

**FAIRYLAND: AN  
OPERA IN  
THREE ACTS**

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Fairyland: An Opera in Three Acts by Brian Hooker

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**BRIAN HOOKER**

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## FAIRYLAND

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AN OPERA IN THREE ACTS

By  
BRIAN HOOKER



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## ARGUMENT

**R**OSAMUND, a novice, from the Abbey balcony beholds the young king *Auburn* riding across the Valley, and falls a-longing for life and for him. But he, scorning the kingdom that has been too easily his own, would fain go a pilgrimage. He leaves his crown, not to *Corvain* his brother, but to the Abbess *Myriel*. *Corvain* therefore steals upon *Auburn* while he prays before the shrine, strikes him down, and leaves him for dead. But *Auburn*, reviving, finds himself among Fairies, and within the shrine not Our Lady but his own lady *Rosamund*; and they two are crowned King and Queen in a vision of Fairyland.

*Auburn* being gone, *Corvain* by force seizes upon the kingdom; which *Myriel* claims also; so each takes tribute from the people, who are grievously oppressed thereby. *Rosamund*, fleeing from the Abbey in search of *Auburn*, falls into the power of *Corvain*. *Auburn* returns to claim his crown again; but none will recognize him for the



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King. *Rosamund* knows him only for her Prince of Fairyland; and he, being come back again to earth, knows her not. *Myriel*, pursuing *Rosamund*, comes upon the two together. While she and *Corvain* quarrel for possession of the fugitive, *Auburn* before all the people interferences, proclaiming himself king, and invoking the magic power of the Rose which he has brought from Fairyland. But the Rose withers before the scornful laughter of *Corvain*, wherein the People join; *Rosamund*, renouncing *Corvain's* protection, is led away prisoner by *Myriel*; and *Auburn* is left desolate.

*Rosamund*, believing steadily in her Fairy Lover, is to be burned for witchcraft. *Myriel* strives to make her repent, persuading her how that her vision had been of Holiness, not of Love; but *Rosamund* will not doubt. *Rosamund* and *Auburn*, being without hope, now wholly remember each other and despise their dream; seeing yet *Robin* and his People as nothing more than mere peasant clods, who therefore cannot aid them. *Auburn* single-handed desperately attacks *Corvain*, who has him seized and bound also to the stake. In that last

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moment, while the fagots kindle, they hear the drinking-song of the common folk in the tavern, and by that mirth know them for the People of the Hills. The Rose burns in *Auburn's* bosom like a star, while *Rosamund* sings the magic song thereof. The scene transforms again into the likeness of their vision, wherein *Myriel* and *Corvain* are overpowered by the throng of fairies rushing in, and *Auburn* and *Rosamund* are again set free and crowned in a world that is one with Fairyland.

THE TIME is roughly the Thirteenth Century; THE PLACE, a hill country in central Europe. These, however, are not intended to locate the story with historical precision, more than in the case of any other fairy tale; but as an affair of scenery and costume and setting, the form in which it meets the eye. For the action takes place in the Valley of Shadows, also called the World: which, seen in a certain light, is also Fairyland. It is concretely represented as a triangular valley, some two miles on a side, having at one corner The Abbey; at another,

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The Castle of the King; and at a third, The Village. And the scene is laid at each of these points in turn, the rest of the Valley being in each case visible and recognized in the distance.

The visual effect of the production, therefore, is of that mediæval realm of fancy with which Maxfield Parrish, Arthur Rackham, and others have made us familiar. And the transformation by which at the end of the First and Third Acts the scene becomes a vision of Fairyland is presented by the sudden change from ordinary stage light to a fantastic and decorative scheme of vivid colors and by the effect of this colored light upon the scenery and costumes.