

**LORELEY: A
ROMANTIC OPERA
IN THREE ACTS**

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Loreley: A Romantic Opera in Three Acts by Carlo D'Ormeville & A. Catalani & A. Zanardini

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CARLO D'ORMEVILLE & A. CATALANI & A. ZANARDINI

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LORELEY

A ROMANTIC OPERA IN THREE ACTS

BY

CARLO D'ORMEVILLE and A. ZANARDINI

English Version by

ALFRED KALISCH

MUSIC BY

A. CATALANI

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M/W

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ARGUMENT.

WALTER, Lord of Oberwesel, is betrothed to ANNA OF REHBERG, niece of the MARGRAVE of Biberich. Wandering one evening in May by the river bank, he met a maiden, and they loved each other. He summons his friend HERMANN and tells him of the struggle between lawful and unlawful love in his heart. HERMANN is himself enamoured of ANNA, but he bids WALTER be true to her. Then LORELEY enters to WALTER, and after many protestations of love he tells her the truth and leaves her in a swoon. HERMANN, lamenting that he has yielded ANNA to one who is indifferent, appeals to the God of the Rhine and dedicates his soul to him, bidding him avenge ANNA's wrongs.

The Nymphs of the Rhine and the Spirits of the Air appear and sing in praise of the River God and the God Thor, the lord of the tempest. LORELEY comes to them lamenting her lost honour and asking who can avenge her wrongs. Unearthly voices answer: "Only one who can make herself irresistible and torture the faithless one with new pangs of love." She asks how she can achieve this end. The answer is: "By the aid of ALBERICH, King of the Rhine." The SPIRITS tell her that such beauty as she desires will be hers if she will swear to ALBERICH the fidelity of a bride. She swears the oath and flings herself into the Rhine and rises instantly, transfigured, with the golden hair and the golden comb of the Loreley of the legend. The curtain falls as she says: "WALTER, I have risen to avenge myself."

In the Second Act we see the preparations for the wedding feast, and HERMANN comes to warn ANNA that she is about to give herself to one who is faithless. As the wedding procession starts on its way to the Church, the heavens glow with a mystic light, and LORELEY appears and sings her song of love to WALTER. Casting from him ANNA, he rushes to LORELEY'S arms—with the words: "I am yours, be mine." She flings herself into the river, leaving WALTER on his knees, and as ANNA falls lifeless, LORELEY reappears on the rock.

The Third Act begins with the obsequies of ANNA. WALTER, on learning that it is ANNA who is being buried, falls in a swoon by the river, and as he wakes he sees LORELEY on her rock, who sings to him her song of love.

She is about to embrace him when menacing voices from the depths bid her remember her oath to the River God, and she tears herself from him and ascends her rocky throne. WALTER flings himself, in frenzy, into the River as LORELEY sings her song of love.

CHARACTERS.

RUDOLPH, *Margrave of Biberich* LORELEY, *an Orphan*
ANNA OF REHBERG, *his Niece* HERMANN, *a Baron*
WALTER, *Lord of Oberwesel*

Fishermen, Woodcutters, Bowmen, Vassals, Women of the People, Female
Vassals, Old Women, Nymphs of the Rhine, Spirits of the Air,
Boys (Choir of the Church.)

Burggraves, Counts, Barons, Soldiers, Pages, Trumpeters, Knights, Ladies,
Squires, Heralds, Poor Children, Monks, Prelates, Acolytes.

DANCES:

Of Peasants in Act II.
Of Water Nymphs in Act III.

The action takes place on the Banks of the Rhine about 1500.

LORELEY

ATTO PRIMO.

SCENA I.

Scogliera in riva al Reno. A sinistra, l'ingresso d'una cupa grotta.— Nel fondo, strade che s'incrociano al quadrivio rappresentato dal fondale.—A destra un folto bosco. E l'alba.

PESCATORI, ARCIERI e BOSCAIUOLI seguiti dalle loro donne entrano in iscena da varie direzioni. Un gruppo di vecchie con fardelli di legna in capo esce dal bosco. Alcuni Boscaiuli sono già in iscena, intenti a tagliare un tronco d'albero.

BOSCAIUOLI.

Buona preda!

PESCATORI e ARCIERI.

Chi sa?

BOSCAIUOLI.

Ci son de' guai?

PESCATORI e ARCIERI.

Il picco di Thabor s'è tinto in rosso...

BOSCAIUOLI e DONNE.

E vuol dir?

PESCATORI e ARCIERI.

E vuol dir...

BOSCAIUOLI e DONNE.

Che mai? Che mai?

ARCIERI.

Che il cervo è all'erta...

BOSCAIUOLI.

E al mar il carpio ha mosso!

BOSCAIUOLI e DONNE.

Ma doman...

ARCIERI.

Chi nol sa!

x

BOSCAIUOLI e DONNE.

Compiuto il rito,
C'è al castel...

BOSCAIUOLI.

Chi nol sa!

BOSCAIUOLI e DONNE.

Lauto convito!...
Walter, il nostro sire...

PESCATORI e ARCIERI.

E chi nol sa!

BOSCAIUOLI e DONNE.

Ad Anna di Rehberg l'anel darà!...

LE VECCHIE

(sopravvenendo in gruppo).

Mah!...

TUTTI.

Che sarebbe a dir?

LE VECCHIE.

C'è sempre un mah!...
I re Magi si son visti
A Colonia smorti e tristi...

TUTTI.

Dio disperda il malo augurio!

LE VECCHIE.

E nel povero tugurio
Che scavato abbiam nel tufo
Ulular s'è inteso il gufo!

GLI UOMINI *(minacciandole)*.

Ah! le vecchie! le maliarde!

LE DONNE

(trattenendo gli uomini).

Saghe son della foresta!

GLI UOMINI.

Il fardel che avete in testa
Chè non v'arde! chè non v'arde!

LE VECCHIE *(impassibili)*.

S'è veduta sulla bruna

LORELEY

ACT FIRST.

SCENE I.

A rocky landscape on the banks of the Rhine. To the left the entrance to a deep cave. In the background cross-roads. To the right a thick wood. It is dawn.

FISHERMEN, BOWMEN, and WOODCUTTERS, followed by their WOMENFOLK, enter from various directions. A group of old WOMEN with loads of faggots on their heads comes out of the wood. Some WOODCUTTERS discovered, busy hewing the trunk of a tree.

WOODCUTTERS.

Luck be with you!

FISHERMEN and BOWMEN.

Who knows?

WOODCUTTERS.

Why, fear ye evil?

FISHERMEN and BOWMEN.

Look yonder. Thabor's peak all red is burning.

WOODCUTTERS and WOMEN.

What means it? Say!

FISHERMEN and BOWMEN.

It means that...

WOODCUTTERS and WOMEN.

Tell us quickly.

BOWMEN.

The deer wake warily.

FISHERMEN.

The fish turn seaward.

WOODCUTTERS and WOMEN.

But Walter...

BOWMEN.

Yes, we know...

WOODCUTTERS and WOMEN.
Of Oberwesel
Our Master...

FISHERMEN.

Yes, we know.

WOODCUTTERS and WOMEN.
With sacred ritual
To-morrow in yon Chapel...

FISHERMEN and BOWMEN.

Yes, we know full well.

WOODCUTTERS and WOMEN.
Makes Anna of Rehberg his wedded wife.

OLD WOMEN.

Woe!

ALL.

Why this warning cry?

OLD WOMEN.

There's naught but woe!
At Cologne with mien dejected
The Three Kings, they say, are
pining.

ALL.

Heaven avert the evil omen!

OLD WOMEN.

And within the darksome cavern
Where we dwell beneath the mountains
We have heard the death-bird screeching!

MEN (*threateningly*).

Hence, ye beldames, with your witchcraft.

WOMEN (*restraining the men*).

They're wise women of the forest.

MEN.

May the fardels that ye carry
Burn and scorch ye, burn and scorch ye!

OLD WOMEN (*unmoved*).

Yesternight, too, in the gloaming,

Ier raminga andar la luna,
Con intorno un verde velo...

LE DONNE (*sparite*).
Il color non è del cielo...

I PESCATORI (*alle vecchie*).
Ah! col mal detto m'avveleni l'esca...

ARCIERI.
E col mal occhio mi disvil lo strale...

I PESCATORI.
La colpa è tua, se fallirà la pesca...

ARCIERI.
Tua, se ci sfugge il daino od il cignale...

I BOSCAIUOLI.
Han ballato stanotte alla tregenda...

PESCATORI e ARCIERI.
Facciamole ballar la ridda orrenda!...
(*Si avventano contro le vecchie.*)

LE DONNE (*inframmettendosi*).
Pel santo re Gaspar di lor pietà!
(*Si accapigliano.*)

HERRMANN
(*entrando dal fondo*).
Bella virtù di prodi in verità!

GLI UOMINI
(*si arrestano di botto accusandosi
l'un l'altro*).
E' stato lui!... non io!...

HERRMANN
(*accennando imperiosamente a tutti
di uscire*).
Tutti al lavor!

TUTTI
(*ritraendosi a voce bassa e con ri-
spetto*).
E' desso Ermanno... il pietoso si-
gnor!
(*Fra di loro, nell'allontanarsi, alter-
nandosi.*)

Eppur...
Che c'è?
Le vecchie...

x

Ci han stregato
Le reti...
Gli archi...
Se fosse mai vero?
Il picco...
E' rosso...
E il sol non s'è levato...
Mister!
Mistero!

(*Escono in diverse direzioni.*)

HERMANN (*con dolore*).
Da mè Walter che brama?...
Perchè mi vuole a questa
Scogliera mesta?

(*Con angoscia.*)

Già più il mio cor Walter non ama?!
Non è sua fidanzata
Anna, la vergin dal mio cor desia-
ta?!...

Ah! invano io dunque nel cuor pro-
fondo

Il mio segreto nascosto ho al mondo?
(*Vedendo giungere WALTER, riesce
a vincere la sua commozione, ed
esclama quasi irionfante:*)

E' desso! e la sua vista ogni pen-
siero
Cupo dissolve!... Un uom ritorno
ed amo.

(*Corre con slancio ad incontrare
WALTER che entra dalla destra.*)

WALTER ed HERRMANN.

HERRMANN.
Perchè qui vieni e fuggi il nido
dell'amor?

WALTER (*cupo*).
E' questa spiaggia desolata e tetra
Come il mio cuor!
Per me ogni pietra
Mi ricorda un rimorso, mi ricorda
un terror!

HERRMANN
(*guardandolo con sorpresa e dolore*).
Ohimè che avvien di te?

WALTER.
Fedele amico
A me tu sei...

Shining with a light unearthly,
From her course the moon did
wander.

THE OTHER WOMEN.

Not from heav'n are such signs
sent us!

FISHERMEN.

Yea, with their curses all our bait
they've poisoned!

BOWMEN.

And with their magic sent astray
our arrows!

FISHERMEN.

Yours is the fault if bootless all our
fishing!

BOWMEN.

Yours, if unscathed our quarry doth
escape us!

WOODCUTTERS.

Yesternight they danced the dance
of Satan.

FISHERMEN and BOWMEN.

Let us make them dance to-day the
dance of Haman.

(Preparing to seize OLD WOMEN.)

WOMEN (intervening).

Now by the sainted Three Kings,
hold your hands!

(The men and OLD WOMEN struggle.)

HERMANN

(entering from the back).

Now, by my troth, brave prowess
this indeed.

THE MEN

(stopping and accusing each other).
It was not I—'twas he!

HERMANN

(making an imperious sign to all to
leave him).

To work—cease brawling!

ALL

(withdrawing respectfully, in a low
voice).

It is Sir Hermann—gentlest he of all
Knights!

(To each other, as they go off al-
ternately.)

And yet—

O'er all—
Their foul spells—
Have wrought havoc—
Our fishing—
And our hunting—
If 't were true now?
Blood red
The mountain shines—
The sun is hidden.
Bewitched—bewitched.

(Exeunt in different directions.)

HERMANN (in great grief).

Of me what seeketh Walter?
Why choose a trysting place
So dark and gloomy?

(With anguish.)

Hath love for Walter died within
me?

Is not his bride affianced
Anna, the only maid my heart de-
sireth?

Ah! all in vain my guilty secret
From all the world to hide I've
striven.

(Seeing WALTER approach, he suc-
ceeds in conquering his emotion
and exclaims, as though in
triumph:)

'Tis he! His very presence drives to
fight
All thoughts of ill! And, as of yore,
I love him.

(Hastens eagerly to meet WALTER,
who enters from the right.)

WALTER and HERMANN.

HERMANN.

Walter, why com'st thou hither, and
fliest from thy bride?

WALTER (in a hollow voice).

As in my heart, horror and desola-
tion

Here have their home!
For me ev'ry footstep
Holds a mem'ry of terror, a mem'ry
of grief!

HERMANN

(looking at him with surprise and
grief).

Alás! what grief is thine?

WALTER.

A faithful friend
Art thou to me?