

**RIGEL AN AUTUMN
MYSTERY**

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Rigel an Autumn Mystery by C. F. Keary

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C. F. KEARY

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RIGEL
AN AUTUMN MYSTERY

BY
C. F. KEARY

LONDON: DAVID NUTT
57-59 LONG ACRE
1903

THE SCALDS

*All that by Earth ingraven are
Some honour had 'twixt shore and shore :
These have sped their keels so far
They are lost for evermore.*

*They that filled the ground and passed
Somewhere in their offspring live :
Their children-songs these to the waste
Did and the wandering breezes give.*

*The winds about the earth that run,
Have forgot their voices sweet :
I only, now my day is done,
May lament their fate.*

*Thou that lovest from rocks and stones,
To fashion harmonies, O sea !
Hast thou for these thy buried ones
Thought, nor care, nor memory ?*

*To them thou art cruelest ; for thy tide
Changes his deep ocean-bed,
That even their bones may not abide
Where they once were laid*

CHARACTERS

| | |
|--------|---------|
| RIGEL | GUY |
| BEVIS | REYNAL |
| FLORIO | BROOK |
| GILES | AMBROSE |

A HOST

And various Guests in Acts II. and III.

| | |
|---------|-------|
| MELISSA | GRACE |
| LYDIA | CHLOE |

AMINTA (*Hostess*)

And other Ladies in Acts II. and III.

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------|
| A WOODMAN (<i>Faun</i>) | ECHO |
| A ONE-EYED BEGGAR | A GNOME |
| A LITTLE BREEZE | A WOOD MAIDEN |

Mermaids, Attendants on Night, Nymphs, Fairies,
and various Spirits

A Clock. A Chair. A Grate. A Fiddle

RIGEL: AN AUTUMN MYSTERY

ACT FIRST

SCENE I.—*A place by the seashore. The near sea is not visible, only that at the back and on the right of the scene, as if the waves were in front and to the right also. Looking out thus to the back, RIGEL is lying just above the beach amid sea-thistle and rest-harrow, of which, though it is full autumn, some blooms remain. To the left there is a wood, golden-brown, out of which have stolen, also to look out to sea, a Woodman and Woodmaiden (or faun and nymph) behind RIGEL, not seeing him, because a mound of rock and earth lies between. Anon (but not at opening of the scene) from the right comes a flight of sea-gulls, and these pass as it were overhead, watched by RIGEL and by the Woodman and Maiden.*

Near sunset at the opening of the scene, turning to night before the end.

RIGEL.

From the low-plaining, ill-contented sea
Comes up a sighing wind.
Is it not the voice of those far-buried ones

Who gave their service to the forgetting Muse,
 And now are lost and hidden out of mind?
 O Lady, what excuse
 Have we—
 What answer to the wicked man who saith,
 That but in vain the bones
 Of thine anointed deck those under-ways,
 In vain did hymn on hymn exalt thy praise,
 Who hast no thought nor care for man beneath?
 'Tis sure that from our once-loved isle have gone
 Memory and all compassion for thine own;
 Nor can the billows in our thousand caves
 By voice or moan move thine indifference,
 Nor all thy servants, pleading from their graves,
 Claim pity for one left without defence;
 One left behind, and quite astray
 Amid such hosts that tread the evil way.

[The flight of sea-gulls passes.]

WOODMAN.

List to the surges' sweet antiphony.

WOODMAIDEN.

And mark the well-poised sea-gulls sailing by.

RIGEL.

[Following the flight of the sea-gulls.]

How do ye so majestically move, O birds of equal flight?

The tired sailor, labouring at his oar, in envy watches
you.

The chainèd, beaten galley-slave in ages past, as to some
might

Supernal, paid you vows and sacrifice, as I not less
would do.

The beaten galley-slave, he plied
His heavy sweep by Melos' side;
Clear-voiced, but in barbarian tones,
He sang to ease his aching bones.
(Would I like him might duly frame
Some lauds, to magnify your name;
Though cramped and slow the pinion
Of uncouth rhyme that bears me on!)

What riddles have ye hoarded up out of the jealous
North?

For Finland queens your fosters were, O grave and
silent ones!

A floating, desert berg of ice, in summer labour, brought
you forth,

And year-long winters have ye sat and spelled in runic-
carven stones.

The heroes, they are laid to rest;
Deep furrows graved in Gerda's breast
Shall guard them, till a golden cry
Awake their frost-bound chivalry.
(Would I, like them, might hidden keep
Through this mean age in charmèd sleep,
With sword at side, to wield again
When Fenris rives his six-fold chain!)

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Unto the going down at even of the imperial sun,
Your eyes are turned, prophetic birds, and unabated
wings.

Gold are your breasts, and on your flanks are purple
shadows thrown.

So from our sight ye sail away in secret triumphings.

Far, far from here the ocean smiles
About Saint Brandan's happy isles.
And there shall your blest eyes behold
The Sun-god's swains his flocks enfold.
(O God, where is the cleansing might
Of thy far-darting arrows' flight?
And where is laid the golden bow
That brought the boastful Argives low?)

CHORUS OF FAIRIES.

[*Scarcely seen, floating among the trunks in the wood.*]

See Sol, the radiant giant, flinging
Level beams on earth and sky,
Like a well-fed minstrel, singing
To whoso list his lullaby.
Men are deaf, and cannot hear,
Faintly we the burden bear;
We murmur only to that chaunt,
Who are but mist and gossamer.

See the crystal Eve up-springing
From the bourn of earth and sky,
Her attendant fairies winging,
With their dew-fed buckets by.