegfried

Leave the forest  
For the wide world,  
Never more to return.  
Ah, how fair  
A thing is freedom !  
Nothing holds me or binds !  
No father have I here,  
And afar shall be my home ;  
Thy hearth is not my house,  
Nor my covering thy roof.  
Like the fish  
Glad in the water,  
Like the finch  
Free in the heavens,  
Off I will float,  
Forth I will fly,  
Like the wind o'er the wood  
Wafted away,  
Thee, Mime, beholding no more !

*[He runs into the forest.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Mime

*Greatly alarmed.*

Stop, boy ! Stop, boy !

Whither away ?

Hey ! Siegfried !

Siegfried ! Hey !

*[He looks after the retreating figure for some time in astonishment ; then he goes back to the smithy and sits down behind the anvil.]*

He storms away !

And I sit here :

To crown my cares

Comes still this new one ;

My plight is piteous indeed !

How help myself now ?

How hold the boy here ?

How lead the young madcap

To Fafner's lair ?

And how weld the splinters

Of obstinate steel ?

In no furnace fire

Can they be melted,

Nor can Mime's hammer

Cope with their hardness.

*[Shrilly.]*

The Nibelung's hate,

Need and sweat

Cannot make Nothung whole,

Never will weld it anew.

*[Sobbing, he sinks in despair on to a stool behind the anvil.]*

Wanderer

(Wotan)

All hail, cunning smith !

A seat by thy hearth

Kindly grant

The wayworn guest.

*Enters from the wood by the door*

*at the back of the cave.*

*carries a spear.*

*He wears a long dark blue cloak, and, for staff,*

*On his head is a round, broad-brimmed slouched hat.*

## SIEGFRIED

**Hime**  
*Starting up in  
alarm.*

Who seeks for me here  
In desolate woods,  
Finds my home in the forest wild ?

**Wanderer**  
*Approaching  
very slowly  
step by step.*

Wanderer names me the world, smith.  
From far I have come ;  
On the earth's back ranging,  
Much I have roamed.

**Hime**

If Wanderer named,  
Pray wander from here  
Without halting for rest.

**Wanderer**

Good men grudge me not welcome ;  
Many gifts I have received.  
By bad hearts only  
Is evil feared.

**Hime**

Ill fate always  
Dwelt by my side ;  
Thou wouldst not add to it, surely !

**Wanderer**  
*Slowly coming  
nearer and nearer.*

Always searching,  
Much have I seen ;  
Things of weight  
Have told to many ;  
Oft have rid men  
Of their troubles,  
Gnawing and carking cares.

**Hime**

Though thou hast searched,  
And though much thou hast found,  
I need neither seeker nor finder.  
Lonely am I,  
And lone would be ;  
Idlers I harbour not here.



## SIEGFRIED

**Wanderer**  
*Again coming a  
little nearer.*

There were many  
Thought they were wise,  
Yet what they needed  
Knew not at all ;  
Useful lore was  
Theirs for the asking,  
Wisdom was their reward.

**Wife**  
*More and more  
anxious as he sees  
the Wanderer  
approach.*

Idle knowledge  
Some may covet ;  
I know enough for my needs.  
*[The Wanderer reaches the hearth.]*  
My own wits suffice,  
I want no more,  
So, wise one, keep on thy way.

**Wanderer**  
*Sitting down at  
the hearth.*

Nay, here at thy hearth  
I vow by my head  
To answer all thou shalt ask.  
My head is thine,  
'Tis forfeit to thee,  
Unless I can give  
Answers good,  
Deftly redeeming the pledge.

**Wife**  
*Who has been  
staring at the  
Wanderer open-  
mouthed, now  
shrinks back ;  
aside, dejectedly.*

Now how to get rid of the spy ?  
The questions asked must be artful.  
*[He summons up courage for an assumption  
of sternness ; aloud.]*  
Thy head for thy  
Lodging pays :  
'Tis pawned ; now seek to redeem it.  
Three the questions  
Thou shalt be asked.

**Wanderer**

Thrice then I must answer.

## SIEGFRIED

**Wime**  
*Pulls himself  
together and  
reflects.*

Since, far on the back  
Of the wide earth roving,  
**Thy** feet have ranged o'er the world,  
Come, answer me this :  
Tell me what race  
**Dwells** in the earth's deep gorges.

**Wanderer**

In the depths of earth  
The Nibelungs have their home ;  
Nibelheim is their land.  
Black elves they all are ;  
Black Alberich  
Once was their ruler and lord.  
He subdued the busy  
Folk by a ring  
Gifted with magical might ;  
And they piled up  
Shimmering gold,  
Precious, fine-wrought,  
To win him the world and its glory.

Proceed with thy questions, dwarf.

**Wime**  
*Sinks into deeper  
and deeper  
meditation.*

Thou knowest much,  
Wanderer,  
Of the hidden depths of earth.  
Now, answer me this :  
Tell me what race  
**Breathes** on earth's back and moves there.

**Wanderer**

On the earth's broad back  
The race of the giants arose ;  
Riesenheim is their land.  
Fasolt and Fafner,  
The rude folk's rulers,  
Envied the Nibelung's might.

## SIEGFRIED

So his wonderful hoard  
They won for themselves,  
And with it gained the ring too.  
The brothers quarrelled  
About the ring,  
And slain was Fasolt.  
In dragon's form  
Fafner now watches the hoard.

One question threatens me still.

*Mime*  
*Quite lost in*  
*thought.*

Much, Wanderer,  
Thou dost know  
Of the earth's back rude and rugged.  
Now answer aright :  
Tell me what race  
Dwells above in the clouds.

*Wanderer*

Above in the clouds  
Dwell the Immortals ;  
Walhall is their home.  
They are light-spirits ;  
Light-Alberich,  
Wotan, rules as their lord.  
From the world-ash-tree's  
Holiest bough once  
Wotan made him a shaft.  
Though the stem rot,  
The spear shall endure,  
And with that spear-point  
Wotan rules the world.  
Trustworthy runes  
Of holy treaties  
Deep in the shaft he cut.  
Who wields the spear  
Carried by Wotan

## SIEGFRIED

The haft of the world  
Holds in his hand.  
Before him kneels  
The Nibelung host ;  
The giants, tamed,  
Bow to his will.  
All must obey, and for ever,  
The spear's eternal lord.

*[He strikes the ground with the spear as if  
by accident, and a low growl of thunder is  
heard, by which Mime is violently alarmed.]*

Confess now, cunning dwarf,  
Are not my answers right,  
And is not my head redeemed ?

Mime

*After attentively  
watching the*

*Wanderer with the spear, becomes very frightened, seeks in a confused  
manner for his tools, and looks timidly aside.*

Both thou hast won,  
Wager and head ;  
Thy way now, Wanderer, go.

Wanderer

Knowledge useful to thee  
Thou wert to ask for ;  
Forfeit my head if I failed.  
Forfeit be thine,  
Knowest thou not  
The thing it would serve thee to know.  
Greeting thou  
Gavest me not ;  
My head into thy hand  
I gave  
That I might rest by thy hearth.  
By wager fair  
Forfeit thy head,  
Canst thou not answer  
Three things when asked ;  
So sharpen well, Mime, thy wits !

"In dragon's form  
Fafner now watches the hoard"  
See p. 21



## SIEGFRIED

**Time**

*Very much  
frightened, and  
after much  
hesitation, at last  
composes himself  
with timid  
submission.*

Long it is  
Since I left my land ;  
Long it seems to me  
Since I was born.

I saw here the eye of Wotan  
Shine, peering into my cave ;  
His glance dazes  
My mother-wit.

But well were it now to be wise.  
Come then, Wanderer, ask.  
Perhaps fortune will favour  
The dwarf, and redeem his head.

**Wanderer**

*Comfortably  
sitting down  
again.*

Then first, honest dwarf,  
Answer this question :  
Tell the name of the race  
That Wotan treats most harshly,

*[Very softly, but audibly.]*

And yet loves beyond all the rest.

**Time**

*With more  
cheerfulness.*

Though unlearnèd  
In heroes' kinship,  
This question I answer with ease.  
The Wälsungs are Wotan's  
Chosen stock,  
By him begotten  
And loved with passion,  
Though they are shown no grace.  
Sigmund and Sieglinde  
Born were to Wälse,  
A wild and desperate  
Twin-born pair ;  
Siegfried had they as son,  
The strongest shoot from the tree.  
My head, say, is it  
Still, Wanderer, mine ?

## SIEGFRIED

**Wanderer**  
*Pleasantly.*

How well thou knowest  
And namest the race !  
Rogue, I see thou art clever.  
The foremost question  
Thou hast solved ;  
The second answer me, dwarf.  
A crafty Niblung  
Shelters Siegfried,  
Hoping he will slay Fafner,  
That the dwarf may be lord of the hoard,  
The ring being his.  
Say, what sword,  
If Fafner to fall is,  
Must be by Siegfried swung ?


**Wife**  
*Forgetting his  
present situation  
more and more,  
rubs his hands  
joyfully.*

Nothing is  
The name of the sword ;  
Into an ash-tree's stem  
Wotan struck it ;  
One only might bear it :  
He who could draw it forth.  
The strongest heroes  
Tried it and failed ;  
Only by Siegmund  
Was it done ;  
Well he fought with the sword  
Till on Wotan's spear it was split.  
By a crafty smith  
Are the fragments kept,  
For he knows that alone  
With the Wotan sword  
A brave and foolish boy,  
Siegfried, can slay the foe.

*[Much pleased.]*

A second time  
My head have I saved ?





Mime and the Wanderer  
See p. 17



## SIEGFRIED

**H**anderer  
*Laughing.*

The wisest of wise ones  
Thou must be, surely ;  
Who else could so clever be !  
But wouldst thou by craft  
Employ the boy-hero  
As instrument of thy purpose,  
With one question more  
I threaten thee.  
Tell me, thou artful  
Armourer,  
Whose skill from the doughty splinters  
Nothing the sword shall fashion.

**H**ime  
*Starts up in great  
terror.*

The splinters ! The sword !  
Alas ! my head reels !  
What shall I do ?  
What can I say ?  
Accursèd sword !  
I was mad to steal it !  
A perilous pass  
It has brought me to.  
Always too hard  
To yield to my hammer !  
Rivet, solder—  
Useless are both.

*[He throws his tools about as if he had gone  
crazy, and breaks out in utter despair.]*

The cleverest smith  
Living has failed ;  
And, that being so,  
Who shall succeed ?  
How rede aright such a riddle ?

**H**anderer  
*Has risen quietly  
from the hearth.*

Three things thou wert to ask me ;  
Thrice was I to reply.  
Thy questions were  
Of far-off things,

## SIEGFRIED

But what stood here at thy hand—  
Needed much—that was forgot  
Now that I guess it,  
Thou goest crazed,  
And won by me  
Is the cunning one's head.  
Now, Fafner's dauntless subduer,  
Hear, thou death-doomed dwarf.  
By him who knows not  
How to fear  
Nothing shall be forged.

*[Mime stares at him ; he turns to go.]*

So ward thy head  
Well from to-day.  
I leave it forfeit to him  
Who has never learned to fear.

*[He turns away smiling, and disappears quickly in the wood. Mime has sunk on to the bench overwhelmed.]*

**Mime**

*Stares before him into the sunlit wood, and begins to tremble more and more violently.*

Accursèd light !  
The air is on fire !  
What flickers and flashes ?  
What buzzes and whirs ?  
What sways there and swings  
And circles about ?  
What glitters and gleams  
In the sun's hot glow ?  
What rustles and hums  
And rings so loud ?  
With roll and roar  
It crashes this way !  
It bursts through the wood,  
Making for me !

*[He rises up in terror.]*

Its jaws are wide open,

## SIEGFRIED

Eager for prey ;  
The dragon will catch me !  
Fafner ! Fafner !

*[He sinks shrieking behind the anvil.]*

**Siegfried**  
*Behind the scenes,  
is heard breaking  
from the thicket.*

Ho there ! Thou idler !  
Is the work finished ?

*[He enters the cave.]*

Quick, come show me the sword.

*[He pauses in surprise.]*

Where hides the smith ?  
Has he made off ?

Hey, there ! Mime, thou coward !  
Where art thou ? Where hidest thou ?

**Mime**  
*In a small voice,  
from behind the anvil.*

'Tis thou then, child ?  
Art thou alone ?

**Siegfried**  
*Laughing.*

Under the anvil ?  
Why, what doest thou there ?  
Wert thou grinding the sword ?

**Mime**  
*Comes forward,  
greatly upset and  
confused.*

The sword ? The sword ?  
How could I weld it ?

*[Half aside.]*

By him who knows not  
How to fear  
Nothung shall be forged.  
Too wise am I  
To attempt such work.

**Siegfried**  
*Violently.*

Wilt thou speak plainly  
Or must I help thee ?

## SIEGFRIED

Mime

*As before.*

Where shall I turn in my need ?

My wily head

Wagered and lost is,

*[Staring before him.*

And forfeit to him it will fall

Who has never learned to fear.

Siegfried

*Vehemently.*

Dost thou by shuffling

Seek to escape ?

Mime

*Gradually  
recovering  
himself.*

Small need to fly

Him who knows fear !

But that lesson was one never taught thee.

A fool, I forgot

The one great thing ;

What thou wert taught

Was to love me,

And alas ! the task proved hard.

Now how shall I teach thee to fear ?

Siegfried

*Seizes him.*

Hey ! Must I help thee ?

What work hast thou done ?

Mime

Concerned for thy good,

In thought I was sitting :

Something of weight I would teach thee.

Siegfried

*Laughing.*

'Twas under the seat

That thou wert sitting ;

What weighty thing foundest thou there ?

Mime

*Recovering  
himself more and more.*

Down there I learned how to fear,

That I might teach thee, dullard.

Siegfried

*With quiet wonder.*

This fear then, what is it ?

Mime

Thou knowest not that,

Yet wouldst from the forest

Forth to the world ?

## SIEGFRIED

What help in the trustiest sword,  
Hadst thou not learned to fear ?

Siegfried  
*Impatiently.*

What absurd  
Invention is this ?

Hime  
*Approaching  
Siegfried with  
more and more  
confidence.*

'Tis thy mother's wish  
Speaking through me.  
I must fulfil  
The promise I gave her :  
That the world and its wiles  
Thou shouldst not encounter  
Until thou hadst learned how to fear.

Siegfried  
*Vehemently.*

Is it an art ?  
Why was I not taught ?  
Explain : this fearing, what is it ?

Hime

In the dark wood  
Hast thou not felt,  
When shades of dusk  
Fall dim and drear,  
When mournful whispers  
Sigh afar,  
And fierce growling  
Sounds at hand,  
When strange flashes  
Dart and flicker,  
And the buzzing  
And clamour grow—  
[*Trembling.*

Hast thou not felt grim horror  
Hold every sense in its clutches ?—

[*Quaking.*

When the limbs shiver,  
Shaken with terror,

[*With a quivering voice.*

## SIEGFRIED

And the heart, filled with dismay,  
Hammers, bursting the breast—  
Hast thou not yet felt that,  
A stranger art thou to fear.

Siegfried  
*Musing.*

Wonderful truly  
That must be.  
Steadfast, strong  
Beats my heart in my breast.  
The shiver and shudder,  
The fever and horror,  
Burning and fainting,  
Beating and trembling—  
Ah, how glad I would feel them,  
[ *Tenderly.*  
Could I but learn this delight !  
But how, Mime,  
Can it be mine ?  
How, coward, could it be taught me ?

Mime

Following me,  
The way thou shalt find ;  
I have thought it all out.  
I know of a dragon grim  
That slays and swallows men :  
Fear thou wilt learn from Fafner,  
When I lead to where he lies.

Siegfried

Where has he his lair ?

Mime

Neidhöhl'  
Named, it lies east  
Towards the end of the wood.

Siegfried

It lies not far from the world ?

Mime

The world is quite close to the cave.



## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried           That I may learn what this fear is,  
                          Lead me there straightway ;  
                          Then forth to the world !  
Make haste ! Forge me the sword.  
In the world fain I would swing it.

Mime                   The sword ? Woe's me !

Siegfried            Quick to the smithy !  
                          Show me thy work !

Mime                   Accursèd steel !  
Unequal my skill to the task ;  
                          The potent magic  
Surpasses the poor dwarf's strength.  
                          'Twere more easily done  
                          By one who never felt fear.

Siegfried            Artful tricks  
                          The idler would play me ;  
                          He is a bungler ;  
                          He should confess,  
And not seek to lie his way out.  
                          Here with the splinters !  
                          Off with the bungler !

*[Coming to the hearth.]*

                          His father's sword  
                          Siegfried will weld :  
By him shall it be forged.

*[Flinging Mime's tools about, he sets himself  
impetuously to work.]*

Mime                   If thou hadst practised  
                          Thy craft with care,  
Thou wouldst have profited now ;  
                          But thou wert far  
                          Too lazy to learn,  
And now at need canst do nothing.

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

Where the master has failed  
What hope for the scholar,  
Had he obeyed him in all ?

*[He makes a contemptuous grimace at him.]*

Be off with thee !  
Meddle no more,  
In case with the steel I melt thee.

*[He has heaped a large quantity of charcoal on the hearth, and keeps blowing the fire, while he screws up the pieces of the sword in a vice and files them to shavings.]*

Mime

*Who has sat down  
a little way off,  
watches Siegfried at work.*

Why file it to bits ?  
There is the solder  
All fused, ready to hand.

Siegfried

Off with the pap,  
I need it not ;  
With paste I fashion no sword !

Mime

Now the file is ruined,  
The rasp is useless ;  
Why grind thus the steel to splinters ?

Siegfried

It must be shivered  
And ground into shreds ;  
Only so can splinters be patched.

*[He goes on filing with great energy.]*

Mime  
*Aside.*

I see a craftsman  
Is useless here ;  
By his own folly the fool is best served.  
Look how he toils  
With lusty strokes ;  
The steel disappears,  
And still he keeps cool.

*[Siegfried has blown the fire to a bright flame.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Though I am as old  
As cave and wood,  
The like I never yet saw !

*[While Siegfried continues to file the piece of  
the sword impetuously, Mime seats himself  
a little further off.]*

He will forge the sword—  
I see it plain—  
Boldly weld it anew.  
The Wanderer was right.  
Where shall I hide  
My luckless head ?  
If nothing teaches him fear,  
Forfeit it falls to the boy.

*[Springing up and bending down in growing  
agitation.]*

But woe to Mime !  
If Siegfried learn fear,  
The dragon will never be slain ;  
And, if so, how gain the ring ?  
Accurst dilemma !  
Would I escape,  
I must find out some way  
Of subduing the boy for myself.

**Siegfried**

*Has now filed  
down the pieces,  
and puts the filings in a crucible, which he places on the fire.*

Hey, Mime ! The name !—  
Quick, name the sword  
That I have pounded to pieces.

**Mime**

*Starts and turns  
towards Siegfried.*

Nothing, that is  
The name of the sword ;  
'Twas thy mother told me the tale.

## SIEGFRIED

*Siegfried  
During the  
following song  
keeps blowing the  
fire with the  
bellows.*

Nothing! Nothing!  
Conquering sword!  
What blow, I wonder, broke thee.  
Thy keen-edged glory  
I chopped to chaff;  
The splinters now I am melting.  
Hoho! Hoho!  
Hohei! Hohei! Hoho!  
Bellows blow!  
Brighten the flame!  
In the woods  
A tree grew wild;  
It fell, by my hand hewn down.  
The brown-stemmed ash  
To charcoal I burned;  
Now it lies heaped high on the  
hearth.  
Hoho! Hoho!  
Hohei! Hohei! Hoho!  
Bellows blow!  
Brighten the flame!  
How bravely, brightly  
The charcoal burns!  
How clear and fair its fire!  
With showering sparks  
It leaps and glows,—  
Hohei! Hoho! Hohei!—  
Dissolving the splintered steel!  
Hoho! Hoho!  
Hohei! Hohei! Hoho!  
Bellows, blow!  
Brighten the flame!  
Hoho! Hoho!  
Hoho, hohei! Hohei!  
Nothing! Nothing!  
Conquering sword!

The forging of Nothung  
See p. 34



## SIEGFRIED

Thy steel chopped to chaff is fused ;  
In thine own sweat  
Thou swimmest now,

*[He pours the glowing contents of the crucible  
into a mould, which he holds up.]*

But soon my sword thou shalt be !

*Time*

*During the pauses  
in Siegfried's song,  
still aside, sitting  
at a distance.*

The sword he will forge  
And vanquish Fafner,  
So much I can clearly foresee ;  
Hoard and ring  
The victor will have ;  
How to win them both for myself !  
By wit and wiles  
They shall be captured,  
And safe shall be my head.

*[In the foreground, still aside.]*

After the fight, when athirst,  
For a cooling draught he will crave ;  
Of fragrant juices  
Gathered from herbs  
The draught I will brew for him.  
Let him drink but a drop,  
And in slumber  
Softly lapped he shall lie :  
With the very sword  
That he fashioned to serve him  
He shall be cleared from my way,  
And treasure and ring made mine.

*[He rubs his hands with satisfaction.]*

Ha ! dull didst hold me,  
Wanderer wise !  
Does my subtle scheming  
Please thee now ?

## SIEGFRIED

Have I found  
A path to peace ?

*[He springs up joyfully, fetches several vessels,  
shakes spices and herbs from them into a pot,  
and tries to put it on the hearth.]*

**Siegfried**

*Has plunged the  
mould into a pail  
of water. Steam  
and loud hissing  
ensue as it cools.*

In the water flowed  
A flood of fire ;  
Furious with hate,  
Grimly it hissed ;  
Though scorching it ran,  
In the cooling flood  
No more it flows ;  
Stiff, stark it became,  
Hard is the stubborn steel ;  
Yet warm blood  
Shall flow thereby !  
Now sweat once again,  
That swift I may weld thee,  
Nothung, conquering sword !

*[He thrusts the steel into the fire, and blows  
the bellows violently. While doing so he  
watches Mime, who, from the other side of  
the hearth, carefully puts his pot on the fire.]*

What does the booby  
Make in his pot ?  
While I melt steel,  
What art thou brewing ?

**Mime**

A smith is put to shame,  
And learns from the lad he taught ;  
All the master's lore is useless now ;  
He serves the boy as cook.  
Steel thou dost brew into broth ;  
Old Mime boils thee  
Eggs for thy meal.

*[He goes on with his cooking.]*



## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

Mime, the craftsman,  
Learns to cook now,  
And cares no longer to forge ;  
I have broken  
All the swords that he made me ;  
What he cooks my lips shall not touch.

*[During the following he takes the mould  
from the fire, breaks it, and lays the  
glowing steel on the anvil.]*

To find out what fear is  
Forth he will guide me ;  
A far-off teacher shall teach me ;  
Even what he does best  
He cannot do well ;  
In everything Mime must bungle !

*[During the forging.]*

Hoho ! Hoho ! Hohei !  
Forge me, my hammer,  
A trusty sword.  
Hoho ! Hahei !  
Hoho ! Hahei !  
Blood-stained was once  
Thy steely blue,  
The crimson trickle  
Reddened thy blade.  
How cold was thy laugh !  
The warm blood cooled at thy touch !  
Heiaho ! Haha !  
Haheiaha !  
Now red thou comest  
From the fire,  
And thy softened steel  
To the hammer yields.  
Angry sparks thou dost shower  
On me who humbled thy pride.

## SIEGFRIED

Heiaho ! Heiaho !  
Heiahohohohoho !  
Hahei ! Hahei ! Hahei !  
Hoho ! Hoho ! Hohei !  
Forge me, my hammer,  
A trusty sword !  
Hoho ! Hahei !  
Hoho ! Hahei !  
How I rejoice  
In the merry sparks !  
The bold look best  
When by anger stirred !  
Gay thou laughest to me,  
Grimly though thou dost pretend !  
Heiaho, haha, haheiaha !  
Both heat and hammer  
Served me well ;  
With sturdy strokes  
I stretched thee straight ;  
Now banish thy modest blush,  
Be as cold and hard as thou canst.  
Heiho ! Heiaho !  
Heiahohohohoho ! Heiah !

*[He swings the blade, plunges it into the pail  
of water, and laughs aloud at the hissing.]*

**Time**

*While Siegfried  
is fixing the  
blade in the hilt,  
moves about in  
the foreground  
with the bottle  
into which he  
has poured the  
contents of the  
pot. Aside.*

He forges a sharp-edged sword :  
Fafner, the foe  
Of the dwarf, is doomed ;  
I brewed a deadly draught :  
Siegfried must perish  
When Fafner falls.  
By guile the goal must be reached ;  
Soon shall smile my reward !  
For the shining ring  
My brother once made,

## SIEGFRIED

And which with a potent  
Spell he endowed,  
The gleaming gold  
That gives boundless might—  
That ring I have won now,  
I am its lord.

*[He trots briskly about with increasing satisfaction.]*

Alberich even,  
Whom I served,  
Shall be the slave  
Of Mime the dwarf.  
As Nibelheim's prince  
I shall descend there,  
And all the host  
Shall do my will ;  
None so honoured as he,  
The dwarf once despised !  
To the hoard will come thronging  
Gods and men ;

*[With increasing liveliness.]*

The world shall cower,  
Cowed by my nod,  
And at my frown  
Shall tremble and fall !  
No more shall Mime  
Labour and toil,  
When others win him  
Unending wealth.  
Mime, the valiant,  
Mime is monarch,  
Prince and ruler,  
Lord of the world !  
Hei, Mime ! Great luck has been thine !  
Had any one dreamed of this !

## SIEGFRIED

### Siegfried

*During the pauses in Mime's song has been filing and sharpening the sword and hammering it with the small hammer. He flattens the rivets of the hilt with the last strokes, and now grasps the sword.*

Nothing ! Nothing !  
Conquering sword !  
Once more art thou firm in thy hilt.  
Severed wert thou ;  
I shaped thee anew,  
No second blow thy blade shall shatter.  
The strong steel was splintered,  
My father fell ;  
The son who now lives  
Shaped it anew.  
Bright-gleaming to him it laughs,  
And for him its edge shall be keen.

*[Swinging the sword before him.]*

Nothing ! Nothing !  
Conquering sword !  
Once more to life I have waked thee.  
Dead wert thou,  
In fragments hewn,  
Now shining defiant and fair.  
Woe to all robbers !  
Show them thy sheen !  
Strike at the traitor,  
Cut down the rogue !  
See, Mime, thou smith ;  
Thus sunders Siegfried's sword !

*[He strikes the anvil and splits it in two from top to bottom, so that it falls asunder with a great noise. Mime, who has mounted a stool in great delight, falls in terror to a sitting position on the ground. Siegfried holds the sword exultantly on high. The curtain falls.]*





## THE SECOND ACT

*A deep forest*

*Quite in the background the entrance to a cave. The ground rises towards a flat knoll in the middle of the stage, and slopes down again towards the back, so that only the upper part of the entrance to the cave is visible to the audience. To the left a fissured cliff is seen through the trees. It is night, the darkness being deepest at the back, where at first the eye can distinguish nothing at all.*

**Alberich**

*Lying by the cliff, gloomily brooding.*

**In night-drear woods  
By Neidhöhl' I keep watch,  
With ear alert,  
Keen and anxious eye.  
Timid day,  
Tremblest thou forth?  
Pale art thou dawning  
Athwart the dark?**

*[A storm arises in the wood on the right, and from the same quarter there shines down a bluish light.]*

**What comes yonder, gleaming bright?  
Nearer shimmers  
A radiant form;  
It runs like a horse and it shines;  
Breaks through the wood,  
Rushing this way.**

## SIEGFRIED

Is it the dragon's slayer ?  
Can it mean Fafner's death ?

*[The wind subsides ; the light vanishes.]*

The glow has gone,  
It has faded and died ;  
All is darkness.  
Who comes there, shining in shadow ?

**W**anderer  
*Enters from the  
wood, and stops  
opposite Alberich.*

To Neidhöhl'  
By night I have come ;  
In the dark who is hiding there ?

*[As from a sudden rent in the clouds moonlight  
streams forth and lights up the Wanderer's  
figure.]*

**A**lberich  
*Recognises the  
Wanderer and  
shrinks back at  
first in alarm, but*

'Tis thou who comest thus ?  
What wilt thou here ?  
Go, get thee hence !  
Begone, thou insolent thief !  
*immediately after breaks out in violent fury.*

**W**anderer  
*Quietly.*

Schwarz-Alberich  
Wanders here ?  
Guardest thou Fafner's house ?

**A**lberich

Art thou intent  
On mischief again ?  
Linger not here !  
Off with thee straightway !  
Has grief enough  
Not deluged the earth through thy guile ?  
Spare it further  
Sorrow, thou wretch !

**W**anderer

I come as watcher,  
Not as worker.  
The Wanderer's way who bars ?

## SIEGFRIED

Alberich

Thou arch, pestilent plotter !  
Were I still the blind,  
Silly fool that I was,  
When I was bound thy captive,  
How easy were it  
To steal the ring again from me !  
Beware ! For thy cunning  
I know well,

[*Mockingly.*

And of thy weakness  
I am fully aware too.  
Thy debts were cancelled,  
Paid with my treasure ;  
My ring guerdoned  
The giants' toil,  
Who raised thy citadel high.  
Still on the mighty  
Haft of thy spear there  
The runes are written plain  
Of the compact made with the churls ;  
And of that  
Which by labour they won  
Thou dost not dare to despoil them ;  
Thy spear's strong shaft  
Thou thyself wouldst split ;  
The staff that makes thee  
Master of all  
Would crumble to dust in thy hand.

Handeter

By the steadfast runes of treaties  
Thou hast not,  
Base one, been bound ;  
On thee my spear may spend its  
strength,  
So keen I keep it for war.

## SIEGFRIED

Alberich

How dire thy threats !  
How bold thy defiance !  
And yet full of fear is thy heart !  
Foredoomed to death  
Through my curse is he  
Who now guards the treasure.  
What heir will succeed him ?  
Will the hoard all desire  
Belong as before to the Niblung ?--  
That gnaws thee with ceaseless torment.  
For once I have got it  
Safe in my grasp,  
Better than foolish giants  
Will I employ its spell.  
The God who guards heroes  
Truly may tremble !  
I will storm  
Proud Walhall with Hella's hosts,  
And rule, lord of the world !

Wanderer  
*Quietly.*

Thy design I know well,  
But little I care :  
Who wins the ring  
Will rule by its might.

Alberich

Thou speakest darkly,  
But to me all is plain.  
Thy heart is bold  
Because of a boy,

*[Mockingly.]*

A hero begot of thy blood.  
Hast thou not fostered a stripling  
To pluck the fruit thou durst not

*[With growing violence.]*

Pluck frankly for thyself ?



## SIEGFRIED

Wanderer  
*Lightly.*

With me  
'Tis useless to wrangle ;  
But Mime thou shouldst beware ;  
For thy brother brings here a boy  
To compass the giant's doom.  
He knows not of me ;  
He works for Mime alone.  
And so I say to thee,  
Do as seems to thee best.

*[Alberich makes a movement expressive of  
violent curiosity.]*

Take my advice,  
Be on thy guard :  
The boy will hear of the ring  
When Mime tells him the tale.

Alberich  
*Violently.*

Wilt thou hold thy hand from the hoard ?

Wanderer

Whom I love  
Must fight for himself unaided ;  
The lord of his fate,  
He stands or falls :  
All my hope hangs upon heroes.

Alberich

Does none but Mime  
Dispute me the ring ?

Wanderer

Only thou and Mime  
Covet the gold.

Alberich

And yet it is not to be mine ?

Wanderer  
*Quietly coming  
nearer.*

A hero comes  
To set the hoard free ;  
Two Nibelungs yearn for the gold.  
Fafner falls,  
He who guards the ring ;  
Then a hand, seizing, shall hold it.

## SIEGFRIED

More wouldst thou learn,  
There Fafner lies,  
Who, if warned of his death,  
Gladly would give up the toy.  
Come, I will wake him for thee.

*[He goes towards the cave, and, standing  
on the rising ground in front of it, calls  
towards it.]*

Fafner ! Fafner !  
Wake, dragon ! Wake !

Alberich  
*With anxious  
amazement, aside.*

Does the madman mean it ?  
Am I to have it ?

Fafner's voice

Who troubles my sleep ?

Wanderer  
*Facing the cave.*

A well-wisher comes  
To warn thee of danger ;  
Thy doom can be averted,  
If thou wilt pay the price  
With the treasure that thou guardest.

*[He leans his ear towards the cave, listening.]*

Fafner's voice

What would he ?

Alberich  
*Has come to the  
Wanderer and  
calls into the  
cave.*

Waken, Fafner !  
Dragon, awake !  
A doughty hero comes  
To try his strength against thine.

Fafner's voice

I want a meal.

Wanderer

Bold is the boy and strong ;  
Sharp-edged is his sword.

Alberich

The ring he seeks,  
Nothing besides.

## SIEGFRIED

Give me the ring, and so  
The strife shall be stayed.  
Still guarding the hoard,  
In peace shalt thou live long !

**Hafner**  
*Yawning.*

I have and I hold :—  
Let me slumber !

**Wanderer**  
*Laughs aloud and  
then turns again  
to Alberich.*

Well, Alberich ! That ruse failed,  
But call me rogue no more.  
This one thing thou shouldst  
Never forget :  
Each according to his kind must act ;  
Nothing can change him.  
I leave thee the field now ;  
Show a bold front,  
And try thy luck with thy brother ;  
Thou knowest his kind perhaps better.  
And things unknown  
Thou also shalt learn !

*[He turns away, and disappears quickly in  
the wood. A storm arises and a bright  
light breaks forth ; then both quickly cease.]*

**Alberich**  
*Looks after the  
Wanderer as he  
gallops off.*

Away on his shining  
Horse he rides,  
And leaves me to care and scorn !  
Laugh on ! Laugh on,  
Ye light-minded  
And high-spirited  
Race of immortals !  
One day ye shall perish  
And pass !  
Until the gold  
Has ceased to gleam,

## SIEGFRIED

Will wise Alberich watch,  
And his hate shall prevail.

*[He slips into the chasm at the side. The stage remains empty. Dawn.]*

*As the day dawns Siegfried and Mime enter. Siegfried carries his sword in a sword-belt of rope. Mime examines the place carefully. At last he looks towards the background, which remains in deep shadow, whilst the rising ground in the middle becomes, after a time, more and more brightly illuminated by the sun.*

**Mime**                      Our journey ends here ;  
Here we halt.

**Siegfried**                So here I shall learn what fear is ?  
*Sits down under the lime-tree and looks about him.*    A far way thou hast led me ;  
We have wandered lone together  
A whole night long in the woods.  
This is the last  
Of thee, Mime !  
Can I not master  
My lesson here,  
Alone I will push forward  
And never see thee again.

**Mime**                      Lad, believe me,  
If thou canst not  
Learn it here and now,  
No other place,  
No other time  
Ever will teach thee fear.  
Dost thou see  
That cavern yawning dark ?  
Yonder dwells  
A dragon dread and grim,  
Horribly fierce,

## SIEGFRIED

Enormous in size,  
With terrible jaws  
That threaten and gape ;  
With skin and hair,  
All at a gulp,  
The brute could swallow thee whole.

Siegfried  
*Still sitting under  
the lime-tree.*

'Twere well to close up his gullet ;  
His fangs I will therefore avoid.

Mime

Poison pours  
From his venomous mouth ;  
Were he to spue out  
Spittle on thee,  
Thy body and bones would decay.

Siegfried

That the poison may not consume me,  
I will keep out of its reach.

Mime

A serpent's tail  
Sweeping he swings ;  
Were that about thee wound  
And folded close,  
Thy limbs would be broken like glass.

Siegfried

That his swinging tail may not touch me,  
Warily then I must watch.  
But answer me this :  
Has the brute a heart ?

Mime

A pitiless, cruel heart.

Siegfried

It lies, however,  
Where all hearts lie,  
Brute and human alike ?

Mime

Of course ! There, boy,  
The dragon's lies too.  
At last thou beginnest to fear ?

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

*Who till now has  
been lying  
indolently stretched  
out, sits up  
suddenly.*

Nothing into  
His heart I will thrust !  
Is that what is meant by fearing ?  
Hey, old dotard !  
Canst thou teach me  
Nothing but this  
With all thy craft,  
Linger no longer by me :  
No fear is here to be learnt.

Hime

Wait awhile yet !  
What I have told thee  
Seems to thee empty sound ;  
When thou hast heard  
And seen him thyself,  
Thy senses will swoon, overwhelmed !  
When thine eyes grow dim,  
And when the ground rocks,  
When in thy breast  
Thy heart beats loud,

*[Very friendly.]*

Thou wilt remember who brought thee,  
And think of me and my love.

Siegfried

Thy love is not wanted !  
Hast thou not heard ?  
Out of my sight with thee ;  
Let me alone !  
Begin again talking of love,  
And on the instant I go !  
The horrible winking,  
The nods and blinking—  
When shall I see  
The last of them,  
And rid be at length of the fool ?

## SIEGFRIED

**Mime**

Well, I will off,  
And rest there by the spring.  
Thou must stay here,  
And as the sun scales the sky  
Watch for the foe :  
From his cave  
He lumbers this way,  
Winds and twists  
Past this spot,  
To water at the fountain.

**Siegfried**  
*Laughs.*

Liest thou by the spring,  
Unchecked thither the brute shall go ;  
He shall swallow thee  
Down with the water,  
Ere with my sword  
To the heart I stab him !  
So heed well what I say :  
Rest not beside the spring.  
Seek somewhere else  
A far-off spot,  
And nevermore return.

**Mime**

Thou wilt not refuse  
Cooling refreshment  
When the fierce fight is over ?  
*[Siegfried motions him angrily away.]*  
Call on me too  
Shouldst thou need counsel,  
*[Siegfried repeats the gesture with more violence.]*  
Or if felled on a sudden by fear.  
*[Siegfried rises and drives him away with  
furious gestures.]*

**Mime**

*Aside, as he goes  
away.*

Fafner and Siegfried—  
Siegfried and Fafner—  
Might each the other but slay !  
*[He disappears in the wood on the right.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried  
*Stretches himself  
at his ease under  
the lime-tree, and  
looks after Mime  
as he departs.*

He is no father of mine !  
How merry of heart I feel !  
Never before  
Seemed the forest fair ;  
Never day  
Wore as lovely a smile,  
For the loathed one has gone at last,  
To be looked on by me no more.

*[He meditates in silence.]*

My father—what was he like ?—  
Ha ! like me, without doubt.  
Had Mime by chance had a son,  
He would have been  
Mime's image :  
Quite as disgusting,  
Filthy and grey,  
Small and bent,  
Hunchbacked and halting,  
With ears long and hanging,  
Rheumy eyes running—  
Off with the fright !

To see him makes me sick !

*[He leans further back and looks up through  
the branches of the tree. Deep silence.  
Woodland murmurs.]*

What could my mother,  
I wonder, be like ;  
That is not  
So easy to picture.

*[Very tenderly.]*

Her clear shining eyes  
Must have been soft,  
And gentle like the roe-deer's,  
Only far fairer.

*[Very softly.]*

In fear and woe she bore me,



## SIEGFRIED

But why did she die through me ?  
Must then all human mothers  
Thus die on giving  
Birth to a son ?  
That would truly be sad !  
Ah, if I only  
Could see my mother !—  
See my mother,  
A woman once !

*[He sighs softly, and leans still further back.  
Deep silence. Louder murmuring of the wood.  
His attention is at last caught by the song of  
the birds. He listens with growing interest  
to one singing in the branches above him.]*

O lovely warbler,  
I know not thy note ;  
Hast thou thy home in this wood ?  
If I could but understand him,  
His sweet song might say much—  
Perhaps of my mother tell me.  
A surly old dwarf  
Said to me once  
That men might learn  
To follow the sense  
Of birds when they were singing ;  
Could it indeed be done ?  
Ha ! I will sing  
After him,  
On the reed follow him sweetly.  
Though wanting the words,  
Repeating his measure—  
Singing what is his language—  
Perhaps I shall know what he says.

*[He runs to the neighbouring spring, cuts a  
reed off with his sword, and quickly makes  
himself a pipe out of it. He listens again.]*

## SIEGFRIED

He stops to hear,  
So now for my song !

*[He blows into the pipe, breaks off, and cuts it again to improve it. He resumes his blowing, shakes his head, and cuts the pipe once more. After another attempt he gets angry, presses the pipe with his hand, and tries again. He ceases playing and smiles.]*

That rings not right ;  
For the lovely tune  
The reed is not suited at all.  
I fear, sweet bird,  
I am too dull ;  
Thy song cannot I learn.

*[He hears the bird again and looks up to him.]*

He listens so roguishly  
There that he shames me ;

*[Very tenderly.]*

He waits, and nothing rewards him.  
Heida ! Come hearken  
Now to my horn ;

*[He flings the pipe away.]*

All I do sounds wrong  
On the stupid reed ;  
To a song of the woods  
That I know,  
A merry song, listen now rather.  
I hoped it would bring  
Some comrade to me,  
But wolves and bears  
Were the best that came.  
Now I will see

## SIEGFRIED

Who answers its note :  
What comrade will come to its call.

*[He takes the silver hunting-horn and blows on it. During the long-sustained notes he keeps his eyes expectantly on the bird. A movement in the background. Fafner, in the form of a monstrous lizard-like dragon, has risen from his lair in the cave. He breaks through the underwood and drags himself up to the higher ground, so that the front part of his body rests on it, while he utters a loud sound, as if yawning.]*

**Siegfried**                      My horn with its note  
   Has allured something lovely ;  
*Looks round and gazes at Fafner in astonishment.*      **A jolly companion wert thou.**  
   *He laughs.*

**Fafner**                              What is that ?  
*At the sight of Siegfried has paused on the high ground, and remains there.*

**Siegfried**                              If thou art a beast  
   Who can use its tongue,  
Perchance thou couldst teach me  
   something.  
   Here stands one  
   Who would learn to fear ;  
Say, wilt thou be his teacher ?

**Fafner**                                      Is this insolence ?

**Siegfried**                                      Courage or insolence,  
   What matter ?  
With my sword I will slay thee,  
Wilt thou not teach me to fear.

**Fafner**                                      Drink I came for ;  
   Now food I find too !  
*Makes a laughing sound.*                      *[He opens his jaws and shows his teeth.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried           What a fine set of teeth  
                          Thou showest me there !  
                          Sweetly they smile  
                          In thy dainty mouth !  
'Twere well if I closed up thy gullet ;  
Thy jaws are gaping too wide !

Fafner               They were not made  
                          For idle talk,  
                          But they will serve  
                          To swallow thee.

Siegfried           Hoho ! Ferocious,  
                          Merciless churl !  
                          I have no fancy  
                          To be eaten.

Better it seems to me  
That without delay thou shouldst die !

Fafner  
Roaring.           Pruh ! Come,  
                          Boy, with thy boasts !

Siegfried           Beware, growler !  
Draws his sword.   The boaster comes !

*[He springs towards Fafner and remains defiantly confronting him. Fafner drags himself further up the knoll and spits at Siegfried from his nostrils. Siegfried avoids the poison, springs nearer, and stands on one side. Fafner tries to reach him with his tail. Siegfried, who is nearly caught, springs over Fafner with one bound, and wounds him in the tail. Fafner roars, pulls his tail angrily away, and raises the front part of his body so that he may throw its full weight on Siegfried, thus offering his breast to the stroke. Siegfried quickly looks to see where his heart is, and thrusts his sword into it up to the hilt. Fafner raises himself still higher in his pain, and, when Siegfried has let go his sword and sprung aside, he sinks on the wound.]*

Siegfried kills Fafner  
See p. 56





## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

Who was my father ?  
Tell, if thou canst.  
Dying, thou showest,  
Wild one, much wisdom.  
Siegfried my name is ; haply  
That may help thee to guess.

Fafner

Siegfried ! . . .

*[He raises himself and dies.]*

Siegfried

The dead can tell no tidings.  
My living sword, lead !  
Lead onward, my sword !

*[Fafner has rolled to the side in dying. Siegfried now draws the sword from his breast. In doing so his hand gets sprinkled with the blood ; he draws it back quickly.]*

The hot blood burns like fire !

*[Involuntarily he raises his fingers to his mouth to suck the blood from them. As he looks musingly before him his attention becomes more and more attracted by the singing of the birds.]*

I almost seem

To hear the birds speaking to me.  
Is there a spell,  
Perhaps, in the blood ?  
The curious bird up there—  
Hark ! he sings to me.

Voice of the  
Wood-bird

*From the branches  
of the lime-tree  
above Siegfried.*

Hei ! Siegfried now owns  
All the Nibelung hoard !  
Oh ! could he the hoard  
In the cave but find !  
Tarnhelm, if he could but win it,  
Would help him to deeds of renown ;  
And could he discover the ring,  
It would make him the lord of the world !



"The hot blood burns like fire!"

See p 58



## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried  
*Has listened  
holding his breath  
and beaming  
with delight.*

Thanks, bonnie bird,  
For the counsel good :  
I follow the call !

*[He turns towards the back and descends to  
the cave, where he at once disappears.]*

*Mime steals up, looking about him timidly to assure himself of Fafner's death.  
At the same time Alberich comes out of the cleft on the opposite side.  
He observes Mime, rushes on him and bars his way, as the latter  
turns towards the cave.*

Alberich            On what errand  
                         Furtive and sly,  
                         Knave, dost thou slink ?

Mime                Accursèd brother,  
                         That thou shouldst come !  
                         What brings thee here ?

Alberich            Rogue, has my gold  
                         Provoked thy greed ?  
                         Dost covet my goods ?

Mime                Get thee gone quickly !  
                         This corner is mine ;  
                         What huntest thou here ?

Alberich            Have I disturbed thee,  
                         Thief, at thy work,  
                         Secret and sly ?

Mime                What I have slaved  
                         And toiled to win  
                         Shall not escape me.

Alberich            Who was it robbed  
                         The Rhine of gold for the ring ?  
                         And whose cunning wrought  
                         The spell of magical might ?

## SIEGFRIED

Alberich                    Turn and look there !  
*Siegfried having appeared in the background.* From the cavern hither he comes.

Hime                        He will have chosen  
Trivial toys.

Alberich                    He bears the Tarnhelm !

Hime                        Also the ring !

Alberich                    Curst luck ! The ring !

Hime                        Get him to give thee the ring now !  
*Laughing maliciously.* 'Tis I, not thou, who shall win it.

Alberich                    And yet to its lord  
Must it at last be surrendered !

*[He disappears in the cleft.  
During the foregoing Siegfried, with Tarnhelm and ring, has come slowly and meditatively from the cave ; he regards his booty thoughtfully, and stops on the knoll in the middle of the stage.]*

Siegfried                    I do not know  
Of what use  
Ye are ; I chose you  
From out the heaped-up hoard  
Because of friendly advice.  
Meanwhile, of this day  
Be ye worn as witness,  
Recalling to mind  
How with fallen Fafner I fought,  
And yet could not learn how to fear.

*[He hangs the Tarnhelm on his girdle and puts the ring on his finger. Silence. His notice is involuntarily drawn to the bird again, and he listens to him with breathless attention.]*

The dwarfs quarrelling over the body of Fafner  
See p. 59



## SIEGFRIED

The Wood-  
bird's voice

Hei ! Siegfried now owns  
Both the helm and the ring !  
Oh ! let him not listen  
To Mime, the false !  
He were wise to be wary of  
Mime's treacherous tongue.  
He will understand  
Mime's secret intent,  
Because he has tasted the blood.

*[Siegfried's mien and gestures show that he has understood the bird's song. He sees Mime approaching, and remains without moving, leaning on his sword, observant and self-contained, in his place on the knoll till the close of the following scene.]*

Mime  
Steals forward  
and observes  
Siegfried from  
the foreground.

He weighs in his mind  
The booty's worth ;  
Can there by chance  
Have come this way  
A Wanderer wise  
Who talked to the child,  
And taught him crafty runes ?  
Doubly sly  
Be then the dwarf ;  
My snares must be cunning,  
Cleverly set,  
That with cajoling  
And wily falsehoods  
The insolent boy I may fool.

*[He goes nearer to Siegfried and welcomes him with flattering gestures.]*

Ha ! Welcome, Siegfried !  
Say, bold fighter,  
Hast thou been taught how to fear ?

Siegfried

A teacher still is to find.

## SIEGFRIED

Hime

But the dragon grim  
Has fallen before thee ?  
A fell and fierce monster was he.

Siegfried

Though grim and spiteful the brute,  
I grieve over his death,  
While there live still, unpunished,  
Blacker scoundrels than he was !  
The one who bade me slay  
I hate far more than the slain.

Hime

*Very friendly.*

Have patience ! Thou wilt not  
Look on me long.

*[Sweetly.]*

In endless sleep  
Soon thine eyelids will be sealed.  
Thy uses are over,

*[As if praising him.]*

Done is the deed ;  
The only task left  
For me is to win the booty.  
Methinks that task will not tax me ;  
Thou wert always easy to fool.

Siegfried

To me thou art plotting harm, then ?

Hime

*Astonished.*

What makes thee think that ?

*[Continuing tenderly.]*

Siegfried, listen, my own one !  
I have always loathed  
Thee and all that are like thee.  
It was not from love  
That I reared thee with care :  
The gold hid in Fafner's cave  
I worked for as my reward.

*[As if he were promising him something nice.]*



## SIEGFRIED

If thou wilt not yield  
It up to me,

*[As if he were ready to lay down his life for  
him.]*

Siegfried, my son,  
Thou plainly must see

*[As if in friendly jest]*

I have no choice but to slay thee !

Siegfried

That I am hated  
Pleases me ;  
But must I lose my life for thy pleasure ?

Mime  
*Angrily.*

I never said that ;  
Thou hast made a mistake.  
See, thou art weary  
From stress of strife,  
Burning with fever and thirst ;  
Mime, the kind one,  
To cool thy thirst  
Brought a quickening draught.  
While thy blade thou didst melt  
I brewed thee the drink ;  
Touch it, and straight  
Thy sword shall be mine,  
And mine the hoard and Tarnhelm too.

*[Tittering.]*

Siegfried

So thou of my sword  
And all it has won me—  
Ring and booty—wouldst rob me ?

Mime  
*Violently.*

Why wilt mistake so my words !  
Do I drivel or dote ?  
I use the utmost  
Pains with my speech,  
That what in my heart  
I mean may be hidden ;

## SIEGFRIED

And the stupid boy  
Misunderstands what I say !  
Open thy ears, boy,  
And attend to me !  
Hear, now, what Mime means.  
Take this : the drink will refresh thee  
As my drinks oft have done.  
Many a time  
When fretful and bad,  
Though loth enough,  
The draughts I brought thou hast  
swallowed.

Siegfried

Of a cooling drink  
I were glad ;  
Say, how has this one been brewed ?

Mime

*Jesting merrily,  
as if describing to  
him a pleasant  
state of  
intoxication which  
the liquor is to  
bring about.*

Hei ! Just drink it !  
Trust to my skill.  
In mist and darkness  
Soon shall thy senses be sunk ;  
None to watch or ward them,  
Stark-stretched shall thy limbs be.  
Thou lying thus,  
'Twere not hard  
To take the booty and hide it ;  
But wert thou to awake,  
Nevermore would  
Mime be safe,  
Even owning the ring.  
So with the sword  
He has made so sharp  
*[With a gesture of extravagant joy.]*  
First I will hack  
The child's head off !  
Then I shall have both rest and the ring !  
*[Tittering.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

Thou wouldst, then, slay me when  
sleeping ?

Mime

*Furiously.*

Do what, child ? Did I say that ?

*[He takes pains to assume the utmost tenderness. Carefully and distinctly.]*

I only mean  
To chop off thy head !

*[With the appearance of heartfelt solicitude for Siegfried's health.]*

For even if I  
Had loathed thee less,  
And had not thy scoffs  
And my drudgery shameful  
So loudly urged to vengeance,

*[Gently.]*

I should never dare to pause  
Till from my path I thrust thee :

*[Festively again.]*

How else could I come by the booty,  
Which Alberich covets as well ?

*[He pours the liquid into the drinking-horn, and offers it to Siegfried with pressing gestures.]*

Now, my Wälsung,  
Wolf-begot,  
Drink the draught and be choked,  
And never drink again !

*[Tittering.]*

Siegfried

*Threatens him  
with his sword.*

Taste thou my sword,  
Loathsome babbler !

*[As if seized by violent loathing, he gives Mime a sharp stroke with his sword. Instantly Mime falls dead to the ground. Alberich's voice in mocking laughter from the cleft.]*

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

*Looking at Mime  
on the ground,  
quietly hangs his  
sword again on  
his belt.*

Envy's wage

Pays Nothung ;

'Twas for this that I forged him.

*[He picks up Mime's body, carries it to the  
knoll, and throws it into the cave.]*

In the cavern, there,

Lie on the hoard ;

With steadfast guile

The gold thou hast gained :

Now let it belong to its master !

And a watchman good

I give thee, that thieves

Never may enter and steal.

*[With a great effort he pushes the body of the  
dragon in front of the entrance to the cave,  
which it completely stops up.]*

There lie thou too,

Dragon grim ;

Along with thy foe

Greedy of gain

Thou shalt guard the glittering gold :

So both at last shall rest in peace.

*[He looks down thoughtfully into the cave for  
a time, and then turns slowly to the front  
of the stage as if tired. He passes his  
hand over his brow.]*

Hot I feel

From the heavy toil ;

Fast and furious

Flows my blood,

My hand burns on my head.

High stands the sun in heaven ;

From azure heights

Falls his gaze

Through a cloudless sky on my crown.

## SIEGFRIED

Pleasant shadows will cool me under the  
linden.

*[He stretches himself out under the lime-tree,  
and again looks up through the boughs.]*

If only, pretty warbler,  
So long and so  
Rudely disturbed,  
I could once more hear thee singing !  
On a branch I see thee  
Merrily swaying ;  
Chirping and chattering,  
Brothers and sisters  
Are happily hovering round.

But I—I am alone,  
Without brother or sister ;  
My mother died,  
My father fell,  
Unseen by their son !  
The one soul I knew  
Was a loathsome old dwarf ;

*[Warmly.]*

Love he fostered not  
By kindness ;  
Many a cunning  
Snare did he set me ;  
At last I was forced to slay him.

*[He looks sorrowfully up at the branches.]*

Bird sweet and friendly,  
I ask thee a boon :  
Wilt thou find for me  
A comrade true ?—  
Wilt thou choose for me the right one ?  
So oft I have called,  
And yet no one has come !

## SIEGFRIED

Thou, my friend,  
Wilt manage it better,  
So wise thy counsel has been.  
[Softly.]  
Now sing ! I hearken to thy song.

The Wood-  
bird's voice

Hei ! Siegfried has slain  
The deceitful dwarf !  
I know for him now  
A glorious bride.  
She sleeps where rugged rocks soar ;  
Ringed is her chamber by fire.  
Who battles the flames,  
Wakens the bride,  
Brünnhilde wins as reward.

Siegfried  
Starts up  
impetuously from  
his seat.

O lovely song,  
Flower-sweet breath !  
Thy yearning music  
Burns in my breast !  
Like leaping flame  
It kindles my heart.  
What races so swift  
Through soul and senses ?  
Sweetest of friends, O say !

[He listens.]

The Wood-  
bird's voice

Grieving yet glad,  
Love I am singing ;  
Blissful, from woe  
Weaving my song :  
They only who yearn understand.

Siegfried

Forth, forth then,  
Swift and rejoicing !  
Forth from the wood to the fell !  
Just one thing more  
I would learn, sweet singer :

## SIEGFRIED

Say, shall I break through the fire?  
Can I awaken the bride?

*[He listens again.]*

The Wood-  
bird's voice

No coward wins  
Brünnhild' for bride,  
Or wakes the maid:  
Only a heart without fear.

Siegfried  
*Shouting  
with joy.*

The foolish boy  
Who has never learned fear,  
Dear bird, that dullard am I!  
To-day I took endless  
Trouble in vain,  
To find out what fear was from Fafner.  
With longing I burn  
Now from Brünnhild' to learn it.  
What path soonest leads to the fell?

*[The bird flutters up, circles over Siegfried,  
and flies hesitatingly before him.]*

Siegfried

The bird to my goal will guide me.  
Fly where thou wilt,  
I follow thy flight!

*[He runs after the bird, who for a time flies  
uncertainly hither and thither to tease him;  
at last he follows him, when, taking a  
definite direction towards the back, the bird  
flies away.]*





### THE THIRD ACT

*A wild spot at the foot of a rocky mountain which rises precipitously at the back on the left. Night, storm, lightning and violent thunder. The latter ceases shortly, but the lightning continues to flash from the clouds for some time. The Wanderer enters and walks resolutely towards a cavernous opening in a rock in the foreground, and takes up his position there, leaning on his spear, while he calls the following towards the entrance to the cave.*

**Wanderer**

Waken, Wala !  
Wala ! Awake !  
From thy long sleep,  
Slumberer, wake at my call !  
I summon thee forth :  
Arise ! Arise !  
From cloud-covered caves  
In earth's dim abysses, arise !  
Erda ! Erda,  
Old as the world !  
From depths dark and hidden  
Rise to the day !  
With song I call thee,  
I sing to wake thee,  
From deep dreams of wisdom  
Bid thee arise.  
All-knowing one !  
Fount of knowledge !  
Erda ! Erda,



## SIEGFRIED

Old as the world !  
Waken ! Awaken, thou Vala ! Awaken !

*[A dim bluish light begins to dawn in the cavern. In this light Erda, during the following, rises very gradually from below. She appears to be covered with hoar-frost, which glitters on her hair and garments.]*

Erda

Loud is the call ;  
Strong the spell that summons ;  
I have been roused  
From dark and wise dreams :  
Who wakes me from my sleep ?

Wanderer

'Tis I who awake thee  
With song of magic,  
That what in slumber  
Was folded fast may rise.  
The wide earth ranging,  
Far I have roamed,  
Seeking for knowledge,  
Wisdom at fountains primeval.  
No one that lives  
Is wiser than thou ;  
Thou knowest all  
In the hidden depths,  
What moves on hill,  
Dale, in water and air.  
Where life is found,  
There thou art breathing ;  
And where brains ponder,  
There is thy thought.  
Men say that all  
Knowledge is thine.  
That I might ask of thee counsel,  
I have called thee from sleep.

## SIEGFRIED

Erda

My sleep is dreaming,  
My dreaming brooding,  
My brooding wisdom's calm working.  
But while I sleep  
The Norns are wakeful :  
They twine the rope,  
And deftly weave what I know.  
The Norns thou shouldst have questioned.

Handerer

In thrall to the world  
Sit the Norns weaving ;  
They cannot alter  
What ordained is.  
But I would fain  
Be taught of thy wisdom  
How a wheel on the roll can be stayed.

Erda

Dark and troubled  
My mind grows through men's deeds.  
A God once subdued  
The Wala's self to his will.  
A wish-maiden  
I bore to Wotan ;  
From fields of battle  
She brought him slain heroes ;  
Bold is she  
And wise to boot :  
Why waken me ?  
Why seek not counsel  
From Erda's and Wotan's child ?

Handerer

The Valkyrie, Brünnhild' ?  
Meanest thou her ?  
She flouted the storm-controller,  
When, sorely urged, himself he controlled.  
What the swayer and lord  
Of battles longed for,

## SIEGFRIED

What he refrained from  
Against his desire,  
Brünnhilde, bold,  
Rash, over-confident,  
When the fight was at fiercest,  
Strove for herself to perform.  
War-father  
Punished the maid :  
He pressed slumber into her eyes,  
On the flame-girt rock she sleeps.  
The hallowed maid  
Will waken alone,  
That she may love and wed with a man.  
Small hope of answer from her.

Orda

Dazed have I felt  
Since I woke ;  
Wild, confused  
Seems the world !  
The Valkyrie,  
The Wala's child,  
Bound lay, fettered by sleep,  
While her all-knowing mother slept !  
Does revolt's teacher  
Chide revolt ?  
Does the deed he urged to  
Anger him, done ?  
He who guards the right,  
To whom vows are sacred,  
Hinders the right ?—  
Reigns through falsehood ?  
Let me down to the dark,  
That my wisdom may slumber !

Wanderer

I will not let thee descend,  
For a potent magic I wield.

## SIEGFRIED

All-wise one,  
Planted by thee  
The sting of care was  
In Wotan's dauntless heart ;  
For, through thy wisdom,  
Downfall and shameful  
Doom were foretold him ;  
My mind was fettered by fear.  
Now let the world's  
Wisest of women  
Answer and say  
How a God may conquer his care.

Erda

Thou art not  
What thou hast said.  
Why art thou come, wild and wayward,  
To trouble the Wala's sleep ?

Wanderer

Thou art not  
What thou hast dreamed.  
Thy end draws near,  
Mother of wisdom ;  
Thy wisdom at war  
With me shall perish.  
Knowest thou Wotan's will ?

*[A long silence.]*

I tell thee  
That thou mayest sleep  
For evermore unvexed by care.  
That the Gods are doomed,  
No longer dismays me,  
Since I will it so.  
What, with myself at war, in anguish,  
Despairing, once I resolved,  
Gaily, gladly,  
With delight I now do.

## SIEGFRIED

Mad with disgust I decreed once  
The world to the Nibelung's hate,  
But now to the valiant Wälsung  
I leave it with joy.

One who never knew me,  
Though chosen by me,  
A boy bold and fearless,  
Helped not by Wotan,  
Has won the Nibelung's ring.

Blest in love,  
Void of all envy,  
On him shall fall harmless  
Alberich's curse,

For no fear does he know.  
Soon thy child and mine,  
Brünnhild',

Shall be waked by him ;  
And when waked  
Our child shall achieve  
A deed to redeem the world.

So slumber again,  
Closing thine eyelids ;  
Dreaming behold my downfall !

Whatever comes after,  
The God rejoicing  
Yields to youth ever young.

Descend, then, Erda,  
Mother of fear !  
World-sorrow !  
Descend ! Descend !  
And sleep for aye !

*[Erda, whose eyes are already closed, and who has gradually been sinking deeper, disappears entirely. The cavern has become quite dark again.]*

## SIEGFRIED

*Dawn lights up the stage ; the storm has ceased. The Wanderer has gone close to the cave, and leans with his back against it, facing the wings.*

**Wanderer**

Lo ! Yonder Siegfried comes.

*[He remains where he is without changing his position. Siegfried's wood-bird flutters towards the foreground. Suddenly the bird stops in his direct flight, flutters to and fro in alarm, and disappears quickly towards the back.]*

**Siegfried**

*Enters and stops.*

My bird has vanished from sight !  
With fluttering wings  
And lovely song  
Blithely he showed me the way,  
And then forsook me and fled !  
I must discover  
The rock for myself :  
The path I followed so far  
'Twere best still to pursue.

*[He goes towards the back.]*

**Wanderer**

*Still in the same position.*

Boy, pray tell me,  
Whither away ?

**Siegfried**

*Halts and turns round.*

Did some one speak ?  
Perhaps he knows the road.

*[He goes nearer to the Wanderer.]*

I would find a rock  
That by flaming fire is surrounded :  
There sleeps a maid  
Whom I would awake.

**Wanderer**

Who bade thee seek  
This rock flame-circled ?—  
Taught thee to yearn for the woman ?

## SIEGFRIED

Siegfried

It was a singing  
Woodland bird ;  
He gave me welcome tidings.

Wanderer

A wood-bird chatters idly  
What no man understands ;  
How then couldst thou tell  
The song's true meaning ?

Siegfried

Because of the blood  
Of a dragon grim  
That fell before me at Neidhöhl'—  
The burning blood  
Had scarce touched my tongue  
When the sense of the singer grew plain.

Wanderer

Who was it urged thee on  
To try thy strength,  
And slay this dragon so dread ?

Siegfried

My guide was Mime,  
A faithless dwarf :  
What fear is fain he had taught me.  
But 'twas the dragon  
Roused me himself,  
Wrathful, to strike the blow ;  
For he threatened me with his jaws.

Wanderer

Who forged the sword  
So hard and keen  
That it slew the daunting foe ?

Siegfried

I forged it myself  
When the smith was beaten ;  
Swordless else I should have been still.

Wanderer

But who made  
The mighty splinters  
From which the sword was welded strong ?





## SIEGFRIED

**Wanderer**  
*Still without  
altering his position*

That is the way I wear it  
When against the wind I go.

**Siegfried**  
*Inspecting him  
still more closely.*

But an eye beneath it is wanting.  
Perchance by some one  
Whose way thou didst  
Too boldly bar  
It has been struck out.  
Take thyself off,  
Or else very soon  
The other thou shalt lose also !

**Wanderer**

I see, my son,  
Where thou art blind,  
And hence thy jaunty assurance.  
With the eye that is  
Amising in me  
Thou lookest now on the other  
That still is left me for sight.

**Siegfried**  
*Who has been  
listening thought-  
fully, now bursts  
involuntarily into  
hearty laughter.*

Thy foolish talk sets me laughing !  
But come, this nonsense must finish.  
At once show me my way ;  
Then proceed thou too on thine own ;  
For me further  
Use thou hast none :  
So speak, or off thou shalt pack !

**Wanderer**  
*Gently.*

Child, didst thou know  
Who I am,  
Thy scoffs I had been spared !  
From one so dear,  
Insult hard to endure is.  
Long have I loved  
Thy radiant race,  
Though from my fury  
In terror it shrank.

## SIEGFRIED

Thou whom I love so,  
All too fair one,  
Rouse my wrath not to-day ;  
It would ruin both thee and me.

Siegfried

Still art thou dumb,  
Stubborn old man ?  
Stand to one side, then ;  
That pathway, I know,  
Leads to the slumbering maid ;  
For thither the wood-bird  
Was guiding when he flew off.

*[It suddenly becomes dark again.]*

Wanderer

*Breaking out in  
anger and  
assuming a  
commanding  
attitude.*

In fear of its life it fled.  
It knew that here  
Was the ravens' lord ;  
Dire his plight were he caught !  
The way that it guided  
Thou shalt not go !

Siegfried

*Amazed, falls back  
and assumes a  
defiant attitude.*

Hoho ! Interferer !  
Who then art thou  
That wilt not let me pass ?

Wanderer

Fear thou the rock's defender !  
My might it is  
Holds the maiden fettered by sleep.  
He who would wake her,  
He who would win her,  
Impotent makes me for ever.

A burning sea  
Encircles the maid,  
Fires fiercely glowing  
Surround the rock ;

## SIEGFRIED

He who craves the bride  
The flames must boldly defy.

*[He points with his spear towards the rocky heights.]*

Look up above !  
That light dost thou see ?  
The surging heat,  
The splendour, grows ;  
Clouds of fire rolling,  
Tongues of flame writhing,  
Roaring and raging,  
Come ravening down.  
Thy head now  
Is flooded with light ;

*[A flickering glow, increasing in brightness,  
appears on the summit of the rock.]*

The fire will seize thee,  
Seize and devour thee.—  
Back, back, there, foolhardy boy !

Siegfried

Stand back, old babb'er, thyself !  
For where the fire is burning,  
To Brünnhilde yonder I go !

*[He advances ; the Wanderer bars his way.]*

Wanderer

Hast thou no fear of the fire,  
Then barred by my spear be thy path !  
I still hold the haft  
That conquers all ;  
The sword thou dost wield  
It shivered long ago :  
Upon my spear eternal  
Break it once more.

*[He stretches out his spear.]*

Siegfried

*Drawing his  
sword.*

'Tis my father's foe,  
Found here at last !  
Now, then, for vengeance !

## SIEGFRIED

In luck am I !  
Brandish thy spear :  
My sword will hew it in twain !

*[With one stroke he hews the Wanderer's spear in two pieces. Lightning flashes from the spear up towards the rocks, where the light, until now dim, begins to flame brighter and brighter. A violent thunder-clap, which quickly dies away, accompanies the stroke.]*

**Wanderer**                      Fare on ! I cannot prevent thee !  
*Quietly picking up the pieces of the spear which have fallen at his feet.*                      *[He suddenly disappears in utter darkness.]*

**Siegfried**                      With his spear in splinters  
Vanished the coward !

*[The growing brightness of the clouds of fire, which keep sinking down lower and lower, attracts Siegfried's eye.]*

Ha ! Rapturous fire !  
Glorious light !  
Shining my pathway  
Opens before me.  
In fiery flames plunging,  
Through fire I will win to the bride !  
Hoho ! Hahei !  
To summon a comrade I call !

*[He sets his horn to his lips and plunges into the fiery billows, which, flowing down from the heights, now spread over the foreground. Siegfried, who is soon lost to view, seems, from the sound of his horn, to be ascending the mountain. The flames begin to fade, and change gradually into a dissolving cloud lit by the glow of dawn.]*

## SIEGFRIED

*The thin cloud has resolved itself into a fine rose-coloured veil of mist, which so divides that the upper part rises and disappears, disclosing the bright blue sky of day; whilst on the edge of the rocky height, now becoming visible (exactly the same scene as in the third Act of "The Valkyrie"), a veil of mist reddened by the dawn remains hanging, which suggests the magic fire still flaming below. The arrangement of the scene is exactly the same as at the end of "The Valkyrie." In the foreground, under a wide-spreading fir-tree, lies Brünnhilde in full shining armour, her helmet on her head, and her long shield covering her, in deep sleep.*

### Siegfried

*Coming from the back, reaches the rocky edge of the summit, and at first shows only the upper part of his body.*

*He looks round him for a long time in amaze. Softly.*

### Solitude blissful

#### On sun-caressed height !

*[He climbs to the summit, and, standing on a rock at the edge of the precipice at the back, gazes at the scene in astonishment. He looks into the wood at the side and comes forward a little.*

#### What lies in shadow,

#### Asleep in the wood ?

#### A charger

#### Resting in slumber deep.

*[Approaching slowly he stops in surprise when, still at some little distance from her, he sees Brünnhilde.*

#### What radiant thing lies yonder ?

#### The steel, how it gleams and glints !

#### Is it the glare

#### That dazzles me still ?

#### Shining armour ?

#### Shall it be mine ?

*[He lifts up the shield and sees Brünnhilde's form; her face, however, is for the most part hidden by her helmet.*

#### Ha ! It covers a man !

#### The sight stirs thoughts sweet and strange !

#### The helm must lie

## SIEGFRIED

Hard on his head ;  
Lighter lay he  
Were it unloosed.

*[He loosens the helmet carefully and removes it from the head of the sleeper. Long curling hair breaks forth. Tenderly.]*

Ah ! how fair !

*[He stands lost in contemplation.]*

Clouds gleaming softly  
Fringe with their fleeces  
This lake of heaven bright ;  
Laughing, the glorious  
Face of the sun

Shines through the billowy clouds !

*[He bends lower over the sleeper.]*

His bosom is heaving,  
Stirred by his breath ;  
Ought I to loosen the breastplate ?

*[He tries to loosen the breastplate.]*

Come, my sword,  
Cleave thou the iron !

*[He draws his sword and gently and carefully cuts through the rings on both sides of the breastplate ; he then lifts this off along with the greaves, so that Brünnhilde now lies before him in a soft woman's robe. He draws back startled and amazed.]*

That is no man !

*[He stares at the sleeper, greatly excited.]*

Magical rapture  
Pierces my heart ;  
Fixed is my gaze,  
Burning with terror ;  
I reel, my heart faints and fails !

*[He is seized with sudden terror.]*

On whom shall I call,

"Magical rapture  
Pierces my heart ;  
Fixed is my gaze,  
Burning with terror ;  
I reel, my heart faints and fails !"

See p. 86





## SIEGFRIED

For aid imploring ?  
Mother ! Mother !  
Remember me !

*[He sinks as if fainting on to Brünnhilde's bosom ; then he starts up fighting.]*

How waken the maid,  
Causing her eyelids to open ?

*[Tenderly.]*

Her eyelids to open ?  
What if her gaze strike me blind !  
How shall I dare  
To look on their light ?  
All rocks and sways  
And swirls and revolves ;  
Uttermost longing  
Burns and consumes me ;  
My hand on my heart,  
It trembles and shakes !  
What ails thee, coward ?  
Is this what fear means ?  
O mother ! Mother !  
Thy dauntless child !

*[Very tenderly.]*

A woman lying asleep  
Has taught him what fear is at last !  
How conquer my fear ?  
How brace my heart ?  
That, myself, I waken,  
I must waken the sleeper !

*[As he approaches the sleeping figure again he is overcome by tenderer emotions at the sight. He bends down lower ; sweetly.]*

Softly quivers  
Her flower-sweet mouth !  
Its lovely trembling

## SIEGFRIED

Has charmed my despair !  
Ah ! And the fragrant,  
Blissful warmth of her breath !

*[As if in despair.]*

Awaken ! Awaken,  
Maiden divine !

*[He gazes at her.]*

She hears me not.  
New life from the sweetest  
Of lips I will suck, then,  
Even though kissing I die !

*[He sinks, as if dying, on to the sleeping figure,  
and, closing his eyes, fastens his lips on Brünn-  
hilde's. Brünnhilde opens her eyes. Siegfried  
starts up, and remains standing before her.]*

### Brünnhilde

*Rises slowly to  
a sitting posture.  
Raising her arms,  
she greets earth  
and sky with  
solemn gestures  
on her return to  
consciousness.*

Sun, I hail thee !  
Hail, O light !  
Hail, O glorious day !  
Long I have slept ;  
I am awake.  
What hero broke  
Brünnhilde's sleep ?

### Siegfried

*Awed and  
entranced by her  
look and her voice,  
stands as if  
spellbound.*

Through the fierce fires flaming  
Round this rock I burst ;  
I unloosened thy helmet strong :  
I awoke thee ;  
Siegfried am I.

### Brünnhilde

*Sitting upright.*

Gods, I hail you !  
Hail, O World !  
Hail, O Earth, in thy glory !  
My sleep is over now,  
My eyes open.  
It is Siegfried  
Who bids me wake !

" Sun, I hail thee !  
Hail, O light !  
Hail, O glorious day !"  
See p. 88



## SIEGFRIED

**Siegfried**  
*Breaking forth in  
rapturous  
exaltation.*

I hail thee, mother  
Who gave me birth !  
Hail, O Earth,  
That nourished my life  
So that I see those eyes  
Beam on me, blest among men !

**Brünnhilde**

I hail the mother  
Who gave thee birth !  
Hail, O Earth,  
That nourished thy life !  
No eye dared see me but thine ;  
To thee alone might I wake !

*[Both remain full of beaming ecstasy, lost in  
mutual contemplation.]*

**Brünnhilde**

O Siegfried ! Siegfried !  
Hero most blest !  
Of life the awaker,  
Conquering light !  
O joy of the world, couldst know  
How thou wert always loved !  
Thou wert my gladness,  
My care wert thou !  
Thy life I sheltered  
Before it was thine ;  
My shield was thy shelter  
Ere thou wert born :  
So long loved wert thou, Siegfried !

**Siegfried**  
*Softly and timidly.*

My mother did not die, then ?  
Did the dear one but sleep ?

**Brünnhilde**  
*Smiles and stretches  
her hand out kindly  
towards him.*

Adorable child !  
Nevermore thy mother will greet thee !  
Thyself am I,  
If I be blest with thy love.

## SIEGFRIED

All things I know  
Known not to thee ;  
Yet only of my love  
Born is my wisdom.

O Siegfried ! Siegfried !  
Conquering light !  
I loved thee always,  
For I alone  
Divined the thought hid by Wotan :  
Hidden thought I dared not  
So much as utter ;  
Thought that I thought not,  
Feeling it only ;  
For which I worked,  
Battled and strove,  
Defying even  
Him who conceived it ;  
For which in penance  
Prisoned I lay,  
Because thought it was not,  
But felt alone !  
For what the thought was—  
Say, canst thou guess it?—  
Was love of thee, nothing but that !

Siegfried

How wondrous sounds  
Thy rapturous song !  
But dark the meaning to me.  
*[Tenderly.]*  
Of thine eyes the splendour  
I see plain,  
I can feel thee breathing  
Soft and warm,  
Sweet can hear  
The singing of thy voice,

## SIEGFRIED

But what thou sayest I strive  
Vainly to understand.  
I cannot grasp clearly  
Things so far distant ;  
Needed is every sense  
To feel and behold thee !  
By laming fear  
Fettered am I,  
For how to fear  
Thou hast taught me at last ;  
Thou who hast bound me  
In bonds of such power,  
Give me my courage again !

*[He remains in great excitement with his  
yearning gaze fixed on her.]*

**Brünnhilde**  
*Turns her head  
gently aside and  
looks towards the  
wood.*

I see there Grane,  
My sacred horse ;  
In gladness he grazes  
Who slept with me !  
He too has by Siegfried been waked.

**Siegfried**  
*Without changing  
his position.*

My gaze on a mouth  
Most lovely is feasting ;  
My lips are afire  
With passionate yearning  
For the pasture sweet that I look on !

**Brünnhilde**  
*Points to her  
armour, which  
she now perceives.*

I see there the shield  
That sheltered heroes ;  
And there is the helmet  
That hid my head :  
It shields, it hides me no more !

**Siegfried**  
*With fire.*

By a glorious maid  
My heart has been hurt

## SIEGFRIED

Wounds in my head  
A woman has struck :  
I came without shield or helm !

**Brünnhilde**  
*With increased  
sadness.*

I see there the breastplate's  
Glittering steel ;  
A keen-edged sword  
Sundered the rings,  
From the form of the maiden  
Loosened the mail :  
Nor shelter nor shield is left  
To the weak and sorrowful maid !

**Siegfried**  
*With heat.*

Through billows of fire  
I battled to thee,  
No buckler or breastplate  
Sheltered or screened ;  
The flames have won  
Their way to my heart ;  
My blood hot-surgings  
Rushes and leaps ;  
A ravening fire  
Is kindled within me :  
The flames that shone  
Round Brünnhilde's rock  
Are burning now in my breast !  
O maid, extinguish the fire !  
Calm the commotion and rage !

*[He has embraced her passionately.]*

**Brünnhilde**  
*Springs up,  
resists him with  
the utmost strength  
of terror, and flies  
to the other side  
of the stage.*

No God's touch have I known !  
With awe the heroes  
Greeted the maiden :  
Holy came she from Walhall.  
Woe's me ! Woe's me !  
Woe the affront,  
The bitter disgrace !



## SIEGFRIED

He wounds me sore  
Who waked me from sleep !  
He has broken breastplate and helm ;  
Now I am Brünnhild' no more.

Siegfried

Thou art to me  
The dreaming maid still ;  
Brünnhilde lies  
Lapped still in sleep.  
Awake, be a woman to me !

Brünnhilde  
*Bewildered.*

Confused are my senses,  
My mind is blank :  
Wisdom, dost thou forsake me ?

Siegfried

Said not thy song  
Thy wisdom drew  
Its light from thy love of me ?

Brünnhilde  
*Staring before  
her.*

Shadows drear-falling  
Darken my gaze ;  
Mine eyes see dimly,  
The light dies out,  
Deep is the dark.  
From dread-haunted mists  
Fear in a frenzy  
Comes writhing forth ;  
Terror stalks me  
And grows with each stride !

*[She hides her eyes with her hands in violent  
terror.]*

Siegfried  
*Gently removing  
her hands from  
her eyes.*

Dread lies dark  
On eyelids bound ;  
With the fetters vanish  
The fear and gloom ;  
Rise from the dark and behold :  
Bright as the sun is the day.

## SIEGFRIED

Brünnhilde  
*Much agitated.*

Flaunting my shame,  
Bright as the sun shines the day !  
O Siegfried ! Siegfried !  
Pity my woe !  
I have always  
Lived and shall live—  
Always in sweet,  
Rapturous yearning,  
And always to make thee blest !

O Siegfried ! Glorious  
Wealth of the world !  
Laughing hero !  
Life of the earth !  
Ah, forbear !  
Leave me in peace !  
Touch me not,  
Mad with delirious frenzy !  
Break me not,  
Bring me not under thy yoke,  
Undo not the loved one so dear !

Hast thou rejoiced  
Thyself to see  
Reflected clear in the stream ?  
If into wavelets  
The water were stirred,  
And ruffled the limpid  
Calm of the brook,  
Thy face would not be there,  
Only water's rippling unrest.  
So untouched let me stay,  
Trouble me not,  
And thy face  
Mirrored bright in me  
Will smile to thee always,  
Gay and merry and glad !

## SIEGFRIED

O Siegfried,  
Radiant child,  
Love thyself  
And leave me in peace ;  
O bring not thine own to naught !

Siegfried

I love thee ;  
Didst thou but love me !  
Myself I have lost ;  
Ah, would thou wert won !  
A fair-flowing flood  
Before me rolls ;  
With all my senses  
Nothing I see  
But buoyant, beautiful billows.  
If it refuse  
To mirror my face,  
Just as I am,  
To assuage my fever,  
Myself I will plunge  
Straight in the stream :—  
If only the billows  
Would blissfully drown me,  
My yearning lost in the flood !  
Awaken, Brünnhilde !  
Waken, O maid !  
Laughing and living,  
Sweetest delight,  
Be mine ! Be mine ! Be mine !

Brünnhilde  
*With deep feeling.*

Thine, Siegfried !  
I was from of old !

Siegfried  
*With fire.*

What thou hast been  
That be thou still !

## SIEGFRIED

Farewell, glittering  
Pomp divine !  
End in bliss,  
O immortal race !  
Norns, rend in sunder  
Your rope of runes !  
Dusk steal darkly  
Over the Gods !  
Night of their downfall  
Dimly descend !  
Now Siegfried's star  
Is rising for me ;  
He is for ever  
And for aye,  
My wealth, my world,  
My all in all :  
Love ever radiant,  
Laughing death !

*Siegfried*  
*While Brünnhilde*  
*repeats the*  
*foregoing, begin-*  
*ning at "Fare-*  
*well Walhall's*  
*Radiant world."*

Laughing thou wakest,  
Thou my delight !  
Brünnhilde lives,  
Brünnhilde laughs !  
Hail, O day  
In glory arisen !  
Hail, O Sun  
That shines from on high !  
Hail, O light  
From the darkness sprung !  
Hail, O world  
Where Brünnhilde dwells !  
She wakes ! She lives !  
She greets me with laughter !  
Splendour streams  
From Brünnhilde's star !

Brünnhilde throws herself into Siegfried's arms

See p. 99



## SIEGFRIED

She is for ever  
And for aye  
My wealth, my world,  
My all in all,  
Love ever radiant,  
Laughing death !

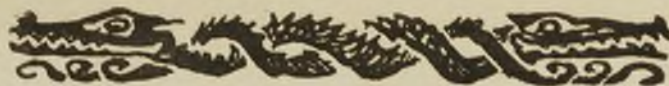
*[Brünnhilde throws herself into Siegfried's  
arms. The curtain falls.]*



THE TWILIGHT  
OF THE GODS







## CHARACTERS

SIEGFRIED  
GUNTHER  
HAGEN  
ALBERICH  
BRÜNNHILDE  
GUTRUNE  
WALTRAUTE  
THE THREE NORNS  
THE RHINE-MAIDENS  
VASSALS  
WOMEN

## SCENES OF ACTION

PRELUDE : ON THE VALKYRIES' ROCK

ACT I. THE HALL OF GUNTHER'S DWELLING ON THE RHINE.  
THE VALKYRIES' ROCK

ACT II. IN FRONT OF GUNTHER'S HALL

ACT III. A WOODED REGION ON THE RHINE. GUNTHER'S HALL





## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

A dauntless God  
Came to drink at the well ;  
For the draught he drank  
He paid with the loss of an eye.  
From the world-ash-tree  
Wotan broke a holy bough ;  
From the bough he cut  
And shaped the shaft of a spear.

As time rolled on the wood  
Wasted and died of the wound ;  
Sere, leafless and barren,  
Wan withered the tree ;  
    Sadly the flow  
    Of the fountain failed ;  
    Troubled grew  
    My sorrowful song.  
And now no more  
At the world-ash-tree I weave ;  
    I needs must fasten  
Here on the pine-tree my rope.  
    Sing, O sister—  
    Catch as I throw—  
Canst thou tell us why ?

### **The Second Norn**

*Winds the rope  
thrown to her  
round a projecting  
rock at the  
entrance of the  
cave.*

Runes of treaties  
Well weighed and pondered  
Cut were by Wotan  
In the shaft,  
Which wielding, he swayed the world.  
A hero bold  
In fight then splintered the spear,  
The hallowed haft  
With its treaties cleaving in twain.  
Then bade Wotan  
Walhall's heroes

The three Norns  
See p. 103



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Hew down the world-ash-tree  
Forthwith,  
Both the stem and boughs sere and barren.  
The ash-tree sank ;  
Sealed was the fountain that flowed.  
Round the sharp edge  
Of the rock I wind the rope :  
Sing, O sister,  
Catch as I throw ;  
Further canst thou tell ?

**The Third Norn**  
*Catching the rope  
and throwing the  
end behind her.*

The castle stands  
By giants upreared.  
With the Gods and the holy  
Host of the heroes  
Wotan sits in his hall ;  
And round the walls  
Hewn logs are heaped,  
High up-piled,  
Ready for burning :  
The world-ash-tree these were once.  
When the wood  
Flares up brightly and burns,  
In its fire  
Shall the fair hall be consumed.  
And then shall the high Gods' downfall  
Dawn in darkness for aye.  
Know ye yet more,  
Begin anew winding the rope ;  
Again I throw it  
Back from the north.  
Spin and sing, O my sister.

*[She throws the rope to the second Norn, and  
the second throws it to the first, who loosens  
the rope from the bough and ties it on to  
another.]*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**The First Norn**  
*Looking towards  
the back.*

Is it the dawn,  
Or the firelight that flickers ?  
Grief-darkened is my gaze.  
The holy past  
I can scarce remember,  
When Loge burst  
Of old into burning fire.  
Dost thou know how he fared ?

**The Second Norn**  
*Winding the rope  
which has been  
thrown to her  
round the rock  
again.*

Overcome by Wotan's  
Spear and its magic,  
Loge worked for the God ;  
Then, to win his freedom,  
Gnawed with his tooth  
The solemn runes on the shaft.  
So with the potent  
Spell of the spear-point  
Wotan confined him  
Flaming where Brünnhilde slumbered.  
Canst thou tell us the end ?

**The Third Norn**

With the broken spear's  
Sharp-piercing splinters  
Wotan wounded  
The blazing one deep in the breast ;  
Ravening fire  
Springs from the wound,  
And this is thrown  
'Mid the world-ash-tree's  
Hewn logs heaped ready for burning.  
Would ye know  
When that will be,  
Wind, O sisters, the rope !

*[She throws the rope back ; the second Norn  
winds it up and throws it again to the  
first.]*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**The First Norn**  
*Fastening the rope  
again.*

The night wanes,  
Dark grows my vision ;  
I cannot find  
The threads of the rope ;  
The strands are twisted and loose.  
A horrible sight  
Wildly vexes mine eyes :  
The Rhinegold  
That black Alberich stole.  
Knowest thou more thereof ?

**The Second Norn**  
*With laborious  
haste winds the  
rope round the  
jagged rock at the  
mouth of the cave.*

The rock's sharp edge  
Is cutting the rope ;  
The threads loosen  
Their hold and grow slack ;  
They droop tangled and frayed.  
From woe and wrath  
Rises the Nibelung's ring ;  
A curse of revenge  
Ruthlessly gnaws at the strands :—  
Canst thou the end foretell ?

**The Third Norn**  
*Hastily catching  
the rope which is  
thrown to her.*

The rope is too short,  
Too loose it hangs ;  
It must be stretched,  
Pulled straighter, before  
Its end can reach to the north !

*[She pulls hard at the rope, which breaks.*

**It breaks !**

**The Second Norn**

**It breaks !**

**The First Norn**

**It breaks !**

*[They take the pieces of broken rope and bind  
their bodies together with them.*



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

The Three Norns So ends wisdom eternal !  
The wise ones  
Will utter no more.  
Descend to Erda ! Descend !

*[They vanish. The dawn grows brighter ;  
the firelight from the valley gradually fades.  
Sunrise ; then broad daylight.]*



*Siegfried and Brünnhilde enter from the cave. He is fully armed ; she  
leads her horse by the bridle.*

**Brünnhilde**

Belovèd hero,  
Poor my love were  
Wert thou thereby  
Kept from new deeds.  
One single doubt  
Yet makes me linger :  
The fear my service  
Has been too small.  
The things the Gods taught me  
I could give :  
All the rich hoard  
Of holy runes ;  
But by the hero  
Who holds my heart  
I have been robbed  
Of my maiden valour.  
In wisdom weak,  
Although strong in will ;  
In love so rich,  
In power so poor—  
Must thou not scorn  
Her lack of riches  
Who, though so eager,  
Can give nothing more ?

The Norns vanish  
See p. 108



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried

Wonderful woman, more  
Thy gifts than I can guard !  
O chide not if thy teaching  
Has left me still untaught.

*[With fire.*

That Brünnhilde lives for me—  
To that lore I hold fast ;  
And one lesson I have learned—  
Brünnhilde to remember !

Brünnhilde

If thou wouldst truly love me,  
Think of thyself alone,  
And of thy deeds of daring !  
The raging fire remember  
That fearless thou didst fare through  
When around the rock it burned——

Siegfried

That I might conquer Brünnhild' !

Brünnhilde

Think too of the shield-hidden maid  
Thou didst find there lapped in slumber,  
And whose helmet hard thou didst  
break——

Siegfried

Brünnhilde to awaken !

Brünnhilde

Those oaths remember  
That unite us ;  
The faith and truth  
That are between us,  
And evermore  
The love we live for ;  
Brünnhilde in thy breast  
Will deeply burn then for aye !

*[She embraces Siegfried.*

Siegfried

Must I leave thee, O love,  
In thy holy fortress of fire,

*[He has taken Alberich's ring from his finger,  
and holds it out to Brünnhilde.*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

This ring of mine I give thee ;  
Let it pay for thy runes.  
Of whatever deeds I did  
The virtue lies therein.  
By my hand was the dragon grim,  
Who long had guarded it, slain ;  
Keep thou the gold and its might  
As token true of my love !

**Brünnhilde**  
*Putting on  
the ring in  
rapturous delight.*

I covet it more than all else !  
For the ring take Grane, my horse.  
Through the air with me  
He galloped once boldly,  
But lost with mine  
Was his magic art ;  
Upon clouds and storm,  
Through thunder and lightning  
No more

Gallantly now will he sweep !  
But if thou lead the way,  
Even through fire

Fearlessly Grane will follow.  
For henceforth, hero,  
Thou art his master !  
Entreat him well ;  
He knows thy voice ;  
O, greet him often

In Brünnhilde's name !

**Siegfried**

Then every deed that I dare  
Will be achieved through thy virtue ;  
All my battles thou wilt choose,  
And my victories will be thine.  
Upon thy good horse riding,  
And sheltered by thy shield,  
No longer Siegfried am I,  
But only Brünnhilde's arm !

Siegfried leaves Brünnhilde in search of adventure  
See p. 111



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Brünnhilde            O were but Brünnhilde thy soul too !  
 Siegfried            Through her my courage burns high.  
 Brünnhilde            Then wert thou Siegfried and Brünnhild'.  
 Siegfried            Where I am, there thy abode is.  
 Brünnhilde            Then a waste is my hall of rock ?  
     *With animation.*  
 Siegfried            Made one, both there abide.

Brünnhilde            Ye Gods, O ye holy  
     *Greatly moved.*            Race of immortals,  
                                   Feast ye your eyes  
                                   On this love-hallowed pair !  
 Apart—who shall divide us ?  
 Divided—still we are one !

Siegfried            Hail, O Brünnhilde,  
                                   Beautiful star !  
 Hail, love and its glory !

Brünnhilde            Hail, O Siegfried,  
                                   Conquering light !  
 Hail, life and its glory !  
 Hail, conquering light !

Both                    Hail ! Hail ! Hail ! Hail !

*[Siegfried leads the horse quickly to the edge of the sloping rock, Brünnhilde following him. Siegfried disappears with the horse down behind the projecting rock, so that he is no longer visible to the audience. Brünnhilde is thus suddenly left standing alone on the edge of the slope, and gazes down into the valley after Siegfried. Her gestures show that Siegfried has vanished from her sight. Siegfried's horn is heard from below. Brünnhilde listens, and steps further out on the slope. She catches sight of Siegfried in the valley again, and waves to him joyfully. Her happy smiles seem to reflect the air of the merrily departing hero.]*





## THE FIRST ACT

*The hall of the Gibichungs on the Rhine. This is quite open at the back. An open shore stretching to the river occupies the background. Rocky heights enclose the shore. Gunther and Gutrune on a throne at one side, before which stands a table with drinking-vessels on it. In front of this Hagen is seated.*

Gunther

Give ear, Hagen ;  
Tell me the truth :  
Is my fame on the Rhine  
Worthy of Gibich's son ?

Hagen

I envy thee  
Thy fame and thy glory ;  
Thy great renown was foretold  
To me by Grimhild' our mother.

Gunther

I envy thee,  
So envy not me.  
I, as first-born, rule,  
But the wisdom is thine.  
Half-brother's feud  
Could scarce be laid better ;  
Asking thus of my renown,  
'Tis thy wisdom that I praise.

Hagen

My words I withdraw,  
Thy fame might be more :  
I know of precious treasures  
That the Gibichung has not yet won.

Gunther

Hide these, and I  
Withdraw my praise.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

- Hagen            In summer's full-ripened glory  
                  Blooms the Gibich stock,  
                  Thou, Gunther, still unwived,  
                  Thou, Gutrun', still unwed.
- Gunther            Whom wouldst thou have me woo,  
                  To win more wide renown ?
- Hagen                 One I know of,  
                  None nobler in the world.  
                  She dwells on soaring rocks,  
                  Her chamber is circled by fire ;  
                  And he who would Brünnhild' woo  
                  Must break through the daunting flame.
- Gunther            Suffices my strength for the task ?
- Hagen                 For one stronger still it is decreed.
- Gunther            Who is that hero unmatched ?
- Hagen                 Siegfried, the Wälsung's son ;  
                  He is the hero bold.  
                  A twin-born pair,  
                  Whom fate turned to lovers,  
                  Siegmund and Sieglinde,  
                  Had as their offspring this child.  
                  In the woods he grew and waxed strong.  
                  'Tis he that Gutrun' must wed.
- Gutrune            Tell me what deed of high valour  
  *Shyly.*            Made this hero the first in renown.
- Hagen                 At Neidhöhle  
                  A huge dragon lay,  
                  Who guarded the Nibelung's gold.  
                  He was slain,  
                  And his horrid jaws closed  
                  By Siegfried's invincible sword.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

From this colossal deed  
The fame of the hero dawned.

**Gunther**                    They say that a priceless treasure  
*Thoughtfully.*            The Niblungs had in their hoard.

**Hagen**                    The man who could use its spell  
Were lord of the world evermore.

**Gunther**                    And Siegfried won it in fight ?

**Hagen**                    He has the Niblungs in thrall.

**Gunther**                    And Brünnhild' no other can win ?

**Hagen**                    To no other will the flames yield.

**Gunther**                    Why wake dissension and doubt ?  
*Rises angrily*            Why stir up my desire  
*from his seat.*            And yearning for joys  
That cannot be won ?

*[He walks to and fro much agitated.]*

**Hagen**                    Would not Brünnhilde  
*Without leaving*            Be thy bride,  
*his seat causes*            Were she by Siegfried brought home ?  
*Gunther to pull up as he approaches him, by a gesture of mysterious import.*

**Gunther**                    But how could I force this man  
*Turns away*            To woo the bride for me ?  
*doubtful and angry.*

**Hagen**                    Thy simple prayer would force him,  
*As before.*            Gutrun' winning him first.

**Gutrune**                    Thou mockest, cruel Hagen !  
What arts have I to bind him ?  
The greatest hero  
In all the world  
Has long ere this by the fairest  
Women on earth been loved.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Hagen

*Bending  
confidentially  
towards Gutrune.*

What of the drink in the chest ?

*[More secretly.]*

In me who won it have more faith.  
To thee in love it will bind  
Him whom thy heart most desires.

*[Gunter has come to the table again, and,  
leaning against it, pays close attention.]*

Hither did Siegfried come,  
And taste of this potion of herbs,  
He would straight forget he had looked  
On any woman before,  
Or been by woman approached.

Now answer :

Think ye my counsel good ?

Gunter

*Starting up  
suddenly.*

Now Grimhild' be praised,  
Who for brother gave us thee.

Gutrune

Siegfried fain I would behold !

Gunter

But how can he be found ?

*[A horn on the stage, from the background  
on the left, very loud but distant.]*

Hagen

*Listens and turns  
to Gunther.*

Merrily hunting  
After renown  
Across the world  
As through a wood,  
Belike in his chase he will come  
To the Gibich's realm on the Rhine.

Gunter

Heartily welcome were he.

*[A horn on the stage, nearer, but still  
distant. Both listen.]*

A horn from the Rhine I hear.



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Gunther            I am he thou dost seek.

Siegfried            Thy fame has reached me  
From the Rhine ;  
Now fight with me,  
Or be my friend.

Gunther            Be thou mine ;  
Thou art welcome !

Siegfried            Where stable my horse ?

Hagen                Leave him to me.

Siegfried            My name thou knowest ;  
*Turning to Hagen.*        Where have we met ?

Hagen                I guessed from thy strength  
Who thou must be.

Siegfried            Be careful of Grane,  
*As he hands over*  
*the horse to*  
*Hagen.*                For thou hast never  
Led by the rein  
So noble a steed.

*[Hagen leads the horse away. While Siegfried looks thoughtfully after him, Guttrune, obeying a sign of Hagen's which Siegfried does not notice, goes to her room through a door on the left. Gunther comes into the hall with Siegfried, whom he has invited to accompany him.]*

Gunther            My father's ancient hall,  
O hero, greet in gladness !  
All thou beholdest,  
Where'er thou art,  
Treat as thine own henceforward :  
Thine is my kingdom—  
Land and folk ;  
By my body I swear it !  
Yea, myself I am thine.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

- Siegfried            Nor land nor folk have I to give,  
Nor father's house nor hall ;  
                         In my body  
                         Is all my wealth ;  
As I live it grows less.  
                         But a sword have I  
                         Which I welded ;  
Let my sword be my witness !—  
That and myself I bestow.
- Hagen                Of the Nibelungs' treasure  
*Who has come*       Rumour names thee the lord.  
*back and now stands behind Siegfried.*
- Siegfried            I almost forgot the hoard,  
*Turning round*       So lightly I prize its worth.  
*to Hagen.*            I left it lying in a cavern,  
                         Where a dragon once held watch.
- Hagen                And nothing took at all ?
- Siegfried            Only this, not knowing its use.
- Hagen                It is the Tarnhelm,  
                         The gem of the Nibelung's art ;  
                         Its use, when worn on thy head,  
                         Is to change thy shape as thou wilt ;  
                         If fain to be borne afar,  
                         In a flash lo ! thou art there !  
                         Didst thou take nothing besides ?
- Siegfried            Yes, a ring.
- Hagen                Which safe thou dost hold ?
- Siegfried            'Tis held by a woman fair.  
*Tenderly.*
- Hagen                Brünnhild' !  
*Aside.*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**Gunther**                   Nay, Siegfried, let us not barter ;  
All I have a bauble poor,  
Matched with thy treasure, would be.  
I will serve thee without reward.

*[Hagen has gone to Gutrune's door, and now opens it.]*

**Gutrune**                   Welcome, O guest,  
To Gibich's house !  
*Enters carrying a full drinking-horn, with which she approaches Siegfried.*  
'Tis his daughter gives thee to drink.

**Siegfried**               Were all forgot  
*Bows in a friendly manner and takes the horn, which he holds thoughtfully before him.*  
Thou gavest to me,  
One lesson  
I will never forget ;  
So this first draught  
With love undying,  
Brünnhild', I drink to thee !

*[He puts the drinking-horn to his lips and takes a long draught ; then he hands it back to Gutrune, who, ashamed and confused, casts down her eyes. Siegfried gazes at her with sudden passion.]*

**Siegfried**               O thou who dost scorch  
And blind with thine eyes,  
Why sink them abashed by my gaze ?

*[Gutrune, blushing, looks up at him.]*

O lovely maid,  
Lower thine eyes ;  
My heart is aflame,  
Burnt by their light ;  
They kindle my blood ; it flows  
In devouring torrents of fire.

*[With a trembling voice.]*

Gunther, what name is thy sister's ?



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Gunther

Gutrune.

Siegfried  
*Softly.*

Can those be good runes  
That in her eyes I am reading ?

*[He ardently seizes Gutrune's hand.*

With thy brother I was fain to serve ;  
His pride my prayer scorned.  
Were I to pray the same of thee,  
Wouldst thou like him be proud ?

*[Gutrune involuntarily meets Hagen's eye.  
She bows her head humbly, and, expressing  
her feeling of unworthiness with a gesture,  
leaves the hall with faltering steps.*

Siegfried

Gunther, hast thou a wife ?

*Attentively watched by Hagen and Gunther, gazes  
after Gutrune as if entranced.*

Gunther

I am not wed,  
Nor, it would seem,  
Likely to find a wife !  
My heart on one I have set  
Whom there is no way to win.

Siegfried

In what canst thou fail  
With me for friend ?

*Turns with  
animation to Gunther.*

Gunther

On rocky heights her home ;  
Surrounded by fire her hall ;

Siegfried

“ On rocky heights her home ;  
Surrounded by fire her hall ” . . . ?

*Interrupting in  
wondering haste.*

Gunther

He only who braves the fire . . .

Siegfried

“ He only who braves the fire ” . . . ?

*As if making an intense effort to remember something.*

Siegfried hands the drinking-horn back to Gutrune and gazes  
at her with sudden passion  
See p. 119



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Gunther

May Brünnhilde's wooer be.

*[Siegfried shows by a gesture that at the mention of Brünnhilde's name all remembrance of her has faded.]*

I dare not essay the dread mountain ;  
The flames would not fall for me.

Siegfried

*Awakes from his dreamy state, and turns to Gunther high-spirited and gay.*

For thee I will win her,  
Of fire I have no fear ;  
For thy man am I,  
And my strength is thine,  
If Gutrun' I win as my wife.

Gunther

Gutrune gladly I grant thee

Siegfried

Thou shalt have Brünnhilde then.

Gunther

But how wilt deceive her ?

Siegfried

I will wear the Tarnhelm  
And appear in thy form.

Gunther

Then let the oath now be sworn !

Siegfried

Blood-brotherhood  
Sworn be by oath !

*[Hagen fills a drinking-horn with fresh wine ; he holds it out to Siegfried and Gunther, who cut their arms with their swords and hold them for a short space over the horn ; then they each lay two fingers on the horn, which Hagen continues to hold between them.]*

Siegfried and  
Gunther

Quickening blood  
Of blossoming life  
Lo ! I drop in the horn !  
Bravely mixed  
In brotherly love,

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Bloom our blood in the draught !  
Troth I drink to the friend  
Glad and free  
To-day from the bond  
Blood-brotherhood spring !  
But if broken the bond,  
Or if faithless the friend,  
What in drops to-day  
We drink kindly  
In torrents wildly shall flow,  
Paying treachery's wage.  
So—sealed be the bond !  
So—pledged be my faith !

*[Gunther drinks and hands the horn to Siegfried, who finishes the draught, and holds out the empty horn to Hagen. Hagen breaks the horn in two with his sword. Gunther and Siegfried join hands.]*

**Siegfried** Why hast not thou plighted thy troth ?  
*Observes Hagen, who, while the oath was being sworn, has stood behind him.*

**Hagen** My blood had soured the good draught.  
It flows not pure  
And noble like yours ;  
Stubborn and cold,  
Slow it runs,  
My cheek refusing to redden.  
I hold aloof  
From hot-blooded bonds.

**Gunther** Heed not him and his spleen.  
*To Siegfried.*

**Siegfried** Up, then, and off !  
*Puts on his shield again.* Back to the boat !  
Sail swift to the mountain !

*[He steps nearer to Gunther and points at him.]*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

By the bank one night  
On board thou shalt tarry,  
And then bring home the bride.

*[He turns to go, and beckons Gunther to follow him.]*

Gunther           Wilt thou not rest awhile ?

Siegfried        I am eager to be back.

*[He goes to the shore to unmoor the boat.]*

Gunther           Thou, Hagen, keep guard o'er the  
                          homestead.

*[He follows Siegfried to the shore. Whilst Siegfried and Gunther, after laying their arms in the boat, are hoisting the sail and making ready for departure, Hagen takes up his spear and shield. Gutrune appears at the door of her chamber just as Siegfried is pushing off the boat, which immediately glides into the middle of the stream.]*

Gutrune           So swiftly whither haste they ?

Hagen             To woo Brünnhild' for bride.

*While he seats himself comfortably with shield and spear in front of the hall.*

Gutrune           Siegfried ?

Hagen             See how he hastes,  
                          For wife seeking to win thee !

Gutrune           Siegfried—mine ?

*[She returns to her room greatly excited. Siegfried has seized an oar and rows the boat down-stream, so that it is soon lost to view.]*

Hagen  
*Sits motionless, his  
back against the  
door-post of the hall.*    On guard here I sit  
                          Watching the house,  
                          Warding the hall from the foe ;  
                          Gibich's son

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Is sped by the wind,  
And sails away for a wife ;  
A hero bold  
Of the helm has charge,  
And danger braves for his sake ;  
His bride once loved  
He brings to the Rhine :  
With her he brings me—the ring.  
O merry comrades,  
Freeborn and honoured,  
Gaily speed on in your pride !  
Base though ye deem him,  
The Niblung's son  
Shall yet be your lord.

*[A curtain which frames the front of the hall  
is drawn, and cuts the stage off from the  
audience.]*



*The curtain is raised again. The rocky height as in the Prelude. Brünnhilde sits at the entrance to the cave in silent contemplation of Siegfried's ring. Moved by blissful memories, she covers the ring with kisses. Distant thunder is heard ; she looks up and listens. She turns to the ring again. A flash of lightning. Again she listens, and looks into the distance, whence a dark thundercloud is approaching the rock.*

**Brünnhilde**

On my ear from afar  
Falls an old sound familiar.  
A horse comes flying  
Swift through the air ;  
On the clouds it sweeps  
In storm to the rock.  
Who seeks the lonely one here ?

**Waltraute's voice**  
*From the distance.*

Brünnhilde, sister,  
Wake if thou sleepest !

Brünnhilde kisses the ring that Siegfried has left with her

See p. 124





## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Brünnhilde  
Starts from  
her seat.

Waltraute's call !  
How welcome the sound !

*[Calling to the wing, and then hastening to  
the edge of the rock.]*

Dost thou, sister,  
Boldly swinging come this way ?  
In the wood—  
Still dear to thee—  
Halt and dismount,  
And leave thy courser to rest.

*[She runs into the wood, from which a loud  
sound like a thunder-clap is heard. She  
returns in great agitation with Waltraute,  
and remains joyfully excited without noticing  
the latter's anxious fear.]*

Art thou so bold  
That thou art come  
Brünnhild' to greet,  
Thy love unconquered by dread ?

Waltraute

Thou alone  
Art cause of my haste !

Brünnhilde

For Brünnhild's sake Warfather's ban  
Hast thou thus bravely broken ?  
Or perchance—O say !—

*[With some hesitation.]*

Has he at last  
Softened to his child ?  
When against the God  
I sought to shield Siegmund,  
Vainly—I know it—  
My deed fulfilled his desire.  
And I know that his anger  
Was assuaged,  
For albeit in slumber deep  
Here to the rock I was bound,

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Doomed to be thrall to the man  
Who should wake the maid as he passed,  
To my anguished prayer  
He granted grace ;  
With ravening fire  
He surrounded the rock,  
To bar to all cowards the road.  
Bane and chastisement  
Turned so to blessing ;  
A hero unmatched  
Has won me as wife ;  
Blest by his love,  
In light and laughter I live.

*[She embraces Waltraute with wild manifestations of joy, which the latter tries with anxious impatience to repress.]*

Hast thou been lured by my lot,  
And wouldst thou, sister,  
Feast on my gladness,  
Sharing in my delight ?

Waltraute  
*Vehemently.*

Sharing the frenzy  
That has maddened thee, fool !  
Far other the cause why I come,  
Defying Wotan in fear.

Brünnhilde  
*Here, for the first time, notices with surprise Waltraute's wildly excited state.*

Art afraid ?  
Anguished with terror ?  
So the stern one does not forgive ?  
Thou fearest his punishing wrath ?

Waltraute  
*Gloomily.*

Might I but fear it,  
At an end were my distress.

Brünnhilde

I am perplexed and amazed.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Waltraute

Calm thou thy frenzy ;  
Mark with care what I say !  
The fear that drove me  
Hither to thee  
Drives me back to Walhall again.

Brünnhilde  
*Alarmed.*

What ails, then, the Gods everlasting ?

Waltraute

Give earnest heed to what I tell thee !  
Since from thee Wotan parted,  
No more has he sent  
Us to battle ;  
Anxious and bewildered  
We rode to the field.  
Shunned are Walhall's bold heroes  
By Warfather ;  
Riding alone,  
Without pause or rest  
He wandered and roamed through the  
world.  
At last he returned  
With his spear splintered ;  
In his hand the pieces ;  
A hero had cleft it asunder.  
With silent sign  
Walhall's heroes  
Then he sent forth  
To hew down the world-ash-tree.  
He bade them pile  
The logs as they hewed them,  
Until they were heaped  
High round the hall of the blest.  
The Gods he next  
Called to a council ;  
The high seat  
He solemnly took,

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Bidding them  
Who gathered in fear sit beside him.  
The heroes filled  
The hall, ranged round in their order.  
So sits he,  
Speaks no word,  
Upon his high seat  
Grave and mute,  
The splintered spear  
Held fast in his hand,  
Holda's apples  
Touching no more.  
Fear and amazement  
Hold the Gods fast fettered.  
He has sent his ravens  
Forth to seek tidings ;  
If they return  
And bring him comforting news,  
Then the God will  
With soul serene  
Smile evermore and be glad.  
Round his knees in sorrow  
Twined lie the Valkyries ;  
He heeds not  
Our glances beseeching ;  
By terror and wild anguish  
We all are consumed.  
Against his breast  
Weeping I nestled,  
Then soft grew his gaze :  
He remembered, Brünnhilde, thee.  
He closed his eyes  
As if dreaming,  
Heavily sighed  
And whispered these words :  
" If to the deep Rhine's daughters

The ravens of Wotan  
See p. 128



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

She would restore the ring that was theirs,  
From the grievous curse  
Both God and world were freed !  
Then I took thought,  
And from his side  
Through the silent ranks  
Stole noiselessly forth.  
In haste, unseen,  
I mounted my horse,  
And stormed in tumult to thee.  
Grant, O sister,  
The boon I beg ;  
What thou canst do,  
Undaunted perform !  
End thou the grief of the Gods !

*[She has thrown herself down before Brünnhilde.]*

Brünnhilde  
*Quietly.*

What dreadful dream-born fancies,  
Sad one, are those thou dost tell ?  
The high Gods' holy  
And cloud-paved heaven  
Is no longer my home.  
I grasp not what thou art saying ;  
Dark its sense,  
Wild and confused.  
Within thine eyes,  
So over-weary,  
Gleams wavering fire ;  
With thy wan visage,  
O pale-faced sister,  
What wouldst thou, wild one, of me ?

Hiltraute  
*Vehemently.*

The ring upon thy hand—  
'Tis that : ah, be implored !  
For Wotan fling it away !

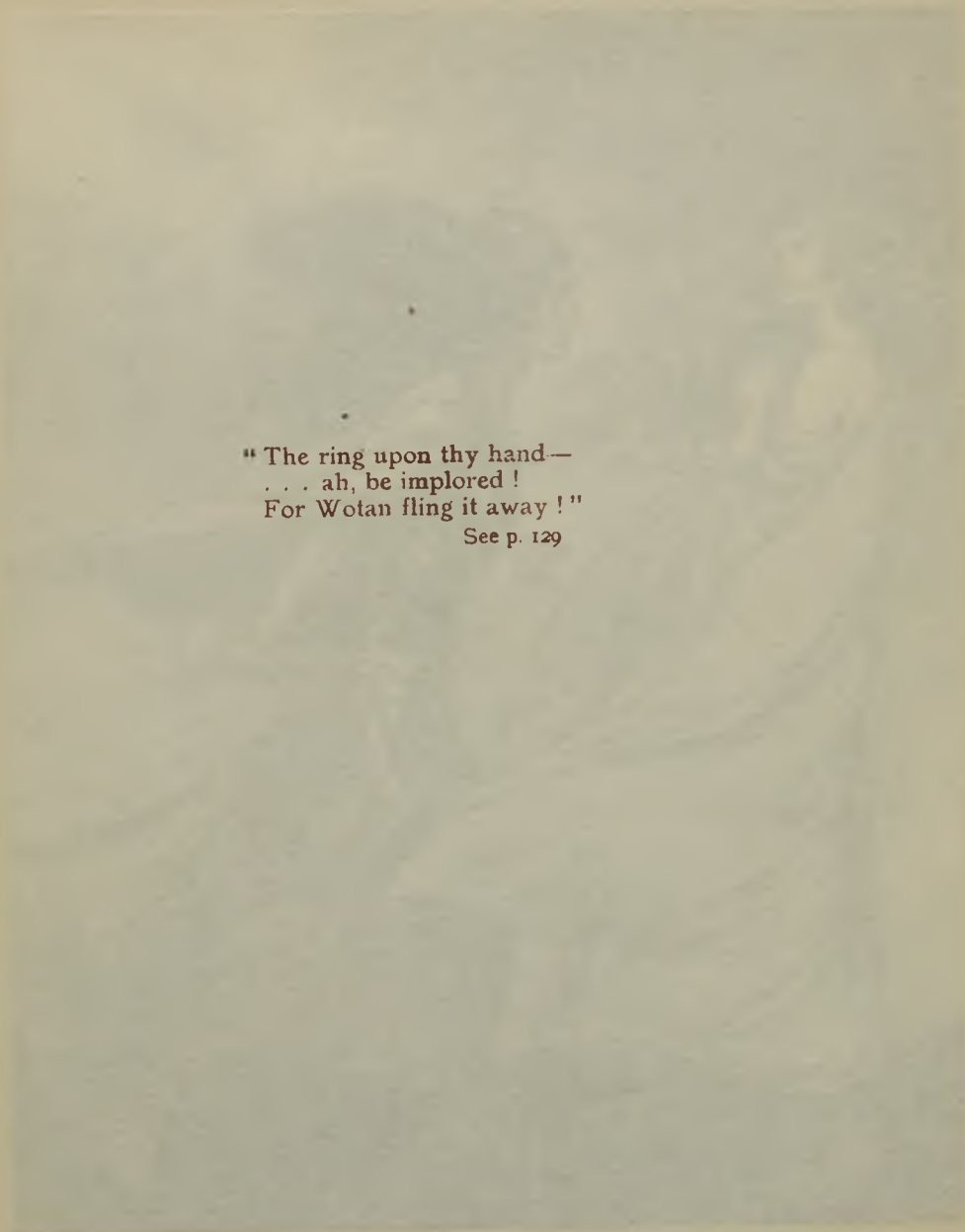
Brünnhilde

The ring—away ?



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

- Waltraute** To the Rhine-daughters give it again.
- Brünnhilde** The Rhine-daughters—I—the ring?  
Siegfried's love-pledge?  
Hast thou gone crazy?
- Waltraute** Hear me! Hear my despair!  
On this hangs  
The world's undoing and woe.  
Throw it from thee  
Into the water;  
End the anguish of Walhall;  
The accurst thing cast in the waves!
- Brünnhilde** Ha! dost thou know what 'twould mean?  
How shouldst thou,  
Maid unloving and cold!  
Much is Walhall's rapture,  
Much is the fame of the Gods;  
More is my ring.  
One glance at its shining gold,  
One flash of its sacred fire  
Is more precious  
Than bliss of all the Gods  
Enduring for aye!  
For Siegfried's dear love  
Shines from it bright and blessèd.  
Love of Siegfried!  
Ah, could I but utter the rapture  
Bound up in the ring!
- Go back to the holy  
Council of Gods;  
Repeat what I have told thee  
Of my ring:  
That love I will not forswear,  
Of love they never shall rob me;



"The ring upon thy hand—  
... ah, be implored!  
For Wotan fling it away!"

See p. 129



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Sooner shall Walhall's glory  
Perish and pass !

**Waltraute** This is thy faith, then ?  
To her sorrow  
Thus coldly thou leavest thy sister ?

**Brünnhilde** Up and away !  
Swiftly to horse !  
I will not part with the ring.

**Waltraute** Woe's me ! Woe's me !  
Woe to thee, sister !  
Woe to Walhall's Gods !  
*[She rushes away. A storm-cloud immediately rises from the wood, accompanied by thunder.]*

**Brünnhilde** Borne by the wind  
*As she looks after the brightly lit, retreating thunder-cloud, which soon vanishes in the distance.*  
In storm and lightning,  
Haste away, cloud,  
And may I see thee no more !  
*[Twilight has fallen. The light of the fire gradually shines more brightly from below. She gazes quietly out on the landscape.]*

Eventide shadows  
Dim the heavens,  
And more brightly  
The flames that encircle me glow.  
*[The firelight approaches from below. Ever-brightening tongues of flame shoot up over the edge of the rock.]*

Why leap so wildly  
The billows that blaze round the rock ?  
Up here to the peak  
Surges the fiery flood !  
*[Siegfried's horn is heard from the valley. Brünnhilde starts up in delight.]*

Siegfried ?  
Siegfried returned ?

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

With his horn greeting he sends !  
Up ! Out to the welcome !  
Swift to my God's embrace !

*[She hastens joyfully to the edge of the crag. Flames leap up, out of which Siegfried springs forward on to a high rock, whereupon the flames immediately withdraw and again only shine up from below. Brünnhilde recoils in terror, flies to the foreground, and from there, in speechless astonishment, stares at Siegfried, who, wearing the Tarnhelm, which covers the upper half of his face, leaving only his eyes free, appears in Gunther's form.]*

**Brünnhilde**

Betrayed ! Who seeks me here ?

**Siegfried**

*Remaining on the rock at the back, motionless and leaning on his shield, regards Brünnhilde. In a feigned (harsher) voice.*

Brünnhild' ! A wooer comes  
Whom thy fire did not dismay.  
I want thee for my wife ;  
Consent to follow me !

**Brünnhilde**  
*Trembling violently.*

What man has done  
This deed undaunted  
That the boldest only dares ?

**Siegfried**  
*As before.*

A hero who will tame  
Thy pride by force at need.

**Brünnhilde**

A monster stands  
Upon yonder stone ;  
An eagle has come  
To rend me in pieces !  
Who art thou, frightful one ?  
Art thou a mortal,  
Or dost thou hie  
From Hella's dark host ?

**Siegfried**  
*As before, beginning with a slightly tremulous voice, but continuing with more confidence.*

A Gibichung am I,  
And Gunther is his name  
Whom thou must follow hence.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**Brünnhilde**  
*Breaking out  
in despair.*

Wotan ! Thou cruel,  
Merciless God !  
Woe ! Now I see  
How thine anger works !  
To scorn and sorrow  
I am condemned.

**Siegfried**  
*Springs down  
from the stone  
and approaches.*

Night falls apace ;  
Within thy cave  
Thou must receive thy husband.

**Brünnhilde**  
*Stretching out  
with a  
threatening gesture*

Stand back ! Fear thou this token !  
While I am shielded by this,  
Thou canst not force me to shame.  
*the finger on which she wears Siegfried's ring.*

**Siegfried**

Wife it shall make thee to Gunther ;  
With this ring thou shalt be wed.

**Brünnhilde**

Stand back, base robber !  
Impious thief !  
Nor dare, overbold, to draw near !  
Stronger than steel  
Made by the ring,  
I never will yield !

**Siegfried**

That it must be mine  
I learn from thy lips.

*[He presses towards her. There is a struggle. Brünnhilde wrenches herself free, flies and turns round as if to defend herself. Siegfried seizes her again. She flies; he reaches her. They wrestle violently together. Siegfried catches her hand and draws the ring from her finger. She gives a loud scream. As she sinks helpless into his arms her unconscious look meets Siegfried's eyes. Siegfried lays her fainting on the stone bench at the entrance to the cave.]*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried

Now thou art mine !  
Brünnhilde, Gunther's bride,  
Lead me the way to thy cave !

Brünnhilde

*Stares, as if  
fainting, before her ; exhausted.*

O woman undone,  
Where now thy defence ?

Siegfried

*Drives her on with  
a gesture of com-  
mand. Trem-  
bling and with  
tottering steps she  
goes into the cave.*

Now, Nothung, witness thou  
That chastely I have wooed,  
And loyal been to my brother ;  
Lie betwixt me and his bride !

*[He follows Brünnhilde. The curtain falls.  
In his natural voice.]*





## THE SECOND ACT

*An open space on the shore in front of the Gibichungs' hall ; to the right the open entrance to the hall, to the left the bank of the Rhine. From the latter, crossing the stage and mounting towards the back, rises a rocky height, cut by several mountain-paths. There an altar-stone to Fricka is visible, as well as one, higher up, to Wotan, and one at the side to Donner. It is night. Hagen, his arm round his spear and his shield by his side, sits against one of the pillars of the hall asleep. The moon shines out suddenly and throws a vivid light on Hagen and his immediate surroundings. Alberich is seen crouching in front of him, leaning his arms on Hagen's knees.*

**Alberich**  
*Softly.*

Hagen, son, art asleep ?  
Betrayed by drowsiness  
And rest thou dost not hear ?

**Hagen**  
*Softly, without moving, so that he seems to sleep on although his eyes are open.*

I hear thee, O baleful Niblung ;  
What wouldst thou tell me while I  
slumber ?

**Alberich**

Remember the might  
Thou art endowed with,  
If thou art valiant  
As thy mother bore thee to me.

**Hagen**  
*Still as before:*

Though courage she bestowed,  
I have no cause to thank her  
For falling under thy spell ;



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Soon old, wan and pale,  
Hating the happy,  
Where is my joy ?

**Alberich**  
*As before.*

Hagen, my son,  
Hate thou the happy ;  
This joyless and  
Sorrow-laden one,  
Him alone thou shalt love.  
Be thou strong  
And bold and wise !  
Those whom with weapons  
Of darkness we fight  
Already our hate has dismayed.  
And he who captured my ring,  
Wotan, the ravening robber,  
By one of his sons  
In fight has been vanquished ;  
He has lost  
Through the Walsung power and might.  
With the whole immortal race  
He awaits in anguish his downfall.  
Him I fear no more :  
He and all his must perish !  
Hagen, son, art asleep ?

**Hagen**  
*Remains motion-  
less as before.*

The might of the Gods  
Who then shall wield ?

**Alberich**

I—and thou !  
The world we shall own,  
If in thy truth  
I rightly trust,  
Sharest thou my hate and wrath.  
Wotan's spear  
Was splintered by Siegfried,

The wooing of Grimhilde, the mother of Hagen  
See p. 135



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

The hero who won  
As booty the ring  
When Fafner, the dragon, he slew.  
Power supreme  
He has attained to ;

*[Still mysteriously.]*

Walhall and Nibelheim bow to his will.  
On this hero undaunted  
My curse falls in vain,  
For he knows not  
The ring's true worth,  
Nor makes use  
Of its wonderful spell ;  
Laughing he burns life away,  
Caring only for love.  
Nothing can serve us  
But his undoing !

Sleepest, Hagen, my son ?

Hagen  
*As before.*

Already he speeds  
Through me to his doom.

Alberich

The golden ring—  
'Tis that that we must capture !  
The Wälsung  
By a wise woman is loved.  
If, urged by her,  
To the Rhine's fair daughters  
—Who bewitched me once  
Below in the waves—  
The stolen ring he restored,  
Forever lost were the gold,  
And no guile could win it again.  
Wherefore with ardour  
Aim for the ring.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

I gat thee  
A stranger to fear,  
That against heroes  
Thou mightst uphold me.  
I had not the strength,  
Indeed, to despatch,  
Like the Wälsung, Fafner in fight ;  
But I reared Hagen  
To deadly hatred,  
And he shall avenge me—  
Shall win the ring,  
Putting Wälsung and Wotan to scorn !  
Swear to me, Hagen, my son !

*[From this point Alberich is covered by an ever-deepening shadow. At the same time day begins to dawn.]*

Hagen  
*Still as before.*

The ring shall be mine yet ;  
Quietly wait !

Alberich

Swear to me, Hagen, my son !

Hagen

To myself swear I ;  
Make thy mind easy !

Alberich  
*Still gradually disappearing, and his voice, as he does so, becoming more and more inaudible.*

Be true, Hagen, my son !  
Trusty hero, be true !  
Be true !—True !

*[Alberich has quite disappeared. Hagen, who has never changed position, looks with fixed eyes and without moving towards the Rhine, over which the light of dawn is spreading.]*

"Swear to me, Hagen, my son!"  
See p. 138



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

*The gradually brightening red of dawn is reflected in the Rhine. Siegfried steps out suddenly from behind a bush close to the shore. He appears in his own shape, but has the Tarnhelm on his head still ; he takes this off, and, as he comes forward, hangs it on his girdle.*

- Siegfried                    Hoioh ! Hagen !  
                                  Weary man !  
                                  Where is thy welcome ?
- Hagen                         Hei ! Siegfried ?  
*Rising in a*                    Swift-footed hero,  
*leisurely fashion.*         Whence stormest thou now ?
- Siegfried                    From Brünnhilde's rock.  
                                  'Twas there that I drew the breath  
                                  I called to thee with ;  
                                  A quick passage I made !  
                                  Slower behind me a pair  
                                  On board a vessel come.
- Hagen                         Hast thou won Brünnhild' ?
- Siegfried                    Wakes Gutrune ?
- Hagen                         Hoiho ! Gutrune !  
*Calling towards*            Haste and come !  
*the hall.*                     Siegfried is here.  
                                  Why dost delay ?
- Siegfried                    How Brünnhild' yielded  
*Turning to*                    Ye shall both be told.  
*the hall.*                     *[Gutrune comes from the hall to meet him.*
- Siegfried                    Give me fair greeting,  
                                  Gibich's child !  
                                  I come to thee with joyful news.
- Gutrune                      Freia greet thee  
                                  To the honour of all women !



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

- Siegfried                    To thy lover glad  
                                  Be gracious ;  
                                  For wife I have won thee to-day.
- Gutrune                    Comes then Brünnhild' with my brother ?
- Siegfried                    None ever wooed with more ease.
- Gutrune                    Was he not scorched by the fire ?
- Siegfried                    It had not burnt him, I trow ;  
                                  But I broke through it instead,  
                                  That I for wife might win thee.
- Gutrune                    And no harm didst thou take ?
- Siegfried                    I laughed 'mid the surge of the flames.
- Gutrune                    Did Brünnhild' think thee Gunther ?
- Siegfried                    Like were we to a hair ;  
                                  The Tarnhelm saw to that,  
                                  As Hagen truly foretold.
- Hagen                      I gave thee counsel good.
- Gutrune                    And so the bold maid was tamed ?
- Siegfried                    Her pride—Gunther broke.
- Gutrune                    Did she give herself to thee ?
- Siegfried                    Through the night the vanquished  
                                  Brünnhild'  
                                  To her rightful husband belonged.
- Gutrune                    For her husband thou didst pass ?
- Siegfried                    By Gutrune sojourned Siegfried.
- Gutrune                    But 'twas Brünnhild' lay beside thee.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried  
*Pointing to his  
sword.*

Far as north from east and west,  
So far was Brünnhild' removed.

Guntrune

But how got Gunther his wife from thee ?

Siegfried

Through the flames of the fire as they  
faded,  
When day dawned, through the mist  
She followed me down the hill ;  
When near the shore,  
None observing,  
I gave Gunther my place,  
And by the Tarnhelm's magic  
Wished myself straight to thee.  
A strong wind drives the lovers  
Merrily down the Rhine ;  
Prepare to greet them with joy.

Guntrune

Siegfried ! Such is thy might,  
I am afraid of thee !

Hagen

I can see a sail in the distance.

*Calling from the shore.*

Siegfried

Now be the envoy thanked !

Guntrune

Let us give her gracious greeting,  
That glad and gay she here may tarry !  
Thou, Hagen, prithee  
Summon the men  
To the hall here for the wedding,  
While blithe maids  
To the feast I bid ;  
Our joy they will merrily share.

*[As she goes towards the hall she turns round  
again.]*

Wilt thou rest, wicked man ?

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried

Helping thee is rest enough.

*[He gives her his hand and accompanies her into the hall.]*



Hagen

*Has mounted a rock at the back, and starts blowing his cow-horn.*

Hoiho ! Hoiho ! Hoho !

Ye Gibich vassals,  
Up and prepare !  
Woeful tidings !  
Weapons ! Weapons !  
Arm through the land !  
Goodly weapons,  
Mighty weapons  
Sharp for strife !  
Dire the strait !

Woe ! Danger ! Danger !

Hoiho ! Hoiho ! Hoho !

*[Hagen remains where he is on the rock. Armed men arrive in haste by different paths ; first singly, and then in larger and larger groups.]*

The Vassals

Why sounds the horn ?  
Who calls us to arms ?  
We come with our arms,  
We come with our weapons.  
Hagen ! Hagen !  
Hoiho ! Hoiho !  
Who hath suffered scathe ?  
Say, what foe is nigh ?  
Who forces war ?  
Is Gunther sore pressed ?  
We come with our weapons,  
With weapons keen !  
Hoiho ! Ho ! Hagen !

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Hagen  
*Still from the  
rock.*

Come fully armed  
Without delay !  
Welcome Gunther, your lord :  
A wife Gunther has wooed.

The Vassals

Is he in straits,  
Pressed by the foe ?

Hagen

A woman hard won  
With him he brings.

The Vassals

Her kinsmen and vassals  
Follow for vengeance ?

Hagen

No one follows  
But his bride.

The Vassals

Then the peril is past,  
And the foe put to flight ?

Hagen

The dragon-slayer  
Helped him at need ;  
Siegfried, the hero,  
Kept him from harm.

The Vassals

How then can his vassals avail him ?  
And why hast callèd us here ?

Hagen

Sturdy oxen  
Ye shall slaughter ;  
On Wotan's altar  
Their blood be shed !

The Vassals

And after that, Hagen ? Say, what next ?

Hagen

After that for Froh  
A boar ye shall fell,  
And a full-grown and strong  
He-goat for Donner ;

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

But for Fricka  
Sheep ye shall slaughter,  
That she may smile on the marriage !

The Vassals  
*With increasing  
cheerfulness.*

What shall we do  
When the beasts we have slain ?

Hagen

The drink-horn take  
That women sweet  
With wine and mead  
Blithely have filled.

The Vassals

The drink-horn in hand,  
What task awaits us still ?

Hagen

Gaily carouse  
Until tamed by wine :  
Drink, that the Gods, duly honoured,  
Grace may accord to this marriage.

The Vassals  
*Burst into ring-  
ing laughter.*

Good luck and joy  
Laugh on the Rhine,  
If Hagen, the grim one,  
So merrily jests !  
To wedding-feasts  
Hagen invites ;  
His prick the hedge-thorn,  
Hagen, has lost !

Hagen  
*Who has re-  
mained very  
grave, has come  
down to the  
men, and now  
stands among  
them.*

Now cease from laughing,  
Doughty vassals !  
Receive Gunther's bride ;  
Yonder come Brünnhild' and he.

*[He points towards the Rhine. Some of the  
men hurry to the height ; others range  
themselves on the shore to watch the  
arrival. Hagen goes up to some of the  
men.]*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Be to your lady  
Loyal and true ;  
Suffers she wrong,  
Swiftly avenge her !

*[He turns slowly aside and moves towards the back. The boat arrives with Gunther and Brünnhilde. Those who have been looking out from the height come down to the shore. Some vassals spring into the water and pull the boat to land. All press closer to the bank.]*

**The Vassals**

Hail ! Hail ! Hail !  
Be greeted ! Be greeted !  
Welcome, O Gunther !  
Hail ! Hail ! Hail !



*Gunther steps out of the boat with Brünnhilde.*

**The Vassals**

*Range themselves respectfully to receive them.*

Welcome, Gunther !  
Health to thee and to thy bride !

*[They strike their weapons loudly together.]*

**Gunther**

*Presenting Brünnhilde, who follows him with pale face and lowered eyes, to the men.*

Brünnhild', a peerless bride,  
Here to the Rhine I bring.  
No man ever won  
A nobler woman !  
The Gods have shown from of old  
Grace to the Gibichung stock.  
To fame unmatched  
Now may it mount !

**The Vassals**

*Solemnly clash their weapons.*

Hail ! O hail, happy Gibichung !

THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**Gunther**                    Dear hero, greetings glad !  
*Leads Brünnhilde, who never raises her eyes, to the hall, from which Siegfried and Gutrune, attended by women, now come forth. Gunther stops before the hall.*  
**I greet thee, fair sister !**  
**By him who won thee for wife**  
**I joyfully see thee stand.**  
**Two happy pairs**  
**Here radiant are shining :**  
*[He draws Brünnhilde forward.*
**Brünnhild'—and Gunther,**  
**Gutrun'—and Siegfried.**

*[Brünnhilde, startled, looks up and sees Siegfried. Her eyes remain fixed on him in amazement. Gunther, who has released her violently trembling hand, shows, as do all present, blank astonishment at her behaviour.*

**The Vassals and Women**                    **What ails her ?**  
**Has she gone mad ?**

**Siegfried**                    **Why looks Brünnhild' amazed ?**  
*Goes a few steps towards Brünnhilde, who has begun to tremble.*

**Brünnhilde**                    **Siegfried . . . here ? Gutrune . . . ?**  
*Scarcely able to control herself.*

**Siegfried**                    **Gunther's gentle sister,**  
**Wed to me**  
**As thou to him.**

**Brünnhilde**                    **I ? Gunther ? 'Tis false.**  
*With fearful vehemence.*  
*[She sways and seems about to fall. Siegfried supports her.*

**Light fades from mine eyes . . .**

*[In Siegfried's arms, looking faintly up at him.*

**Siegfried . . . knows me not ?**

**Siegfried**                    **Gunther, see, thy wife is swooning !**  
*[Gunther comes to them.*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Wake, Brünnhild', wake !  
Here stands thy husband.

**Brünnhilde**  
*Perceives the  
ring on Siegfried's  
outstretched finger, and starts up with terrible vehemence.*

Ha ! The ring  
Upon his hand !  
He . . . Siegfried ?

**The Vassals**                      What's wrong ?

**Hagen**  
*Coming among  
the vassals from behind.*

Now pay good heed  
To the woman's tale.

**Brünnhilde**  
*Mastering her  
terrible excite-  
ment, tries to  
control herself.*

On thy hand there  
I beheld a ring.  
'Twas wrested from me  
By this man here ;  
*[Pointing to Gunther.*

'Tis not thine.  
How camest thou by  
The ring thou hast on ?

**Siegfried**  
*Attentively  
regarding the ring on his finger.*

'Twas not from him  
I got the ring.

**Brünnhilde**  
*To Gunther.*

Thou who didst seize the ring  
With which I wedded thee,  
Declare to him thy right,  
Make him yield up the pledge !

**Gunther**  
*In great  
perplexity.*

The ring ? No ring I gave him,  
Though thou dost know it well.

**Brünnhilde**

Where hast thou hid the ring  
That thou didst capture from me ?

*[Gunther, greatly confused, does not answer.*



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**Brünnhilde**  
*Breaking out  
furiously.*

Ha ! He it was  
Who despoiled me of the ring—  
Siegfried, the treacherous thief !

*[All look expectantly at Siegfried, who seems  
to be lost in far-off thoughts as he contem-  
plates the ring.]*

**Siegfried**

No woman gave  
The ring to me,  
Nor did I wrest it  
From a woman's grasp.  
This ring, I know,  
Was the booty won  
When at Neidhöhl' boldly I fought,  
And the mighty dragon was slain.

**Hagen**  
*Stepping between  
them.*

Brünnhild', dauntless queen,  
Knowest thou this ring well ?  
If it was by Gunther won,  
Then it is his,  
And Siegfried has got it by guile.  
For his guilt must the traitor pay.

**Brünnhilde**  
*Shrieking in  
terrible anguish.*

Betrayed ! Betrayed !  
Shamefully betrayed !  
Deceived ! Deceived !  
Wrong too deep for revenge !

**Gufrune**  
**Vassals**  
**and Women**

A wrong ? To whom ?  
Deceit ? To whom ?

**Brünnhilde**

Holy Gods !  
Ye heavenly rulers !  
Whispered ye this  
In councils dark ?  
If I must bear  
More than ever was borne,

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Bowed by a shame  
None ever endured,  
Teach me such vengeance  
As never was raved !  
Kindle such wrath  
As can never be calmed !  
Order Brünnhild's  
Poor heart to be broken,  
Bring ye but doom  
On him who betrayed !

Gunther

Brünnhild', dear wife,  
Control thyself !

Brünnhilde

Away, betrayer !  
Self-betrayed one !  
All of you, hearken !  
Not he,  
But that man there,  
Won me to wife.

Vassals  
and Women

Siegfried ? Gutrune's lord ?

Brünnhilde

He forced delight  
And love from me.

Siegfried

Dost thou so lightly  
Hold thine honour,  
The tongue that thus defames it  
I must convict of its falsehood.  
Hear whether faith I broke !  
Blood-brotherhood  
I have sworn unto Gunther ;  
Nothung, my trusty sword,  
Guarded the sacred vow ;  
'Twixt me and this sad woman distraught  
Its blade lay sharp.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Brünnhilde                    Behold how thou liest,  
                                  Crafty man,  
                                  Vainly as witness  
                                  Citing thy sword !  
                                  Full well I know its keenness,  
                                  And also the scabbard  
                                  Wherein so snugly  
                                  Hung on the wall  
Nothung, the faithful friend,  
When its lord won the woman he loved.

The Vassals                    What ! Siegfried a traitor ?  
and Women                    Has he stained Gunther's honour ?  
*Crowd together in violent indignation.*

Gunther  
*To Siegfried.*                    Disgraced were I  
                                  And sullied my name,  
                                  Were not the slander  
                                  Cast in her teeth !

Gutrune                        Siegfried faithless ?  
                                  False to his vow ?  
                                  Ah, prove thou that worthless  
                                  Is her word !

The Vassals                    Clear thyself straight ;  
                                  If thou art wronged  
                                  Silence the slander ;  
                                  Sworn be the oath !

Siegfried                        If I must swear,  
                                  The slander to still,  
                                  Which of you offers  
                                  His sword for the oath ?

Hagen                            Swear the oath upon

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

The point of my spear ;  
Bad faith 'twill surely avenge.

*[The vassals form a ring round Siegfried and Hagen. Hagen holds out the spear; Siegfried lays two fingers of his right hand upon the point.]*

**Siegfried**

Shining steel !  
Weapon most holy,  
Witness my oath sworn for ever !  
On this spear's sharp point  
I solemnly swear ;  
Spear-point, mark thou my words !  
If weapon must pierce me,  
Thine be the point !  
When by death I am stricken  
Strike thou the blow,  
If what she tells is true,  
And I broke faith with my friend !

**Brünnhilde**

*Strides furiously  
into the ring,  
tears Siegfried's  
hand from the  
spear, and  
grasps the point  
with her own.*

Shining steel !  
Weapon most holy,  
Witness my oath sworn for ever !  
On this spear's sharp point  
I solemnly swear !  
Spear-point, mark thou my words !  
Devoted be thy might  
To his undoing !  
Be thy sharpness blessed by me,  
That it may slay him !  
For broken his oaths have been all,  
And false is what he has sworn.

**The Vassals**

Help, Donner !  
Roar with thy thunder  
To silence this terrible shame !

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried

Gunther, look to this woman  
Who falsely slanders thy name.  
Let her rest awhile,  
The untamed mountain maid,  
That the unbridled rage some  
demon

In malice has  
Against us roused

May have the chance to subside.  
Ye vassals, go ye your ways ;  
Let the womenfolk scold.  
Like cravens gladly we yield,  
Comes it to fighting with tongues.

*[He goes up to Gunther.]*

Thou art not so vexed as I  
That I beguiled her ill ;  
The Tarnhelm must, I fear,  
But half have hid my face.

Still, women's wrath  
Soon is appeased :

That I won her for thee  
Thankful thy wife will be yet.

*[He turns again to the vassals.]*

Follow me, men,  
With mirth to the feast !

*[To the women.]*

Gaily, women,  
Help at the wedding !  
Joyfully laugh  
Love and delight !  
In hall and grove  
There shall be none  
This day more merry than I !  
Ye whom love has blessed,

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Like myself light-hearted,  
Follow and share in my mirth !

*[He throws his arm in the highest spirits round Gutrune and draws her into the hall. The vassals and women follow, carried away by his example. All go off, except Brünnhilde, Gunther, and Hagen. Gunther, in deep shame and dejection, with his face covered, has seated himself on one side. Brünnhilde, standing in the foreground, gazes for some time sorrowfully after Siegfried and Gutrune, then droops her head.]*



**Brünnhilde**  
*Lost in thought.*

What dread demon's might  
Moves here in darkness ?  
By what wizard's spell  
Worked was the woe ?  
How weak is my wisdom  
Faced by this puzzle !  
And where shall I find  
The runes for this riddle ?  
Oh, sorrow ! Sorrow !  
Woe's me ! Woe's me !  
I gave all my wisdom to him ;

*[With increasing emotion.]*

The maid in his power  
He holds.  
Fast in his fetters  
Bound is the booty  
That, weeping her grievous shame,  
Gaily to others he gives !  
Will none of you lend a sword  
With which I may sever my bonds ?

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

- Hagen  
*Going close to  
Brünnhilde.* Leave that to me,  
O wife betrayed ;  
I will avenge  
Thy trust deceived.
- Brünnhilde  
*Looking round dully.* On whom ?
- Hagen On Siegfried, traitor to thee.
- Brünnhilde On Siegfried ? Thou ?  
*[Smiling bitterly.]*  
One single flash  
Of his eye and its lightning—  
Which streamed in its glory on me  
Even through his disguise—  
And thy heart would fail,  
Shorn of its courage.
- Hagen But to my spear  
His perjury gives him.
- Brünnhilde Truth and falsehood—  
What matter words !  
To arm thy spear  
Seek for something stronger,  
Strength such as his to withstand !
- Hagen Well know I Siegfried's  
Conquering strength :  
How hard in battle to slay him ;  
But whisper to me  
Some sure device  
For speeding him to his doom.
- Brünnhilde Ungrateful, shameful return !  
I taught him all  
The arts I know,  
To preserve his body from harm.

" O wife betrayed,  
I will avenge  
Thy trust deceived "

See p. 154





## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

He bears unwitting  
A charmèd life  
And safely walks by spells enwound.

Hagen                   Then no weapon forged could wound him ?

Brünnhilde           In battle none ;—yet—  
Did the blow strike his back !  
    Never—I knew that—  
    Would he give way,  
Or turn and fly, the foe pursuing,  
So there I gave him no blessing.

Hagen                   And there shall my spear strike !  
                          [*He turns quickly from Brünnhilde to*  
                          *Gunther.*

Up, Gunther,  
Noble Gibichung !  
Here stands thy valiant wife.  
Why hang thy head in grief ?

Gunther  
    *Starting up*  
    *passionately.*  
O shame !  
Dishonour !  
Woe is me !  
No man has known such sorrow !

Hagen                   In shame thou liest—  
That is true.

Brünnhilde  
    *To Gunther.*  
O craven man !  
Falsest of friends !  
Hidden behind  
The hero wert thou  
While won were for thee  
The prize and the glory.  
Low indeed  
The race must have sunk  
That breeds such cowards as thou !

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Gunther  
*Beside himself.*  
Deceived am I—and deceiver !  
Betrayed am I—and betrayer !  
My strength be consumed,  
And broken my heart !  
Help, Hagen !  
Help for my honour !  
Help, for my mother was thine—  
Thee too she bore !

Hagen  
No help from head  
Or hand will suffice :  
'Tis Siegfried's death we need.

Gunther  
*Seized with horror.*  
Siegfried's death ?

Hagen  
Unpurged else were thy shame.

Gunther  
*Staring before  
him.*  
Blood-brotherhood  
He and I swore.

Hagen  
Who broke the bond  
Pays with his blood.

Gunther  
Broke he the bond ?

Hagen  
In betraying thee.

Gunther  
Was I betrayed ?

Brunnhilde  
He betrayed thee,  
And me ye all are betraying !  
If I were just,  
All the blood of the world  
Would not atone for your guilt !

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

But the death of one  
Is all I ask for.  
Dying, Siegfried  
Atones for himself and you !

Hagen  
*Turning to  
Gunther and  
speaking to him  
secretly.*

His death would profit thee ;  
Boundless were indeed thy might  
If thou couldst capture the ring,  
Which, alive, he never will yield.

Gunther  
*Softly.*

Brünnhilde's ring ?

Hagen

The ring the Niblung wrought.

Gunther  
*Sighing deeply.*

'Twould be the end of Siegfried.

Hagen

His death would serve us all.

Gunther

But Gutrun', to whom  
He has been given !  
How could we look in her face  
If her husband we had slain ?

Brünnhilde  
*Starting up  
furiously.*

What wisdom forewarned of,  
And runes hinted darkly,  
In helpless despair  
Is plain to me now.

*[Passionately.*

Gutrune is the spell  
That stole my husband's heart away !  
Woe be her lot !

Hagen  
*To Gunther.*

If this grief we must give her,  
Conceal how Siegfried died.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

We go to-morrow  
Merrily hunting ;  
The hero gallops ahead ;  
We find him slain by a boar.

Brünnhilde  
and Gunther

So shall it be !  
Perish Siegfried !  
Purged be the shame  
He brought on me !  
Faith sworn by oath  
He has broken ;  
Now with his blood  
Let him atone !  
Avenging,  
All-hearing God !  
Oath-witness,  
And lord of vows !  
Wotan, come at my call !  
Send thou thine awful  
Heavenly host  
Hither to hear  
While I vow revenge !

Hagen

Doomed let him die,  
The hero renowned !  
Mine is the hoard,  
And mine I shall hold it !  
From him the ring  
Shall be wrested !

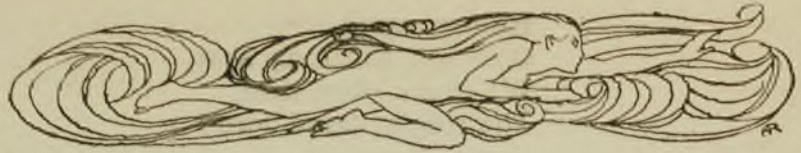
Niblung father !  
O fallen prince !  
Night warder !  
Nibelung lord !  
Alberich ! Hear thou thy son !

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Ruling again  
O'er the Nibelung host,  
Bid them obey thee,  
The ring's dread lord!

[As Gunther turns impetuously towards the hall with Brünnhilde they are met by the bridal procession coming out. Boys and girls, waving flower-wreathed staves, leap merrily in front. The vassals are carrying Siegfried on a shield and Gutrune on a seat. On the rising ground at the back men-servants and maids are taking implements and beasts for sacrifice, by the various mountain-paths, to the altars, which they deck with flowers. Siegfried and the vassals blow wedding-calls on their horns. The women invite Brünnhilde to accompany them to Gutrune's side. Brünnhilde stares blankly at Gutrune, who beckons her with a friendly smile. As Brünnhilde is about to step back angrily Hagen comes quickly between them and presses her towards Gunther, who takes her hand again, whereupon he allows himself to be raised on a shield by the men. As the procession, scarcely interrupted, moves on quickly again towards the height, the curtain falls.]





## THE THIRD ACT

*A wild wooded and rocky valley on the Rhine, which flows past a steep cliff in the background. The three Rhine-Maidens, Woglinde, Wellgunde, and Flosshilde, rise to the surface and swim and circle as if dancing.*

**The Three  
Rhine-Maidens**  
*Swimming  
lower.*

**The sun**  
Sends hither rays of glory ;  
In the depths is darkness.  
Once there was light,  
When clear and fair  
Our father's gold shone on the billows.  
Rhinegold !  
Gleaming gold !  
How bright was once thy radiance,  
Lovely star of the waters !

*[They sing and again start swimming and circling about. They pause and listen, then merrily splash the waters.]*

**O sun,**  
The hero quickly send us  
Who again our gold shall give us !  
If it were ours,  
We should no longer  
Envy thine eye for its splendour.  
Rhinegold !  
Gleaming gold !  
How glad was thy radiance,  
Glorious star of the waters !

*[A horn is heard.]*

**Woglinde**

**Hark ! That is his horn !**

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

- Wellgunde                   The hero comes.
- Flosshilde                  Let us take counsel.  
                                  [*They all dive down quickly.*]
- Siegfried                   Some elf has led me astray  
*Appears on the*           And lured my feet from the path.  
*cliff fully armed.*       Hey, rogue ! Behind what hill  
                                  Hast suddenly hidden my game ?
- The Three                   Siegfried !  
Rhine-Maidens  
*Rise to the surface again and swim and circle as in a dance.*
- Flosshilde                  What art thou scolding about ?
- Wellgunde                  With what elf art thou so wroth ?
- Woglinde                   Hast thou been tricked by some sprite ?
- All Three                   Tell us, Siegfried ; let us hear !
- Siegfried                   Have ye, then, hither charmed  
*Regarding them*           The shaggy-hided fellow  
*with a smile.*             Whom I have lost ?  
                                  Frolicsome maids,  
                                  Ye are welcome to him,  
                                  If he is your love.  
                                  [*The maidens laugh.*]
- Woglinde                   What would our guerdon be,  
                                  Siegfried, if we restored him ?
- Siegfried                   I have caught nothing yet,  
                                  So ask of me what you will.
- Wellgunde                  A golden ring  
                                  Gleams on thy finger.
- The Three                   Wilt grant it ?  
Rhine-Maidens



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried                    From a dragon grim  
I won the ring in fight ;  
And think ye for a worthless bear-skin  
I would exchange the gold ?

Woglinde                    Art thou so mean ?

Wellgunde                   In bargains so hard ?

Flosshilde                   Free-handed  
Thou with women shouldst be.

Siegfried                    On you did I waste my goods,  
My wife would have cause to scold.

Flosshilde                    Is she a shrew ?

Wellgunde                    And beats thee sore ?

Woglinde                    Has the hero felt her hand ?  
*[They laugh immoderately.*

Siegfried                    Though gaily ye may laugh,  
In grief ye shall be left,  
For, mocking maids, this ring  
Ye ask shall never be yours.  
*[The Rhine-Maidens have again joined  
hands for dancing.*

Flosshilde                    So fair !

Wellgunde                    So strong !

Woglinde                    So worthy love !

The Three                    How sad he should a miser be !  
*[They laugh and dive down.*

Siegfried                    Why should I stand  
*Comes down  
nearer to the  
river.*                    Their taunts and blame ?  
Why endure their scorn ?  
Did they return

“ Though gaily ye may laugh,  
In grief ye shall be left,  
For, mocking maids, this ring  
Ye ask shall never be yours ”

See p. 162



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

To the bank again,  
The ring gladly I'd give them.

*[Calling loudly.]*

Hey, hey ! ye merry  
Water-maidens,  
Come back ; the ring shall be yours.

*[He holds up the ring, which he has taken  
from his finger.]*

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens

*Rise to the  
surface again.  
They appear  
grave and  
solemn.*

Nay, hero, keep  
And ward it well,  
Until the harm thou hast felt  
That in the ring lies hid.  
Then wouldst thou fain  
Be freed by us from its curse.

Siegfried

*Calmly puts the ring on his finger again.*

Sing something that ye know !

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens

Siegfried ! Siegfried ! Siegfried !  
Dark our knowledge for thee !

The ring thou keepest  
To thy own scathe !  
From the gleaming gold  
Of the Rhine 'twas wrought ;  
He who cunningly forged it,  
And lost it in shame,  
Laid a curse on it  
Which, for all time,  
The owner thereof  
Dooms to his death.  
As the dragon fell  
So shalt thou too fall,  
And that to-day ;  
Thy fate is foretold,  
Wilt thou not give to the Rhine  
The ring to hide in its waters.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Its waves alone  
Can loose the curse.

Siegfried

Enough, O ye women  
Full of wiles !  
Was I firm when ye flattered,  
I am firmer now when ye threaten !

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens

Siegfried ! Siegfried !  
Our warning is true :  
Flee, oh, flee from the curse !  
The Norns who weave  
By night have entwined it  
In the rope  
Of Fate's decrees !

Siegfried

My sword once shattered a spear ;  
And if the Norns  
Have woven a curse  
Into the strands  
Of destiny's rope,  
Nothing will cleave it asunder.  
A dragon once warned me  
Of this dread curse,  
But he could not teach me to fear.

*[He contemplates the ring.]*

The world's wealth  
Has bestowed on me a ring.  
For the grace of love  
Had it been yours,  
And still for love might it be got,  
But by threats to my life and my limbs—  
Had it not even  
A finger's worth—  
The ring ye never shall gain.  
My limbs and my life—

"Siegfried ! Siegfried !  
Our warning is true :  
Flee, oh, flee from the curse !"  
See p. 164



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Look !—thus  
Freely I fling away !

*[He lifts a clod of earth from the ground,  
holds it over his head, and with the last  
words throws it behind him.]*

The Three  
Rhine-Maidens

Come, sisters !  
Fly from the madman !  
Though dauntless and wise  
He seems to himself,  
He is blind and in fetters bound fast.

*[Wildly excited, they swim in wide circles  
close to the shore.]*

Oaths he swore,  
And was false to his word ;

*[Moving quickly again.]*

Runes he knows  
That he cannot rede.  
A glorious gift  
Fell to his lot ;  
He flung it from him  
Unawares ;

And the ring that deals doom and death  
Alone he will not surrender !

Farewell, Siegfried !

A woman proud

Ere night falls thy wealth shall inherit.  
Our cry by her will be heard.  
To her ! To her ! To her !

*[They turn quickly to their dance, and  
gradually swim away to the back singing.]*

Siegfried

*Looks after them  
smiling, one foot on  
a piece of rock and  
his chin resting on  
his hand.*

Alike on land and water  
I have studied women's ways :  
Still those who mistrust their smiles  
They seek with threats to frighten,  
And, are their threats despised,



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

At once they begin to scold.

And yet—

Held I not Gutrun' dear,  
Of these alluring maidens  
One had surely been mine.

*[He looks calmly after the Rhine-Maidens, who have disappeared, and whose voices gradually die away. Horn-calls are then heard. Siegfried starts from a reverie and sounds his horn in answer.]*

Hagen's voice  
*Far off.*

Hoiho !

Vassals' voices

Hoiho ! Hoiho ! Hoiho !

Siegfried

Hoiho ! Hoihe !

*Having first answered the call with his horn.*

Hagen

So we have found thee

*Appears on the*

Where thou wert hidden !

*height, followed by Gunther. He sees Siegfried.*

Siegfried

Come down all ! Here 'tis fresh and cool.

*[The vassals now appear on the height, and come down with Hagen and Gunther.]*

Hagen

Here let us rest

And see to the meal.

*[They lay the game in a heap.]*

Lay down the booty

And hand round the wine-skins.

*[Wine-skins and drinking-horns are produced. All lie down.]*

Hagen

Now be the wonders told us

Of Siegfried and his hunting

That chased the game from us.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried            No meal at all is mine ;  
                            I beg of you  
                            To share with me your spoil.

Hagen                No luck at all ?

Siegfried            I sought for forest-game,  
                            But water-fowl only I found ;  
                            Furnished with the right equipment,  
                            A brood of three wild water-birds  
                            I had caught and brought you.  
                            Down there on the Rhine they told me  
                            That slain to-day I should fall.

*[Gunther starts and looks darkly at Hagen. Siegfried lies down between Gunther and Hagen.]*

Hagen                A sorry chase were that  
                            If the luckless hunter fell  
                            A victim to the quarry !

Siegfried            Thirst plagues me !

Hagen                It has been rumoured, Siegfried,  
                            That thou canst tell the meaning  
                            Of what the birds sing :  
                            Does rumour speak true ?

*Whilst he orders a drinking-horn to be filled for Siegfried, and hands it to him.*

Siegfried            I have not listened  
                            For long to their song.

*[He takes the drinking-horn and turns with it to Gunther, to whom he offers it after he has drunk from it.]*

Drink, Gunther, drink !  
Thy brother hands the draught !

Gunther             A pale draught thou hast poured !  
*Looks into the horn with horror. Moodily.*

*[More gloomily.]*  
Thy blood alone is there.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried  
*Laughing.*

With thine, then, be it mingled !

*[He pours from Gunther's horn into his own  
so that it runs over.]*

Thus mixed the wine flows over  
To Mother Earth  
May it prove a cordial kind !

Gunther  
*With a deep sigh.*

Thou over-joyous man !

Siegfried  
*Low, to Hagen.*

His cheer Brünnhild' has marred.

Hagen  
*Low, to Siegfried.*

She speaks less plain to him  
Than speak the birds to thee !

Siegfried

Since I have heard women singing,  
The birds I have clean forgot.

Hagen

But thou didst hear them once ?

Siegfried  
*Turning with  
animation to  
Gunther.*

Hei ! Gunther !  
Moody-faced man !  
Come, I will tell thee  
Tales of my boyhood,  
If thou wouldst care to hear them.

Gunther

'Twould please me much.

*[All lie down close to Siegfried, who alone  
sits upright.]*

Hagen

Sing, hero, sing !

Siegfried

Mime was  
A surly old dwarf  
Who because of greed  
Reared me with care,  
That when the child  
Grew sturdy and bold  
He might slay a dragon grim  
That guarded treasure in the wood.

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

He taught me to forge  
And the art of fusing,  
But what the craftsman  
Could not achieve  
The scholar did  
By skill and by daring—  
Out of the splinters of a weapon  
Fashioned featly a sword.  
My father's blade  
Forged was afresh ;  
Strong and true  
Nothing was tempered,  
Deemed by the dwarf  
Fit for the fight.  
The wood then we sought, and there  
The dragon Fafner I slew.

Listen and heed  
Well to my tale ;  
I have marvels to tell you.  
From the dragon's blood  
My fingers were burning,  
And these I raised to my lips ;  
And barely touched  
Was the blood by my tongue,  
When what a bird was saying  
Above me I could hear.  
On a bough it sat there and sang :  
“ Hei ! Siegfried now owns  
All the Nibelung hoard !  
Oh ! could he the hoard  
In the cave but find !  
Tarnhelm, if he could but win it,  
Would help him to deeds of renown ;  
And could he discover the ring,  
It would make him the lord of the world ! ’

THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Hagen

Didst thou take  
The Tarnhelm and ring ?

A Vassal

Was that the end of the singing ?

Siegfried

Having taken  
Tarnhelm and ring,  
Once more I listened  
And heard the sweet warbler ;  
He sat above me and sang :—  
“ Hei ! Siegfried now owns  
Both the helm and the ring !  
Oh ! let him not listen  
To Mime, the false,  
For Mime, too, covets the treasure,  
And cunningly watches and spies !  
He is bent on murdering Siegfried ;  
Be Siegfried wary of Mime ! ”

Hagen

'Twas well that he warned ?

The Vassals

Got Mime due payment ?

Siegfried

A deadly-brewed draught  
He brought me to drink ;  
But, fear-stricken,  
His tongue stammered truly :  
Nothing stretched him out dead !

Hagen

*With a strident  
laugh.*

The steel that he forged not  
Mime soon tasted !

*[He has another drinking-horn filled, and  
drops the juice of a herb into it.]*

The Vassals

What further did the bird tell thee ?

Hagen

From my horn  
Drink, hero, first :  
A magical draught is this ;

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

It will mind thee of things long forgotten,  
And bring old days to remembrance.

*[He offers the horn to Siegfried, who looks  
into it thoughtfully and then drinks slowly.]*

Siegfried

In sorrow I listened,  
Grieving looked up ;  
He sat there still and sang.  
" Hei ! Siegfried has slain  
The deceitful dwarf !  
I know for him now  
A glorious bride.  
She sleeps where rugged rocks soar ;  
Ringed is her chamber by fire.  
Who battles the flames  
Wakens the bride,  
Brünnhilde wins as reward ! "

Hagen

The wood-bird's counsel  
Didst thou follow ?

Siegfried

Straight without pause  
I rose and I ran

*[Gunther listens with increasing astonishment.]*

Till I came to the fire-ringed rock.  
I passed through the flames,  
And for prize I found,

*[More and more ecstatic.]*

Sleeping, and clad in bright mail,  
A woman lovely and dear.  
The hard helmet  
I loosened with care,  
And waked the maid with my kiss.  
Ah, then the burning, sweet embrace  
Of Brünnhild's rapturous arms !

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**Gunther**  
*Springing up in  
the greatest  
consternation.*

What says he ?

*[Two ravens fly up out of a bush, circle above Siegfried, and then fly away towards the Rhine.]*

**Hagen**

Didst understand  
What the ravens there said ?

*[Siegfried starts up suddenly, and, turning his back to Hagen, looks after the ravens. Hagen thrusts his spear into Siegfried's back.]*

**Hagen**

Vengeance—that was the word !

*[Gunther and the vassals rush towards Hagen. Siegfried swings his shield on high with both hands in order to throw it on Hagen ; his strength fails him ; the shield drops from his grasp backwards, and he falls down upon it.]*

**Gunther  
and Vassals**

Hagen, what dost thou ?

*Who have tried to hold Hagen back in vain.*

**Hagen**

Death to traitors !

*[He turns calmly away, and is seen in the gathering twilight disappearing slowly over the height. Gunther bends over Siegfried in great grief. The vassals stand round the dying man full of sympathy.]*

**Siegfried**  
*Supported by  
two vassals in a  
sitting posture,  
opens radiant eyes.*

**Brünnhilde,  
Heaven-born bride,  
Awake ! Open thine eyelids !  
Who again  
Has locked thee in sleep  
And bound thee in slumber so fast ?  
Lo ! he that came  
And kissed thee awake**

Siegfried's death  
See p. 172





## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Again breaks the bonds  
Holding thee fettered  
And looks on Brünnhild's delight.  
Ah ! those dear eyes  
Now open for ever !  
Ah ! the soft fragrance  
Borne on her breathing !  
Death, thou art welcome—  
Sweet are thy terrors—  
Brünnhild' greets me, my bride !

*[He sinks back and dies. The rest stand round him motionless and sorrowing. Night has fallen. At a silent command from Gunther the vassals raise Siegfried's body and bear it away slowly in a solemn procession over the height. The moon breaks through the clouds, and lights up the funeral procession with increasing clearness as it reaches the top of the hill. A mist has risen from the Rhine which gradually fills the whole stage, on which the funeral procession has become invisible. After a musical interlude the mist divides again, until at length the hall of the Gibichungs, as in Act I., appears with increasing distinctness.]*

*It is night. The moonlight is mirrored in the Rhine. Gutrune comes out of her chamber into the hall.*

Was that his horn ?

*[She listens.]*

No !—he  
Has not returned.  
Troubled was my sleep  
By evil dreams !  
Then wildly neighed his horse ;

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Brünnhild' laughed,  
And I woke up afraid.  
What woman was it  
I saw go down to the shore?  
I fear this Brünnhild' !  
Is she within ?

*[She listens at the door at the right and calls.]*

Brünnhild' ! Brünnhild' !  
Art awake ?

*[She opens the door timidly and looks into the inner room.]*

No one is there !  
So it was she

I saw go downwards to the Rhine.

*[A distant horn sounds.]*

Was that his horn ?

No !

All silent !

*[She looks out anxiously.]*

Would but Siegfried return !

*[Hagen's voice is heard outside coming nearer.  
When Gutrune hears it she stands for a time transfixed with terror.]*

Hagen

Hoiho ! Hoiho !  
Awake ! Awake !  
Lights ! Ho ! lights here !  
Burning torches !  
Home bring we  
Spoils of the chase.  
Hoiho ! Hoiho !

*[Increasing light from the torches is seen without. Hagen enters the hall.]*

Up ! Gutrun' !  
Give Siegfried greeting,

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

For home to thee  
Thy hero comes.

Gutrune  
*In great fear.*

What is wrong, Hagen ?  
I heard not his horn.

*[Men and women with lights and firebrands  
accompany, in great confusion, the procession  
returning with Siegfried's body.]*

Hagen

The hero pale  
Will blow it no more ;  
No more will he ride  
To battle or chase  
Or gaily go wooing fair women.

Gutrune  
*With growing  
terror.*

What bring they here ?

*[The procession reaches the middle of the hall,  
and the vassals set down the body on a  
hastily improvised platform.]*

Hagen

'Tis a wild boar's spoil they bring thee :  
Siegfried, thy husband slain.

*[Gutrune shrieks and falls upon the corpse.  
General emotion and mourning.]*

Gunther  
*Bends over the  
fainting Gutrune.*

Gutrun', gentle sister !  
Open thine eyelids !  
Look up and speak !

Gutrune  
*Recovering  
consciousness.*

Siegfried—they have slain Siegfried !

*[She pushes Gunther back violently.]*

Hence ! false-hearted brother,  
Thou slayer of my husband !  
Oh, who will help me !  
Woe's me ! Woe's me !  
These men have murdered my Siegfried !

Gunther

Cast not the blame on me ;  
'Tis Hagen who must bear it :

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

He is the accursèd wild boar  
That did the hero to death.

Hagen                   With me art wroth for that ?

Gunther                Woe and grief  
For aye be thy portion !

Hagen                   Yes, then, 'tis true that I slew him.  
*Steppin forward  
with terrible  
defiance.*                I—Hagen—  
Did him to death !  
By my spear he falsely swore,  
So by my spear he fell.  
I have the sacred right  
Now to demand my booty,  
And what I claim is this ring.

Gunther                Away ! Thou shalt not have  
What forfeit falls to me.

Hagen                   Ye vassals, judge of my right !

Gunther                Thou wouldst seize Gutrune's dower,  
Insolent Niblung son ?

Hagen                   'Dis thus  
*Draws his  
sword.*                The Niblung son demands his own.

*[He rushes on Gunther, who defends himself;  
they fight. The vassals throw themselves  
between. Gunther falls slain by a stroke  
from Hagen.]*

Hagen                   Mine the ring !  
*[He makes a grasp at Siegfried's hand, which  
raises itself in menace. All stand trans-  
fixed with horror.]*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

**Brünnhilde**  
*Advances firmly  
and solemnly  
from the  
background to  
the front. Still  
at the back.*

Silence ! Your sorrow  
Clamour less loud !  
Now for vengeance his wife comes,  
The woman all have betrayed.  
*[As she comes quietly forward*  
I have heard you whining  
As whine children  
When milk is spilt by their mother ;  
But lamentation  
Meet for a hero unmatched  
I have not heard.

**Gutrune**  
*Raising herself,  
suddenly from  
the floor.*

Brünnhilde, spite-enevomed !  
Thou art the cause of our woe !  
For, urged by thee, the men have slain him ;  
Cursèd hour that brought thee here !

**Brünnhilde**

Peace, hapless wretch !  
Thou never wert wife of his ;  
His leman wert thou,  
Only that.  
But I am his lawful bride ;  
To me was the binding oath sworn,  
Before thy face he beheld.

**Gutrune**  
*Breaking out  
in sudden  
despair.*

Accursèd Hagen,  
Why didst thou give the poison  
That stole her husband away ?  
O sorrow !  
Mine eyes are opened :  
Brünnhild' was the true love  
Whom through the draught he forgot.

*[She turns from Siegfried in shame and fear, and, dying,  
bends over Gunther's body ; remaining motionless in this  
position until the end. Hagen stands defiantly leaning  
on his spear and shield, sunk in gloomy thought, on the  
opposite side. Brünnhilde stands alone in the middle.  
After long and absorbed contemplation of Siegfried she  
turns with solemn exaltation to the men and women.*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Brünnhilde

Let great logs  
Be borne to the shore  
And high by the Rhine be heaped ;  
Fierce and far  
Let the flames mount  
That consume to ashes  
Him who was first among men !  
His horse lead to me here,  
That with me his lord he may  
follow.

For my body longs  
To have part in his glory  
And share his honour in death.  
Obey Brünnhild's behest.

*[The young men, during the following, raise a great pyre of logs before the hall, near the bank of the Rhine ; women decorate this with rugs, on which they strew plants and flowers.]*

Brünnhilde

*Absorbed anew  
in contemplation  
of Siegfried's  
dead face.  
Her expression  
brightens and  
softens as she  
proceeds.*

Sheer golden sunshine  
Streams from his face ;  
None was so pure  
As he who betrayed.  
To wife forsworn,  
To friend too faithful,  
From his own true love—  
His only beloved—  
Barred he lay by his sword.  
Never did man  
Swear oaths more honest,  
No one was ever  
Truer to treaties ;  
Never was love  
Purer than Siegfried's ;

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Yet oaths the most sacred,  
Bonds the most binding,  
And true love were never  
So grossly betrayed !

Know ye why that was ?

*[Looking upward.]*

Ye Gods who guard  
All vows that are uttered,  
Look down on me  
In my terrible grief,  
Your guilt never-ending behold !  
Hear my voice accusing,  
Mighty God !  
Through his most valiant deed—  
Deed by thee so desired—  
Thou didst condemn him  
To the doom  
That else upon thee had fallen.  
He, truest of all,  
Must betray me,  
That wise a woman might grow !  
Know I all thou wouldst learn ?

All things ! All things !  
All I know now :  
All stands plainly revealed.  
Round me I hear  
Thy ravens flapping.  
By them I send thee back  
The tidings awaited in fear.  
Rest in peace now, O God !

*[She signs to the vassals to bear Siegfried's  
body on to the pyre ; at the same time she  
draws the ring off Siegfried's finger, and  
regards it musingly.]*



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

I claim as mine  
What he has left me.  
O gold accurst !  
Terrible ring !  
I now grasp thee  
And give thee away.  
O sisters wise,  
Ye have my thanks  
For your counsel good, ye who dwell  
In the waters deep of the Rhine.  
What ye desire  
I gladly give ;  
From out my ashes  
Take ye your treasure ;  
The fire by which I am burnt  
Cleanses the ring of its curse.  
Down in the waves  
Wash it away,  
And guard ever pure  
The shining gold  
That stolen was to your grief !

*[She has put the ring on her finger, and now turns to the pile of logs on which Siegfried's body lies stretched. Taking a great fire-brand from one of the men, she waves it and points to the background.]*

Fly home, ye ravens,  
Tell your lord the tidings  
That ye have heard by the Rhine.  
But fly, as ye go,  
By Brünnhild's rock :  
Still Loge flames there ;  
Bid him follow to Walhall ;  
For the Gods are drawing  
Near to their doom.

Brünnhilde on Grane leaps on to the funeral pyre of Siegfried  
See p. 182



## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Thus—thrown be the brand  
On Walhall's glittering halls !

*[She hurls the brand on to the pile of wood, which quickly breaks into flame. Two ravens fly up from the rock by the shore and vanish in the background. Brünnhilde perceives her horse, which has just been led in by two men.]*

Grane, my horse,  
Be greeted fair !

*[She springs towards him, and, catching hold of him, removes his bridle and bends towards him affectionately.]*

Knowest thou, my friend,  
To whom we are going ?  
Thy lord lies radiant  
There in the fire,  
Siegfried, my hero blest !  
Thou neigest with joy  
To think thou shalt join  
him ?

Laughing, the flames  
Allure thee to follow ?  
Feel thou my bosom,  
Feel how it burns ;  
Flames of fire  
Have laid hold on my heart.  
Ah, to embrace him,  
By him be embraced,  
United for ever  
In love without end !  
Heiajoho ! Grane !  
Give thy lord greeting !

*[She has swung herself on to the horse, and urges it forward.]*

## THE TWILIGHT OF THE GODS

Siegfried ! Siegfried !

See ! Brünnhild' greets thee, thy bride !

[She urges her horse with one leap into the burning pile of logs. The flames immediately blaze up, so that they fill the whole space in front of the hall and seem to catch hold of the building itself. The terrified men and women press as far to the front as possible. When the whole stage appears to be filled with fire the glow gradually fades, so that there is soon nothing left but a cloud of smoke, which drifts towards the back and hangs there as a dark bank of cloud. At the same time the Rhine overflows and the flood rolls up over the fire. The three Rhine-Maidens swim forward on the waves, and now appear over the spot where the fire was. Hagen, who since the incident of the ring has been watching Brünnhilde's behaviour with growing anxiety, is much alarmed by the sight of the Rhine-Maidens. He throws away his spear, shield, and helmet, and dashes into the flood as if mad, crying out, "Back from the ring!" Woglinde and Wellgunde fling their arms round his neck and, swimming away, draw him down with them into the depths. Flosshilde, swimming ahead of the others towards the back, joyously holds up the recovered ring. Through the bank of cloud on the horizon a red glow of increasing brightness breaks forth, and, illumined by this light, the Rhine-Maidens are seen merrily circling about and playing with the ring on the calmer waters of the Rhine, which has gradually retired to its natural bed. From the ruins of the fallen hall the men and women watch in great agitation the growing gleam of fire in the heavens. When this is at its brightest the hall of Walhall is seen, in which the Gods and heroes sit assembled, as described by Waltraute in the first Act. Bright flames seem to seize on the hall of the Gods. When the Gods are completely hidden by the flames the curtain falls.



The Rhine-Maidens obtain possession of the ring and  
bear it off in triumph

See p. 182



Printed by  
BALLANTYNE & COMPANY LTD  
AT THE BALLANTYNE PRESS  
Tavistock Street Covent Garden  
London









Universiteitsbibliotheek UM



0587 7962