Keolanthe or The Unearthly Bride

(Vocal items only)

The Words by Edward Fitzball
The Music by Michael William Balfe

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No manuscript appears to have been retained in the Lord Chamberlain's Plays. A manuscript was presumably sent to the Examiner but has been lost. No printed libretto has been found either. Below is a transcription of the *Songs, Duets, Choruses etc.* from the opera as printed by W.S. Johnson, Soho, London in 1841. Page numbers shown **[x]**.

More information on the opera can be found at https://www.englishromanticopera.org/operas/Keolanthe.htm.

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Keolanthe or The Unearthly Bride

Act 1

Scene 1

The Study of Andrea

Chorus

Health to the Bridegroom of to-morrow!
Calm his slumbers, oft and light;
Never his a waking sorrow,
Bridegroom of the dawn—Good night.
Good night.

Andrea

Dear are the cheering notes of friendship,
Like sweet voices from the land,
To the bold and daring seaman,
Welcoming his barque astrand.
Friends of the gone-time and the morrow
Ne'er shall change—our union blight ;
Hand to hand thro' joy or sorrow,
Thus we meet, and thus good night, &c.

Chorus

Peace to the Bridegroom of the morrow!
Sweet dreams on his slumbers light,
Never more to wake in sorrow;
Bridegroom of the dawn—Good night, &c.

[6]

Andrea

Friends etc, etc

Ballad (Pavina)

Vows too oft are broken,
Therefore do not swear ;
Oaths, like rainbow bubbles,
Melt, alas in air.
No, no, no, the true are free;
No, no, no, no oath for me.
Ah! pray do not swear.

If to rove thy wish love,
Let its wing unbound be,
Never chain did truth restrain,
No, no, no oath for me.
Did I think thy bosom
From its vows could fly
I'd thy heart surrender,
Tho' my doom to die.
No, no, no, &c.

Trio

(*Without Accompaniment*)
Sweetly sleep 'till rosy dawn
Oh her silver wings descend,
Visions of the coming morn,
Gently with thy slumbers blend;
Softly as yon convent chime
Vibrates in the starry light,
Beat a heart that ne'er knew crime,
Sweetly sleep—Farewell—Good night.

Aria (Ombrastro)

From rushy beds of silver Nile,
A wand'ring sprite come I,
[7] Thro' boundless time I laugh at men,
When born, and when they die!
At kings or beggars, all *alike*,
That joy or sorrow quaff ;
Frail mortals, duller far than moles,
Still, still, at you I laugh.
Ha! Ha!

How many thousand years I've seen
These foolish mortals, still
Trudge round the globe, around, around,
Like blind mules in a mill!
For clods of earth or dust they fight,
And yield their slender span;
In love, war, peace, ridiculous;
We spirits laugh at man.
Ha! Ha!

Duetto

Andrea

Awake the dead! One who hath slept a thousand years!
It cannot be! it cannot be!
Or hast thou power, perform the spell,
The lovely Princess let me see.

Ombrastro

In this chamber, student! No;
Dare I breathe the charm forbid,
Hence to Egypt we must go,
To its oldest Pyramid.
There, from her tomb, in life arrayed,
Shalt thou upraise the lovely maid;
Thy voice alone the note of doom,
Must break the spell which binds the tomb.

Andrea

Hence away! for her I brave
Every danger, life resign;
Yes, dear maid, all else I yield,
One brief hour to call thee mine.
Hence, &c.

[8]

Ombrastro (*apart*)
Poor silly mortal, how he raves,
But for a little space to gaze
On beauty's cheek, a transient rose,
All fleeting as the mornings' rays.

Andrea
No more delay;
Away! away!
Thro' earth, or fire, or sea!
Impatient grows my heart,
The Princess let me see, &c.
Now, your hand, no more delay,
To Egypt, hence, away, &c.

Air
Keolanthe
Oh, Andrea! thro' this bosom
What soft tumult wildly flows.
Comest thou never?
From me, ever,
Stays alas! my soul's repose!

Scene 2

Spell (Omrastro)
By the lotus flower long faded,
Silver Queen on thee I call;
O'er a form that death hath shaded
Let thy mystic lustre fall.
Give to life this sacred flower,
[9] Back its former perfume fling,
Silver Queen, thou hast the power,
Yield those buds their second spring.
Mother of the stars! Oh hear! Oh hear!
And bid the bright tints quick appear.
It blooms! It blooms! and with that bloom
Awakes the quiet of the tomb;
Time-faded form the spell obey,
And in thy mouldering folds give way.
Give way!
Keolanthe! Keolanthe! Unclose thine eyes,

Quick from thy sleep awake! arise!
Keolanthe! Keolanthe!

Keolanthe
Where am I? Why is my heart thus cold?
This dismal chamber! What is it I behold?
Oh, I remember all! that urn! that urn!
And must this agony again return.

Air
Oh, Andrea! thro' this bosom
What soft tumult wildly flows!
Comest thou never?
From me ever,
Stays alas! my soul's repose!

As nature greets the dawn,
My bosom would rejoice,
To greet with new delight
The music of thy voice.
Alas! where thou art not
The day Is dark to me;
Flowers droop to meet the dawn,
So I to welcome thee.

Ombrastro
(*to Andrea*)
Beware! Beware! a word, but one!
Dissolve the spell, and she is gone

[10]

Andrea
What loveliness! my raptured soul
In vain I struggle to controul (*sic*).
Keolanthe!

Keolanthe
Oh! Great Osiris! speak!
Lives still Andrea, or comes he me to seek
From some bright world, a spirit of yon sky,
To waft me where love's transports never die?
(*To Andrea*)
Speak! art thou not of air!

Andrea
Beloved one! No!
Life's crimson tides within this bosom flow;
Mortal I am, my soul too, wholly thine.

Keolanthe
Thou livest again, Andrea! only mine!
Andrea

Thine!

Keolanthe
Mine!
(*The embrace*)

Both
Oh, sweet is joy when sorrow
Hath faded from the heart,
Like floods of sunshine falling,
While tempest clouds depart;
The blue appears more tranquil,
The Heaven itself more fair,
So love is purer – brighter -
That bursts thro' past despair.

Ombrastro
Weak mortals! how like painted flies
You bask in every beam!
[11] While spirits laugh, who know your joys,
Each but a rainbow dream!

Finale to First Act
Aria (High Priest)
Great Osiris!
Great Osiris! On thy daughter
Gently place thy chast'ning hand,-
Teach her still, in mildest mercy,
Thy high will to understand.

Chorus
Great Osiris! Love congenial
Ever join thus heart and hand.

Ombrastro
Teach her still, &c., &c.

Duet (Keolanthe and Anrea)
Joy thro' every pulse is stealing,
Bliss too pure for mortal love;
Oh, what transport! Oh, what feeling!
Share our blessings, powers above!
Thou art mine!
I am thine!
Witness for us, powers above!
Joy thro', &c. &c.

Chorus (Priests, Ombrastro and people)
Oh, what transports! Oh, what feelings!
Long conserve them - powers above.

End of Act the First

Act 2

[12] **Scene 1**

Interior of a magnificent Sicilian Villa

Chorus

Play, drink, laugh, and sing;
Joy, like time, flies fast away;
In the sunshine of youth's spring.
Sing, laugh, dance, and play.

Chorus of Peasants

Prince, and Princess, at your feet
We, your grateful tenants, kneel,
With our autumn gifts to greet
Hearts that for the humble feel:
Long be yours, each mortal blessing,
Ne'er to know one earthly care,
You, that every bright enjoyment,
With the lowly love to share.

Tout Ensemble

Ploy, drink, laugh, and dance;
Prime the cup with purple wine,
To our young and noble hostess,
Heart and voice united join;
To our hostess and our host,
Drain the cup of purple wine.

Duetto (Keolanthe and Andrea)

List! Dearest, list! 'tis the nightingale calling;
The soft evening breeze gently steals thro' the grove;
All nature seems calm, ere the night-mist be fa1ling,
Hand and hand let us gaze on the picture of love.
[13] Thou shalt take up thy lute in our favourite bower,
Which looks o'er the glen, where the mountain stream falls;
Away, love! away! 'tis the heart's banquet hour,
Thine *own one* awaits thee, the nightingale calls.
Yes, dearest; yes, when the moonbeams are rising,
Our hearts filled with joy, side by side we will stray,
The rainbow of life for each other despising;
Truth and Love are the blossoms which never decay.
Thou shalt tell me the tale I so often have heard,
Still new from thy lips like sweet music it falls
The melody most by this bosom preferred,
Away, love; away, 'tis the nightingale calls.

Andrea

Thou shalt tell, &c.

Keolanthe

Thou shalt tell, &c.

Ballad (Andrea)

While thus I gaze on those dear eyes,
Ah, would my life might thine renew,
Sweet rose too lightly cast aside,
To wither e'er thy worth I knew.
For palace doom, for lordly power,
I'd waste no sigh of sad regret,
Again, but mine one *sweet short* hour,
The hour of love when first we met.

'Twas frenzy filled my faithless breast;
Some demon tore our loves apart,
Or, never had I lived to slight
Thee, first best idol of my heart.
And now thou'rt lost poor faded flow'r,
The world, wealth, life, I'd all forget,
Again to purchase one short hour,
That hour of love when first we met.

[14]

Concerted Piece

Filippo

Alas! she's gone then! I have no tears to shed.
It is too dreadful! my sister! she's dead! she's dead!

Andrea

Oh, fate appalling! her blameless life so fled,
And I, her murderer! Pavina! she's dead! she's dead!

Keolanthe

Oh! doom unhappy! life, like an essence fled;
A blighted bud! alas! she's dead! she's dead!

Chorus

(*Without*)

Sweet is the sleep of innocence,
Of guileless hearts sweet is the sleep;
Like flowers that bloom thro' night's cold gloom,
When angels dew-drops weep.

Filippo

On yonder bier already is my sister laid!

Keolanthe

To yon convent—her last wish to be conveyed.

Aria and Chorus

Filippo

Ah, my sister! and art thou gone?
From this heart each joy is faded,
Life's young path with woe o'ershaded.

Chorus

Saints eternal, guard her sleep.

[15]

Andrea

Keen are the pangs of treachery;
Of faithless hearts deep is the wound;
The false one's breast remorse possess,
His brows with torture bound.

Filippo

(*Apart to Andrea*)

Remember the hour

Andrea

When tolls yonder bell.

Keolanthe

(*To Andrea*)

What said he?

Andrea

(*Evading*)

He thanks us.
And bids us farewell.

Filippo

Yes lady, I thank you.

(To *Andrea*)

Remember! Farewell.

Andrea

(*To Filippo*)

The meeting! I've sworn it.
Depart now. Farewell.

Keolanthe

Your sorrows I pity!
Sad stranger, farewell.

Scene 2

A Gallery

Ombrastro

When first I beheld a mere speck in the air,
This rolling, sunshine, round- about world,

[16]

How little I thought of the comical scenes,
Or the merry vagaries its shores unfurled.
Were ever such people, such manners, such follies,
Conceited as owls, they affect to despise

Whatever out-shineth their dull-pated vision;
Nor dream of the film that o'ercloudeth their eyes!
This laughs at a bubble; that weeps for a feather;
Their lives, scarce a moment in our calculation,
They waste in mistrust, in ambition, deception;
Or end in an instant of strife or vexation,
No matter, tho' millions of ages be gone,
Whirligig, whirl, rolls the world still on.
Ha! Ha! Whirligig, &c.

Like buds that shoot up as the old leaves fall off,
Another mad race to the past one succeeds,
To strut and to boast of inventions their own,
Oh, what wonderful creatures, what wonderous deeds!
Tho' we, who existed years thousands before them,
Could tell how of yore just the same things were done,
That all things, in circles, roll back in rotation,
In fact, that there's nothing new under the sun.
And so shall it be to the end of the chapter,
The lover despairing, the husband repenting,
The lady coquetting, the rival enraging,
Yes, just the same follies, provoking, tormenting,
No matter, &c.

Aria (Keolanthe)

Let me hear
Thy voice, dear,
Soft as music sounding,
Thro' yon grove,
Where with love,
Gentle hearts are bounding.
[17] 'Mid life's storm,
Wrap my form,
All I'll brave for thee, love;
While I hear
Thy voice near
Grief is joy to me, love.
As the time, -
Welcome chime,
To the lost, benighted,
So this heart,
Where thou art,
Springs up heaven delighted.
Woe and care,
Fell despair,
Yield no pang near thee, love;
While I hear
Thy voice near,
Grief is joy to me, love;

Scene 3

The Mausoleum

Concerted piece

Andrea

Filippo! Filippo! the bell is sounding;
Its last stroke hath not died way.
Filippo! Filippo! 'Tis I, Andrea;
Your solemn bidding I obey,

(*Enter Filippo*)

Filippo

Andrea! Andrea! her knell is sounding;
Its last tone scarce hath died away.
[18] Andrea! Andrea! behold Pavina!
Can blood of thine yon sight repay?

Andrea

I yield it freely; my breast is bare,
Strike! strike! thy sister's wrongs requite.

Filippo

I'm no assassin! thy sword prepare;
High Heaven will doubtless guard the right.

Andrea

No, by our early happy hours,
Sweet days of boyhood ever fled,
When friendship's path lay strewn with flowers,
Gay as the reckless life we led.
No, by thy sister's cruel wrong,
This hand 'gainst thee shall bear no part,
But rather thus invites thy sword
To sheath its fury in this heart!

Filippo

Oh, I could strike thee to the dust,
Where she too early slumbers low;
But while I point the deadly thrust,
She, as it were, averts the blow.

(*Gazing at Miniature*)

No, thro' those eyes now quenched in death,
She bids me 'gainst thee bear no part,
But leave thee to late, stern remorse,
The serpent which consumes the heart.

Andrea

(*Agitated*)

I scorn forgiveness. Aloud for vengeance
From yonder tomb Pavina cries.

Filippo
Hence base deceiver! for ever leave me;
Degraded false one, I thee despise!

[19]

Andrea
Nay, do not scoff me! what, for thy sister,
With guilt enchained my heart might bear-

Filippo
Thus I defy thee.
(*Strikes him with sword*)
With manly courage,
To turn again thou wilt not dare.

Andrea
Not dare?
Filippo
No! No!

Both
My soul's on fire, avoid the blow;
Die, traitor, die! be thine the blow,
Not dare, &c.
Concerted piece
Galeazzo
Drag him to the torture; let him not away;
His murderous blood alone this crime can pay.
Chorus
Drag him, &c.
(*Enter Keolanthe.*)
Keolanthe
Stay! my wretched husband spare.
In pity, pray!

Galeazzo
Hence, thou frantic woman! Guards!
Your victim seize.

Keolanthe
His wretched wife imploring, thus upon her knees,
Oh, deign to hear I he is not guilty I No,
Some demon hand alone hath given this fearful blow.

[20]

Galeazzo
Hence! Frenzied woman! Hence!
No pity! Mercy, no!

Keolanthe
Had my lip the thunder's fury;
Had my eyes the lightning's fire;
At my feet I'd see thee writhing
In the dust! consume! expire!

Still thus with a wife's devotion,
But with life from him I'll part.
No; if fury's blade must reach him,
Be it thro' this faithful heart.
Still, &c.

Andrea and Chorus

Oh! what pure, what fond affection!
Have I thus deserved her care?
Madness come and drown remembrance -
Overwhelm me, wild despair.

Galeazzo

Lo! what strange unearthly fires
From her eyes indignant beam;
Sure no mortal glares upon us,
'Tis the vision of a dream.

Chorus

Lo! what strange, &c.

Galeazzo

The murd'rer seize.

Keolanthe

Oh, wretched hour!
His blood they'll shed.
(*Enter Ombrastro*)

Ombastro

(*Whispering to Keolanthe.*)
The magic flower!
(*Gives the Lotus*)

[21]

Galeazzo

The murd'rer seize!

Keolanthe

Oh, welcome flower!
Thy magic form, which thus I wave,
Shall them repel, and Andrea save.
Behold! they cannot rm thee
Each trace of guilt is gone;
Come, fly with me, this dreary scene,
My Andrea! mine alone!

Andrea

Thy Andrea! thine alone!

Ombrastro

(*To Keolanthe*)
Stay! know thy love degraded;
Behold the lotus faded.
(*Shews Flower*)

Keolanthe and Andrea
Horror! the lotus faded!

Keolanthe

(*Agitated*)
What dream is this? It cannot be,
Andrea false to me!

Ombrastro
This guilty portrait, see!

Andrea
Confusion!

Keolanthe
Ah I that face! 'tis she!
They called Pavina! dreadful fear!
(*To Ombrastro*)
He her destroyer?

Ombrastro
Lo! his features wear
Shame's crimson hue!

[22]

Andrea
What pangs my bosom tear!

Keolanthe
Thou, her destroyer?

Andrea
These reproaches spare.
Oh, Keolanthe, hear me!

Keolanthe.
Approach no longer near me;
Thy perfidy! beware.

Andrea
These reproaches spare.

Keolanthe
Away, thou cruel false one!
I blot thee from my breast?
Oblivion wrap my senses,
Jn one unwaking rest.

Andrea
What horrid jealous feeling
Thus sternly chills thy breast?
With madness wildly fearful
Thy heart is now possest (*sic*)

Ombrastro
Away, thou basely false one!
Osiris knew thy breast!
For thee a mortal penance;
For her a cloudless rest.

Galeazzo and chorus
With us, thou base assassin,
The torture waits thy breast;
Soon flames shall round thee kindle,
Dishonors grave thy rest!

[23]

Galeazzo and chorus
Oh, mystery! a sorceress
Exerts her hellish power!
(*To Keolanthe*)
The sorceress! fell sorceress!
Let flames consume her power!
(*To Andrea*)
Assassin, stay! assassin, stay!
Thou diest within this hour.

Ombrastro
Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha! Ila! Ha!
The Spirit of the Flower!

All
Oh, horror! see, &c,
The Demon of the Flower!

Finale
Happy bride!
For thee what transports flow!
Thy true-love by thy side,
Happy bride!
The white rose on thy brow, &c.

THE END