

THE FALL OF UG

A Masque of Fear

BY

RUFUS STEELE

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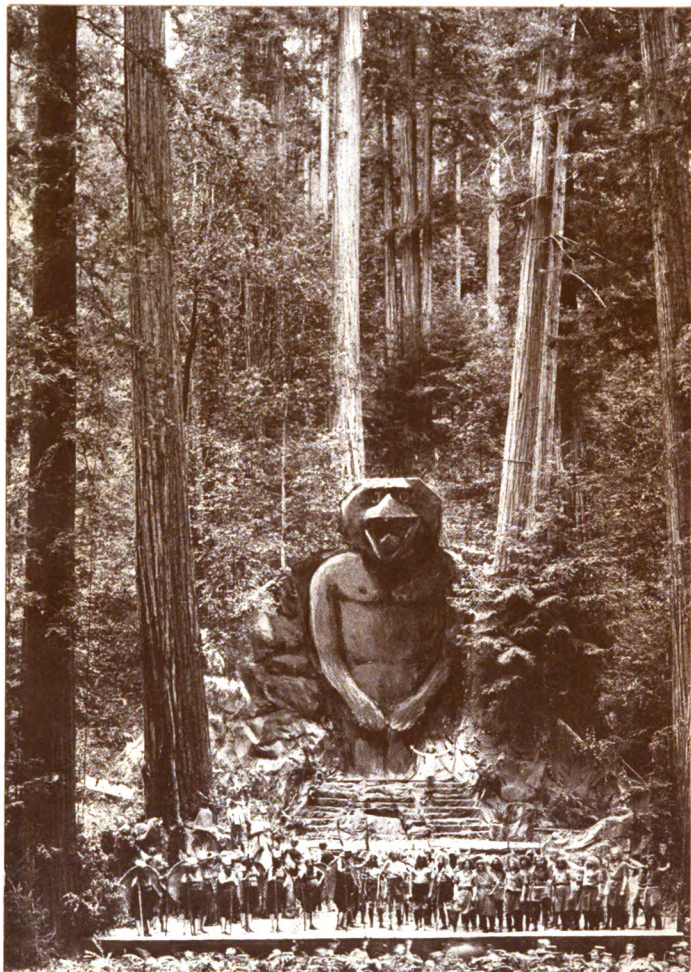


Photo by Gabriel Moulin

THE PRINCE'S PRAYER

Scene immediately preceding the destruction of
Ug, the God of Fear

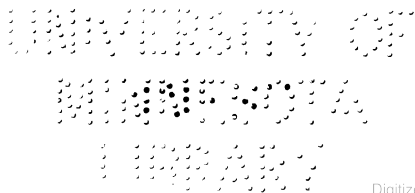
THE FALL OF UG

A Masque of Fear

By RUFUS STEELE
Music by HERMAN PERLÊT

*Being the Eleventh Grove Play
of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco
as Performed by Members of the Club, at the
Thirty-sixth Mid-Summer High Jinks
in the Bohemian Grove, Sonoma
County, California, on the
Ninth Night of
August, 1913*

SAN FRANCISCO
JOHN HOWELL
1913



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NOTE

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Taylor, Nash & Taylor
San Francisco

81st 322
OF

PERSONS IN THE MASQUE

| | |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| THE PRINCE | THE THIRD PRIEST |
| THE FIRST COMPANION | THE YOUNG PRIEST |
| THE SECOND COMPANION | THE HIGH PRIEST |
| TWO OTHER COMPANIONS | THE KING |
| THE FIRST SERVITOR | THE JESTER |
| THE SECOND SERVITOR | THE SCRIBE |
| TWO OTHER SERVITORS | TWO LORDS |
| TRIP (<i>a fairy</i>) | TWO NOBLES |
| THE PATRIARCH PRIEST | THE CHIEF HUNTSMAN |
| THE SECOND PRIEST | THE CHIEF WARRIOR |

A BEAR

HUSBANDMEN, SHEPHERDS, HUNTSMEN,
WARRIORS, FANATIC DANCERS, GODS OF FEAR, ANTIPHONAL
CHORUSES, FLYING FAIRIES, DANCING FAIRIES,
CELESTIAL BEINGS

(180 persons participated
in the play as performed
in the Bohemian Grove)

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PLAN OF THE MUSIC

- I. PRELUDE
- II. INTERMEZZO
- III. ENTRANCE OF THE GROUPS, HIGH
PRIEST AND KING
- IV. CHORUS OF PRIESTS
- V. THE SONG OF UG
- VI. DANCE OF THE FANATICS
- VII. THE SONG OF THE JESTER
- VIII. THE PRINCE BEFORE UG
- IX. THE FLYING FAIRIES
- X. WORLD HYMN AND FINALE

THE ORCHESTRA

Twelve first violins, ten second violins, six violas, six cellos, six double basses, three flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, harp, cor anglais, timpani and drums.

FOREWORD

On the Russian River in Sonoma County, California, seventy miles north of San Francisco, stands an untouched grove of Sequoia sempervirens, or redwoods, of great beauty. Hundreds of trees, from two hundred to three hundred feet in height, are estimated to range in age from seven hundred to fifteen hundred years. A famous club of San Francisco which owns this grove has, for many years, held a mid-summer encampment here, and has produced an original play, the text written by one member and the music composed by another, upon a stage at the foot of a steep hillside, with redwoods forming the proscenium. The outdoor play is made possible by the fact that rain in mid-summer is almost unknown. This Grove Play has developed year by year, is said to have become a positive influence in American dramatics, and annually commands the interest of art lovers and critics both of this country and Europe.

It is inconceivable to me that this grove should not always have been the meeting-place extraordinary of the men who occupied the country roundabout. The lace-hung, purple-coated trees were to the first men who knew them as awesomely venerable as they are today. Always they must have played the patriarchs to every moving creature. The yester men knew their appeal. A cycle can have brought no change in that appeal, but only in men's progress toward interpretation. I believe that earnestness and even periodicity marked the coming to this grove of yesterday's pretenders to its mastery; that then, as now, men courted witness everlasting to the best deed that they knew.

And who can doubt which deed it was the yester people called their best? All early records of man's melancholy worship show him struggling to appease the Terrible. What first brought men into this temple grove except some sober ceremony to ease the

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common curse — some rite by which they sought to relegate Old Fear?

These trees have gazed on immemorial exorcisms meant to set men's spirits free. Today they stay the snuffing blasts; they let men strike the flints of brotherhood to start a splendid flicker in the mist of dread. But those men of yesterday — they also had their hopeful flints. What was their magic like? How did they cozen or make war on Fear?

*What might the trees remember if devoutly importuned? By light of moon, on wind-swept morn and in the solitude of rain I teased them for the tale. At length the red mothers could no more deny a child the thing he begged. When I had turned the vision into stumbling words, *Perlèt* I called — *Perlèt*, who hearing with the blessed ear, sings in the sweeter key — and he sat with me and all the things we witnessed wrote he down in language of the soul. Our joy lies in the sharing of the tale. And if the patient one that harks to us — to *Perlèt's* telling and to mine — reaps but a tinkling of the ear, and fails to see with inward eye some twitching of the mortal veil, then are we faulty messengers, for we ourselves stood at the veil and as we stood we thought the pall was snatched away.*

Our vision touched a night that reeked with perfume as of ruddy grapes. It was the season when in these woods the year seems verily to stand still. Spring's reckless promise had been met and overpaid in leafy green; it seemed as if the crisping hand of Autumn might never come at all. In that same glade of dreams now called the stage I saw the yester men — good, swart progenitors they were — foregather in a throng. The place I barely recognized, for no sweet hillside vista rose above. A peak of grayish rock walled all that range through which men's hearts today look up to Heaven. A rock it was — but more. Some force had hewed the rock into a semblance every shuddering mortal knew to be the demon God of Fear. And on the perfect night (I know not in what century it was for these trees have no sense of time) men gathered to affirm their endless subjugation to the god.

A monstrous tinge of hope was theirs. Some faith fixed by their dim forefathers told these men that if they yearly sacrificed their fairest youth to Fear, the people should be spared some meas-

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ure of the daily toll they paid the god. And in the rites that my eyes looked upon, the king's own son, by strange concatenation of events, was drawn to die — the Prince who loved to live!

A struggle followed such as none might ever know save one called on to die the death of fear. The Prince's father failed him, and his friends — the only priestly counsel was submission! The brave youth sought a promise from the god himself that his death be the last — that royal blood should pay the final measure of demand. And then, the stony image belching no reply, the Prince rebelled and lifted up his eyes, and marveling at the assurance of the redwood tops, he prayed the grim old sentinels to become his aids.

Since man began the trees had stood confessors to his woe; a youth's beseeching eyes drew all the consolation that they knew.

They calmed him for a little space and opened his mortal senses to woodland music and to fairy creatures whose feet behaved on insubstantial air as though they tripped the ground.

Of course the beauty that assuaged could not annul the Prince's plight. The monster pressed again. The friendly trees, their feet fast in the bowels of the earth, no step might take. And yet they served. The anguished youth about to die in sacrifice saw trees no more; what had been trees were now red fingers, nameless in their size and urgency, uppointing him a strange and certain way of peace.

In a cataclysm fell old rocky Fear; but the rejoicing Prince fell not. He saved his people too. It must have been that Fear was not eternal; that men themselves had heurn its horrid form!

One would have thought the demon god was vanished from the world. And yet — and yet, the rumor runs, his visible portion lost in dust, Old Fear has latterly contrived some gross perpetuation of himself within the human breast.

What exorcism now? Or is there any way to shatter fear firm rooted in the heart?

The Prince might tell! But the Prince, alas, has gone. Long since has gone the last of those who saw the marvel that befell when Faith upturned its eyes and Essence called to Essence whence it sprung. All living things in all the living world are changed.

But stay — the trees! The lone imperishables remain! The very trees that heard the Prince's call and gave such answer back

FOREWORD

have ignored the withering centuries. Unchanged they look down on the waning, wondering world. Good reader, can it be that, now as then, they wait on tiptoe to uppoint a wanderer to his forfeitless estate—that they stand tireless through all time, until the last sad princeling lifts his eyes and voice to claim the Eternal Secret as his own?

RUFUS STEELE.

San Francisco.

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ARGUMENT

A YOUNG PRINCE and his hunting companions follow a stag through a forest on Mid-Summer Day. They pause before a colossal stone figure of Ug, the God of Fear, which has long blocked the white path leading Heavenward up the hill. The people, it develops, come here this very night for the annual human sacrifice to Ug. The Prince laughs his scorn of the God of Fear and almost at the same moment the ominous sunset shadow of the colossus falls on the young man.

Evening comes as the princely party pass on in pursuit of the stag. Furred and feathered denizens of the wood appear. Trip, the brown-faced fairy master of the grove, swings to the tail of a huge bear, but gives up his teasing to take his music lesson from a bird.

When the moon floods the place servitors arrive to prepare for the rites. Their mortal eyes are blind to Trip, but they see Ug all too plainly. Trip amuses himself by adding to their terror. Upon their departure Trip warns colossal Ug that he may not always dominate mankind, and conjures up a procession of the fallen gods of fear who at one time or another have blighted man's joyous world. When men wrestled with their fear, Trip declares, each dreadful one vanished.

As Trip runs off after his bear a party of priests arrive and a neophyte learns from the others the legend of the ancient pact which forces them to sacrifice a youth on each Mid-Summer Night, and of how Ug always sends a blood-red dawn to show that he is appeased. A patriarch priest recites a mythical promise of a final sacrificial night when the victim shall lift his eyes and call some power not of earth to aid him—some power that shall utterly destroy old Ug and send a white dawn to swallow up the red in token of a nobler day.

Husbandmen, Shepherds, Huntsmen, Warriors, King, High Priest, Prince, Jester, Scribe, Nobles, Lords—the world in fact—

ARGUMENT

arrive and in a mighty chorus voice their trembling tribute to the god.

The King names as the new Defenders of great Ug a list of youths who have done valiantly. At the Chief Warrior's demand the name of the proud young Prince is added to the list. It is hardly intended that the Prince shall stand with other Defenders before the table of secret stones by which Ug makes his choice of a victim, but at the Jester's taunt the Prince leaps from the throne steps to claim his place—and presently the blackened stone falls to his royal hand!

The King protests, and so does the Prince, though not through fear of death. The High Priest allows no questioning of Ug's choice. The Prince calls his father to lead in rebellion against old Ug. The High Priest forces from the King's unwilling lips a story that shows the terrible consequences of revolt. The wretched Prince consents to die. Fanatics perform their wild dance of ritual. The company leaves the victim to his prayers while it feasts in a glade nearby. The departing High Priest offers the Prince sophist consolation; the Jester offers liquor, with a song that tells him why men drink.

The deserted Prince begs Ug to promise that no other victims shall come after him, and when no answer comes, the Prince turns away and gropes helplessly among the trees. His hands encounter a mighty trunk. He sees for the first time how calmly the tree stands amidst the horrors of this place. In ecstasy he calls to the unseen spirit of the trees to bring him balm. That very call unseals the Prince's eyes to Trip, who drops down from the air. The fairy tells the story of the friendly trees. He calls Ug a mere rock that men with their evil imaginings and lack of faith have carved into a terror-god. The Prince protests the awful reality of Ug, when Trip flies to the shoulder of the colossus and lifts a nestling dove from the terrifying beak.

The Prince's ears are opened so that he hears the fairies as they pipe and call. Good Trip reveals the talismanic key growing at their feet which enables the Prince to see the dainty woodfolk as they play and spurn the ground. The transported Prince desires to fetch the King and Priests and all the company to share his sparkling vision, but Trip reminds him sadly that blindness binds all of them, since none has ever lifted up his eyes and called.

ARGUMENT

Shouts tell that the company is returning to sacrifice the victim. The Prince beseeches Trip to remain, but the fairy declares this useless. He is touched by the Prince's plight and before he whisks away he gives the wisest counsel he knows — he bids the needy youth anoint his eyes once more with faith and look where the redwood fingers point him.

The Prince tries to make his people understand something of what has been revealed to him, but fails utterly. In discouragement he disrobes for the sacrifice. Red dawn is already showing in the hideous face of Ug. The naked youth is lifted high by the Priests to be tossed into Ug's arms, from which he must drop into the flames. Suddenly Trip's pipe is heard close by. The Prince is aroused. He struggles out of the Priests' grasp, leaps to a rock and lifts up his soul to the God where point the redwood hands, declaring the ancient promise of deliverance now fulfilled in him.

The forest trembles with the thunder of Ug's doom. Lightning rends the colossus. Great Ug sinks down in bits of dust. The whited path to Heaven, which so long he held fast, is seen to lead on to the joyous summit of the mount. Celestial beings in majesty descend to commune with men. As the throng moves upward over the very spot where once was Ug, the world chorus of rejoicing grows until it fills all space.

The red dawn that once spoke Ug's sway is swallowed in a crystal morn, the breaking of a day of which the hearts of men had hardly dared to dream.

THE FALL OF UG

THE SCENE is an open space at the foot of a steep hill in a forest of redwood trees. The trunks of the trees, limbless to a considerable height, are like mighty pillars supporting the mass of dark green foliage. Ferns of unusual size, vines, mosses and flowers, such as love sunshine that has filtered through lofty tree tops, mask the hillside's rugged lines and spread a variegated carpeting. The time is late afternoon of Mid-Summer Day. A white road, entering from one side and turning up the hill, is completely blocked by a crudely carved, colossal statue of Ug, the God of Fear. The grey stone figure, although in a sitting posture, is about seven times the height of a man. Not only does it bar the ascending path or road, but it casts upon the hillside above it a shadow suggestive of dangers unseen. The long, cruel beak of Ug is open and menacing. The forelimbs extend outward and downward; the human sacrifice cast upon the upturned palms must roll off and drop into the pit beneath, where the fire burns at sacrificial times. The colossus dominates the scene with the gloom of tragedy, even though the litter of limbs and leaves upon an incense altar and a crude throne set against a great tree indicate that there has been no recent human occupancy of the place.

(A stag bounds across the stage and makes off through the thicket. A huntsman's horn is heard, then shouting. The Prince enters, running, in pursuit of the stag. He gazes eagerly in the direction taken by the animal. The First Companion, Second Companion and two other Companions arrive just as the Prince, appearing to catch sight of the stag, lets an arrow fly from his bow. The First Companion slips and falls. He does not rise, and puts his hand to his knee as if in pain.)

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THE FALL OF UG

THE PRINCE: [*striking his bow disgustedly*]

Child's work! The eager shaft o'ersped the mark.
The stag enheartened scents the peaks. Come all!
Such noble quarry calls for noble chase.

(The Prince beckons to his Companions impatiently and starts off. All but the First Companion prepare to follow him.)

THE FIRST COMPANION:

Pray hold! My knee refuses to go on.

THE PRINCE:

Then wait us here. Our backs shall be your steeds
When yonder antlered stag rides on them too.

THE FIRST COMPANION:

Forsake me not! Though dying would I run
Ere I alone in such a place remain.

THE PRINCE:

Your hurt is soon forgot. What ails this place?
(The Companions exchange glances.)

THE SECOND COMPANION:

Good Prince, do you not see our friend lies prone
Beneath the very beak of awful Ug,
Who here blockades the path that leads to Heaven?

THE PRINCE: [*gazing at the colossus*]

Naught but the stag I saw. Why heed old Ug?
This ancient God of Fear no terror holds
Save for some guileless shepherd or a child.

THE SECOND COMPANION:

Have you forgot this is Mid-Summer Day?
That on this very night we send through flames
A youth to join his soul with awful Ug?

THE PRINCE:

The yearly sacrifice had slipped my mind.

THE FALL OF UG

THE FIRST COMPANION :

The Prince forgets because his eyes are spared.
We have observed how on Mid-Summer Night
The King, his father, sends him forth while all
Are at the feast; nor bids him stay to feed
His eyes upon the human offering
That marks the coming of the blood-red dawn.

THE PRINCE :

Well said. Though full I know the rites that fetch
The King, the Priests and people here this night,
The final scene I ne'er have looked upon;
Nor have I feared this God of Fear. Too sweet
The mad pursuit of butterflies and stags;
Too dear the all engrossing cup of life
To waste a thought on creatures such as this.
When I am King I swear old Ug must fall!

THE SECOND COMPANION : [*with alarm*]

Oh hear him not, great Ug; the Prince but jests.
No man that breathes but knows the sting of fear.

THE PRINCE :

Fear not for me — but stay! Perchance this night
Myself shall learn to know the dread of Ug.
My birthday anniversary it is;
The boy no more am I; behold the man!
And by the King's decree the sacrifice
No more shall be withholden from my eyes.

*(The Prince, turning toward the colossus, snaps his fingers
in derision and laughs.)*

Tonight I stay to laugh my scorn of thee!

THE FIRST COMPANION :

The Prince must learn as learns the humblest man
How limitless the power of mighty Ug.

(Forgetting his knee he scrambles to his feet.)

THE FALL OF UG

E'en at this moment as the day declines
Am I reminded that we must beware.
Who here that does not know the legend well,
Who does not know that man or beast or bird
Upon whom Ug's strange sunset shadow falls
Some hideous service for Ug must perform?

THE PRINCE:

Have done, have done! Save nightmares for the night.
Quick mend your knee. Meanwhile let me divert
Our thoughts to things that better fit our youth.
A game I know, a game of skill and speed.
Let yonder tree be goal: let one stand here:
Another fend the crossing to the tree:
Myself shall judge and leader be. This rock
Shall serve my twice exalted station well.

(Climbing upon the rock.)

Prepare to run as I direct. Prepare—

(As the Prince stands upon the rock a deep shadow envelops him.)

ALL THE COMPANIONS:

Oh-h-h!

THE FIRST COMPANION:

Ug's sunset shadow has enwrapped the Prince!

THE PRINCE: [*leaping down and picking up his bow*]

Enough, enough of childish omens, friends.
Tonight we must attend this cheerless place.
Let's now away to fresh our minds and hearts.
The challenge of the stag calls to our skill:
Ere daylight dies our bows must bring him down.
Forget old Ug! Let ardor wing our feet.

(The Prince runs into the forest followed rapidly by all the others.)

THE FALL OF UG

INTERMEZZO

Night follows the day. Twilight comes, then darkness, then moonlight. The transition is made a musical theme. The native denizens of the wood appear. The music tells the story of the life and mystery of the forest.

By daylight, darkness and moonlight mystical lights and shadows play over mighty Ug. During the darkness the fire-flies dance about his head. In full moonlight Ug's face is seen in weird and awful aspect. Behind and above the colossus is the dense shadow Ug casts upon the blockaded path to Heaven.

Squirrels play on the redwood trees. A covey of quail whirs up from the leaves. Rabbits hop about. A coyote slinks along. The hoot of an owl and the scream of a panther are heard. A huge bear appears. Trip, a brown-faced fairy, swings to the bear's tail and teases the beast at every step. A bird appears upon the limb of a tree and begins to sing. Trip is caught by the singing. He allows the bear to lumber off while he raises to his lips a small pipe dangling from his neck and takes his music lesson from the bird. When the lesson is ended the bird flies away.

TRIP: [*laughing and running about*]

Rocky peak and lily dell
Know my skipping footsteps well.
From the whitening columbine,
From the trilliums making wine,
From the vale of flowering fern,
From the hill where poppies burn
Lately did my pathway twine,
Twisted like clematis vine.
Morning cup with bees I shared
When by foxglove wells I fared.
When at noon the shadows fled
Thimbleberries gave me bread.
All the long, mad afternoon
Wanton laurels coaxed my tune;
Danced and swayed till great-eyed deer
Through woodwardias leapt in fear.
When the moon drave out the sun

THE FALL OF UG

Loath was I to end the fun.
Sweet Mid-Summer Night holds sway —
Trip bids all the woods be gay!

*(The First Servitor enters followed by the Second Servitor
and two other Servitors.)*

Mortals come! They see not me —
Blind to fairy folk they be!

*(Trip skips here and there, inspecting the Servitors at close
range. Their actions show them to be entirely uncon-
scious of his presence.)*

THE FIRST SERVITOR:

Here sits great Ug. The place we must prepare
Ere come the Priests and King and all the train.
Here you, remove this limb. Go, clear the throne.
And you, brush off the leaves the winds have piled
Upon the altar in mock sacrifice.
Wipe up the litter fallen in a year.

*(All busy themselves dragging off limbs and brushing leaves
from the throne and incense altar. Trip follows them
about. He tickles the neck of one with a blade of grass.
The fellow shows that he believes it was Ug that an-
noyed him. Trip follows the Second Servitor and when
the man has carefully removed a bough from the throne
Trip lays it back again. The man is astonished.)*

THE SECOND SERVITOR:

I move the boughs; Ug throws them back again.
Ug's strangling fingers seem to clutch my throat.
Good master, grant me leave to flee and hide!

(Trip mocks the Second Servitor's show of fright.)

THE FIRST SERVITOR:

No hiding place there be. No dim-lit cave,
No hollowed trunk, no secret tangled vale
May screen you from Ug's penetrating eyes;
No sweet asylum knows the weary world.

THE FALL OF UG

THE SECOND SERVITOR:

Then give me spear, or give me bow of yew—
Some trusty weapon that may win me peace.

THE FIRST SERVITOR:

Cease, friend. What forged steel smites off the load
Of fear Ug slings upon the backs of men?
Have done with fruitless wailing. To your work.

(Servitors, dragging limbs, disappear.)

TRIP: [*sadly*]

Countless men come to this place;
Few behold my willing face.
Blind they are, and deaf and cold
To the world I would unfold.
How may they discover me
When they hardly see yon tree?
Pish! They never dream at all;
Never lift their eyes and call.

(Turning toward the colossus, he shakes his finger at it.)

Foolish men see Ug alone:
Trip knows Ug is but a stone.
Hi! How long will men come here
To renew their dream of fear?
How long shall old Ug endure?
Mighty Ug, be not too sure!
Give me heed and Trip shall tell
How the other false ones fell.
Come, ye gods who, since man's birth,
Leagued to blight his joyous earth.
Come, ye gods whose chain and stave
Made the trembling world a slave.
Come, ye other gods of fear;
Come and join your brother here!

(Trip waves his arms before a large rock and out of the stone emerges Set, who proceeds with rigid head and stately movements toward the colossus. He gives no sign of hearing as Trip continues speaking.)

THE FALL OF UG

Set! How Egypt licked your hand
When your fevers gave command!
Iron were your bones and will;
Grist were mortals in your mill.
When men wrestled with their fear,
Lo, they saw you disappear!

(Set disappears into the ground at the feet of Ug and Moloch emerges from the rock out of which Set came.)

Moloch! Bitter barbed your thorns
When the world writhed on your horns.
Hungry ocean never saw
Victims much as crammed your maw.
When men wrestled with their fear,
Lo, they saw you disappear.

(Moloch disappears into the ground at the feet of Ug and Medusa emerges from the rock.)

Hail, Medusa! Serpent-crowned;
How you made Greece bite the ground!
When men's eyes gazed in your own,
Living flesh was changed to stone.
When men wrestled with their fear,
Lo, they saw you disappear.

(Medusa disappears and Huitzilopochtli emerges.)

See Huitzilopochtli now —
Aztec lifeblood on your brow!
Master you of war and strife;
Life was yours, you swallowed life.
When men wrestled with their fear,
Lo, they saw you disappear.

(Huitzilopochtli disappears and Tiamat emerges.)

Tiamat! Your horrid spell
Golden Babylon knew well.
Order, peace and equal law
Know no more your dragon jaw!

(Tiamat disappears and Baal emerges.)

THE FALL OF UG

Baal! Where your ancient flail?
Silent now Phœnicia's wail;
No more does she sacrifice
To the father of all lies!

*(Baal disappears and Kali, Hydra, Ate, Hecate, Minotaur
and Rudra emerge in rapid succession from the rock.)*

Kali! Bloody queen of Ind,
Your destruction none could mend.
Hydra! How your heads could frame
Terrors past all depth or name!
Ate! How your poisoned times
Stung the Greek to reckless crimes!
Hecate! How pain-racked Thrace
Sucked its witchcrafts from your face!
Minotaur! Your Cretan vale
Burst with human victims' wail.
Rudra! How you smote with storms!
How you all lashed with alarms!
Ug, behold their broken spell!
Ug, take heed how each one fell!
When men wrestle with their fear,
Lo, all false gods disappear!

*(As Rudra disappears after the others, the bear is seen
again. Trip pursues, and goes out of sight swinging to
the tail of the baffled beast. The Patriarch Priest, the
Second Priest, the Third Priest and the Young Priest
enter. The first three halt before the colossus and make
the sign of Ug by extending their arms straight out at
the sides on a level with their shoulders, then bringing
the left hand to rest over the heart, then clapping the
right hand upon the left, and finally letting the head
drop forward upon the breast. The Young Priest, stand-
ing behind the others, watches and imitates them.)*

THE YOUNG PRIEST:

The very earth proclaims that this is Ug,
Among whose Priests a neophyte am I.
I know him, yet ne'er saw I him before.

THE FALL OF UG

THE SECOND PRIEST:

Though never saw you this colossal form
That here locks fast the path to higher joys,
Ne'er saw you day since from the womb you sprang,
But Ug lurked close behind your elbow joint.
Unseen, he fretted you in cradle days.
When she who bore you, tore you from her breasts
And bade you walk, Ug set the path with thorns.
The youth chafed oft at yoke upon his neck;
The man finds fear encysted in his heart.

THE YOUNG PRIEST:

How say you this who knew me not in youth?

THE SECOND PRIEST:

Alas, the heavy tale of one fits all.
No man complains that Ug has passed him by.

THE YOUNG PRIEST:

Since day by day we pay, what drives us now
To lay the richest gift of all—a youth—
Upon the altar of insatiate Ug?

THE SECOND PRIEST:

Know, son, that in the mystic dawn of things,
Ere magic had been stirred into this soil,
And Nature's womb still held these ancient trees,
The fathers of our fathers' fathers' sires
Knew tongue, now lost, in which they spake with Ug
And with a compact sued some meed of peace.
Though great Ug would not yield the whited path,
By iron oath he bound himself to sink
His beak but lightly into mortal hearts,
Nor ever take his fill of human woe.
And for this boon our fathers pledged themselves
And all their children's children's sons to come
Here in the fullness of Mid-Summer moon
And send through flames to join his soul with Ug
A youth by Ug marked for such sacrifice.

THE FALL OF UG

A thousand moons of soft Mid-Summer Night
Have lit the strict performance of our bond;
A thousand times as stood the victim forth
A blood-red dawn has shown great Ug appeased.

THE YOUNG PRIEST :

And shall there be no end of sacrifice
And dawns that seem to bathe the world in blood?

THE SECOND PRIEST :

No end shall be while faithful Priests of Ug
Demand enforcement of the changeless law.

THE PATRIARCH PRIEST :

Hear me in my great age.
Now memory illumines the tale the Priest,
My father, told me, which long since the Priest,
His father, had told him. A myth it was,
A legend shaped mayhap at Fancy's wheel
And yet so rich in promise was the tale,
So freighted with the rarest gems of hope,
That even now it leaps upon my tongue.
The prophecy says naught of fixed time.
Told in some season long forgot, it leaps
Through cycles to a strange Mid-Summer Night
When Ug calls loudly for his human toll;
And then, so runs the tale, because the youth,
About to pass into the flames, uplifts
His eyes and voice, some wondrous vision waits,
And when the seeing youth beseeches aid
Some warrior, not of earth, his lance drives home:
Rends mighty Ug to nameless bits of dust,
Nor leaves one fragment to rekindle fear.
And down the freshly opened path to Heaven
Celestial beings come to walk with men.
Comes dawn, the strangest ever born of night:
Ug's ancient beams reach out their crimson hands,
When lo, there breaks a dawn all crystal white
That overcomes the last false beam of blood

THE FALL OF UG

And wraps the world in joy ineffable.
* * * * *

A dream! A dream! But such a treasure dream!
(Overcome with emotion, the Patriarch sinks down.)

THE SECOND PRIEST: [*manifesting disbelief and impatience*]

Save for your age we would not hear your tale—
A dream that sees our calling snatched away.

(Lights are seen through the trees approaching from the east.)

THE THIRD PRIEST:

The hour is near: the throngs approach this place.

(A party of Husbandmen enter, singing. They carry stalks of corn, fruits and huge bunches of grapes slung from shoulder poles.)

THE SONG OF THE HUSBANDMEN

From fields all green and glowing
We sons of Nature come.
Where living streams are flowing
There may be found our home.
The fertile soil doth yield us
Reward on stalk and tree.
When Ug from blight doth shield us
Glad husbandmen are we.

(The Husbandmen dispose themselves upon the ground. Lights are seen coming down the hill. A party of Huntsmen enter, singing. They carry long bows, quivers of arrows and the carcasses of game.)

THE SONG OF THE HUNTSMEN

The hills are our dominion.
The beast of secret lair,
The bird of swiftest pinion
Yield to the bow and snare.

THE FALL OF UG

A thousand dangers lurking
Along the tangled trail
Will find us never shirking;
The huntsmen do not quail.

(The Huntsmen dispose themselves. Lights are seen approaching from the west. A party of Shepherds enter, singing. They carry live lambs and each has a crook.)

THE SONG OF THE SHEPHERDS

Mid meadows sweet with grasses,
Through sylvan shadows cool
The flock serenely passes
To rest beside the pool.
No lamb is left to wander
Upon the hillside steep;
The wolf is watching yonder,
The shepherd guards his sheep.

(As the Shepherds dispose themselves lights are seen approaching from the east. A party of Warriors enter, singing. They wear helmets and carry lances and shields and spoils of warfare.)

THE SONG OF THE WARRIORS

Let justice guide our lances,
Let courage steel our hearts.
Where evil's banner dances
There loose our wingèd darts.
Let victory behold us
Where battle axes fall;
Let honor still enfold us
Or let death claim us all.

(Husbandmen, Huntsmen and Shepherds rise and mingle with the Warriors.)

CHORUS

Let all the world assemble,
Come all men to this place.

THE FALL OF UG

We wait the words that tremble
Upon Ug's dreadful face.
For us no mad rebelling;
Obedient we stand.
Ug's call is all-compelling;
The world is in his hand.

(Lights are seen approaching on the main highway. Cries of "The King! The King!" and "Hail the King!" are raised. The King and the High Priest are borne in, seated in a palanquin supported on the shoulders of eight bearers. Lords, Nobles, the Scribe and the Jester accompany the palanquin. The King is assisted to mount the throne, while Priests conduct the High Priest to a seat beside the incense altar. Servitors place logs in the sacrificial pit. Torches are set up to supplement the moonlight. The Jester skips about, taunting this one and that, and finally settles at the King's feet. The incense altar is made to send up a column of smoke.)

THE KING: [glancing about questioningly]

The Prince! The Prince! Where hides my son the Prince?

THE CHIEF HUNTSMAN:

We met his youthful party just at eve.
A stag fled high among the distant peaks.
"I'll fetch him down!" exclaimed the Prince, then led
Where none of slower foot might follow him.
We left his faithful Huntsmen at the pass.
They'll bear his load — I swear he'll fetch the stag.

(Lights are seen coming down the mountain and a horn is heard.)

The Prince's horn! Its tone proclaims his kill!

(The Prince enters followed by his four Companions, who carry a stag suspended from a pole. The Chief Huntsman leaps forward, takes the Prince's hand and strikes him on the shoulder in commendation. Other Huntsmen crowd about the stag. The Prince is accorded a cordial reception.)

THE FALL OF UG

THE PRINCE: [*saluting the King and also the High Priest*]

Your pardon, Sire, and yours, if long I have
Delayed the ceremonies of the night.

(The Prince leaps up the steps of the throne, kisses the hand of the King, and sinks at his feet. The High Priest stands before the colossus and raises his arms. All the other Priests stand at his back and lift their arms.)

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Hail, mighty Ug!

CHORUS OF PRIESTS:

Hail, Ug, hail!

(The salutation and chorus are repeated three times, then all the Priests but the High Priest move to one side.)

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Peace to this place and hour.

Mid-Summer holds the world in charmed thrall.
The mantling softness of these stately woods
Enchants the aisles of every lesser grove.
Gone are the rains and floods. Asleep the blasts.
The winds chant only dulcet threnodies.
Clothed are the meadow pastures with white flocks;
The valleys covered o'er with ripening corn.
Each great and little breast of Nature drips
With honey and with milk. All paths drop fat.
It is the hour of harvest and reward.
The husbandman receives his cheerful toll.
The tree throws back its acorn to the ground.
The fold that was protected yields its lamb.
Fear has but nibbled at our hearts the year—
Great Ug awaits his promised recompense.

(Stretching his hands toward the Shepherds.)

The Shepherds bow before Ug's form.

(The Shepherds advance until they stand in front of Ug, and fling down their lambs. They make the Sign of Ug

THE FALL OF UG

and kneel upon one knee, showing grave agitation. The Jester has climbed to an eminence from which he watches the Shepherds in wonder and mockery.)

THE JESTER:

Oh, see our frightened Shepherds bow and weep:
They are as bold as any new-born sheep!

THE HIGH PRIEST:

The Husbandmen their reverence pay.

(The Husbandmen advance, fling down their corn and grapes, make the Sign of Ug and kneel behind the Shepherds.)

The Huntsmen are defenceless fawns.

(The Huntsmen advance, fling down their game, make the Sign of Ug and fall upon one knee behind the Husbandmen.)

To Ug alone the Warriors kneel.

(The Warriors advance, throw down their trophies, make the Sign of Ug and fall upon one knee. The Jester continues his show of scorn.)

THE JESTER:

O waffing Warriors! Are you also bound
To grovel? 'Ware of spiders on the ground!

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Nor holds the world Lord, Prince or august King
Who dares deny Ug's never-ending sway.

(The Lords, the Nobles and the Scribe kneel behind the others, making the Sign of Ug. Then the Prince. The King lays aside crown and scepter and kneels with the others. The Jester skips up the throne steps, puts on the crown, grasps the scepter and seats himself upon the throne.)

THE FALL OF UG

THE JESTER:

Their hearts to senseless god of stone they fling:
I'm no such fool. Forsooth, let me be King!

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Fool of all fools, before Ug smites you down
Prone on the ground and chew repentant dust!

(Two Priests leap up the throne, remove the crown and scepter and fling the Jester to the ground where he grovels. The High Priest signals and the Third Priest rises and sings the Song of Ug, the entire company singing the chorus.)

THE SONG OF UG

Out of the terrible Night,
Out of the Chasm Unknown,
Lacking a star or a light,
Sweeps from the caverns a moan.
Over the rim of the world
Darkness in travail writhes low,
Straight from her womb there is hurled
Ug, bastard scion of Woe.
Oh, see how all mortals are bending;
The jewel each wears is a tear;
Man's homage is given unending
To Ug, God of Fear, to Ug, God of Fear,
to Ug, God of Fear!

CHORUS

O Ug, our poor courage lies quaking —
O Ug, be not deaf to our prayer —
O Ug, crush us not with thine aching.
Ug, spare! Ug, spare! Ug, spare! Ug, spare!
—Spare! —Spare! —Spare! Ug, spare! Ug, spare!

Deep in the breast of mankind,
Close by the chamber of Soul,
Chiefest of treasures enshrined,

THE FALL OF UG

Joy of Life points man his goal.
Swift as a fiend from the dark
Fear comes with sword and with chain —
Man is left fettered and stark,
Joy of Life ravished and slain.
Oh, hark, how all mankind is moaning;
A flood rushes from the world's tear;
Forever men turn with their groaning
To Ug, God of Fear, to Ug, God of Fear,
to Ug, God of Fear!

CHORUS

O Ug, our poor lives we are giving —
O Ug, be not deaf to our prayer —
O Ug, slaughter not Joy of Living.
Ug, spare! Ug, spare! Ug, spare! Ug, spare!
—Spare! —Spare! —Spare! Ug, spare! Ug, spare!

(The final chorus ends with all on their faces. Thereafter the company relaxes and distributes itself as before. Servitors pass through with litters loaded with meats and fruits for the feast. The Jester filches a horn bottle from a litter and takes a drink.)

THE JESTER:

Ho, ho! My belly is an empty waste:
Let's to the feast in yonder glade make haste.

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Peace, fool. Tempt not again Ug's vengeful hand.
Moon shadows mark the hour of fateful choice.
The patient eyes of Ug light with desire.
Our bravest youth shall stand before the god
Like snowy lambs that he may choose his own.
Who are Ug's new Defenders? Who the youth
That have done valiantly?

THE SCRIBE: [unrolling a scroll handed him by the King and reading]

THE FALL OF UG

These has the King set down:
Among the Husbandmen, Althone and Weg,
Who cunningly led water to the vines
Until the grapes nigh burst their purple skins.
Of Shepherds, Tord and Kim are named. All know
They scorned their lives to save the fold from wolves.
Mikail and Elam are the Huntsmen's boast:
Their arrows gone, with stones they slew two bears.
Of warring men are Jud and Shed enrolled:
They fetched a woman captive from a cave
When hostile spears fell like the Autumn rain.
Thus ends the list of those the King acclaim.

(Each of the young men, as his name is called, leaves his companions and leaps forward. When the Prince's name is not read he sinks his head in his hands.)

THE JESTER: *[after a pull at the bottle]*

He names me not, yet death I often dare:
I tease the sleeping King's nose with a hair!

(Roaring at his own joke, the Jester is seized and thrust aside.)

THE KING: *[indicating the Defenders]*

The leafen chaplets set upon their brows:
Their fame be higher than these trees are high.

THE CHIEF WARRIOR:

Pray hold!
How may the scroll of brave youth be complete
Save when my lord the Prince leads all the rest?
How often have I seen him hew his way
In battle and with righteous lance drive back
The foe that numbered him full five to one!

THE KING:

Not through his own, but through another's eyes
A father may see virtue in his son.
Arise, O Prince, a proud Defender thou!

THE FALL OF UG

(The Prince rises joyfully. He does not go down to join the others, being detained by his father's hand. Priests deck each young man with laurel and with a ceremonial vestment.)

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Bring forth the table of the secret stones
That speak the changeless, wordless will of Ug.

(A table or rack having stone slabs upright upon it is brought in and set before the colossus. All the Defenders excepting the Prince gather beside the table.)

Great Ug, the blossom of our race behold;
The noblest and the proudest of our youth.
Regard them well, the fairest lamb approve:
Affix thy seal upon him with the darkening stone.

(The Defenders, lifting their arms to Ug, begin to march around the table. The Jester runs out close to them, then looks back at the throne.)

THE JESTER:

What brave Defender is the kingly son?
He dares not share the risk the others run!

THE PRINCE:

A fool's wise words! My rightful place I claim;
Defender I, and after that the Prince.

(Leaping down the steps the Prince takes his place with the Defenders. The King rises and then sinks doubtfully to his seat.)

THE KING:

It matters not if he be there or here:
Not Ug would rob the throne to feed his maw.

(The Defenders resume their march around the table of stones.)

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Lift each the stone that calls unto his hand.
Ye only play at choosing: Ug's the choice.

THE FALL OF UG

These stones be all as white as wool is white,
Yet when Ug's favored youth lifts up a stone
And turns it so that all our eyes may see,
Behold, it shall be black as raven's wing:
Ug's tongue it shall become to speak his will.

(Each Defender in turn lifts a stone and holding it aloft, slowly turns it around. As the underside of his stone is seen to be white a cry of relief breaks from each Defender's friends. At length the Prince lifts a stone carelessly, holds it above his head and turns it around. The underside is seen to be black. The Prince starts in amazement and lets the stone fall.)

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Ug's choice has fallen on the Prince!

(The sign is recognized and consternation seizes the company. Cries of "The Prince! The Prince!" "It cannot be!" and "It must be so!" are heard. The Prince falters. The King, all but overcome, starts up and is about to protest when the High Priest stops him with an imperative gesture.)

Ug speaks! Let none oppose; let none commend!

THE KING:

What dread mistake is here? Not Ug himself
May claim the Prince and heir for sacrifice!

THE HIGH PRIEST:

The Prince that was is vanished from our eyes:
Behold the lamb Ug chooses as his own!

(Turning to the Prince.)

Salute the fatal tablet with a kiss
That all may know you do consent to die.

(The Second Priest raises the stone from the ground and presents it to the Prince, who dashes it down again.)

THE FALL OF UG

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Does noble Youth so fear to look at Death?

THE PRINCE:

Who says the King's son is afraid to die?
Think you kind Nature has bestowed on me
My father's flesh, bone of his bone, and yet
Withheld the faultless courage of his heart?

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Then why this strange reluctance? Would you dare
Defy the pact our fathers made with Ug?

THE PRINCE:

Hear me, High Priest:
About me now I feel a throng of youths
As they outstretch their pleading hands to me.
Souls are they of Ug's countless victims past.
Souls of Ug's countless victims yet to come.
And all as one they claim my tongue to curse
This unavailing slaughter to an end.

THE SECOND PRIEST:

The poor Prince raves; fear has transformed the lad.

THE JESTER:

The Prince is sane, and all the rest be mad.

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Peace, boy. While earth shall last Ug must be paid.

THE PRINCE:

If obligation pend, let Ug stand forth
With lifted lance, or human champion name
And I will war with all my strength and life
To pay his debt in measure that shall leave
No stern remainder for our sons to pay.

THE YOUNG PRIEST:

What said the Patriarch to us? He told
How on some mystic night the victim should

THE FALL OF UG

Behold a vision seldom seen of men,
And from the vision draw some spirit aid
That should forever rend Ug from our path.

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Heed not the tale, an empty, time-worn dream.
It tells of Ug in dust upon the ground —
See how Ug still predominates the world!
Come, boy; kiss yonder stone. We would proceed.

*(The Second Priest again picks up the fatal stone, but the
Prince giving him no heed turns to the King.)*

THE PRINCE:

My being cries to know a better fate.
Speak, Father; say that old Ug is not so!

THE KING:

My son!
My crown, my scepter would I swift exchange
For answer that would satisfy your prayer.
My reason at Ug's bold pretensions scoffs;
My living senses cry that Ug is true.
Ug I deny, and straight my ears resound
With groans of mortals in the grip of fear.
Ug I deny, and straight my eyes behold
Some yet more dreadful festers of his darts.

THE PRINCE:

My Father and my King, if Ug be so,
Then lead us in rebellion 'gainst old Ug!

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Ha, ha! That foolish word long since I heard.
Speak, King, and tell him what rebellion means.

THE KING: [*cowering*]

I have no words to say.

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Speak now! I voice great Ug's command!

THE FALL OF UG

THE KING: [*hesitatingly, as he comes down from the throne*]

The High Priest's words are flames that melt the locks
On secrets ne'er intended for my son.
Hear now confession of that man who drained
Rebellion's cup down to the poisoned dregs.
Mature was I when lifted to the throne,
And holding steadfast to the good in men;
My people served I with a strong delight.
Succumbed our foes or fled before our fame.
At length none dared intrigue against our peace;
No shackles knew our hearts save Ug's alone.
Long pondered I upon my fancied strength,
Then swore to bring destruction on great Ug.
Mid-Summer Night was nigh. Farewell I bade
That hyacinth of womankind, my queen,
And drew to this accustomed place resolved
That with the hour of sacrifice at hand
Defiance I should thunder to Ug's claim
And rend him with my men from Heaven's path.

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Behold, the memory moves Ug not at all!

THE KING:

E'en as I drew to loose my verbal bolt
A runner breathless sank and gasped his news:
My queen, the twin soul of my soul, was dead!
Our son not yet expected had been born.
The weakened mother clutching him to breast,
Her eyes wild with the light of prophecy,
Screamed that Ug's hideous stamp was on her child!
She died, herself slain by the darts of fear.

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Thus laughed Ug at the hand that threatened him!

THE KING:

A score of years and each year like a score
Have I watched o'er the son, nor once forgot
The sword by spider thread swung in suspense;

THE FALL OF UG

Nor ever have I smiled save when false hope
Lied that my faith in prophecy was fled.
Tonight I drave forebodings from my heart —
Tonight Ug calls my son to sacrifice!
And louder now than voice of her long dead,
And louder than the wretched victim's prayer,
And louder than a father's wailing soul
The universe exclaims, Ug is supreme!

(The Prince, all but overcome by his father's story, approaches the King and falls upon his neck. The Second Priest comes close with the fatal stone. He waits a little while, then rouses the Prince by plucking his sleeve.)

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Revolt no more. The common weal demands
That you shall pay the debtor for us all.

(The Prince releases the King, who slowly remounts the throne. The Prince looks around uncertainly. All await his action. With a gesture of hopeless resignation he seizes the stone, presses his lips to it and lets it fall to the ground. The Defenders bring a white robe and put it on the Prince. Removing the garlands from their necks, they hang seven about the neck of the Prince. The second Priest and the Third Priest spread a rug before the colossus, and two Defenders escort the Prince to this rug. He sinks upon it and buries his face in his arms. A figure, almost nude, but loaded with dazzling barbaric ornaments, glides upon the upper level before Ug, and begins a curious writhing of the body. Three others, similarly costumed, follow him upon the upper level, while a dozen appear upon the lower level. A fanatic dance is performed as a solemn part of the ceremony before Ug. The dance is wild and furious, reaching a frenzy. At its end the dancers whirl away.)

THE HIGH PRIEST: [addressing the Prince upon the rug]

Now are you sealed unto the sacrifice.
A little while we feast. When we return
Be full prepared to pass into Ug's flames.

THE FALL OF UG

(The King leaves the throne. The Nobles support him as he goes away in the direction of the feast. All the company follow with the exception of the High Priest and the Jester. The High Priest goes over to the bowed Prince.)

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Death is the changeless fortune of mankind.
To some it comes as last of countless storms
That bent and marred but could not fell until
The sap of life had brittle with the years.
To others death comes in the quiet noon:
The troubled axe they leave in half-hewn log
Must marvel while it rots. To others still
Death is a breath that shuts the door of life
On eyes still round with wonder at the view.
Some chew the cud until the bitter's gone;
Some never know the cud is aught but sweet.
If called in youth or called in age, all men
Swear solemnly the other way were best.
Peace, boy. What privilege to die for those
Doomed but to live!

(The Prince gives no sign that he has heard. The High Priest departs. The Jester advances, bottle in hand.)

THE JESTER:

Forget Old Graybeard, boy; his trade is woe.
What sophistry can make you glad to go?
Or what, forsooth, should make you glad to stay?
Grief is your certain portion either way.
The fool is wise, he quick accepts the rule;
The wise man long denies it—he's the fool.
Forgetfulness alone can scoff man's plight—
Good liquor is the very salve of life!

(The Jester tries to force his bottle upon the Prince. He is thrust away and moving about, he sings.)

THE JESTER'S SONG

When the sweets of the world have been captured;
When joys are plucked ripe from the tree;
And the senses no longer enraptured

THE FALL OF UG

Awake to the dull mockery;
Then the mortal embittered to madness,
All bereft of the false dream of gladness,
Will not spurn the soft call in his sadness,
"Let wine be the solace for thee."

So fill up the bowl to the brim;
Let the flagon not balk at the rim.
The man who will sip
With a smirk of the lip
Is a man from whose hand
The good cup may well slip;
But the man who swigs hard we will bless —
He has lived and knows life is a mess.
He drinks if he dies for it,
Dying, he cries for it —
This be his prize for it —
Sweet forgetfulness!

When the pains of existence shall thicken;
When the urge of desire grows thin;
When passion's pulse ceases to quicken;
And love is of things that have been;
Then the grape sheds its blood without stinting
And the mortal forgets his resenting,
Sees his sky glow again with new tinting —
Good wine is the solace of men!

So fill up the bowl to the brim;
Let the flagon not balk at the rim.
The man who will sip
With a smirk of the lip
Is a man from whose hand
The good cup may well slip;
But the man who swigs hard we will bless —
He has lived and knows life is a mess.
He drinks if he dies for it,
Dying, he cries for it —
This be his prize for it —
Sweet forgetfulness!

THE FALL OF UG

(The Jester, walking unsteadily, departs in the direction taken by all the others. The Prince, left alone, gets up, lifts a spear a Warrior has left behind and stands before the colossus. His speech is emotional recitative.)

THE PRINCE:

O mocking monster that befouls the world,
Dare but expose some vulnerable joint,
And though fiends straight devour me will I drive
This iron lance to end thy cursèd spell.

(The Prince hurls the lance and it strikes against the colossus. The lance is shattered to pieces by the impact. The Prince's attitude changes to entreaty.)

O endless Fear, whom mortals may not slay,
The King's son prays you grant this single boon:
Speak now and say my death shall terminate
This ghastly sacrifice of bravest youths—
Swear none come after me—and I, the Prince,
Will bless old Ug and leap into thy flame!

(The Prince sinks to his knees and waits expectantly. When no answer comes he rises in utter despair. He turns his back upon Ug and staggers away. He gropes this way and that. He encounters a great tree. He clutches the bark and his eyes travel up the trunk. He regards this tree and the other trees about him as if really seeing them for the first time, then sings.)

THE PRINCE'S SONG

Behold my woe, ye Trees.
Behold old Ug's disdain.
What cares he for my pain,
This Ug that gluts on human agonies?
Ye tremble not, O Trees!
How stand ye so serene?
What vision have you seen
That smites fear's shackles from your steadfast
knees?

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THE FALL OF UG

O Trees, how lift the head?
Assurance is your crown;
You only bow not down.
What secret frees your hearts from palsied dread?
Sweet spirit of this Grove,
Let mortal share thy calm.
My soul cries for thy balm.
Come to me nameless messenger of love!

(A flute ripples briefly, high up the hill. It repeats off at one side, then off at the other, then near the Prince. Trip, the fairy, is seen. His pipe still at his lips, he alights upon a rock.)

TRIP:

As ye called me so come I;
Bid me stay or swift I fly.

THE PRINCE:

Stay! Stay! O living fairy, who are you?

TRIP:

Ho, ho! Ask the snakes and snails—
How I twist their lazy tails!
Ask the squirrel in the tree—
Would he store nuts but for me?
Ask the linnet, quail or jay—
I command them when to lay.
When I speak, madrona tree
Dons a purple robe for me.
Master I of birds and bees,
Friend, companion of the trees.
Flock I guard, and herd and drove—
Lord and spirit of this Grove!
Fear me, mortal, fear my whip!

(Lifting a branch above his head he threatens, then flings it away and clasps his arms about himself in ecstasy.)

Hi! I love you! I am Trip!

THE FALL OF UG

THE PRINCE:

Sweet Trip, full often have I roamed this wood:
How falls it that we never met till now?

TRIP:

Oft as in this Grove you've strayed
Trip has faithful shadow played;
Sometimes followed where you led,
Often flitted on ahead.
I have whistled, you have slept;
I have piped and you have wept.
In the bush I've teased the bear;
Lured your foolish arrows there;
After you mad bruin went —
It was I who stole the scent!

THE PRINCE:

Alas, alas, not once saw I your form!

TRIP:

Change has come to you, not me;
Faith has made your eyes to see.

THE PRINCE:

Where be your home; not near this dreadful spot?

TRIP:

Dreadful, dreadful, dreadful bind
Eyes of men who will be blind!

(With merriment he dances about, then sobers and goes on.)

Home? Ah, mortal, you shall see
How Trip grew a homing tree.
Once a sapling all unblest
Came into the Grove to rest.
Full ten thousand moons have sped
Since I found it all but dead;
Barkless, leafless, white with pain,

THE FALL OF UG

Summer zephyrs might have slain.
Called I humming-birds and bees,
Bade them whisk to farthest leas.
Flower, bush and vine run rife
Sent me each one drop of life.
Lo, the sapling bent its head,
Quaffed and flushed a living red.
At my word the beaked birdfolk
Wove a warm majestic cloak;
Teeth of squirrels wise and old
Worked expansion in each fold.
Leaves were wanting, in their place
Spiders spun the rarest lace.
Came the day my tree in ease
Sang to soothe the orphan breeze;
Came the splendid night at last,
It defied the winter blast.
"Grow!" I cried. It lifted high,
Pillared up the tired sky.
I dreamed immortality—
See my deathless redwood tree!

THE PRINCE:

Strange is the secret of your life, old tree,
Grown by a fairy for his castle home.

TRIP:

Fool you are, oh fool you be!
Is my purpose hard to see?
Need I in such tree to dwell
Whom a poppy serves as well?
Why grew I these shafts so tall,
Like a Heaven-kissing wall,
But to hide from mortal eyes
Yonder stony god of lies?

THE PRINCE:

No fairy knows the awful power of Ug.
Alas, bright Trip, perchance yourself should fear.

THE FALL OF UG

TRIP:

Ug was once a rock and bare
Save for vines it flung in air.
Men beheld it block the path,
Marvelled at the stone in wrath,
Loudly called to it, "Begone!"
Rocks are deaf, the rock stayed on.
Lack of faith like subtle darts
Set men trembling in their hearts.
Yon dread face they graved through tears
With the chisels of their fears.
With their evil thoughts alone
They drave life into this stone;
With impure imaginings
Raised a god of countless stings.

THE PRINCE:

Say not a simple stone bars Heaven's path.
What stone could cast such shadow black as doom,
And peopled mayhap by such awful shapes
That Ug in contrast is most fair?

TRIP:

I know panther, mouse and bee;
Awful shapes are strange to me.
Nameless monsters Trip would find—
Hi, let's see what hides behind!

(Trip passes through the air to the shoulder of the colossus, shades his eyes with his hand and peers earnestly into the shaded hillside above.)

Not a monster rolls in sight;
Nothing is but lack of light.
When you stand beside his head
Awful Ug is all but fled.

THE PRINCE:

Deride not great Ug to his face. Beware!
He holds the world's heart in his iron beak.

THE FALL OF UG

TRIP:

Is it fearful to be near?
What this strange, soft sound I hear?

(Trip climbs to where he can lay a hand on the beak, then draws back in mock fright. He repeats this, looking playfully down at the Prince. He thrusts his hand into the beak and draws out something which he hides under both hands against his breast while he laughs and chuckles.)

While this beak holds men dismayed
See what nests here unafraid!

(Trip tosses into the air a dove he had lifted from its nest in Ug's beak and the bird flies away. Trip drops back to the ground near the Prince.)

Music comes to cheer your heart:
Hear the nightly chorus start.

THE PRINCE:

Ah, gentle Trip, mock not my tortured plight.
No music hear I save the cricket's dirge.

TRIP:

Hist now! Let your mood be ripe—
'Tis some far off fairy's pipe.
(Both listen with hand to ear.)

THE PRINCE:

Alas, no sweet tones greet my dreary ear!

TRIP:

Deaf your ear to woodland sighs
With long listening to men's lies.
Hi! There sounds the call again—
Now the answer from yon glen!
(Both listen.)

It comes!

THE PRINCE:

Not so!

THE FALL OF UG

TRIP:

Now again!

THE PRINCE:

Only silence!

TRIP:

List with all your ears and mind!

(After a time the rising notes of a pipe are heard. The sound dies and is repeated off at a distant place. The sound is heard very faintly at first and then more clearly, as the reward of intent listening. The Prince shows by his joyful manner that he has heard at last.)

Now the chord runs all around
Till the woods with trills resound.
Open now to fresh delight;
Share the harmony of night.

(The instrumental chord runs through the woods. Trip dances about, charmed that the Prince is able to hear.)

THE PRINCE:

It seems I hear who never heard before!

TRIP:

Now from hill and cavern dim
Shall uplift the woodfolk hymn.
Sing, ye sounding forest, sing!
Ring, ye living redwoods, ring!

(The haunting, wordless song of the woodfolk is heard in one place, then in another, and the ripple of it runs along the hill. Finally it is heard coming from every side, with indescribable effect.)

THE PRINCE:

I should have sworn my faculties complete,
Yet deaf was I and knew it not until
The wondrous music of the forest night
Revealed and healed and left me lacking naught.

THE FALL OF UG

TRIP:

Deaf you were and knew it not,
Deaf as any stone, I wot.
Having eyes you think you see—
Blind as bat at noon you be!

THE PRINCE:

Alas, my eyes see more than cheers my heart.

TRIP:

Worse than blind, poor mortal eyes,
Seeing clouds in summer skies;
Seeing ugly and untrue,
Until Beauty hides from view;
Spying woes on ev'ry side
That no flowing tears may hide.
Try your eyes; gaze either way;
See the woodfolk at their play.
Bear with their mischievous plight—
Soft the air Mid-Summer Night.
See them skip and romp and prance;
See, they beckon you to dance!

THE PRINCE:

If such things be, then truly I be blind!

TRIP:

How may golden visions rise
When you never lift your eyes?
How might you behold my face
Where another saw but space
Save that when old Ug appalled
You alone looked up and called?
Great now your reward shall be,
Loosed shall be the mystery;
Swiftly shall you pass the door
Mortal seldom passed before.
Mighty, mighty vainly knocks;
Lowly, lowly turns the locks.

THE FALL OF UG

Bend and pluck humility—
Sweet oxalis is the key!

(The Prince stoops and plucks a stalk of the oxalis which he holds up.)

Bay leaves, jonquils, dragonflies!
Woodfolk, greet his famished eyes.

(A company of fairies is seen and a lively frolic follows, during which the fairies frequently leave the ground and go sailing away through the trees. Others come flying from distant parts to join the fun. Objects which appeared to be bushes and rocks stir and move and are seen to be fairy folk. Suddenly the Prince drops his oxalis key. The fairies fly away and the vision fades rapidly.)

THE PRINCE:

My key I've lost! Quick, give it back! But stay—
The King, the Priests, the company I call
That all may share this vision of delight.

TRIP:

Ho, ho! Blindness binds them all.
When did they look up and call?
Smallest fairy knows no fear
When the fiercest man be near.
When mad mortals hurl their best
Into Ug's consuming breast,
Fairies join their unheard cries
To the woe of him who dies.
Even now their eyes are dew—
They prepare to weep for you.

THE PRINCE:

Your words recall me to my bitter fate.
E'en now approaching shouts proclaim my hour.
The hope that had sprung up was but a dream.

TRIP:

Hi! What know you of dreams?
What is true and what but seems?

THE FALL OF UG

Learn which is reality;
Therein lies the golden key.

THE PRINCE: [*when shouting is heard*]

They come! Stay, gentle Trip, desert me not.
When my sad eyes must close in hideous death
Let their last vision rest on you, else I
Upon the threshold turn to curse the world.

TRIP:

Trip must fade nor linger on.
Come your people I am gone.
How might you hold me in view
When their blindness may blind you?
This my last injunction be:
Heed my mystic redwood tree.
When Ug scourged, you called and lo,
Now you know what fairies know!
More than fairies know you need —
Seek and find some higher meed.
When men wrestle with their fear
Often does the path grow clear.
Faith once more your eyes anoint —
Look where redwood fingers point!

(At his final word Trip whisks away. The Prince runs appealingly to the spot where the fairy stood. The shouting grows louder. The King enters and is escorted to the throne. The Priests, led by the High Priest, take their places. The company is quickly composed as before. The Prince appears to see something invisible to the others.)

THE PRINCE:

Look, King and Priests; look, Warriors, Huntsmen, all.
See how the fairy master of this Grove laughs down
In scorn of all our bootless sacrifice!
Fear Ug no more! Great Ug is but a stone!
Oh, see you not sweet Trip? Ask him to tell!

THE FALL OF UG

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Peace, lad; fear has distraught your mind.
Stand boldly as the kingly son should stand,
Nor shame us with your monstrous dread of death.

THE PRINCE:

What words of mine could make you understand?

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Far spent the night; make ready for the rites.
(Priests direct Husbandmen and others in placing additional logs in the sacrificial pit and the flames are lighted.)

THE PRINCE:

I see and hear: you all be blind and deaf!

THE CHIEF WARRIOR: *[to the Prince]*

Oh, falter not nor forfeit our esteem:
True valor scoffs at fate and laughing dies.

THE PRINCE:

Illusion's victim — worse than Ug's — am I.
They think me coward, else they call me fool.

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Lay off the garlands. Aid him to prepare.
(Priests offer to assist the Prince to remove the garlands from about his neck, but he motions them away.)

THE PRINCE:

My hands suffice: straight I disrobe my soul.
(He lifts off a garland and holds it in his hands.)
Let this be love of father, home and friends:
My dearest tie melts at the touch of Ug.
(He pitches the garland into the sacrificial pit, then lifts another one from his neck.)

This be ambition; how its roses flamed
Ere Ug's foul breath turned every petal sere!

THE FALL OF UG

(He flings the garland into the pit and lifts off another.)

This be sweet charity; it was a robe
That hid the world's defects from trusting eyes
Until Ug's hand displayed the horrid truth.

*(He flings the garland into the pit and lifts the remaining
four from his neck.)*

Fair hope was this; a lily stung by frost:
This truthfulness, this pride, this loyalty.
Ug's fetid touch blasts all their purity.

*(He flings all the garlands into the pit, then tears off his
white robe, standing nude but for a breech cloth and
sandals.)*

This garment be outrageous joy of life,
A mocking pretense that enfolds all men,
Yet at the first rude plucking rends apart

(Rending the robe he throws it aside.)

And leaves us naked to such foe as Ug!

THE HIGH PRIEST:

We wait with ready sacrifice that Ug
May speak his promise of a blood-red dawn.

THE YOUNG PRIEST:

Pray let the Patriarch recall his tale:
Mayhap he will pronounce the season come
When red dawn shall be swallowed up by white
In token that Ug's day at last be done.

*(While speaking the Young Priest has advanced to the
Prince, though looking at and imploring the Patriarch,
who moves his head doubtfully. The High Priest seizes
the Young Priest and hurls him to the ground at one
side. The High Priest lifts his hands and all but the
Prince fall upon their faces. At length the face of the
colossus begins to glow with red.)*

THE HIGH PRIEST:

Red dawn is nigh. Ug calls for sacrifice!

THE FALL OF UG

(Priests and others seize the Prince and lift his naked form above their heads preparatory to casting it upon the outstretched palms of Ug, from which it will drop into the pit of flame. At this moment Trip's pipe is heard loudly rippling somewhere close at hand. The sound startles the Prince and arouses him to desperate action. He struggles out of the hands of the Priests, springs to the top of a rock and with his back to the colossus, raises his arms to Heaven.)

THE PRINCE:

O God of Truth, where point the redwood hands,
Thy promise be established now in me!
Thy kingdom comes; Thy thunders vanquish Fear;
Thy will is done; Thy lightnings rend Fear's form;
Thy word unbars the path that leads to Thee;
Thy crystal dawn enwraps the reborn world,
And lights men's famished eyes to know Thy face!

(The Priests appear to be frantic in their anger and despair, but the Prince's attitude of commanding faith makes them afraid to lay hand upon him. As the Prince remains with arms uplifted, thunder is heard. The stage grows dark. The thunder culminates in a cannon-like detonation. Lightning flashes and rends the colossus. In the noise and mystery of a convulsion, Ug is dimly seen to shrivel and go down into utter nothingness. With the settling of the dust quiet ensues and the white road is seen to be complete across the spot where once Ug sat. Growing light reveals the path leading up the hillside. Celestial beings are seen to beckon and to sweep downward toward the company of people. The latter lift their arms in gladness and, led by the Prince, commence to climb upward. As they pass over Ug's former seat they begin to sing a world hymn of rejoicing. The chorus is caught up by many unseen choirs in remote places until all the world seems to be voicing its rapture.)

THE FALL OF UG

THE WORLD HYMN

The Lord made the earth and the fulness thereof;
By His hands were the deep places laid;
The strength of the mountains the breath of His mouth;
In His palm are the mighty seas weighed.
He spake and the wilderness wept with new rain;
From the dry ground the water-springs came.
He looked on the earth and it trembled with joy;
The hilltops He touched into flame.
Let the floods clap their hands, let the winds shout their
praise;
Let the mountains bow low and be furled;
The Lord from His high sanctuary hath come;
His lightnings enlighteneth the world.
The gods of the nations are idols of clay;
The sun hath our Lord full arrayed:
The Lord lifts His voice, let the nations be dumb—
“Lo, man in mine image is made:
“Dominion be his over earth and himself:
“The eyes of his faith none shall bind.
“When perfect love casteth out fear from my son,
“Lo, in him be the infinite mind!”

Let all the nations
And all the peoples

Rejoice

And be glad

Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice, etc.

(The last vain impulse of fallen Ug is seen in the occurrence of his red dawn. The red illumination seems for a brief space to drive Ug's colorful suggestion into all the earth, but meaning and motive have gone, and presently a new and strange sublimity creeps into the breaking of the day. To men's unaccustomed eyes the novel rays at first are green, but as they overcome and swallow up the old manifestation of blood, it is seen that the promise is indeed fulfilled, that crystal dawn is come to enwrap the hearts of those escaped from Ug in nameless glory and in endless peace.)

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC

After close study of the play I realized the fact that Ug could claim no single country as his own, but that his awful power held the world and dominated all nations, savage and civilized, alike. Consequently in my conception of the music I have not adhered to any one form, style or school; on the contrary, I have written "with a free hand," breaking theoretical rules at my pleasure in order to get most thoroughly into the atmosphere of Mr. Steele's book. Since Ug dominates the hearts of all the characters, Ug must have an unmistakable and powerful motif which rings out in commanding, awe-inspiring tones at all times. It must be ever in the ear as well as in the mind and heart; hence I have chosen this as the Ug theme or motif:



It is used in many forms and developments. It is heard at the beginning of the Prelude, being announced by the entire brass choir; again it proclaims its glory and power when the world gathers before the colossus to do homage, this wild harmonization introducing the entrance of the clans:



In the Song of Ug the motif frequently appears in the accompaniment of the song, while the chorus uses it in still another form:

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC

Tenor
Bass
Organ

O Ug our poor country - like gathering -

Thus the motif appears and reappears, sometimes in warning and again in jealous frenzy, as though Ug himself feared that the truth might be learned by his slaves and his power lost for all time.

In the Prelude, after the triumphant declaration of the Ug motif, the atmosphere changes to one of calm, in a short episode sung by three French horns:

Andantino

In this is denoted the natural peace and calm of the Grove. Through it is heard a mournful voice (the Cor Anglais) pleading with broken heart for recognition. It is the voice of Truth begging that it be listened to and heeded, but no one and no thing pays attention to it save only the evening breeze that seems to follow the mournful strain in its wanderings, looking for a mind or heart to receive it.

Cor Anglais
Trompe

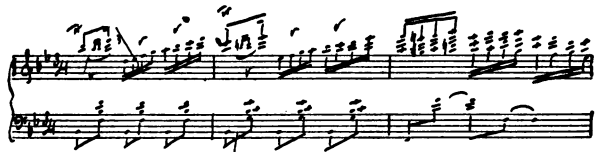
Adagio

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC

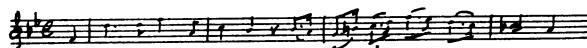
The voice hopes and trusts that it will find lodgment (as it eventually does), because it knows that its reception will cause to spring up a strength, glory and eternal beauty before which Fear must vanish as fog vanishes before the sun. When, after its hard struggle, it is finally recognized, there occurs the downfall of the coarse and boastful Ug; and the Ug theme dies away before the glorious, overwhelming motif of Truth.



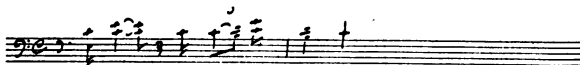
In the Intermezzo I have "tone-pictured" the transition from afternoon to night as nearly as I could. The jovial, happy little scene in which Trip takes his music lesson from a bird is merely a short duet between a flute and piccolo, the theme being as follows:



The next number of importance is the entrance of the groups. In this we have first the motif of the Husbandmen (tenors):



Next is the motif of the Huntsmen (first basses):

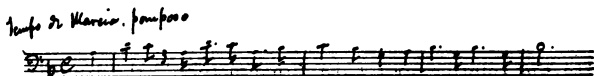


The Shepherds (second tenors) follow, their song being accompanied by the pastoral music of the pipes:

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC



Last of the groups come the Warriors (second basses):



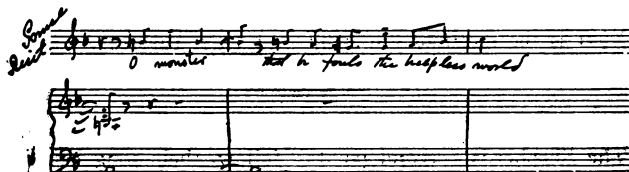
Then comes an ensemble of all the groups, with the Ug motif dominating.

The Dance of the Fanatics is a wild, weird motif, purely suggestive of a barbaric religious frenzy.

In the Drinking Song of the Jester, the motif of the refrain is the same in each occurrence, while the verses themselves are foreign to each other. This is the motif of the refrain:



The distracted young Prince, left alone before Ug to whom he is soon to be sacrificed, dares Ug to meet him in combat:



SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC

Getting no response, the Prince appeals in another manner. He begs Ug to swear that his death shall be the last sacrifice demanded, whereupon the Prince will gladly leap into the flame:

Handwritten musical score for a scene. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "you will die", "after the name come after me", "and of the", "Prince ye & the Prince will then set us", "and", "leap in to the flame". The piano part features complex rhythmic patterns and chords.

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC

Receiving no reply, the Prince turns away in despair and discovers the trees. He looks at their upward pointing shafts, and it is during his appeal to them that we hear once more the mournful, earnest appeal of the motif of Truth, beseeching the Prince to heed it:

The musical score consists of two systems. The first system is for the Prince, with the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "As hold my eyes ye". The second system is for the Trees, with the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are "Trees be - hold old days - Dis - pain". Both systems feature a vocal line with lyrics and a piano accompaniment with a prominent upward-pointing motif.

Trip's joyous motif is suddenly heard again, before he reveals himself to the Prince:

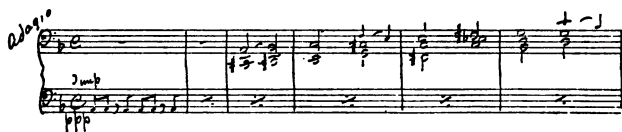
The musical score is a single system for Trip's joyous motif. It is marked "Alto Piccolo" and features a melodic line with a piano accompaniment. The motif is characterized by a series of upward-pointing notes.

SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC

Next, the call of the fairies is heard. Then the fairies appear and dance and gambol and dart through the air on silken wings. The birds of the forest lend their notes to the musical rhythm; the friendly quail take flight to clear the way for the fairy dancers, and through the dance birds are heard calling as if expressing their approval:



The Finale, which is the next number of musical importance, is announced by the timpani in solemn, measured tone as the Prince is being prepared for his death. The voices of two bassoons add greater color of sadness:



SYNOPSIS OF THE MUSIC

While the Prince is in the depths of despair, the Truth motif is again heard begging for recognition. The youth seems to feel its unknown strength and influence. The Priests are seized with fear as the Prince lifts his voice in prayerful declaration. Thunder and lightning ensue. As Ug is demolished, the Truth motif rings up triumphantly. Light, Truth's counterpart, floods the place where once darkness reigned, and the World Hymn of rejoicing is heard:

Motif

The Lord made the earth and the firmament of the sky —

hands over the deep places — The strength of the

On his path on the mighty sea —

Transcends the wrath of his voice —

The motif of Truth sings on in overwhelming majesty. Fear is vanquished.

HERMAN PERLÉT.

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