

**UNDINE, A DREAM
PLAY IN
THREE ACTS**

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Undine, a dream play in three acts by W. L. Courtney

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W. L. COURTNEY

**UNDINE, A DREAM
PLAY IN
THREE ACTS**

UNDINE

*A DREAM PLAY
IN THREE ACTS*

By W. L. COURTNEY

LONDON: WILLIAM HEINEMANN

MDCCCCH

*Do you remember, love, when once I dreamed,
 In a rose sunset by a rosy sea,
 While o'er our heads the changing colours gleamed,—
 Of all that human life, well-lived, might be ?*

*You laughed. I think I hear your laughter rend
 The sweet illusion of a future age :
 It was not thus, you said, that " that great end,"
 Which we all strive for, " dawns on history's page " !*

*No, " life is earnest, life is real," you
 Had proved it so by many a dreary act ;
 And dreams were valueless, and only true
 " Dry, hard, experimental, actual fact."*

*Dear, fond, prosaic babbler ! Yet you knew
 The thousand unrehearsed effects of morn,
 In twilight grey the inimitable hue,
 In midnight black the mystery forlorn.*

*You saw the golden glory of the flower,
 You saw the pageantry of heath and tree ;
 What are they ? Visions of a dreaming hour,
 Brain-pictures, deftly wrought by you and me.*

*Who paints the rosy tints of sky and sea ?
 Whose is the rapture that the poet dreams ?
 What is the true save what we think to be ?
 What is the real other than what seems ?*

W. L. C.

October 1902.

FOURTEENTH

1867

CHARACTERS

UNDINE.
COUNT HULDBRAND OF
RINGSTETTEN.
BERTALDA.
FATHER HEILMANN.
FISHERMAN.

FISHERMAN'S WIFE.
BERTALDA'S FOSTER-
PARENTS.
SHEPHERD.
THREE BEGGARS.
A BLIND MAN.

COURTIERS, ATTENDANTS, CROWD, ETC.

- ACT I. *Interior of Fisherman's Cottage.*
ACT II. *Hall of Castle of Ringstetten.*
ACT III. *A Mountain Gorge near Ringstetten.*



ACT I

SCENE I

Interior of FISHERMAN'S cottage. It is evening. A staircase comes down from the upper part of the cottage at one corner : there is a fireplace in the centre with an ingle-nook, and a spinning-wheel stands at one side of it, where the FISHERMAN'S WIFE is spinning. The FISHERMAN enters by the door leading outside, and, as he enters, a gust of wind shows that outside a storm of rain and wind is raging, the windows are rattling with the tempest, and the sound of a lashing rainstorm is heard on the roof, while the wind howls round the eaves. While the FISHERMAN'S WIFE is seated very quietly and placidly, the FISHERMAN, after shutting the door, is restless and disturbed. He comes to the fireplace, warms himself for a moment, then goes to the window, and returns once more to the fireplace. He glances at his wife, as though irritated by her stillness.

Act 1.
Sc. 1.

Fisherman. It is many years since we had such a storm—not since Undine came to us. And the water is rising all round, and cutting us off from the mainland. It makes one uneasy and restless. Where is

Act I. Undine? How can you sit there, wife, hour after
Sc. 1. hour, as though nothing was happening—as though
nothing was going to happen?

Wife. No one can alter fate. [*She goes on spinning.*]

Fish. Oh, I have not your patience. You sit there,
just as you have sat for years—spinning, spinning,
spinning. And the world is altering all the time.
So many mornings and evenings come and pass away;
and the sun rises and sets, and the stars come out:
and each day something is happening which may
change all our lives. I am very uneasy and restless
to-night. I feel that some change is coming. I feel
it in my bones.

Wife. Well, husband, if it has to come, it will come.
You can do nothing but wait and receive at Fate's
hands whatever Fate has to give you.

Undine [*coming downstairs, gaily singing*].

Where is the Sea-King's home?
There where the great fish roam,
In the heart of the deep sea's foam,
There is the Sea-King's home. . . .

Arkël, Sibol, Harald, Kühleborn! I hear you! I
hear you! [*Dances round FISHERMAN'S WIFE and kisses*
her.] I am coming, I am coming! [*Goes to window.*]

Fish. Where are you going, Undine? It is not a
night for you to leave the house.

Undine [*laughs*]. Why not? It is a night when
all my kinsmen are abroad! Arkël, Sibol . . . [*She*
opens the window.]