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MUSI

PARSIFAL



A SACRED FESTIVAL-DRAMA

BY

RICHARD WAGNER



TRANSLATED BY

M. H. GLYN



LONDON

SCHOTT & Co.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

AMFORTAS.
TITUREL.
GURNEMANZ.
PARSIFAL.
KLINGSOR.
KUNDRY.

The Brotherhood of the Grail Knights. Esquires, Youths,
and Boys.
Klingsor's Flower-maidens.

Scene of action:— the domains and Castle "Monsalvat," of the
Guardian of the Grail, with scenery characteristic of the northern
mountains of Gothic Spain. — Later, KLINGSOR's enchanted castle,
on a southern slope of the same mountains, looking towards
Moorish Spain.

The costume of the Grail Knights and Esquires: light blue tunics
and long scarlet mantles embroidered with the figure of a
dove hovering.

May 1888
Wiesbaden - 1914
PARSIFAL

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SCHOTT & Co., LONDON

B. SCHOTT'S SÖHNE

Mainz · Leipzig · Brüssel · Paris

Small to medium

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ACT I.

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Scene.—In the Grail's domain.—Forest deep and shady, but not gloomy. A glade in the centre. L. rises the way to the Castle. The ground sinks down at the back to a deep-set forest lake.—Day-break.—GURNEMANZ (elderly but vigorous) and two youths, ESQUIRES of the Grail, are lying asleep under a tree. From L., as though from the Castle, is heard a solemn awaking trumpet call.

### GURNEMANZ

(waking and rousing the ESQUIRES).

Ho! There! Foresters ye!  
Sleep guard ye together!  
Come wake at least with the morning!

(The two ESQUIRES spring up.)

Hear ye the call? Now thank our God  
that He hath call'd on you to hear it!

(He kneels with the ESQUIRES, and together they silently offer up their morning prayer, slowly rising from it as the trumpets cease.)

Up, boys, and hasten; look to the Bath.  
Time is't, that there the King await ye.

(He looks off L.)

The litter bears him forth, behold,  
already draw his heralds near.

(Two Knights enter.)

Hail friends! How fares Amfortas now?

Right early for the Bath he cometh:  
the wild herb, that Gawain  
with craft and daring won for him,  
I dare say, he is eased thereby?

### SECOND KNIGHT.

This sayest thou, who yet all dost know?  
With e'en more vehement throb

the pain did soon return: —  
sleepless till early morning,  
desired he eagerly the Bath.

GURNEMANZ

(sinking his head sadly).

Fools are we, to ease his pain thus hoping,  
when only cure can ease him! —  
For ev'ry simple, ev'ry potion search  
and ride far through the world: —  
but One thing helpeth, —  
One the Helper.

SECOND KNIGHT.

Then name this One!

GURNEMANZ

(evasively).

Seek ye the Bath.

SECOND ESQUIRE

(turning away with the first ESQUIRE to the back, and looking  
off R.)

See there, the flying witch doth ride!

FIRST ESQUIRE.

Heigh!

With wild-flowing mane the devil's mare raceth!

SECOND KNIGHT.

Ha! Kundry there?

FIRST KNIGHT.

She must bring urgent tidings?

SECOND ESQUIRE.

The mare is stagg'ring.

FIRST ESQUIRE.

Flew she through the air?

SECOND ESQUIRE.

Now she's stretching o'er the ground.

FIRST ESQUIRE.

With her mane she's sweeping the moss.

(They all eagerly look off R.)

SECOND KNIGHT.

See, Kundry doth fling herself off.

(KUNDRY rushes hastily in, almost staggering. She wears a wild garb, and a snakeskin girdle with long hanging ends: her black hair is loose, her complexion deep red-brown, her eyes dark and piercing, sometimes flashing wildly, more often fixed and staring.)

KUNDRY

(hastening up to GURNEMANZ, and forcing into his hand a small crystal vial.)

Here! Take thou! Balsam . . .

GURNEMANZ.

Say, whence broughtest thou this?

KUNDRY.

From farther hence than thou e'er canst think:

Should the balsam fail,

then Araby hideth

naught else for his relief. —

Ask no farther! I am weary.

(She throws herself on the ground.)

(A train of KNIGHTS and ESQUIRES bearing and accompanying a litter on which AMFORTAS lies, appears L.)

GURNEMANZ

(at once turning towards the approaching company).

He comes, thus borne a helpless burden. —

Alas! What grief bear I, beholding

him, in the pride of manhood's flower,

the Head of his victorious race,

now to his sickness fall'n a slave! —

(To the ESQUIRES.)

Be heedful! Hear, the Master groans.

(The ESQUIRES pause and set down the litter.)

AMFORTAS

(raising himself a little).

Thus well! — Ah thanks! — Here rest awhile.

From wild distressful night  
to dawn o'er forest height!  
This holy lake's  
pure wave my pain will lighten,  
the sorrow breaks, —  
the night of woe doth brighten.  
Gawain!

SECOND KNIGHT.

Lord! Gawain tarried not;  
for as the healing herb,  
though hard he toil'd to win it,  
yet did thy hope deceive,  
upon a further quest he straightway ventured.

AMFORTAS.

Unbidden! — May he then atone it,  
that light the Grail's behest he holds! —  
Ah woe to him, of knights most daring,  
if into Klingsor's snares he fall! —  
May none of you for me thus trespass!  
I wait for him, the One assign'd me: —  
“By pity waken'd” —  
was't not so?

GURNEMANZ.

E'en so thou saidst to us.

AMFORTAS.

“the blameless Fool” —  
Methinks now that I know him:  
durst I as Death to name him! —

GURNEMANZ.

But before: assay yet once this balsam!  
(He hands KUNDRY's vial to Amfortas.)

AMFORTAS

(viewing it).

Whence came this vial, strange in form?

GURNEMANZ.

For thee 'twas from Arabia hither brought.

AMFORTAS.

And who secured it?

GURNEMANZ.

There lies the roving wench.

Up, Kundry! Come!

(KUNDRY refuses and remains lying on the ground.)

AMFORTAS.

Thou, Kundry?

Must I then once more thank thee,  
thou shy and restless maid?

'Tis well!

the balsam will I now assay:  
let this be thanks for thy true service.

KUNDRY

(moving restlessly and vehemently on the ground.)

Not thanks! ha ha! — what will it help thee! —  
Not thanks! Off, off — thy bath!

(AMFORTAS gives the signal for starting, and the procession moves away into the deep background. GURNEMANZ remains looking sorrowfully after it; KUNDRY is still stretched on the ground. — ESQUIRES pass to and fro.)

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Ho! Woman!

Why liest thou there like a very beast?

KUNDRY.

Are not beasts around here holy?

THIRD ESQUIRE.

True: but if thou art so,  
it doth not as yet appear.

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

And with her magic balm, deem I,  
in sooth the Master wholly she'll ruin.

GURNEMANZ.

H'm! Work'd she e'er harm to you? —  
When all in doubt ye stand,  
how tidings to send to the errant Brothers,  
far in other lands fighting,  
for where they may be, who knows?  
Then, ere ye are even resolved,  
who will rush off thither and back,  
a message-bearer aye brave and true?  
She seeks no help, — she's ne'er at hand,  
naught common has she with you;  
yet need ye her help in danger's hour,  
her zeal will bear her as through the air,  
though ne'er to you for thanks she looks.  
Meseemeth, is this harmful,  
thereby are ye well advantaged.

THIRD ESQUIRE.

She hates us though; —  
but see, what spiteful looks on us she casts!

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

And a heathen, she; a sorceress.

GURNEMANZ.

Yea, under a curse she still may be.  
Here lives she now, —  
perchance the while,  
of earlier life her guilt atoning,  
of which not yet is she forgiven.  
Worketh she penance by such actions,  
as the welfare of our Knights may further, —  
well hath she done, assuredly well,  
serving us, she aids herself.

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Then haply 'tis that guilt of hers,  
that brought so great distress on us?

GURNEMANZ

(recollecting).

Yea, did she tarry long away from here,  
then fell mishap on us indeed.

And her, I long have known: —

aye, Titurel knew her yet longer.

For he, while building yonder Castle,  
found her asleep in forest-bush —

benumb'd, lifeless, as dead.

Thus I myself did find her lately,  
when scarce the mischief had befall'n,  
which that magician over the mountains  
so evilly upon us brought.

(to KUNDRY.)

Ho! Thou! Hearken and say:  
where wert thou roving at that time,  
e'en when our King the Spear did lose?

(KUNDRY is gloomily silent.)

Wherefore didst thou not help us then?

KUNDRY.

I help you ne'er.

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

This e'en she saith!

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Is she so true, and void of fear,  
then send her forth to fetch the missing Spear.

GURNEMANZ

(gloomily).

That lies beyond us; —  
Guarded 'tis from all. —

(with deep emotion)

Oh wondrous wonder-working  
holiest Spear!

Wielded I saw thee  
by unholy hand.

(absorbed in recollection)

And arm'd with This, Amfortas, thou all-daring,  
who might have power to stay thee  
from vanquishing th' enchanter? —  
Yet near the walls, — drawn was the King apart:  
a woman passing fair had witch'd his heart;  
by her enfolded lay he trancéd,  
the Spear unseen down-glancéd;  
a deadly cry! I rush'd a nigh: —  
away with laughter Klingsor sprung,  
the Holy Spear mocking he swung.  
The King's escape, hard-fighting I assisted,  
but — now a spear-wound in his side was burning,  
this wound it is, that ne'er will close again.

(The first and second ESQUIRES enter from the lake.)

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Thou knewest then Klingsor?

GURNEMANZ

(to the returning ESQUIRES).

The King, how fares he?

FIRST ESQUIRE.

Refresh'd he seems.

SECOND ESQUIRE.

The balsam stays the pain.

GURNEMANZ

(aside).

This wound it is, that ne'er will close again! —

THIRD ESQUIRE.

O father, I pray that thou wouldst tell,  
who knewest Klingsor, — how all befell.

(The third and fourth ESQUIRES have already sat down at GURNEMANZ'S feet under the great tree; the other two join them, and seat themselves likewise.)

GURNEMANZ.

Titurel, the godly king,



knew Klingsor well.

To him, as threat of savage foeman's might  
the realm of holy Faith distresséd,  
once bending down to him in solemn night  
appear'd the Saviour's messengers blesséd:  
whence last He drank, Who Feast of Love ordainéd,  
that holy Cup, the Vessel unprofanéd,  
which at the Cross His blood divine received,  
therewith the sacred Spear, His wound that cleaved,—  
this witness-treasure wondrous high and rare,  
was placed by angels in our hero's care.  
To guard it builded he the Sanctuary.

Ye, to its service who were bidden  
by ways, from sinners ever hidden,  
ye know, 'tis giv'n none others  
save to the pure as Brothers  
to enter, whom, to holy work ordainéd,  
the Grail's high power hath sustainéd.  
Hence, 'twas to him of whom ye ask, refused, —  
Klingsor, though toil and pains therefor he used.  
He dwelt alonely in a distant valley,  
in yonder land o'ergrown by heathendom:  
ne'er have I known, what sins he there committed,  
yet fain atone would he, be holy even.  
But pow'rless, in himself the lust of sin to deaden,  
his end, sought he by violence,  
toward the Grail his hand now turn'd,  
and with contempt its Guardian chased him thence.  
Thereat by fury prompted, Klingsor learn'd  
how might his ignominious deed  
to knowledge of evil magic lead;  
this found he soon.

From desert, wondrous gardens he created,  
where maids of charms unholy flower;  
there for the Grail's pure Knighthood he hath waited,  
to snare by lust and magic's power:  
whom once he lures, ne'er frees he any:  
already hath he ruin'd many.

When Titurel, at length in years well stricken,  
dominion to his son had given,  
Amfortas would not rest, might he  
o'er magic's hold win mastery.

This know ye, how the issue stands:  
the Spear — is now in Klingsor's hands:  
if he can wound therewith e'en heroes saintly,  
the Grail he deemeth surely his already.

(During the above KUNDRY has often turned round with an impetuous movement, as though angry and uneasy.)

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

Now first of all: the Spear to win again!

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Ha! Whoso should, what joy and fame were his!

GURNEMANZ.

Before the plunder'd Sanctuary,  
in fervent pray'r Amfortas wrestled,  
a sign of rescue wild imploring:  
a blesséd radiance from the Grail forth gleaméd;  
a holy vision near

him spake with accents clear  
this simple utt'rance that a watchword seeméd: —

“by pity waken'd  
the blameless Fool,  
him await,  
My chosen One.”

THE FOUR ESQUIRES

(together).

“By pity waken'd  
the blameless Fool —”

(From the lake are heard shouts and the cries of KNIGHTS and ESQUIRES. — GURNEMANZ and the four ESQUIRES start up and turn round in alarm.)

KNIGHTS AND ESQUIRES

(behind the scenes).

Shame! Shame! — Hoho!

On! — Whose is the outrage?

GURNEMANZ.

What now?

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

There!

THIRD ESQUIRE.

Here!

SECOND ESQUIRE.

A swan!

FOURTH ESQUIRE.

A wild swan!

THIRD ESQUIRE.

See, he is wounded!

(A wild swan flies unsteadily across the scene from the lake, and sinks struggling to the ground; it is followed by the KNIGHTS and ESQUIRES, one of whom draws an arrow from its breast.)

KNIGHTS AND ESQUIRES.

Ha, shameful! Shameful!

GURNEMANZ.

Who shot the swan?

FIRST KNIGHT.

The King had hail'd it as a happy token,  
when o'er the lake circled the swan,  
then flew a shaft —

KNIGHTS AND ESQUIRES

(pushing PARSIFAL forward).

His deed! His shot!

(seizing PARSIFAL's bow)

It was this bow!

SECOND KNIGHT

(producing the arrow).

Here's the shaft, alike to his.

GURNEMANZ

(to PARSIFAL).

Is't thou, who hast this swan destroyéd?

PARSIFAL.

'Tis I! and thus I shot it in flight!

GURNEMANZ.

This hast thou done? and art not afraid at thy deed?

KNIGHTS AND ESQUIRES.

Punish the outrage!

GURNEMANZ.

Never-heard-of act!

Thou couldest murder, — here in holy forest,  
its quiet peace enfolding thee?

Came not the woodland creatures tame to thee? —  
greeting thee e'en as a friend?

And what sang thee our birds in their leafy haunts?

When harm'd thee that faithful swan?

His mate was he seeking, as he rose  
with her to circle over the lake,  
which thus he hallow'd, stately of wing.

Didst marvel not then? . . . Wert tempted but  
to wild childish impetuous shot?

He was our friend: what seems he thee now?

Here, behold! — here pierced thy shaft; —  
scarce stiffen'd the blood, — wings helplessly  
drooping,

the snowy plumage deeply bestain'd, —  
how darken'd his eye — seest thou the look?

(PARSIFAL has listened to him with growing interest and emotion; now he breaks his bow, and hurls his arrows away.)

Now of thine evil deed art conscious?

(PARSIFAL draws his hand over his eyes.)

Say, lad, perceivest thou how great thy crime?  
How couldest thou thus have sinn'd?

PARSIFAL.

I knew it not then.

GURNEMANZ.

Whence comest thou?

PARSIFAL.

That know I not.

GURNEMANZ.

Who is thy father?

PARSIFAL.

That know I not.

GURNEMANZ.

Who was it, that sent thee hither?

PARSIFAL.

That know I not.

GURNEMANZ.

Thy name declare.

PARSIFAL.

Several had I,  
but now of these I know not one.

GURNEMANZ.

Then all thou knowest not?

(aside)

So dull a one

I never found, save Kundry here.

(to the ESQUIRES who have assembled in increasing numbers)

Now go!

Nor let the King's bath neglected be! — Help

(The ESQUIRES reverently lift the dead swan upon a bier of fresh branches, and move away with it to the lake. At length GURNEMANZ, PARSIFAL and KUNDRY [at the side] only remain.)

GURNEMANZ

(turning again to PARSIFAL).

Now speak; naught knowest of what I ask thee;  
e'en state what thou canst;  
for something surely thou knowest.

PARSIFAL.

Yes, I have a mother: "Heart-in-sorrow" she's named:  
the woods and the barren moorland made we our  
home.

GURNEMANZ.

Thy bow then, whence came it?

PARSIFAL.

That made I myself,  
to scare away wild eagles from the forest.

GURNEMANZ.

Yet knightly I ween art thou, and high descended, —  
why hath thy mother not let thee  
learn better weapons to handle?

(PARSIFAL is silent.)

KUNDRY

(who, still lying at the edge of the wood, has glanced sharply at  
PARSIFAL, breaks in hoarsely).

Since fatherless did his mother bear him,  
as in battle slain was Gamuret;  
from like untimely hero's death  
her son to hinder, strange to arms  
in desert a fool e'en thus she rear'd him: —  
how foolish! —

(she laughs.)

PARSIFAL

(who has listened to her intently).

Aye! and once some men in glitt'ring array,  
on splendid creatures mounted,  
pass'd the edge of the forest:  
like to them would I be;  
with laughter they swept far away.  
Then after them I ran, but could not o'ertake them;  
through wilderness came I, o'er hill and dale:  
oft fell the night; then follow'd day:  
my bow in need must defend me  
from wild beast and men gigantic.

KUNDRY

(who has risen and moved towards the men, eagerly).

Yes! Robbers and giants tested his strength;  
they learnt then to fear the fiery stripling.

PARSIFAL

(surprised).

Who feareth me? say!

KUNDRY.

The wicked.

PARSIFAL.

Those who attack'd me, wicked were they?

(GURNEMANZ laughs.)

Who is good?

GURNEMANZ

(again serious)

She, thy mother, whom thou desertedst,  
and who for thee now must yearn and grieve.

KUNDRY.

No more she grieves; his mother is dead.

PARSIFAL

(in great alarm).

Dead? — My mother? — 'Tis false!

KUNDRY.

As I rode by, I saw her dying:  
and Fool, she bade me then greet thee.

(PARSIFAL springs at KUNDRY in a rage, and seizes her by the throat.)

GURNEMANZ

(drawing him back).

Again this violence! Boy, art thou mad?

(he sets KUNDRY free; PARSIFAL stands awhile motionless.)

How wrong'd thee the maid? She truly spake;  
for ne'er lies Kundry, — whate'er she saw.

PARSIFAL

(seized with violent trembling),

I am fainting!

(KUNDRY, on perceiving PARSIFAL'S condition, at once hastens to a spring in the wood; and now brings water in a horn, with which she sprinkles PARSIFAL, and then hands him the horn to drink.)

GURNEMANZ.

Thus well! So doth the Grail teach mercy:  
he overcomes, who meets evil with good.

KUNDRY  
(gloomily).

Good do I never: —

(she turns sadly away, and while GURNEMANZ attends in a fatherly manner to PARSIFAL, she creeps unobserved by them towards a thicket in the wood.)

I long to rest me,  
to rest me — ah! I 'm weary.  
Slumber! Oh, would that no man wake me!  
(starting in fear.)

No! I dare not! — Horrors seize me!

(She trembles violently, and lets her arms drop wearily.)

Vain to resist! The time is come! —  
Slumber — slumber: — I must! —

(With short abrupt steps she moves into the thicket, and is seen no more. — During this a movement is perceived by the lake, and now across the background passes the train of KNIGHTS and ESQUIRES bearing the litter homewards.)

GURNEMANZ.

From bathing doth the King wend home;  
see, high the sun is:  
to this our Holy Feast e'en let me now lead thee,  
for art thou pure,  
with food and drink the Grail will sustain thee.

(He has gently laid PARSIFAL'S arm over his own shoulder, and supporting the boy with his arm, leads him with very slow steps. — The scene begins to move imperceptibly from L. to R.)

PARSIFAL.

Who is the Grail?

GURNEMANZ.

That ne'er is said;  
but art thyself Thereto ordainéd,  
by thee the knowledge shall be gainéd.

And lo!

Methinks, I know thee now aright:  
no way leads to Its holy height,



and no man e'er could tread it thither,  
save whom Itself had guided hither.

PARSIFAL.

I slowly tread,  
Yet deem myself now far.

GURNEMANZ.

Thou seest, my son,  
to space time changeth here.

(The woods have now disappeared, and the two pass through a gateway in the side of a rocky precipice, and are lost to sight. The way appears to ascend through walls of rock, until the scene has by degrees entirely changed, and GURNEMANZ and PARSIFAL are seen entering the mighty Hall of the Grail Castle.)

GURNEMANZ.

Observe thou well, and let me see:  
art thou a fool and pure,  
what knowledge now may be assign'd to thee.

Scene.—A pillared hall, with a vaulted dome over the centre space in which the Feast is held. — Bells are pealing from the dome. — At the further end of the Hall, on both sides the doors are opened: from R. the GRAIL KNIGHTS pace forward and place themselves at tables in the centre.

GRAIL KNIGHTS.

O Feast of love and blessing,  
our portion day by day,  
a gift of purest blessing  
that passeth ne'er away;  
who doth the right and true  
here getteth strength anew;  
for worthy now is he  
at this high Feast to be.

From the L. door. AMFORTAS is carried in on a litter by ESQUIRES and serving Brothers; before him march the four ESQUIRES, bearing the covered shrine of the Grail. This procession moves to the centre background, where stands a raised couch to which AMFORTAS is assisted; before it is an oblong stone altar on which the covered shrine is placed.

YOUTHS' VOICES.

(from the mid-height of the dome).

For sinners low fallen,  
with pangs a thousand

He once His life up-render'd;  
now to Him, Redeemer,  
in service glad-given  
be all my life surrender'd:  
He died — our sin atoned He thus;  
He liveth by His death, in us.

BOYS' VOICES

(from the top of the dome).

The Faith doth live;  
the Lord doth give  
the Dove, His dearest token:  
take at His board  
the wine outpour'd,  
and bread of Life here broken!

When all have taken their places, a pause ensues, broken by the voice of the aged Titurel, coming from a vaulted niche behind AMFORTAS' couch in the extreme background, as though out of a tomb.

TITUREL.

My son Amfortas, art in thy place?  
(Silence.)  
Shall I yet live, once more the Grail beholding?  
(Silence.)  
Must I die then, denied the saving vision?

AMFORTAS

(half raising himself in an outburst of painful despair).

Woe me! Woe is me my pain!  
Yet once more, oh! my father,  
do thou the Office serve!  
Father, live! and let me perish.

TITUREL.

Entombéd live I by the Saviour's grace:  
too feeble am I, now to serve Him.  
Thou serving mayst atone thy guilt!  
Reveal ye the Grail!

AMFORTAS

(rising to stop the Esquires).

No! Leave It unreveal'd!

Oh! May no one, no one e'er this torment  
feel,

in me awaked by th' sight — to you all joy!

What is the spear-wound with its fiery smart,  
'gainst the distress, the hell of pain,  
in office here — accurst to stand!

Woefullest birthright, that I, the fallen,  
I, only sinner of my people,  
the holiest Thing on earth must cherish,  
Its blessing must supplicate for these, the Blame-  
less!

Oh, judgment! Judgment never equal'd  
of, ah! — the injured Lord of mercy!

For Him, for His all-holy greeting,  
awakes my heart in longing;  
by inmost soul's repentance savéd,  
to Him must I win upward!

The hour is nigh: —

a ray descendeth on the Vessel divine!  
the cov'ring falls:

(gazing before him.)

the Cup of blessing gloriously shines,  
aglow with radiance heaven-born;  
thrill'd e'en by rapturous delight to pain,  
the well-spring of blood divine  
gushing I feel into my heart:

then back must ebb in a surging tide  
my own sin-defiled blood  
in tumult wild recoiling,  
in the world of sinful lust  
its might in terror expending;  
anew it leaps o'er the bounds,  
and thus it now rusheth out

here through the spear-wound, alike to His,  
which thrust, even that very Spear did make

that smote the Redeemer and pierced His side,  
when, tears of blood thence weeping,  
the Holy One sorrow'd o'er man's disgrace  
in pity's holiest yearning, —  
and now here from me — high office I holding,  
in charge of godliest treasure,  
of redemption's balm the guardian, —  
the heated sinful blood outflows,  
ever renew'd by a rush of longing,  
that, ah! — no repentance e'er can still.

Have mercy! Have mercy!  
Thou all-merciful! Oh, have mercy!  
Take back my birthright,  
give my wound healing,  
that holy I die now,  
pure — Thine — for ever!

(He sinks back as though unconscious. — PARSIFAL on hearing AMFORTAS' cry of agony, with a sudden movement presses his hand convulsively to his heart, and remains long in that position.)

BOYS' AND YOUTHS' VOICES.

{ "By pity waken'd, the blameless Fool,  
The pitying . . . . . blameless Fool,  
him await,  
My chosen One."

THE KNIGHTS

(softly).

So came to thee the promise:  
wait on in hope;  
Thy office serve to-day!

TITUREL.

Reveal ye the Grail!

(AMFORTAS raises himself slowly and with difficulty. — The ESQUIRES remove the shrine, taking from it an antique crystal cup, which they leave uncovered before AMFORTAS.)

YOUTHS' VOICES

(from above).

"Take ye this body Mine,  
take ye this My blood,  
so be our love betoken'd."

(AMFORTAS bows devoutly in silent prayer before the chalice; the light in the hall gradually wanes to a mere dusky glimmer.)

### BOYS' VOICES

(from above).

“Take ye this My blood,  
take ye this body Mine,  
hereby remember Me.”

(A dazzling ray of light falls from above upon the crystal Cup, which now glows, ever-deeper, a shining wine-purple colour, shedding a soft light on all around. — AMFORTAS with a transfixed expression raises the Grail, and waves it slowly to every side, thus consecrating the bread and wine. All are kneeling.)

### TITUREL.

Oh, glorious vision!  
The Lord's greeting this day how bright!

(AMFORTAS sets the Grail down, and its glow slowly fades, as the darkness lightens; hereupon the ESQUIRES enclose the vessel in its shrine, and cover it as before. — Daylight returns. — The four ESQUIRES take two flagons and two baskets containing the consecrated wine and bread from the altar-steps; they distribute the bread to the KNIGHTS and fill their cups with wine. The KNIGHTS seat themselves, and GURNEMANZ, who has kept a place empty beside him, signs to PARSIFAL to come and take part in the meal; but the latter remains standing apart, silent and motionless, as though wholly entranced.)

### BOYS' VOICES

(from above).

Wine and bread of consecration,  
once the Lord of our salvation  
changed for love and pity's sake,  
to the blood which then He shed,  
to the body which He brake.

### YOUTHS' VOICES

(from above).

Blood and body, gift of blessing,  
changeth now for your refreshing,  
He, the loving Spirit true,  
to the wine for you outpour'd,  
to the bread that strengthens you.

### THE KNIGHTS

(First half).

Take ye the bread,  
change it beside  
to body's strength and power,  
true to your Head,  
steadfast abide,  
to work till the dying hour!

### THE KNIGHTS

(Second half).

Take ye the wine,  
change it anew  
to life-blood's fiery pulsation,  
one is the sign,  
Brotherly true,  
to fight for the holy salvation!

ALL THE KNIGHTS WITH YOUTHS' AND BOYS' VOICES.

\*Blesséd in Faith!  
Blesséd in Love!

(The KNIGHTS rise and pace from each side to the centre, where they solemnly embrace, and pass out slowly in procession. — AMFORTAS, who has taken no part in the meal, has gradually sunk down from his state of inspired exaltation; he bows his head, and presses his hand to the wound. The ESQUIRES approach him, and their movements show that the wound has broken out afresh; they attend to it, and assist their master back to the litter. Then in the order in which they came, the ESQUIRES bear out AMFORTAS and the holy Shrine. — The light diminishes. — ESQUIRES pass through, and the bells peal again. When the last KNIGHTS and ESQUIRES have left the hall, and the doors are closed, PARSIFAL is still standing motionless.)

### GURNEMANZ

(coming up to PARSIFAL in an ill humour and shaking him by the arm.)

Why standest here still?  
Know'st thou, what thou saw'st?

(PARSIFAL presses his heart convulsively and slightly shakes his head).

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\* Text-book version only. For singing, the following —  
Blesséd in living!  
Blesséd in dying!

GURNEMANZ

(much irritated).

Thou art then nothing but a fool!

(He opens a narrow side door.)

Hie thee hence, on thy way begone!

Yet heed well Gurnemanz:

do thou henceforward our swans let alone,  
and seek to thee — gander thy goose!

(He pushes PARSIFAL out and bangs the door angrily upon him, then turns to follow the KNIGHTS.)

A VOICE

(from above).

“By pity waken’d,  
the blameless Fool.”

VOICES

(from the mid-height and top of the dome).

Blesséd in Faith!

(The Curtain closes.)



## ACT II.

////////

Scene. — KLINGSOR's enchanted Castle; the inner keep of the watch-tower, the floor strewn with magical implements. On one side a flight of steps ascends to an aperture in the wall, which lights the chamber, and the shining azure of the sky thus revealed, throws into deeper contrast the gloom of the background, where a dark opening yawns in the floor.

### KLINGSOR

(seated at one side looking into a metal mirror).

The time is come. —

My magic tow'r the Fool now lureth,  
afar I see him come with childish shout. —  
In deathly slumber her the Curse doth hold;  
its iron grasp is mine to loose.

Up then! To work!

(He moves towards the centre and lights incense, which immediately fills the background with blue smoke. He seats himself again before his magical instruments, and calls down with strange gestures into the gulf below.)

Uprise! Uprise! To me!

Thy master calls thee, nameless wand'rer,  
Hell's rose-blossom! Witch primeval!  
Herodias wert thou, and what more?  
Gundryggia there, Kundry here!  
Come here! Come hither! Kundry!  
Thy master calls: obey!

(In the blue light KUNDRY's figure rises up. She seems asleep. Presently she moves as though awaking, and breaks into a frightful cry.)

Art waking? Ha!

To my will again

thou art fallen now e'en to the time.

(KUNDRY utters a loud wail of misery, that sinks gradually into low accents of fear.)



Say, where hast thou been wand'ring again?  
Faugh! Seeking the Knights in their lair,  
where for a brute art content to pass?

Dost thou not with me fare better?  
When thou their master for me hadst captured —  
ha ha! — the Grail how chastely he guardeth! —  
what drove thee off thither again?

KUNDRY

(hoarsely and brokenly as though striving to regain speech).

Oh! Oh! Gloomy night . . .  
Frenzy . . . Oh! Rage . . .  
Woe! Wailing!  
Sleep . . . sleep . . .  
deepest sleep . . . Death!

KLINGSOR.

There did another wake thee? Eh?

KUNDRY

(as before).

Yea . . . My curse.  
Oh . . .! Longing . . . longing!

KLINGSOR.

Ha ha! 'tis for the Knights of virtue?

KUNDRY.

There . . . there . . . served I.

KLINGSOR.

Aye aye, thou wouldst amend the mischief,  
that on them thy malice had wrought?  
They profit thee not;  
bid I but rightly,  
sold are they one and all:  
the steadiest fails

when in thine arms he sinketh,  
and so falls he by the Spear,  
which from their King himself did I seize. —  
The most dangerous one to-day must be met:  
his shield is Foolishness.

KUNDRY.

I — will not. — Oh ... Oh ...

KLINGSOR.

Aye wilt thou, for thou must.

KUNDRY

Thou ... thou canst ... not ... force me.

KLINGSOR.

Fast yet I hold thee.

KUNDRY.

Thou? ...

KLINGSOR.

Thy master.

KUNDRY.

Then by what pow'r?

KLINGSOR.

Ha! — Since only with me  
can thy pow'r naught prevail.

KUNDRY

(with a shrill laugh).

Ha ha! Art thou chaste?

KLINGSOR

(furiously).

Why ask me this? Accurséd witch! —  
Terrible fate!

So laughs now the fiend at me,

that once I after holiness strove?  
Terrible fate!  
Gnawing pain of untamed desire,  
horrible impulse hell-inspired,  
which I had forced to silence of death,  
laughs and mocks it aloud  
through thee, the devil's bride?

Yet beware!

One his contempt and scorn has repented,  
the proud one, strong in holiness,  
who once rejected me:

his race I ruin'd,  
unrelieved,

shall the righteous Guardian lie wasting,  
and soon — meseemeth —  
guard I myself the Grail. —

Ha ha!

And pleased he thy taste, Amfortas — the brave —  
whom to enrapture thou wert set?

KUNDRY.

Oh! Grievous! Grievous!  
Weak e'en *he*, — weak all men, ...  
thus accurséd with me  
all lost and ruin'd! —  
Oh, sleep of the dead,  
only release, —  
how — how may I win thee?

KLINGSOR.

Ha! Who defies thee, setteth thee free:  
assay with the boy who draws near!

KUNDRY.

I — will not!

KLINGSOR

(hastily mounting the steps).

Lo, now he's scaling the wall!

KUNDRY.

Oh! Woe me! Woe me!  
To this did I waken?  
Must I? Must? —

KLINGSOR

(looking out).

Ha! He is fair, yon stripling!

KUNDRY.

Oh! Oh! Woe is me!

(KLINGSOR leaning out, blows a horn.)

KLINGSOR.

Ho! Ye warders! Ho! Arm ye!  
Heroes! Knights! Foes are near! —  
Ha! How they rush to the ramparts,  
my infatuated vassals,  
to shelter their beautiful witches!  
On! Courage! Courage!  
Ha ha! He feareth them not:  
from bold Sir Ferris he snatches a weapon,  
which fiery he wields in thick of the fight.

(KUNDRY falls into wild hysterical laughter, which ends in a  
woeful moan, as she disappears from view.)

How ill with the dullards his ardour agrees!  
One's struck in the thigh, in th'arm another!  
Ha ha! They're yielding! They're flying!  
Each doth carry home with him a wound! —  
Nor this do I grudge ye! —  
May even so

the Knights of virtuous race  
rise and destroy one another!  
Ha! How proudly he stands on the rampart!  
How in his cheeks the roses are laughing,  
in childish amaze  
as the garden deserted he views!

(He turns to the back; the blue light has been extinguished  
and all is dark.)

Ho! Kundry!

(not perceiving her.)

So! E'en at work?

Ha ha! The spell right well I knew;  
it ever recalls thee to serve me again!

(turning outwards again.)

Thou there, — innocent lad, —  
though by prophecy wert taught,  
too young and dull  
hast fallen into my pow'r:  
thy pureness once torn from thee,  
'gainst me, naught can avail thee!

(The whole tower rapidly sinks with him, in its place rises the magic garden.)

Scene. — KLINGSOR's magic garden, filling the whole stage with tropical vegetation and luxuriant growth of flowers. It rises in terraces to the extreme background where it is bounded by the battlements of the rampart. Through the foliage appear projecting parts of the palace, built in rich Arabian style. Upon the rampart stands PARSIFAL, gazing in astonishment into the garden. — From all sides rush in the "Flower-maidens"\* clad in light veil-like garments, first singly, then in numbers forming a confused many-coloured throng. They seem as though just startled out of sleep.

#### SIX MAIDENS

(separately).

Here! Here was the tumult!  
Weapons! Cries of battle!  
Ah me! Whose is the outrage?

CHORUS.

Up to vengeance!

THE SIX MAIDENS.

My belovéd one wounded!  
Mine, where shall I find him?  
All alone did I waken!

CHORUS.

Ah! Whither fled they?

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\* (NB. The *ensemble* of the "Flower-maidens" consists of to groups each containing three sol singers, and a double chorus of 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> soprano and alto voices, which is again subdivided.)

THE SIX MAIDENS.

Where is my belovéd?  
Mine, where shall I find him? —  
All alone did I waken! —

{ Alas! Ah woe me! —  
SECOND CHORUS.  
{ Where are all our lovers?

FIRST CHORUS.

Within the palace! —  
{ We saw them all yonder.  
{ We saw them lie bleeding and wounded.

SECOND CHORUS.

Up, to help them!

WHOLE CHORUS.

Who is the foe?

THE SIX MAIDENS

(together).

Who, who is our foe?

(They perceive PARSIFAL and point him out.)

There stands he!

CHORUS.

See him there, see him there!

THE SIX MAIDENS!

(separately and with chorus).

In his hand he holds my Ferris' sword. —  
{ 'Tis my lover's blood thereon I see.  
{ I saw! — 'T was he! — The fortress he storm'd.  
{ I heard then the Master's horn —  
Yes we too heard his horn. —  
My knight hither ran. —  
They one and all hither came. —  
They all came hither,

{ but each one received his repulse!  
{ Woe him who wounded them! —  
    He wounded my lover. —  
    My friend did he smite. —  
    Yet bloody the weapon! —  
    'Tis my lover's foe! —

{ Thou there! — Thou there!  
{ Wherefore cause such distress?  
{ Alas! Ah woe thee!  
{ Why cause us so great distress?  
{ Oh what distress!

(All together)

Accurst, accurst shalt thou be!

(PARSIFAL springs somewhat further into the garden.)

(All hastily retreating.)

Ha! Bold one!

THE SIX MAIDENS.

Darest thou approach us?

Why smotest thou all our lovers?

PARSIFAL

(pausing in great wonder).

Ye fairest children, what could I but smite them?  
To you, sweet charmers, my passage they strove  
to bar.

SECOND MAIDEN.

To us wouldst thou come?

FIRST MAIDEN.

Didst think us fair?

PARSIFAL.

Ne'er yet saw I such wondrous array:  
name I you fair, think ye it right?

SECOND MAIDEN.

Then truly thou wilt not smite us?

PARSIFAL.

That might I not.

THE SIX MAIDENS.

Yet losses many hast thou caused us,  
grievous and many!  
Thou smotest all these our play-mates!  
Who'll play with us now?

PARSIFAL.

That fain would I.

(The maidens break into a merry laugh. He approaches nearer, whereupon half the group slip away behind the flower-bushes.)

THE MAIDENS

(who remain).

Art thou our friend, stay not afar!  
An so thou wilt not chide us,  
find thy reward beside us:  
'tis not for gold we play,  
but guerdon that Love shall pay.  
Wouldst console us forsaken,  
oh, Love now in us awaken!

FIRST GROUP OF MAIDENS

(separately, returning with their flower-adornment completed, and making a rush at PARSIFAL.)

Leave ye our play-mate! — He is mine alone!  
No! — No! — No! — Mine!

SECOND GROUP

(running off in haste to attire themselves).

Ha! The sly ones! They deck'd them in secret!

FIRST GROUP.

Come! Come! Gentle lover!  
Come! Come! I am thy flower!  
Come! O'er thee Joy shall hover,  
Love delight on thee shower!

(The Second Group returns, attired like the other.)

ALL THE MAIDENS.

Come! Come! Gentle lover!  
Let me for thee flower;



Joy around thee shall hover,  
our love delight on thee shower!

PARSIFAL

(standing in their midst in quiet enjoyment).

How sweet your fragrance!  
Are ye then flowers?

THE SIX MAIDENS.

With odour rare  
adorn we the garden  
in spring cull'd by its warden.  
We grow where'er  
the sunlight hath power,  
for thee in rapture to flower.

(with chorus.)

Be to us kind, we pray!  
Oh spare not the Flowers their pay!  
An thou canst not love us and cherish,  
we fading and dying must perish.

CHORUS.

Come! Gentle lover!  
Let me for thee flower!

THE SIX MAIDENS

(separately).

Oh take me, love, to thy breast! —  
Thy brow, so let me cool it. —  
To touch thy cheek, oh allow me! —  
Thy lips yield to my kisses! —  
No! I! The fairest am I. —  
I am fairer! —  
My fragrance sweeter! —  
No! — I! — I!

(chorus.)

I! — I! — Yes I!

(They all press close round PARSIFAL.)

PARSIFAL

(gently moving them back).

Ye wild throng of flower-like fair ones,  
if I be your play-mate, give space here around me!

SECOND MAIDEN.

Why strivest thou?

PARSIFAL.

Because ye quarrel.

FIRST MAIDEN.

We quarrel but for thee.

PARSIFAL.

Forbear then!

THE MAIDENS

(singly or in parts to each other).

Away from him; he favours me! —  
Me rather! — No, see he favours me!

(to PARSIFAL.)

Thou keepest me from thee? —

{ Wilt drive me away?

{ Dost keep me far? —

How, art thou fearful of maidens? —

Where hast left thy courage? —

How cold and how timid thy manner! —

Wouldst have the butterfly woo'd by the flowers?

(to each other.)

Ah, he's afraid! — Ah, he is cold! —

Off! Leave ye the Fool-born! —

We give him up despairing. —

Then let him ours be chosen! —

No, mine is he alone! —

No, ours, our own is he! —

{ He's mine! — Yes, mine!

{ No, ours! — Yes, ours!

PARSIFAL

(half angrily frightening the maidens off).

Begone! Ye snare me not!

(He is about to escape when a voice out of the flower-foliage arrests him.)

KUNDRY.

Parsifal! Tarry!

(The Maidens shrink back terrified.)

PARSIFAL.

“Parsifal?”

So in her dream named me once my mother.

KUNDRY

(gradually coming into sight, lying on a flower-couch, in altered form, young and beautiful, wearing a light robe of Arabian style.)

Oh tarry! Parsifal!

Here greet thee joy and delight indeed.

(to the Maidens.)

Ye childish admirers, part ye from him;  
fast-withering flowers,

your sport is not for one such as he.

Go home, tend ye the wounded,  
lonely awaits you many a knight.

THE MAIDENS

(moving timidly and reluctantly away from PARSIFAL towards the palace).

Must we leave thee? — Must we shun thee? —

Oh 'tis woeful! — Woeful the pain!

From all we'd willingly be parted,  
with thee alone to stay.

Farewell! Farewell!

Thou fair one, thou proud one,  
thou Fool!

(Laughing, they disappear into the palace.)

PARSIFAL.

Meseemeth as 'twere all a dream!

(Turning round half in fear, he perceives KUNDRY, but remains at a distance from her.)

Calledst thou to me, the nameless?

KUNDRY.

Thee named I, foolish pure one,  
"Fal parsi" —

Thee, pure in folly: "ParsiFal".  
For thus, ere in Arabian land he expired,  
thy father Gamuret did call to him,  
the son, who yet the light had seen not,  
whom with this name he dying greeted;  
to let thee know it, have I waited here:  
what drew thee on, if not the wish to know?

PARSIFAL.

Ne'er saw I, ne'er dream'd of yet, what now  
I view, and e'en with dread it filleth me.  
And flow'rest thou too in this wondrous garden?

KUNDRY.

Nay, Parsifal, thou foolish pure one!  
Far, far away my home lies.  
I did but tarry till thou shouldst find me here;  
from far hence came I, many things have seen. —  
I saw the babe upon its mother's breast,  
its earliest lisp yet laugheth in my ear:  
    though grieving hearted,  
    how laugh'd also then "Heart-in-sorrow",  
    as o'er her mourning  
Love waken'd new, her eyes to gladden!  
In mossy hollow softly cradled,  
the babe she lull'd asleep caressing;  
    with anxious watching  
its slumber the mother yearning guarded,  
    at morn 'twas waken'd  
by mother's tears as dew-drops falling.  
So weeping ever, child of sorrow,  
she wail'd thy father's love and death:  
to guard thee ever from like danger,  
she deem'd the highest duty's hest.

Afar from arms, from men of strife and fury,  
would she in safety shelter and conceal thee.

How careful was she, ah! how anxious,  
lest ever knowledge or tidings should reach thee.

Canst thou not still hear her woeful cry,  
when late and far thou hadst roam'd?

Heigh! What was her joy and laughing mirth,  
when she seeking found thee at last:

as thee she held in vehement clasp,  
of kissing wert thou perchance afraid? —

But her wailing thou didst not hear,  
her grief as tempest raging,

at length when thou didst not return,  
no trace of thee remaining.

Through days and nights she waited,  
then still'd her lamentation,

as grief consuméd her pain,  
to silent death she cried:

her sorrow brake her heart,

and — "Heart-in-sorrow" — died. —

#### PARSIFAL

(who has gradually approached KUNDRY, now sinks down at her  
feet overcome with distress).

Woe me! Woe me! What did I? Where was I?

Mother! Gentle loving mother!

Thy son, — thy son to be thy murd'rer?

O Fool! Blind and giddy-brain'd Fool!

Where wanderest thou, her love forgetting, —

thy love, thy love forgetting?

Mother, mother belovéd!

#### KUNDRY.

Wert thou stranger to grief,  
then comfort's blessing

gave thee ne'er its relief;

now satisfy thy want,

thy woe distressing

in comfort Love waits to grant.

PARSIFAL

(sinking lower in his sadness).

My mother, my mother — could I forget thee?  
Ha! What else may I now have forgot?  
What — did I e'er remember yet?  
'Tis only folly dwells in me!

KUNDRY

(still reclining, bends over PARSIFAL's head, gently touches his forehead, and winds her arm confidently round his neck.)

Acknowledge  
thy guilt, and sorrow endeth;  
by knowledge  
to sense thy folly bendeth.  
Of Love shouldst thou be learning,  
to Gamuret that came  
from Heart-in-sorrow burning  
to fold him in its flame!  
Who once had even  
life to thee given,  
shall death and folly from thee chase;  
she sends thee here,  
as mother's blessing last and dear,  
thy lover's first embrace!

(She has bent her head completely over his, and now presses her lips to his mouth in a long kiss.)

PARSIFAL

(suddenly starting up with a gesture of intense fear, his demeanour expressing some fearful change; his hands pressed tightly against his heart, as though to subdue a rending pain).

Amfortas! —  
The spear-wound! — The spear-wound!  
In my heart it is burning. —  
Oh! Moaning! Moaning!  
Terrible moaning;  
aloud it crieth out of my heart. —  
Oh! O! Wretched one! Plight most woeful!  
I see the spear-wound bleeding,  
'tis bleeding now in me!  
Here — here!

No! No! Not the spear-wound is it.  
Thence let in stream the life-blood outflow!  
Here! Here, is fire in my heart!  
    The longing, the terrible longing,  
by which my senses are held and sway'd!  
    Oh! Love tormenting!  
How all is shudd'ring, stir'd, convulsed —  
    by sinful lust and longing! . . .

(While KUNDRY stares at him in fear and wonder, PARSIFAL becomes subdued into awed calm; and as though fallen wholly into a trance.)

My glance is fix'd now on the Holy Cup: —  
    The Holy Blood doth glow: —  
    Redemption's joy, divinely mild,  
    trembleth afar through ev'ry spirit:  
yet here — here only will the heart-pang yield not.  
    The Saviour's wailing 'twas I heard there,  
    the wailing, ah! the wailing  
o'er the profanéd Sanctuary:  
    "Deliver, rescue Me  
    from hands with guilt defilé!"  
    So the Divine bewailing  
    calléd loud, loud to my spirit.  
    And I — the fool, the coward,  
to deeds of boyish wildness hither fled!  
    (He throws himself despairingly on his knees.)  
    Redeemer! Saviour! Lord of grace!  
    How shall my sin be e'er atoned?

#### KUNDRY

(whose astonishment has changed to sorrowful wonder, hesitatingly approaches PARSIFAL).

O honour'd Knight! Delusion fly!  
Look up, thy handmaid draweth nigh!

#### PARSIFAL

(still kneeling, gazes fixedly at KUNDRY, who during the following, bends over him with the caressing movements that are here denoted).

Aye! With these accents, so call'd she him;  
and this her look, — truly I know it well —

this also, to him unpeaceful smiling;  
so tempted — aye — was he by her lips;  
so too her neck was bending, —  
so boldly rose her head; —  
so laughing her locks flutter'd o'er him, —  
so wound she her arm round his neck;  
so flattering smiled her features;  
in league with every pang of anguish,  
his soul's salvation  
her mouth did kiss away! —  
Ha! 'Tis her kiss! . . .

(He has gradually risen and pushes KUNDRY from him.)

Destroyer thou! Get thee away!  
Ever, ever from me!

KUNDRY

(very passionately).

Cruel one!  
Hast feeling only  
for others' sorrows,  
thy heart shall know mine now also!  
Art the Deliv'rer,  
how comes it, miscreant,  
to me no salvation thou bringest?  
For endless ages thee I awaited,  
the Saviour, come so late,  
whom once I durst revile.  
Oh! Knewest thou the curse,  
by which, in sleep and waking,  
in death and living,  
pain and laughter  
to new affliction steel'd anew,  
endless — is my life prolong'd!  
I saw — *Him* — *Him* —  
then — laugh'd I . . .  
on me fell — His look.

. . . . .  
I seek Him now from world to world,



yet once more to behold Him.  
In deepest need  
ween I His eye even near, —  
His look now on me cast: —  
then — once more the accurséd laugh outbreaketh, —  
a sinner sinks upon my bosom!  
So laughing, laughing,  
still ne'er weeping,  
I wander, crying,  
storming, raving,  
in night of madness that e'er returns,  
whence I repentant scarce awake. —  
For whom I yearn'd in mortal longing,  
he whom I knew, so weak, derided:  
let me upon his breast be weeping,  
be one hour only with thee united,  
and if by God and man disown'd,  
in thee be cleansed of sin and atoned!

PARSIFAL.

For evermore  
thou wert condemn'd with me,  
if for one hour  
forgetful of my mission  
unto thy clasp I yielded!  
Thee also am I sent to save,  
wilt thou for sin no longer crave.  
The new life, that shall thee deliver,  
think not thy sorrows' fount may yield  
salvation can thy heart know never  
until that fount to thee is seal'd.  
— What other need was that, ah me!  
in which I once did pitying see  
the Brothers pine, by woe distresséd,  
that life tormented and oppresséd. —  
But who aright and clear hath known  
the one Salvation's fount alone?  
Oh mis'ry, of all help the flight!

Oh! Gloom of world-wide error:  
to hotly seek Salvation's height,  
yet thirst for Hell's dark fount of terror!

KUNDRY

(in wild ecstasy).

Lo! Hath then my kiss  
with world-wide vision endow'd thee?  
My perfect love, thee embracing  
surely to Godhead shall raise thee.  
The world deliver, an 'tis thy work: —  
make thyself God this hour,  
for this let me perish then for aye,  
ne'er wound of mine be healéd!

PARSIFAL.

Deliv'rance, impious one, offer I thee.

KUNDRY.

Oh! Let me love thee, divine one,  
deliv'rance gav'st thou so to me.

PARSIFAL.

Love and deliv'rance shall reward thee,  
if my way  
To Amfortas thou wilt shew.

KUNDRY

(breaking out in fury).

Ne'er, ne'er shalt thou find it!  
Let the Fallen go to his ruin, —  
the shame-seeker,  
unblesséd one,  
whom I derided — laughing — laughing —  
ha ha! He fell by his own good spear!

PARSIFAL.

Who durst then to wound him with the Holy  
Lance?

KUNDRY.

*He . . . He . . .*

who once my laughter chastised:  
his curse, ha! it gives me strength;  
'gainst thee thyself I'll call his lance,  
if to that sinner thou pity shew'st! . . .

(hesitatingly)

Ah! Madness!

(beseechingly)

Pity! Pity for me!  
Wert thou but one hour mine!  
Were I but one hour thine . . .  
and on thy way  
then shalt thou guided be!

(She tries to embrace him.)

PARSIFAL.

Avaunt, thou woman of sin!

(He thrusts her forcibly from him.)

KUNDRY

recoiling in wild raging fury, and calling into the background)

Hither! Hither! Oh help!  
Seize ye the bold one! Oh help!  
Ward ye his way there!  
Ward ye his passage!

(to PARSIFAL.)

And if thou fleddest hence and foundest  
all the ways of the world,  
the Way that thou seek'st,  
its path shalt thou find never:  
for path and foot-way  
that from me can lead thee,  
thus — I curse them to thee:  
Wander! Wander!  
thou in my trust!  
thee unto him I devote!

KLINGSOR

(appearing on the terrace, and swinging a lance towards PARSIFAL.)  
Hold there! Destroy'd be thou with fitting tool!  
His Master's Spear shall place in my pow'r the Fool!  
(He hurls the Spear, which remains hanging over PARSIFAL's head.)

PARSIFAL

(seizing the Spear, which he holds over his head, and then swings  
in the sign of the Cross).

Now with this sign destroyéd be thy magic.  
E'en as This may the wound close,  
that with It thou smotest,  
to wreck and to ruin  
thy lying pomp may It hurl!

(The Castle falls as by an earthquake; the garden withers to  
a desert; the ground is scattered with faded flowers. KUNDRY  
sinks down with a cry.)

PARSIFAL

(hastening away, pauses on the top of the ruined wall, and turns  
back to KUNDRY.)

Thou know'st,  
where thou canst find me once again!

(He hastens off. KUNDRY has raised herself a little and looks  
after him.)

(Curtain.)

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ACT III.

Scene. — Pleasant open spring landscape in the domains of the Grail. Towards the background gently rising flower-meadows. The edge of the forest is seen in the foreground, thence stretching away R. to rising rocky ground. By the wood-side a spring; and opposite to this, further back, a hermit's hut, leaning against a mass of rock. — Very early morning.

GURNEMANZ

(grown very old, and habited as a hermit in the tunic only of the Grail KNIGHTS, steps out of the hut and listens).

From yonder rose the groaning. —

No beast doth so piteous moan,
and in truth would not, this holiest morn of all.
Methinks, I know of old that moaning cry. —

(He walks determinedly towards a thorn thicket at the side, much overgrown: he forces the undergrowth apart; then suddenly stops).

Ha! She — here once more?

The thicket of rough wintry thorn
held her conceal'd: how long since?

Up! Kundry! Up!

The winter's fled, and spring is here!

Awaken! Awaken to spring!

(He draws KUNDRY stiff and lifeless out of the bushes, and bears her to a grassy mound near. She is in the coarse robe of a penitent; her complexion pale.)

Cold and stiff!

This time deem I her dead indeed: —

Yet was't her groaning that reach'd mine ear?

(As KUNDRY lies out stiff before him, he rubs her hands and temples, and does his utmost to relax her stiffness. At last life seems to awake in her; she opens her eyes and utters a cry. She gazes long at GURNEMANZ. Then raising herself she arranges her hair and dress, and moves away as though a maid in service; the wildness vanished from her looks and behaviour.)

GURNEMANZ.

Thou strangest maid!
Hast thou no word for me?
Are these my thanks,
that from deathly slumber
I now have waked thee again?

KUNDRY

(slowly bending her head, and at length bringing out hoarsely
and brokenly the words:)

Service, — service.

GURNEMANZ

(shaking his head).

'Twill give thee little toil:
For messages are sent no more;
each man doth seek out
herbelet and root for himself, —
from beast of the forest we learn'd.

(KUNDRY has meanwhile looked about her, perceives the hut
and goes into it. He gazes after her wondering.)

How different moves she than of old!
Hath the Holy Day wrought the change!
Oh! Day of mercy without equal!
In truth, for her salvation,
might I from her, poor maid,
the deathly slumber frighten.

(KUNDRY comes again from the hut; she carries a pitcher
and goes with it to the spring. Here glancing into the wood,
she perceives in the distance some one approaching, and turns
to GURNEMANZ to point this out to him.)

GURNEMANZ.

Who neareth there the holy spring?
In gloomy war apparel? —
Yon knight is ne'er a Brother!

(KUNDRY with her filled pitcher moves slowly away into the
hut, where she busies herself. — PARSIFAL enters from the wood
in a black suit of armour: with closed helm and lowered spear
he strides slowly forward, and moves with bowed head in dreamy
uncertainty to the little grass mound, where he seats himself.)

GURNEMANZ

(having gazed long at PARSIFAL in astonishment now steps nearer to him).

Hail thee, my guest!
Art thou astray, and may I direct thee?

(PARSIFAL gently shakes his head.)

Wilt thou no greeting offer me?

(PARSIFAL bends his head.)

Heigh! — What? —
If knightly vow
doth constrain thee yet to silence,
mine own remindeth me,
that I now tell thee what is meet.
Here art thou in a hallow'd place:
thus none in armour should draw near,
with closéd helmet, shield, and spear;
still less to-day! Knowest thou not
what Holy Day is this?

(PARSIFAL shakes his head.)

Nay? Then whence comest thou?
Where 'mid the heathen hast abode,
to know not e'en that this-day
is ever-holiest Good Friday's morn?

(PARSIFAL sinks his head yet lower.)

Put off thine armour!
Grieve thou not the Lord, who this-day,
bare of defence, did shed His blood
the sin of the world to expiate.

(PARSIFAL raises himself after a further silence, thrusts his spear into the ground before him, lays shield and sword beneath it, opens his helmet, and removing it from his head lays it with the other arms, and then kneels in silent prayer before the spear. — GURNEMANZ watches him in wonder and emotion. He beckons to KUNDRY who has just re-appeared from the hut. PARSIFAL raises his eyes devoutly to the spear-head.)

GURNENANZ

(softly to KUNDRY).

Thou knowest him?
'Tis he, who once the swan destroy'd.

(KUNDRY inclines her head slightly in assent.)

In truth, 'tis *he*,
the Fool, whom in anger I dismiss'd.

Ah! And what pathways found he?

(KUNDRY gazes fixedly but calmly at PARSIFAL.)

His Spear, — I know it well.

(with great solemnity.)

Oh! Holiest Day,
to which this morn awaken'd me!

(KUNDRY turns her face away.)

PARSIFAL

(rises slowly from prayer, looks calmly about him, recognizes GURNEMANZ, and extends his hand to him in greeting).

Ah well, that again here I find thee!

GURNEMANZ.

So knowest thou me still?

Again dost know me,

whom grief and care so deep have bow'd?

How cam'st thou here, — and whence?

PARSIFAL.

Through error and the paths of suff'ring came I;
can I believe that now the struggle endeth,

since that this woodland murmur

I again am hearing,

thee, kind old man, anew am greeting?

Or yet, err I farther?

Here all, methinks, is changéd.

GURNEMANZ.

But say, to whom the way thou soughtest?

PARSIFAL.

To him, whose deep complaining

in foolish wonder once I heard,

now whose salvation's bearer

I dare as chosen deem myself.
But — ah! —
by curse of evil onward driven
I pathless have wander'd,
ne'er the Way of healing to find:
numberless dangers,
battles and conflicts,
forced me from off the pathway,
thought I to know it aright.
Then was I seized with dread, despairing
to hold me sacred the Treasure,
and which so guarding, so defending,
I won me many a wound in the strife;
for This I durst not
wield as weapon in battle;
unprofaned
do I bear it beside me,
and homeward now I guide it,
that 'fore thee gleameth pure and clear:
the Grail's all-holy Spear!

GURNEMANZ

(in a transport of joy).

O mercy! Wondrous weal!
Oh! Wonder! Holy highest wonder!

(After somewhat composing himself.)

Sir Knight! It 'twere a curse
that chased thee from thy path aside,
trust me, its spell is broken.
Here art thou, — this, the Grail's domain,
our Knights have waited long for thee.

Ah, they have need of succour,
the succour, that thou bring'st! —
Since the morning that thou tarriedst here,
the sorrow, then made known to thee,
that trouble, grew to utmost need.
Amfortas, to withstand the torments
that his soul and body suffer'd,

did crave in madden'd defiance but for death.

No pray'r, no mis'ry of his servants
could move him to perform his holy Office.

In shrine long closéd hath remain'd the Grail:

thus hopes Its sin-repentant Guardian,

because he cannot die

while It he yet beholds,

his end perforce to compass,

and so with life to win his sorrows' ending.

The holy Love-feast are we thus denied,

and common food must now support us:

Thereby exhausted is our heroes' strength.

No more comes message here,

nor call to holy war from out the distance:

pale and wretched, reft of hope,

the Knights now leaderless do wander forth.

Here in the forest have I hid myself,

in silence death awaiting,

that hath my agéd warrior-lord o'erta'en;

for Titurel, my holy King,

now by the Grail's pure vision no more quicken'd,

is dead; a man, as all men!

PARSIFAL

(springing up in intense grief).

And I — myself,

have all this sorrow caused!

Ah! How with trespass,

how with wanton crime

hath this my foolish head

eternally been laden,

since no repentance, no atonement,

my blindness hence can banish,

and I though chosen to deliver

must wander lost for ever,

now this last path from me doth vanish!

(He seems about to fall powerless. GURNEMANZ supports him, and lets him sink down on to the grassy mound. — KUNDRY hastily fetches a basin of water with which to sprinkle PARSIFAL.)

GURNEMANZ

(gently refusing KUNDRY).

Not this!

The holy spring itself
shall now revive our pilgrim's strength.
High work, my heart forebodes,
may e'en this day await him,
on him may fall a holy Office:
let him be pure of stain,
and dust of error's paths
shall now from him be wash'd away!

(They both gently move PARSIFAL to the edge of the spring. KUNDRY unbinds the greaves of his armour, and GURNEMANZ removes his breast-plate.)

PARSIFAL

(gently and wearily).

Shall I to Amfortas be this day guided?

GURNEMANZ

(still busy).

Most surely; e'en for us the Castle waits:
the solemn death-rite of my dearest lord
doth thither summon me.
The Grail once more shall be to us revealéd,
the long-neglected Office
shall once more now be servéd,
to sanctify the saintly father
e'en by his son's misdoing slain,
who thus the crime would now atone, —
this hath Amfortas vow'd.

PARSIFAL

(gazing in quiet wonder at KUNDRY, who with eager humility is bathing his feet).

Thyself my feet hast washéd, —
besprinkle now my head, oh friend!

GURNEMANZ

(taking some water in his hand from the spring and besprinkling PARSIFAL's head).

Thrice blesséd be, thus purified, thou pure one!
So vanish every weight
of sin and care from thee!

(During this KUNDRY draws a golden vial from her bosom, and pours some of its contents over PARSIFAL's feet, which she dries with her hair, hastily unbound.)

PARSIFAL

(gently taking the vial from her and passing it to GURNEMANZ)

My feet hast thou anointed,
let Titurel's true Knight anoint my head,
that he to-day as King may even greet me!

GURNEMANZ

(pouring out the vial over PARSIFAL's head, upon which he lays his hands in blessing).

So came to us the promise,
my blessing so receive,
as King this day to greet thee.

Thou, blameless!
Patient in suffering,
by pity wakenéd!

As the redeem'd one's sufferings thou hast suffer'd,
the final load uplift now from his head!

PARSIFAL

(who has unnoticed filled his hand with water from the spring, bends forward to KUNDRY who is still kneeling before him, and pours it over her head).

My office thus I first perform:
Baptizéd be,
and trust in the Redeemer!

(KUNDRY sinks her head to the earth; she seems to weep passionately).

PARSIFAL

(turning away, gazes in mild ecstasy upon field and forest, which are glowing in the morning light).

How fair meseems the meadow-land to-day!
Once upon magic flow'rs I chanced,
that to my head upstretch'd their baneful tendrils;
yet saw I ne'er so fresh and sweet
the green blade, flow'ret and blossom,
ne'er scented all so child-like fair,
nor spake with charm so dear to me.

GURNEMANZ.

That spell Good Friday worketh, lord.

PARSIFAL.

Alas then, the day of deepest woe!
Now should, meseemeth, all that flow'rs,
that breathing lives, and lives anew,
weep only, ah! and sorrow?

GURNEMANZ.

Thou seest, that is not so.
It is the sinner's tear repentant,
that now with holy dew
doth field and mead bestrew:
thus grace and beauty lendeth.
Now all creation doth rejoice
in this the Saviour's love to trace,
to Him its pray'r ascendeth.
On th' Cross uplifted Him no more it seeth:
it therefore looketh up to man redeem'd;
whom Love's great sacrifice divinely freeth
from load of sin, and maketh pure and whole:
each meadow-blade and flower now perceiveth,
this day the foot of man for it hath care,
in truth, as God with patience infinite
once pain for him in pity bare,
so man in love will earth requite,
by gentle tread will spare.
Thus grateful doth creation bide,
whate'er doth flow'r and tadeth soon,
since now that Nature purified
her day of Innocence hath won.

(KUNDRY has slowly raised her head, and gazes up with tearful eyes, filled with calm and earnest entreaty to PARSIFAL.)

PARSIFAL.

I saw them wither, once bright in laughter:
now their deliv'rance yearn they after? —

This tear of thine the dew of blessing showers:
thou weepest, — see, how smile the flowers!

(He kisses her gently on the forehead.)

(A distant pealing of bells is heard.)

GURNEMANZ.

Mid-day: — the hour is come.

Permit, my lord, that thy servant may lead thee!

(GURNEMANZ has fetched from within his Grail-knight's mantle, with which he and KUNDRY invest PARSIFAL. — PARSIFAL solemnly takes up the Spear, and with KUNDRY follows GURNEMANZ, slowly leading. The scene changes very gradually, as in the first Act, but from R. to L. After remaining for a time visible the three entirely disappear, as the forest is gradually vanishing, and in its place the rocks draw near. — Through the arched passages, the sound of bells swells ever louder. The rock walls open, disclosing the lofty Grail's Hall, as in the first Act, only without the feast table. — Faint illumination. — From one side appear Knights bearing TITUREL's coffin, from the other side those escorting AMFORTAS in the litter, preceded by the covered shrine of the Grail.)

FIRST PROCESSION

(with AMFORTAS).

E'en thus we bear in sheltering shrine
the Grail to hallowéd altar;
whom shelter ye in gloomy shrine
and thither sorrowing bear?

SECOND PROCESSION

(while the two processions pass each other).

This mourning shrine doth the Hero hide,
doth hide his heavenly might,
to whose care God once yielded Himself:
Titurel hither we bear.

FIRST PROCESSION.

Who laid him thus low, whom in Godhead's guard,
God Himself once shielded?

SECOND PROCESSION.

The burden of age hath laid him thus low,
since the Grail no longer beheld he.

FIRST PROCESSION.

Who stay'd him the Grail's pure grace from be-
holding?

SECOND PROCESSION.

Whom there ye are bearing; its unworthy Guardian.

FIRST PROCESSION.

We do bear him this day, because yet once more —
the last time even, —
will he now serve his office.

(AMFORTAS is now placed on the couch behind the Grail's altar,
the coffin set down in front.)

THE KNIGHTS

(turning to AMFORTAS).

Woe thee! Guardian of the Grail!
Though 'tis the Last,
be to thy Office recall'd!
Though 'tis the Last!

AMFORTAS

(wearily raising himself a little).

Yea — Woe me! Woe me! Woe be on me!
So cry I freely with you.
Better 'twere to take from you my death, —
the sinner's lightest atonement!

(The coffin is opened. All at sight of TITUREL's body break
into a sudden cry of woe.)

AMFORTAS

(raising himself high on his couch, and turning to TITUREL's body).

My father!

Highly blessed thou of heroes!
Most pure one, 'fore whom the angels once bended:
while only I long'd to die,
death gave I to thee!
Oh! Thou who now in radiance divine
the Redeemer dost behold
entreat thou of Him that His holy blood,
— if yet once more now His blessing
shall quicken here the Brothers —
while in them life renewing,
death, may now grant me at last!
Death! Dying: —
only mercy!

O perish the poison, the wound of horror,
stiffen the heart corroded thereby!

My father! I cry thee:
cry to Him, thou all-blest,
“Redeemer, send thou my son to rest!”

THE KNIGHTS

(pressing nearer to AMFORTAS).

Reveal ye the Grail!
Serve thou the Office!
Thy father doth warn thee:
thou must! Thou must!

AMFORTAS

(springing up in maddened despair, and rushing into the midst
of the recoiling Knights).

No! No more! Ha!
Death darkens already around me,
and yet once more back into life shall I turn?
Mad deem I ye!

Who will to life now constrain me,
can ye e'en death but attain me?

(He tears open his garment.)

Here stand I, the open wound is here!
Thus am I poison'd, here flows my blood: —
out with your weapons! Plunge in your sword-
blades

deep, deep, to the hilt!

Up! Ye heroes:

slay ye the sinner and end his wail, —
and clear for you will then shine the Grail!

(All have shrunk back in fear before AMFORTAS, who now in
terrible ecstasy, stands alone. PARSIFAL, accompanied by GURNE-
MANZ and KUNDRY, has appeared unobserved among the Knights,
and now advancing, he extends the Spear.)

PARSIFAL.

One only weapon serves:
The Spear that smote
must heal thee of thy wound.

(He touches with the point of the Spear AMFORTAS' side, whose
face then shines with holy rapture; he staggers, as though over-
come with awe and emotion; GURNEMANZ supports him.)

PARSIFAL.

Be whole, absolvéd and atoned!
For I do now thy Office hold.
Thrice-blesséd be thy suffering,
that e'en to purest strength
and pity's wondrous might
the tim'rous Fool hath waked!

(He paces towards the centre, the Spear raised high before him.)

The Holy Spear, —
This I to you restore!

(All gaze in highest rapture upon the upheld Spear, to the point of which PARSIFAL raises his eyes and continues in enthusiasm: —)

Oh! Miracle of highest joy!
This that upon thee health bestowéd,
thence see I Holy Blood hath flowéd,
with longing e'en for its source it pineth,
that there darkly the Grail enshrineth. —
This let its veil no more confine: —
Reveal ye the Grail, — open the shrine!

(PARSIFAL ascends the altar-steps, takes the Grail from the shrine already opened by the ESQUIRES, and sinks in silent prayer before it. — The "Grail" softly shines. — Increasing gloom below and growing light from above.)

ALL

(with voices from the mid-height and top of the dome).

Wondrous high Salvation!
Redeeméd the Redeemer!

(The ray of light falls from above, and the Grail glows brightest. From the dome descends a white dove and hovers over PARSIFAL'S head. — KUNDRY, with her gaze uplifted to PARSIFAL sinks slowly lifeless to the ground. — AMFORTAS and GURNEMANZ kneel in homage before PARSIFAL, who waves the Grail in blessing over the worshipping Knighthood.)

(The Curtain slowly closes.)



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