The Fairy Oak

A Romantic Opera
in two acts

The Words by Henry Coe Coape

The Music by Henry Forbes

The manuscript in the British Library being unavailable at this time, this libretto is a transcription from the printed libretto published by W.S. Johnson in 1845 and held at the Warwickshire County Record Office (CR4141/10/40). The original page numbers are indicated **[x].**

Sections structured

Singer Dialogue

are usually the spoken dialogue sections but there are some places where it is used for ensembles, such as in the finales.

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

Please email any queries to englishromanticopera@gmail.com.

R Burdekin, January 2024
www.englishromanticopera.org
www.victorianenglishopera.org

Dramatis Personae

Duke Rudolph	Mr Borrani
Hace (the Solitary)	Mr Burdini
Count Alphonso	Mr S. Jones
Albert (Arnold's Foster Son)	Mr Allen
Arnold (The Duke's Ranger)	Mr Howell
Fritz (His Son)	Mr Harley
Kuno (An Elfin Page)	Mr Wieland
Seneschal of the Castle	Mr T. Matthews

Chorus of Foresters, Guards, Vassals, Fishermen, etc., etc.

Ianthe (The Duke's Daughter)	Miss Rainforth
Queen of the Fairies	Miss Fitzjames
Orchis {Attendant Fairies}	Miss Collett
Fair Star	Miss Helen Lane

Chorus of Fairies

Scene – Castle of Lowenstein in Bohemia

The Music of the Opera is published and may be had at all the Music Sellers

The Fairy Oak

[3]

A Romantic Opera

in two acts

Act 1

Scene 1 – *(Sunset) In front the Fairy Oak, which occupies nearly the whole of the stage. On the R. is the entrance to the Castle of Lowenstein. On the L. the Ranger's Cottage, and an ancient Convent upon an eminence beyond the Forest. Beneath the Oak a bank of verdure. Tables, benches, etc.* Arnold, Fritz, *chorus of Foresters, drinking.* Albert *sits apart buried in thought.*

Chorus

Jovial brothers of the bow
Send the sparkling cup around;
This for all our ills below
Never-failing balm is found.
Merrily, merrily, pass the cup -
Merrily, merrily, pass the cup!

First Forester

Joy is ours in forest green,
When the mighty bristled boar
Rushing from his lair is seen -
Lair that shall be his no more.
Wildly joyful throbs each heart,
When thro' swamp and brake and dell,
Fly we, like the lightning's dart,
With halloo, and deep-mouth'd yell!

Chorus

Jovial brothers of the bow

[4]

Chorus

Joyous is the fall of eve,
When, reward of all our toil,
Field and forest dark we leave,
Bearing home our silvan spoil.
Now, a happy festive band,
Free from every care and strife,
Each his mantling cup in hand,
Sing we of our joyous life!

Jovial etc.

(*The sun sets during the last verse, and lights appear in the Convent and Cottage*

Arn (R.) See, friends, the sun hath already sunk to rest behind the hills, and the lamp, kindled in the cottage, gives us notice that night is at hand. I pray you all to return to your homes, or who knows what tricks the fairies may play you on your way thro' the wood in the dark.

Fritz (L) Truly you speak, father mine. Touching that very oak, for instance; why that say 'tis as swarmed with fairies, when the moon rises, as it is with gnats when the sun sets – Ugh! (*catching at a gnat*)

Arn Fairies! Ha! Ha! I should like to see one.

Fritz (*alarmed*) I shouldn't; and what's more, I wouldn't look out of my bed-room window after dark, to see Queen Mab herself; it would deprive me of my senses.

Arn Ha! Ha! No fear of that, simpleton. But take in the flasks and cups, now empty as thy head, and get to rest; I'll follow in an instant. So at once, good night, neighbours – and sound slumbers to you all! Forget not that we have to assemble early for the boar hunt, commanded by the Duke, in honour of his daughter's marriage with Count Alphonso.

2nd Forester Fear not. We shall be stirring betimes.

All Good night! Good night!

Chorus renewed

Joy is ours in forest green etc

(*Exeunt severally*

Fritz enters cottage, draining flask, letting things fall, etc.

Arn Good night! good night! So, now then to – (*seeing Albert lost in reflection*, R.) Ah! Albert, my boy! Why thus lost in thought?

[5]

Alb (*starting*) I was thinking, father, of what Fritz said just now about Fairies haunting the old oak.

Arn Stuff! I don't credit such things (L)

Alb (*fervently*) I do!

Arn Boy!

Alb Listen

Recitative

This morn, deep in the forest, I espied
A beauteous maiden on a flow'ry bank,
Beneath a spreading oak, in slumber sunk –
Alarm'd- she fled- I follow'd, and o'ertook her –
She smiled! Oh *then* how fair! She spoke; oh sounds
Of liquid music! Now no more she sought
To fly – but pleas'd, she marked each look impassion'd,
And heard each tone, when Love the theme. And oft
We met beneath that oak – but if I ask'd her
What home was her's, methought a voice like Echo's
Did summon her from earth to other spheres –
And – Fairy-like – she vanished! -

Song

There surely dwell
In cave and dell,
Some beings of immortal birth;
And she hath come
From a fairy home,
Where Spirits smile upon this earth.

Across the glade,
Beneath the shade
Where lost in thought, the hunter strays,
She tempts his view -
Should he pursue,
She, nymph-like, flits thro' thorny maze.

At twilight hour,
With magic pow'r,
She ever haunts my forest way;
And still doth seem,
In each wild dream,
To beckon me away, away!

But let me pray
Whene'er I may,
That she, her name and birth declare,
Her form is gone,
And I'm alone,
The prey of love and wild despair!

[6]

Arn Foolish fellow! Why you're becoming as crazy as old Haco, the Solitary, who has lived in a cell in the forest for the last fifteen years; he's always talking of Fairies; and says that very oak is the boundary of their dominions, and – But I can't believe it! I won't believe it! Good night, boy; if *you* are for sitting up all night, to consult the elves of the forest, *I'm* not. At your age, you may catch a

village girl, and mistake her for a fairy; at mine, I should only catch aches for my pains, no mistaking that; Ha! Ha!

(*Exit into cottage* L

Alb He's right! These are foolish fancies that must hold my thoughts captive – This lovely being must be mortal; for I have felt the gentle, yet throbbing pressure of her hand – I have clasp'd her fair form, and yet even at that moment is it that she vanishes and leaves my enraptured gaze fixed – on vacancy! Haply I am under the influence of some spell – Ha! that ethereal strain which is wont to call her from me.

(*Sinks into chair, and leans on table*

Invisible Chorus of Fairies

Man's senses are o'erclouded
When shades of ev'ning fall
And souls of earth are shrouded,
In sleep's mysterious pall.

(*The flowers, which ornament the bank of turf, seem to rise up into rich blossoms, bearing amongst them the form of* Ianthe, *who sings*,

The nursling of a fairy band,
In bright and beauteous Elfin land
My youthful days serenely pass'd,
No cloud of woe, my sould o'ercast;
But ne'er they told me that this earth
To higher joys than mine gave birth;
To bound each hope and fear they strove,
And never named thee, sacred Love!

(*Disappears*

Albert *rising hastily*

Recitative

Ah! Darkness all! Yet she was there-
Bright as the sunbeam on the op'ning rose!
I'll seek her thro' the forest everywhere-
And if I find her not, to end my woes,
Come death, more welcome than this deep despair!

(*Rushes out* U.E.L[1]

(Music. *Enter* Kuno *from the castle* U.E.R *a pale torch in his hand, with which he searches the* **[7]** *wood; he listens at the cottage, then beckons to the Castle. Enter* Rudolph *from the Castle,* R, *looking about him, and dismissing* Kuno, *who gives him the torch – Distant convent bell tolls the hour of midnight.*

Rud[2] (*Speaking*) Midnight again! I hear the convent clock peal forth the solemn hour; all silent else – all at rest, save thee Rudolph, assassin of thy brother's – but hence remorse! Now to reclaim my daughter, seventeen years ago, entrusted to fairy

[1] Upper Entry Left
[2] Rudolph is sometimes listed as the Duke in the libretto

keeping, that I might ward from my denounced head the ominous legend, foretelling that Ianthe should love the man who would dispossess her father of – I had almost said – his rights! (*sighing*) My rights! But conscience! – it is now too late! The spell! – the spell that works my will with these fairy beings!

Recitative

This night restores to me my child! – Fairies,
I have observed *my* portion of our contract;
No hand profane I've suffer'd to invade
This portal of your dwelling! Th'enchanted Oak
Still stands in solitary grandeur, see
That Ianthe be restor'd with heart untouch'd
By mortal love – or tempest blight your tree!

(*Wild music, as he passes around the tree now violently agitated, the torch streaming in his hand.*

Fears weigh upon my soul- unknown the cause –
Tho', by mine art, I can divine that foes,
At once to me and Count Alphonso, walk
Within this forest. I must seek the aid
Of Fairy Knowledge (*Placing torch on bank*

Incantation *and invisible* Chorus *of Fairies*

Rud By the pow'r I've earn'd so dearly,
I command you tell me clearly
Who doth threat my life and fame!

Fairies Prince, thy foe we may not name,
His star ascends! Beware! Beware!

Rud Fairies, have I not the pow'r
To avert the evil hour? (*Thunder*

Fairies Lo! A storm is in the air!
If it last the live long night,
Thou prevail'st; but if moonlight
Break upon the tempest's rage, (*Lightning*
Let defence thy thoughts engage!
Lo! The storm is in the air –
Now the test's at hand – Prepare! (*Torch vanishes*

[8]

Scena - Rudolph

Lo! 'mid clouds of dusky red,
The sun hath sought his western bed
The eagle feasts upon his ev'ning prey;
The seamew shrieking, skims the foamy spray;
While the surge, with hollow roar
Boiling beats the rocky shore.
Now sweeps the fierce whirlwind o'er mountain and fen –

Now rushes the hailstorm adown the deep glen -
The torrents are dashing
O'er riven trees falling!
The lightning is flashing
Thro' darkness appalling!
Hark! The murky vaults of Heav'n
By the thunder-peal is riv'n - (*Storm*
The fabric of the world
Seems in dark ruin hurl'd –
Say, has not grim Despair, his banner black unfurl'd?

(*The moon appears*

Fairies

Prince for thyself beware!
Moonbeams illume the air,
And from the convent shrine
Sweet prayers are softly pealing!

Rudolph

Horror! What fell despair!
The storm forsakes the air;
Come darkness, still be mine,
My fearful crime concealing! (*Exit into castle*

(Music. *The scene becomes gradually brighter. The Oak, expanding its branches wider and wider, shows itself peopled with Fairies, who flutter, play, and swing amongst its branches; others entering beneath and dancing.*

Chorus etc

Come forth, ye fairy Elves, come forth!
No more the storm is pealing
Thro' the deep forest shade;
The moon's pale rays are stealing
Along each grassy glade
Come forth etc

Man's senses are o'erclouded
When shades of ev'ning fall
And souls of earth are shrouded,
In sleep's mysterious pall.
Come forth etc

[9]

We tread our fearless mazes
O'er soft and thymy banks;
Her voice the night-bird raises
To lead our merry pranks.
Come forth etc

The timid fawns surround us,
And fearlessly they view
Bright haloes shining round us,
Like stars dissolv'd in dew.
Come forth etc

Enter the Queen *from the Oak hastily*

Queen Suspend awhile these revels – and quickly tell me – where's Ianthe?

Orchis Wandering in the forest

Queen Know ye not that this night endeth our eighteen years' compact with Duke Rudolph, her father, who entrusted her an infant, to our fairy charge; and that we must even now restore her to him, with heart untouched by love of mortal?

Orchis Alas! Already she loveth!

Queen Albert, the hunter! In the forest they encountered. Love's destiny, even Fairies cannot avert; Rudolph's dreaded prophecy must then come to pass. But see, where the maiden appeareth! Retire Fairies! Let us listen to her own avowal.

(Music. *All vanish; Ianthe comes slowly forward. The oak, and the scene remains as before.*

Recitative

Thanks to the pale moon's rays, I can proceed.
Which path to take I know not – here are many –
I am bewilder'd in the forest mazes;
And none at hand to aid me. That youth –
The gentle Albert, prayed me trust *his* guidance-
Alas! That I refused his proffer'd help! (*Looks out*
He is, ere this, afar – and I must see,
Alone my fairy home.

Aria

The nursling of a fairy band,
In bright and beauteous Elfin land
My youthful days serenely pass'd,
No cloud of woe my soul o'ercast;
But ne'er they told me that this earth
To higher joys than mine gave birth;
To bound each hope and fear they strove;
And never named thee, sacred Love!

[10]

How brightly shed the sun, this day,
O'er the glad earth his golden ray –
Parent of universal light;
With kindred blaze o'er darker night,
Thy beam, oh Love! resistless stole

Upon my spell-entranced soul,-
Which instant own'd its sovereign pow'r,
The conquest of one little hour.

(Queen *and* Fairies, *who have been listening, advance*

Queen Ianthe

Ian That voice! Oh! happy moment that thus restores the wanderer to thy presence!

Queen Ah, truant! Too well of these wanderings I divine the cause; - that gentle heart is stricken by a mortal's love.

Ian Do not reproach me.

Queen No, I weep for thee! At day-break I must restore thee to thy father's arms.

Ian (*alarmed*) Must I leave thee?

Queen Yes, for thy parent summons thee, and soon wilt thou become a happy bride.

Ian (*joyfully*) To Albert!

Queen (*troubled*) Why not another?

Ian Never! His equal lives not in this wide – wide wood – my world. Oh! cast not a shade over two fond hearts, whose vows of constancy are register'd on high.

Aria

Oh! brightly the day-star of happiness glows
In the heart that hath never known gloom;
And soft is the hue of the opening rose,
Ere the storm hath yet sullied its bloom.

You may whisper that darkness and tempest are near,
That the fairest smile but to deceive;
But the heart, yet a stranger to sigh or to tear,
The sad warning will never believe.

And far above all that the tongue can impart,
Is the bliss, which in love's early spring
We feel, when we know that another dear heart
To the same fond illusion will cling;

Then o'er my glad spirit be sorrowing wail,
Oh! seek not a shadow to cast –
But tell me there's truth in the fluttering tale,
That its brightness for ever will last.

Queen Alas! my poor Ianthe! I cannot, even in pity, deceive thee; thy father designs thy hand for another

Ian (*alarmed*) That other -

[11]

Queen Didst thou not love already, were not unworthy of thee; a gallant knight he is – one Count Alphonso – Behold!

(Music. *Part of the castle dissolves and discovers the* Duke *and* Alphonso *at a table, signing a contract, by the torch of* Kuno

Queen What beholdest thou?

Ian My father – and a stranger – who signs –

Queen A contract of marriage – 'tis thine with himself, tomorrow-

Ian No! Let me die rather!

(*Falls fainting into the Fairies' arms.*

Chorus

Love! Love!
Oh, yes, Love's pow'r behold
Love! Love! (*The day begins to dawn*
Hark! Hark! the woodman's song
Now echo bears along.
See! See! the rosy dawn
Proclaims the coming morn;
While nights' dusky robe
Fadeth from the waking globe.
Fairies, we must now away,
It is! It is the break of day!
Ianthe! may'st thou peace and love,
Despite the clouds that rise, approve!

(Music. *The* Fairies *retire. The bell of the castle, pulled by an invisible hand, rings. The door opens and* Kuno *enters hastily, searching; the* Queen *points to* Ianthe, *whom he now perceives.* The Queen *vanishes*. Kuno *re-enters the castle.* Fritz *looks out of the cottage window, his night cap on.*

Fritz (*yawning*) Yaw! Guests at the castle so early! Why 'tis scarcely day-light; these great folks can't rest themselves, and won't allow any one else the privilege (Bell). What a ringing to be sure – no doubt the Duke's daughter unexpectedly arrived, who is to marry the Count Alphonso; on which occasion I was promised the office of Major-Domo.

(Music. *During this speech, and the* Duke *and* Alphonso *have entered, and lifted up* Ianthe. Kuno, *who is with them, perceives* Fritz, *makes a sign, and laughs aside*.

[12] *Duke* (*with joy, raising* Ianthe) The fairies have not failed of their compact, my daughter is restored to me

Alph. (admiringly) My lovely bride!

Duke Yes, 'tis Ianthe! Support her in!

(Music. *They support* Ianthe *into the castle while* Kuno, *as the doors are closed, steals roguishly towards the cottage, and kneels.*

Fritz (*at window*) Who's there? (*Kuno shews himself*) Ah! It's the daft page of the Duke; he's always playing me some ugly trick – Get away, you little essence of toad-stool, or I'll –

(Kuno *makes signs that* Fritz *is in request at the castle*

Fritz I wanted at the castle? What for, thou cub of Satan? Ah! Is there a beating to take off your back?

(Music. Kuno *imitates the carriage of a Major Domo*

Fritz I appointed Major-Domo, by the Duke! And thro' your interference too! Oh you most amiable of dev—pages! Give me your hand.

(Music. *Giving his hand to* Kuno, *who pulls him out at the window*

Holy Dunstan! You've broken every bone in my body! 'Tis a mercy I didn't pitch upon my head, and dash out my brains. Here's a bump, for the first appearance of a Major-Domo; and an eye that will become by to-morrow as black as a raven on the castle battlements.

(Music. Kuno *runs towards castle, and makes a sign that if he does not make haste the doors will be closed against him.*

Close the doors! Oh! don't do that till I am fairly installed inside. Won't father stare to meet me in my robes of office? And won't I strut past him in a *contemptuous* sort of way? (*strutting*) So somehow! Now then, to enter my *officious* situation with all the *indignity* of the Duke himself.

(Music. *As he is pompously walking up the marble steps,* Kuno *slily trips him up; he stumbles into the castle, and* Kuno *follows laughing*.

Enter Albert

Recitative

'Tis vain to fly! Enchantress of my soul,
Where dost thou dwell? Methinks a beauteous form,
With every moonbeam, glances o'er my path,
Ianthe! Love! 'tis thine
In every breeze a whisper'd name I hear,
Ianthe! Love! 'tis thine

[13]

Orchis *and* Fair-Star *behind the Oak*

Ianthe! Love! 'tis thine
Ianthe! Love! 'tis thine

Recitative – Albert

Surely
Some voice! Nay, I remember Echo dwells
For aye within these woody caves, enamour'd
Of shepherd's tuneful pipe, and huntsman's horn;
And now, as knowing well the pangs of love,
She bids the hollow rocks and deepen'd groves
Dwell on thy name, my lov'd Ianthe!

Enter Orchis *and* Fair Star *on each side of the Fairy Oak*

Trio

Orchis & Fair Star

Oh! List again! Ianthe's name!
Ianthe, love! Ianthe!
Ianthe's guardian elves have found thee
There is no spell,
Of Heav'n or Hell;
But, Albert, tho' it be not granted
Thy mortal eye
Should Elf descry,
'Tis elfin strain thou hearest chanted.

Albert

Hark! 'Twas again Ianthe's name
Ianthe, love! Ianthe!
I hear mysterious voices round me;
There is some spell,
Of Heav'n or Hell;
I surely walk in grove enchanted;
Nought meets mine eye,
But melody
I hear from realms by spirits haunted

(*Two* Fairies *retire behind oak*

Recitative - Albert

All silent now! "Am I then mock'd by pow'rs supernal?
Or are these sweet strains but wrought,
By my o'er-heated brain, from Echo's voice?
Sweet child of air, who dwellest in the spheres," [3]
Above, around, beneath us – yet unseen
By mortal eye – unknown to mortal touch –
I call on thee, Echo!

Aria - Albert

Art thou floating through the sky,
Far from ken of human eye,
Rapt by the ever-sounding choirs of Heav'n?
Lurk'st thou in the forest shade,
Where each dell and sunny glade,
By wild halloos and merry horn is riv'n?

From rock to rock impetuous borne along,
Say dost thou swiftly sail
On the fierce rushing gale?
Or in the coral caves
Which mighty ocean laves,
Chant'st thou at eve the mermaid's mournful song?

[3] The reason for quote marks here and occasionally elsewhere is not obvious

Enter Arnold *from cottage,* L

[14] *Arn.* Ah! Albert – up as usual at day break, wandering through the forest in search of your runaway Fairy. Has she appeared to you, eh? (*laughing*)

Alb Yes, but now! And vanished, as usual, near this oak – 'Tis very strange!-

Arn (*with compassion aside*) Another of his dreams, poor lad!

Enter Fritz, d*ressed as the* Major-Domo *from the castle*

Why, what's here? This must be a dream of *mine*. Fritz! Can it be you?

(Fritz *puts him aside with his wand*

Fritz Out of my way, plebian, and learn proper respect to the Major-Domo of the Castle of Lowenstein (*struts past to* L)

Arn Why what *does* all this mean?

Fritz Mean! That the bridal procession is coming forth; and I'm to do mine office, and clear the way of the lower orders.

Arn Bridal procession! Who's going to be married? Not you, I hope.

Fritz Who's going to be married? Now that's good. What! Would you wring from me my lord's state secrets? Am I to disclose to you that the bridegroom is Count Alphonso, and the bride, my Lady Ianthe? I'll perish sooner. Ho! there! Clear the way! Clear the way!

Alb (*apart* L) Ianthe!

(Music. *The bridal procession enters from castle; on one side* Duke Rudolph. Alphonso, Ianthe, Kuno, *Bridesmen and maidens; on the other side, Hunters, People etc.*

Duke (*R*) Courage, my child. (*apart, exultingly*) Now do I defy the legend! Proceed we to the convent. On!

Fritz (*flourishing his staff*) Clear! Clear!

Ian (*lifting her veil*) Alas! Let me have air! I faint.

Alb (*gazing nearer*) 'Tis she! – Ianthe!

Ian (*with a cry of joy*) Ah! Albert, save me (*rushing into his arms*)

Alb (*embracing her*) I will, or perish!

Duke (*enraged*) Ha! Who is this bold intruder?

Ian (*simply*) Albert the Hunter! He hath already won my heart.

Alb And vowed my love to thee for ever

Duke (*furiously*) Seize on the insolent!

Fritz I give myself notice to quit. (*Exit*)

(*Trumpet sounds in the distance*

[15] Finale[4]

Chorus Hark! Hark!

Duke Hark! Hark!
Why doth yon distant warlike note
Upon the early breezes float?
Doth it to me some warning bear
Which bids my guilty soul despair?

Alph What distant sounds his fury stay,
Alb And fill his stern heart with dismay?
Ian Do they to him some warning bear,
Which bids him of this act beware?

Rud Come vengeance deep, my bosom seal!

Alph On him thy direst wrath let fall!

Alb Her love from me no pow'r can steal

Ian Fairies! On you for aid I call
(*Looking wildly around*
What sight arrests my wand'ring gaze –
My sire and Count Alphonso here!

Alb Calm, dearest love, thy wild amaze;
Thee from these arms they shall not tear.

Rud. To Ian Wouldst thou thy noble race degrade
With yon base serf thy love to share?

Aplh to Alb Fly, slave! While life yet lend its aid
No more a rival's fury dare!
(*Ianthe kneels to Rudolph* , C.

Ian Oh! Pity, sire!

(*Raising* Ianthe, *as the armed* Vassals *advance at a sign from* Rudolph

[4] Although laid out in the same structure as the dialogue sections are, this would all have been sung.

Chorus

Dread sir, thy bidding we but wait,
To drag the traitor to his fate.

Rud/Alph [5] His insolence shall meet his doom!

Rud For her – thy bride, or cloister gloom;

Alph Let her, at once, my bride become.

Rud/Alph Hurry him to dungeon deep;
With trumpet sound, ere close of day,
High on the frowning Castle keep,
His recreant life for all shall pay.

Albert

Pray'r of mine would fail to move
Father, deaf to nature's cry;
Proudly, then, I tell the love
Sworn to her eternally!
High my prison walls might be,
Deep the grave assign'd to me;
Still a voice shall ever rise-
Voice that "Vengeance tyrant!" cries.

(*With proud disdain*

[16]

Rud Hurry him to a dungeon deep;
With trumpet sound ere close of day,
High on the frowning castle keep,
His recreant life for all shall pay.

Ian & Alb Alas! Our dream of love is o'er.
We part on earth to meet no more.

Ian They tear thee from this throbbing breast,
That, 'reft of thee, can know no rest;
Whate'er my pangs, whate'er my doom,
I'll wait thee in the quiet tomb.

Alb Thy form shall live within my breast,
That torn from thee can know no rest;
A cruel death may be my doom,
I'll wait thee in the quiet tomb.

[5] This section (down to Albert) is just headed by a single *Rud/Alph.* It has been broken up into its most likely structure

Rud & Your master's mandate quick } obey
Chorus Our noble Duke's commands }
A dungeon be his/thy doom – Away!
The hand of justice none shall stay-
The captive to his chains convey.

Alb. & Ian For us a golden dawn shall break
Upon this night of woe and care,
When we to hope and love shall wake,
And joy shall banish dark despair.

(Albert *is dragged into the* Castle; Ianthe *faints as the drop falls etc*.

Tableau

End of Act 1

[17]

Act 2

Scene 1 – *(Moonlight) The borders of the forest near the lake. The waves reflect the stars, and are slightly agitated. On the* R *is a romantic cavern, within which, at the foot of a cross, illuminated by the rays of the moon,* Haco *is sleeping.* Music. Fairies *are discovered dancing.*

Chorus

Hail! All hail great Fairy Queen
Floating o'er the waves serene!

(Queen *appears floating in a shell drawn by dolphins etc*

'Tis the hour when Mab doth reign,
Greet it with an elfin strain,
O'er the joyous festal scene
Bursts thy bright and glorious sheen,
Making dark our lesser rays
With its all surpassing blaze;
So the moon's undying light
Dims each other fire of night.
Hail! All hail! etc

Queen *enters*

Queen

Fairies! Ere this mystic wand
Wave your glad expectant band,
To the merry festive round,
On allegiance are ye bound
Matters high of state to hear –
Speak! Inform each list'ning ear.

(*addressing the three Fairies*

Trio – Orchis, Fair Star *and a* Fairy

Listen! Listen fairies all –
Know ye that tonight must fall
Rudolph's long usurpèd pow'r
Yes, 'tis Heav'n's avenging hour.

[18]

Chorus

"Say, doth good or evil fate,
For us, upon his ruin wait?"

Trio

"Tho' stern Rudolph's star decline,
Brighter still our sphere will shine,
Since the rightful lord shall prove
Bound to us by links of love;
'Tis Ianthe's star must be
Ruler of our destiny"

Queen

Lo! Where sleeps in silent gloom (*points* to Haco)
He who rules o'er Rudolph's doom –
For the heir of Lowenstein,
Fairies, now, rejoice and sing!
O'er him sweetest flowers fling!
(*They strew flowers in the cave*
To responding echo's voice,
Fairies all! Rejoice! Rejoice!

Chorus

Ha! ha! ha! to Mab our queen;
Give thanks, give thanks to Mab, our queen!
Let us trip merrily!
Let us sing full cheerily!
Shout and laugh right lustily!
Quaffing dew-drops joyously!
Time doth fly too wingedly!
Hark! we're summon'd hastily!

First semi-chorus

Chanticleer, with herald voice,
Joyful greets the early dawn;
Fairy laws admit no choice,
We must shun the op'ning morn.
Scarce for us, the feast is spread,
Ere the mystic hour is fled;
Scarce we've sung our roundelay,
Ere fate summons us away.

Chorus

Flew this hour too speedily -
Fairies' day is mortal's night;
Fast and far we now must fly,
To the realms of azure light,
Where we happy elves do dwell;
Where the pale moon shineth ever,
Where the sun intrudeth never.

First semi-chorus

We'll the gossamer bestride,
So t'our fairy home we'll ride.

[19]

Second semi-chorus

We will sail in a tiny shell
O'er the unfathom'd ocean's breast.

Chorus

While our watchman's note shall be,
Not the cricket's merrily;
But the wild bee's drowsily,
Making sleeper's melody

(Music *gradually becomes softer, and the distant convent hymn is heard*

Chorus

Lo! From distant convent choir,
Swells to Heav'n the matin holy;
Soft attun'd to sacred lyre,
Wildly sweet yet melancholy.

(*Distant mountain pipe is heard*

Distant on the air doth float
Grateful shepherd's morning note

(*Hunting horn at a distance*

Hark! the huntsman's merry horn
Hath arous'd the wary deer-
Hark! each cave and wood-girt lawn,
Echoes back its accents clear.

Second semi-chorus

We with Mab will softly rest
In some deep secluded dell;
On a bed of violets made,
'Neath a rose tree's scented shade.

Chorus

Lo! The chase comes sweeping on –
Fairies all, we must begone!
Merrily, merrily, take our flight
To the realms of azure light!

(*The voices die away, and the Fairies slowly disappear*.
Haco *advances*.

Haco (*speaking*) That sweet vision seems floating still before me. Fairies, methinks ye have revealed to me a brighter future than in my wildest dreams I had dared to anticipate!

Enter Arnold *from a boat on the lake*

Arn. Haco!

Haco (*joyfully*) Arnold! Already returned! Welcome my friend. What reply bringest thou?

Arn I trust the best (*gives a letter*)

Haco (*reading*) Ha! The vision of the fairies! Behold (*gives the letter*)

Arn (*reading*) This is indeed joyful intelligence. The Emperor, upon your representation of the wrongs of Albert, promises to send an immediate force to his rescue.

Haco And have you told our brave Foresters all?

Arn I have, and to a man have they sworn to assist in this day's attack upon the castle.

Haco Go then, my trusty friend; summon them ither. In person, I will lead them against the hirelings, who man the walls of Lowenstein.

Arn In less than an hour expect my coming. (*Exit* Arnold

Haco Thanks, fairy beings, who rejoice in the bright destinies of Lowenstein! Ye have roused my spirit by your revelations. Ere another sun set upon your shady haunts, Albert shall be free, and by the blessing of Heaven on a just cause, he shall inflict upon the oppressor Rudolph, the vengeance due to a thousand wrongs. And yet across this dawning hope there still will come the cloud that ever seems to darken my fate. For alas! The thoughts that I am wont to summon out of memory's dark cavern are less of hope and joy than of despair and death!

Recitative

How vain the pride of man! – The pomp of kings!
The learning of the sage! – The wealth amass'd
By care and toil! – The madd'ning lust of conquest!
The loveliness of youth! – Since to the dust,
From whence we sprung, we all must be resolv'd!

Aria

Oh boast not high estate,
Child of a moment's breath!
Thou canst not fly thy fate,
Thou canst not conquer death!
This is the irrevocable doom,
That all must come
To the silent tomb.

Go seek for glory on yon battle plain,
Where steeds are prancing -
Where pennons are dancing -
Where swords are glancing!

[21]

Go mark you monarch, with his gorgeous train –
His statesman old-
His barons bold –
His wealth untold!
From the brow of the warrior his laurels are torn,
From the grasp of the monarch his sceptre is borne,
When Death, with pale and icy hand,
Hath wav'd them to the Spirit's land.

(*Exit into the cavern*, R)

(Music. *Enter* Rudolph *and* Alphonso, L, *conducted by* Kuno, *who points to the cavern, and then enters it*

Alph I marvel not they term this mysterious being Haco, *the Solitary*. If this be his dwelling, he is likely to have few visitors, save the wolves and wild boars of the forest; unless, indeed, there be truth in the tales they tell of the nocturnal visits paid to him by Queen Mab and her merry court.

Rud Peace , Alphonso – jesting suits ill my mood – and on this theme of all others.

Alph Nay, my Lord, shake off this gloomy fit. All will yet be well.

(*Retires, as if awaiting* Haco

Rud (*aside*) All well! Happy thou whose soul, unstained by guilt, can thus hail that hope, which mine frowns upon as an unbidden and unwelcome guest!

Ballad (Rudolph)

My heart, grown old in misery,
Still clings to its despair;
In future hope I dare not see
A balm to soothe my care.
Like one arous'd from prison gloom,
That seem'd eternal night,
I shudder at a change of doom,
And dread the dawning light.

Some vision wild, or fitful dream,
Doth joy appear to me;
While Sorrow's pang alone I deem
The stern reality.
No aid but thine, kind Heaven! can rend
My spirit from its shroud;
And to despair a smile can lend,
Like sunbeam to the cloud

(*Alphonso advances* R

Alph See! The Solitary approaches

(*Enter* Haco, *conducted by* Kuno

Rud Ha! I am prepared! (*aside*) My heart sinks – I tremble at his presence, but wherefore I know not.

(*Exit* Kuno, L. Haco *eyes* Rudolph *sternly and then conceals his features*

[22]

Haco (*aside*)'Tis he! Duke Rudolph, thou canst not deceive me!

Rud & Alph They say thou readest the stars. (Haco *signs assent*) Canst thou reveal the future?

Haco That thou shalt thyself decide; first say what thou wouldst know.

Rud I would know the fate of –

Haco (*in a low whisper apart, to him*) Thy brother's son!

Rud (*starting*) Thou knowest he was –

Haco (*whispers*) Lord of Lowenstein! Listen!

Trio

Haco
I have gaz'd upon the star
Which doth rule his destiny!
Lo! it hath descended far
In a dark and stormy sky.

Rud & Alph
Hast thou gaz'd upon the star
Ruling Rudolph's destiny?
Tell us, shines it not afar
In a calm and cloudless sky?

Haco
Last night when I gaz'd, its hue
Had become a blood-like red!

Rud & Alph
If thou be a prophet true,
How is this interpreted?
If thou canst the curtain raise,
Which doth shroud futurity

Say, but not in mystic phrase,
What is Rudolph's destiny?

Haco When again I gaz'd on high,
O'er *thy* star there hung a cloud;
(*Aside to Rudolph*
Dark is Rudolph's destiny?
Woe to him, the fierce, the proud.

Rud & Alph More than this we seek to know

Haco Ask no more, till coming night
Prove my warnings wrong or right! (*Turning* R

Alph & Rud Sullen prophet! we'll away
Till the closing of the day!

Haco Yes, depart without delay,
We shall meet e'er close of day!

(*They are going when the sound of the trumpet is heard, and the distant air of* "Hark! hark! *as before – All start*

Rud & Alph Hark! that fearful/martial strain once more
Wafted from the lake's wild shore
(*March nearer*

[23] *Haco* (*aside*) Welcome is that sound to me
But my joy they must not see.

Rud & Alph Doth it weal portend, or woe

Haco That, ere midnight, thou wilt know,

Rud & Alph Sullen prophet, we'll away,
Till the closing of the day!

Haco Yes, depart without delay,
We shall meet ere close of day!
(*Exeunt* Rudolph *and* Alphonso, L.

Haco (*speaking*) Rapidly now approaches the welcome sound that tells of future triumph – O'er the lake I hear it – nearer – nearer still!

Enter Arnold

Well, Arnold, what say our brave foresters?

Arn All are here! prepared to die for Albert

Haco Heaven be praised! And see, the Emperor has kept his word.

(Music. *The Foresters enter armed* , R. *At the same time armed troops enter from boats etc.*

Song and Chorus

Haco Up and away, my comrades all!
There are deeds of might
To be done this night –
Let none be laggard in bow'r or hall.

Chorus Up and away at the stirring call!
Here is not one heart,
Where fear doth part –
But we are liege and true men all!

Haco And if in the fray your prowess fail,
Be "Albert" the word
On ev'ry lip heard
Then once again the foe assail!

Chorus The heart that before the foe will quail,
When our rightful lord
Hath spoken the word
In all other cause will surely fail!

Haco Forward! Away! My comrades all!
'Tis justice arms! 'Tis glory's call!

Chorus Forward! Away! Etc

(*Exuent*

Scene II - *An apartment in the Castle hung around with tapestry; a painted window,* R, *with Gothic seat to open. Ancient portraits. Door*. L.

Enter Ianthe, *advancing to window*

Recitative

The dawn is past; and o'er the beauteous scene
The sun now sheds his golden rays – but still
[24] The fairies come not – Oh! that I could note
Their stealthy tread! Or hear their gentle voices
Swell on the morning air! Hark! (*Matin bell*
'Twas the bell
Of convent matin bell! – Again a sound!
'Twas but the breeze, swift rushing o'er the lake –
Now deepest silence reigns o'er field and forest.

Aria

Ah! Why doth love so firmly bind
Fond souls that fate hath torn apart;
Why do I pray once more to gaze
On him, the lost one of my heart –
My foolish woman's heart!

Go ask the pale rose why it woos
Th' inconstant zephyr's playful kiss –
It knows not; yet, bereft, it dies;
So, hopeless, seeks my heart its bliss,
My foolish woman's heart!

(*Going* – Fritz *climbs up at the window*

Fritz Hist! Lady! Sweet Lady!

Ian Ah! Who art thou?

Fritz The foster-brother of Albert! Don't you see the handsome *family* likeness?

Ian (*smiling*) *Family* likeness! But what is thine errand here? – Whom seek'st thou?

Fritz (*sitting on window*) Kuno the page

Ian Trifler, begone!

Fritz Begone! That's easily said by one standing on terra firma; but it isn't quite so easy of performance by one sitting on a window sill. My head is like a whirligig at the very thought (*looking out*). Mercy on me, the rope gone too! I'm caught, entrapped! – oh, that ugly imp! Was it for this he tempted me hither under pretence of liberating Albert?

Ian Albert!

Fritz (*entering the apartment and advancing*) Yes! He promised to steal away the key of Albert's prison in the north turret of the castle; and by the aid of that very rope ladder, which somebody has so unhandsomely handed off, we were to have escaped thro' the – Oh, dear! – we are undone! – No Kuno! No Ladder!

(Music. *Enter* Kuno *hastily. He makes signs that all is discovered. The* Duke *approaches*

Fritz (*alarmed*) The Duke coming hither! What's to become of me? I could sneak int an acorn shell – any where to escape. Caught too in a lady's chamber! How improper! **[25]** I should die with shame! (*noise*) Sweet imp! Pretty imp! – put me in your pocket, can't you.

(*Noise*. Kuno *lifts up the lid of the window seat and motions him to enter*

Fritz Ah! What a fortunate retreat! Hush! – not a word, Manikin!

(Music. *Disappears. Kuno lets own the lid heavily; then showing a key to* Ianthe, *lift up the tapestry, opens a door, and invites her out.*

Ian (*joyfully*) To Albert! Oh! Lead the way!

(*Exeunt*

Enter Duke Rudolph, Seneschal etc, R.

Duke I heard voices! Ianthe! Gone! What treachery is this?

Sen (*showing a rope*) This rope, my lord, suspended from this window, shows that some one has at least attempted to scale the wall, and enter the apartment.

Duke (*looking from the window*) It is impossible that Ianthe should have escaped in this way; unless, indeed, by fairy aid.

Fritz (*lifting up lid of window-seat*) Fooh! I'm suffocating! And that's certain death.

Duke (*starting, and seeing him*) Ah! What ill-favoured reptile is this? A spy! – an assassin, perhaps! Drag him forth!

Fritz Sweet Duke! I'm your Major-Domo!

Duke Idiot! The Lady Ianthe! Where is she, knowest thou?

Fritz Oh; yes, I know. Peeping through the keyhole there, I saw the Goblin Page whip her under – I should say it was a wing, and fly away with her through – no, not through the window – through the tapestry. (*aside*) I think I got pretty well out of that.

Duke False fiend! (*opens tapestry, and discovers door*) Yes, it is so. But neither shall elude Rudolph's vengeance. (*Turning*) For this knave, I'll reward him –

Fritz (*smiling*) Thank your highness! What generosity!

Duke (*sternly*) Hang him on the nearest oak! Seneschal, see it done!

(*Exit through arras*

Fritz That's his opinion of a reward! O—h!

Sen (*to* Fritz) Now

Fritz *I'm* in no hurry, if *you* are not.

[26]

Sen But I am

Fritz Humph! That's unlucky – seeing I'm not exactly ready. Besides, this is some mistake; his lordship spoke of ill-favoured; that couldn't mean *me,* you know, eh? (*Gesture of impatience from* Seneschal) Hang *me*! Why by tomorrow morning there wouldn't be oaks enough in the forest whereon to hang the bodies of all the pretty girls that would commit suicide on my account. (*They seize him*) Oh! here's an end for a Major-Domo! Sweet Seneschal! (*aside*) Savage monster! Even *my* looks don't move him

(*They force him out,* R.

Scene III – *A turret of the castle, with cross window. An entrance,* C, *through floor. Albert discovered near the window watching.*

Chorus of Foresters *and* Villagers *below*

Cho

From virtue's sleep,
So calm and deep,
Wake, Albert! Wake, oh wake!

Alb Once more I hear
Known voices near;
Comrades, I wake, I wake!

Cho To thee warm friends
Kind Heaven sends;
Their voices, Albert, list!

Alb Long have I pray'd
For Heaven's aid
Comrades, I list, I list.

Alb Rescue is hopeless. I can neither see the number of my friends, nor indicate to them the direction of my prison. And could their kind endeavours set me free, how valueless, now, were the liberty I once prized! Without thee, my beloved Ianthe, life were burdensome to me, and the world would seem but a dungeon! For alas! There are fetters to the heart which nor time nor change can remove.

Aria - Albert

The captive sad, unlov'd, who pines,
With freedom's hope all joy entwines;
But thankless boon were liberty
That tore me, dearest maid, from thee;
And heavy chains within this tow'r
That looks for aye upon thy bow'r,
More dearly prized than liberty,
My lov'd Ianthe, far from thee!

[27]

Though free and distant I could roam,
This heart would seek its prison home;
And bid me change my liberty
For the blest pow'r to gaze on thee.
Then welcome chains and solitude-
On woe like this 'tis joy to brood,
Away all thoughts of liberty
That tears me, dearest maid, from thee!

(Music. *Enter* Kuno *up the stairs; he looks about, recalls* Albert, *who is turning from him, then beckons up* Ianthe, *who ascends as* Kuno *makes signs that he will watch, and retires down stairs.*

Alb Ianthe, my beloved!

Ian Oh! Albert, is it thus we meet? (*they embrace*

Alb Even to meet is ecstacy [*sic*] to this sad heart.

Ian The Fairy Queen hath sent me a promise that her power shall release thee. To know that thou livest, and art free, though in a distant land, and that thy thoughts sometime turn to Ianthe, will be my only happiness.

Alb Alas! Without thee I could not live; to die near thee is now my only hope.

Ian Nay, nay, Albert! Speak not of death.

Duetto – Ianthe and Albert

Albert

While thro' the vigils of the night
I vainly pray for sleep,
'Twill soothe my heart to know that thou,
Like me, doth watch and weep;
And sweet the thought in distant climes,
While gazing on the ocean;
That thou, my love, art gazing too,
And, with a like emotion.

Ianthe

And when at ev'ning's silent hour,
I scan the vault of Heav'n,
And seek to read the mystic lore,
In stars, to mortals giv'n,
Shall fancy paint thine eye uprais'd,
Thy lips apart in pray'r;
Then bending low, but high in hope,
Thine orisons I'll share.

Both

A viewless chain doth bind for ever
The hearts in love once plighted;
'Mid ills that other links would sever,
They more become united.
Star of Hope, from Heaven beaming,
Thro' woe's night transcendent gleaming.
[28] Guide upon life's troubled sea
Hearts that perish but for thee!
While thy guardian ray is o'er us,
Sorrow's wave shall fall before us;
Love the storms of fate defies,
Tho' their wildest winds arise.

(Music. Kuno *rushes in troubled, and pursued by the* Duke *with his sword drawn*, Guards etc.

Duke Accursed imp! Betrayed by thee! Thou shalt not escape my vengeance!

(*About to strike him on the head with his sword.* Kuno *utters a wild cry of mockery, and vanishes.*

Duke (*to* Ianthe) For thee, deluded girl, thus I tear thee from yon traitor's arms, and to a convent's rigid solitude, till death, consign thee.

Alb Stand off, proud duke! – or –

Duke *Serf*! Take at once thy doom.

(*Rushing at him, with the sword, which* Albert *seizes*

Alb (*proudly*) Mark how one nobly born, quails beneath a serf's glance. Take back thy sword and let us onward pass.

Duke (*with bitter irony*) *Us*! The peasant Albert with his Lord's daughter! Ha! Ha! Ha! (*with fury*) Slave! This hour is thy last! Despair, and die!

Trio and chorus

Duke
Away! Away!
No more delay!
The call of death
Thou must obey.
Away!
Albert
Mine hour is come!
Then welcome fate
If here my doom
To separate!
These pangs to stay
The call of death
I now obey.
Away!
Ianthe
No, we'll not part!
Oh! Wretched fate!
Leave not my heart
All desolate.
Thy steps delay!
Or now, let death
Maintain his sway.
Away!

[29]

Chorus of Guards

Away! Away!
No more delay!
The duke's decree
Thou must obey!

(*The* Duke *forces out Ianthe, when* Albert *places himself proudly between the guards, follows.*

Scene the Last – *The Fairy Oak, as at first*

(Music. *Enter* Archers, *conducting in* Albert *from the Castle*

Ballad - Albert

I know my fate, I know I part
From all I love so well;
But oh! it wrings my breaking heart
To say that word – Farewell!

I look my last upon the sun,
I gaze on wood and dell;
I know my weary course is run,
Yet cannot say – Farewell!

It seems upon my troubled soul
The sound of parting knell;
As I my agony controul [*sic*],
And strive to say, Farewell!

Oh! did one eye bestow a tear,
One heart with pity swell,
'Twould soothe my grief, since friends would hear
My dying word, Farewell!

(Duke *enters from the Castle sternly surveying* Albert, *as they bind him to the trunk of the Oak, and the* Archers *with bows in their hands, take their stand,* R

Duke Archers, prepare! The signal of death is given

(Ianthe *rushes in from Castle*

Ian No! no! mercy! Mercy! My father!

Alb (*gazing at her tenderly*) Ianthe!

Ian I die with thee (*Falls at his feet*

Duke (*to* Archers) Strike! (*they turn away, as if moved*) How! Who are ye, that dare disobey your lord's mandate? Discharge your arrows, I command! What! All traitors! Recreants! Where be the wretch I condemned but now to perish on the nearest oak? Ah! Here he is – (Fritz *forced in* R). Slave! Strike me a shaft through yonder traitor and I'll spare thy worthless life and give thee gold to boot.

[30]

Fritz Spare my life! Anything's better than hanging; I'm a famous shot at a crow! I'll do it. Now my Lord! (*taking bow*) Where be this traitor? Clear the way! Let me see him! I'll – (*sees* Albert) Eh! Oh dear! Foster-brother Albert! I can't. I'd sooner be hanged, if you please. (*Wiping his eyes*

Duke (*with quick rage*) Stand aside fool! Give me the bow!

(*As he seizes the bow, a knight, clad in complete armour, advances from the crowd and raises his shield before* Albert.

Knight (*with sarcasm*) What! Does the Lord of Lowenstein take pastime and play the executioner?

Duke Who art thou?

(*The* Knight *releases Albert with a blow of his sword*. Albert *raises* Ianthe.

Knight One, tyrant, who, despite thy proud authority, dares to release thy victim

Duke Who art thou, I again demand?

(*The* Knight *raises his vizor in silence*

Alb (*and others*) Haco the solitary!

Duke (*trembling*) *Bertram*!

Knight Yes, *Bertram*, thine ancient vassal, whom though thoughtst *dead*

Duke (*fiendishly to* Guards) The assassin of my brother's son! Guards! I denounce –

Knight Fiend! Thy brother's son still liveth – reared in this very forest by Bertram! Yes, usurper! (*Points to* Albert) Behold him, here, to demand the restoration of his lands and title – Albert the Hunter, the *true* Duke of Lowenstein!

Alb I! Duke!

All Albert! (*Shouts*

Fritz Well, I never!

Duke (*scornfully*) His rights! – win them! Ha! Ha! Ha!

(Bertram *sounding a bugle. Armed* Knights, Soldiers, Arnold etc *rush from the foliage*

Duke The Emperor's forces! Then I am lost indeed. (Bertram *whispers to* Rudolph, *pointing the while to* Ianthe *and* Albert) Be it so (*To* Albert) Remember Albert, I believed you to be a serf – Ianthe is yours (*Joining their hands*

Alb Oh! Happiness (*They embrace*

Ian With your blessing, my father, our joy is complete.

[31] Finale

Ianthe, Albert, Rudolph, Alphonso, Haco & chorus

Fear and sorrow now at rest,
Peace descend on every breast!
'Tis of joy the op'ning morn –
Merrily, merrily, sound the horn!
Huntsmen, let the forest ring-
Village maidens dance and sing –
'Tis of love and bliss the morn,
Merrily! Merrily! Sound the horn!

Aria - Ianthe

Sweet Fairy voices, swelling
In farewell accents clear,
Of early joys are telling
To mem'ry ever dear.
The fleeting shades of sorrow
No more my bosom knows;
So cloudless beams the morrow
On deepest night that rose.
Affection's hallow'd ray
My future steps will guide,
Where love's enchanting ray
Invites the happy bride.

(*The Fairy Oak opens and discovers the* Queen of the Fairies *and her* Attendants, *with* Kuno *at her feet*

Chorus of Fairies

Fairy blessings scatter round
Over the enchanted ground
Bless the brave and high-born youth-
Bless the child of Fairy-land –
All the joys of love and truth
Be the boon of Elfin band!

Chorus

The sky of bliss is golden bright
No cloud now shades our heart's delight;
The arm of justice, bar'd in might,
A happy triumph gives to Right

Grand Tableau
As the curtain falls

End