

WILLIAM TELL

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William Tell by Friedrich Schiller & Henry Thompson

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FRIEDRICH SCHILLER & HENRY THOMPSON

WILLIAM TELL



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William Tell.

From the German of
Friedrich
Gottlieb Schiller.



M. DCCC. XLV.
1845

Dramatis Personae.

HERMANN GESSLER, <i>Governor of Switz and Uri.</i>		
WERNER, <i>Baron of Attinghausen, free noble of Switzerland.</i>		
ULRICH VON RUDENZ, <i>his Nephew.</i>		
WERNER STAUFFACHER,	}	<i>People of Switz.</i>
CONRAD HUNN,		
HANS AUF DER MAUER,		
JORG IM HOFE,		
ULRICH DER SCHMIDT,		
JOST VON WEILER,		
ITEL REDING,	}	<i>of Uri.</i>
WALTER FÜRST,		
WILHELM TELL,		
RÜSSELMANN, <i>the Priest,</i>		
PETERMANN, <i>Sacristan,</i>		
KUONI, <i>Herdsman,</i>		
WERNI, <i>Huntsman,</i>	}	<i>of Unterwald.</i>
RUODI, <i>Fisherman,</i>		
ARNOLD OF MELCHTHAL,		
CONRAD BAUNGARTEN,		
MEYER VON SARNEN,		
STRUTH VON WINKELRIED,		
KLAUS VON DER FLUE,	}	<i>Peasant women.</i>
BURKHART AM BUHEL,		
ARNOLD VON SERVA,		
PFEIFER OF LUCERNE.		
KUNZ OF GERSACK.		
JENNI, <i>Fisherman's son.</i>		
SEPPI, <i>Herdsman's son.</i>	}	<i>Peasant women.</i>
GERTRUDE, <i>Stauffacher's wife.</i>		
HEDWIG, <i>wife of Tell, daughter of Fürst.</i>		
BERTHA OF BRUNECK, <i>a rich heiress.</i>		
ANNGART,	}	<i>Peasant women.</i>
MICHTHILD,		
ELSBETH,		
HILDEGARD,		

WALTER, }
WILHELM, } *Tell's sons.*
FRIESHARDT, }
LEUTHOLD, } *Soldiers.*
RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, *Gessler's master of the horse.*
JOHANNES PARRICIDA, *Duke of Swabia.*
STUFFEL, *Overseer.*
THE MAYOR OF URI.
A COURIER.
MASTER STONEMASON, COMPANIONS, AND WORKMEN.
TASKMASTER.
A CRIER.
MONKS OF THE ORDER OF CHARITY.
HORSEMEN OF GESSLER AND LANDENBERG.
MANY PEASANTS; MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE WALDSTETTEN.



William Tell.

ACT I. SCENE I.

High rocky shore of the Lake of Lucerne, over against Switz. The lake forms a bay in the land. A hut is not far from the shore. A fisher-boy guides a boat across the lake. Beyond the lake are seen the green meadows, villages, and farms of Switz, lying in the bright sunshine. To the left rise the heights of the Hacken, covered with clouds; to the right, in the distance, are seen the glaciers. Before the curtain is drawn up, the Ranz des Vaches is heard, and the musical tinkling of the cattle-bells, which sounds for some time after the opening of the scene.

THE FISHER-BOY (*sings*).

(*Air of the Ranz des Vaches.*)

Brightly is sparkling the lake's clear tide,
The youth is asleep on its verdant side;
A murmur of music
Breathes soft where he lies,
As the voices of angels
In paradise.

Hark! as he wakes from his dreamless rest
The crisping waves play over his breast.

A gentle whisper
Is heard from the deep:
Belovèd, that resteth
In dreamless sleep,
Follow me—haste to my crystal cell,
Come to the caves where the sea-nymphs dwell!

SHEPHERD (*on the mountains*).

(*Variation of the Ranz des Vaches.*)

Farewell, ye meadows!
The flowers are strewn,
The flocks are scattered,
The summer is gone

We depart to the mountains, we come again
 When the woods are filled with the cuckoo's strain;
 When the flowers of the earth are glad and gay,
 And the brooks flow clear in the laughing May.

Farewell, ye meadows!
 The flowers are strawn,
 The flocks are scattered,
 The summer is gone!

CHAMOIS-HUNTER (*appears on the height of a rock*).

(*3d variation.*)

The thunder sweeps by with fear, with wrath,
 But the hunter treads his mountain path:

O'er the fields of ice
 He strides along;
 There reigneth no spring,
 There breathes no song:

A misty sea is beneath his feet,
 His gaze no dwelling of man may greet.

The beautiful world
 Lies veiled, unseen,
 With its fairy flowers,
 Its robes of green;

Unseen, save when from beneath his eyes
 For a moment the shadows of mist roll by.

[*The landscape changes. A hollow sound is heard from the mountains; shadows of clouds pass over the ground.*]

RUODI the fisherman comes from his hut; WERNI the hunter descends from the cliff; KUONI the shepherd enters with his milk-pail on his shoulder; SERRI, his attendant, follows him.

RUODI.

Haste, Jeuni, to the shore. The Thalvogt¹ hangs
 Heavy and low—a dull and hollow sound
 Comes from the Firn.² The Myttenstein³ puts on
 Its veil of darkening clouds, and cold the wind
 Blows from the Wetterloch.⁴ A storm is brooding:
 An hour, and 'twill be here.

¹ A sort of mist.

² That part of the mountains where the ice begins.

³ A tall rock bordering on the lake.

⁴ Opening between two hills through which the weather is said to come.

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KUONI.

There cometh rain :
My herds crop eagerly the grass ; the dogs
Look round with gaze disturbed, scratching the earth.

WERNI.

The fish leap in the air — the waterfowl
Dive in the lake : a storm draws on apace.

KUONI (*to the boy*).

Have a care yonder, Seppi ; look you well
That the cattle-do not stray.

SEPPI.

My ear doth catch
The sound of Lissel's bells.

KUONI.

Then are the rest
Not far — she is always first of the herd.

RUODI.

'Tis a fine yoke of bells.

WERNI.

But not so fine
As the neck that bears them. — Are these cattle yours ?

KUONI.

No — I am not so rich ; they are my lord
Of Attinghausen's.

RUODI.

See yonder heffer ;
How well the ribbon-band adorns her neck.

KUONI.

She knows it too ; were I to take it off
She would not eat. It is her badge, she knows,
And gives her title to be first of the flock.

RUODI.

What? — a creature without sense or reason !

WERNI.

But animals have reason ; we huntsmen
Know they have. With what well-ordered care
They range themselves as they go to the pastures ; —
One, as a sentinel, first, who pricks his ears,
And warns of the approach of the huntsman.