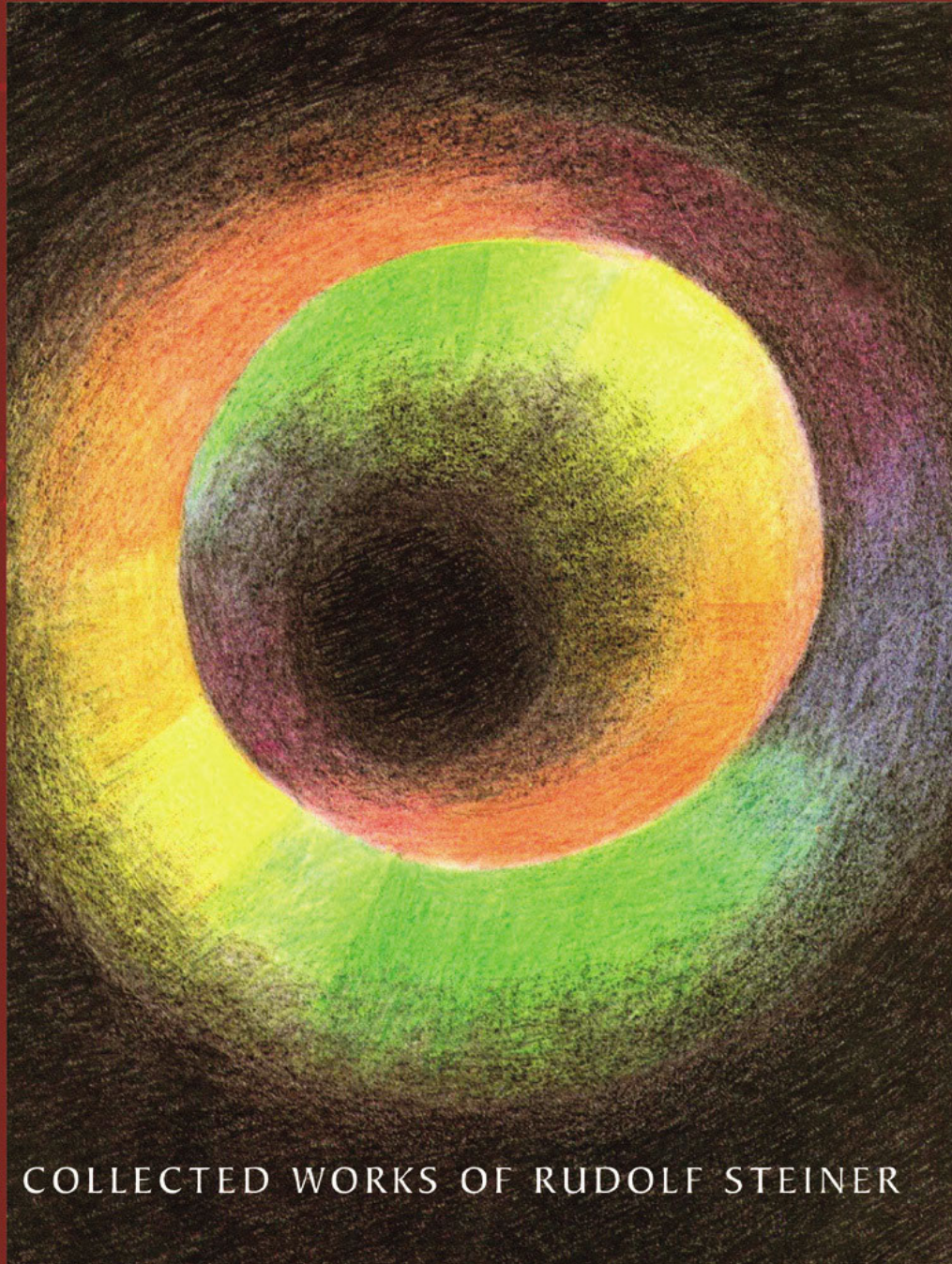


FOUR MODERN MYSTERY DRAMAS

THE DOORWAY OF INITIATION – THE TRIAL OF THE SOUL –
THE GUARDIAN OF THE THRESHOLD – THE SOULS AWAKEN



THE COLLECTED WORKS OF RUDOLF STEINER



FOUR MODERN MYSTERY DRAMAS

THE DOORWAY OF INITIATION

THE TRIAL OF THE SOUL

THE GUARDIAN OF THE THRESHOLD

THE SOULS AWAKEN

TRANSLATED AND INTRODUCED BY RICHARD RAMSBOTHAM

RUDOLF STEINER

RUDOLF STEINER PRESS

CW 14

Rudolf Steiner Press
Hillside House, The Square
Forest Row, RH18 5ES

www.rudolfsteinerpress.com

Published by Rudolf Steiner Press 2023

Originally published in German under the title Vier Mysteriendramen
(volume 14 in the Rudolf Steiner Gesamtausgabe or Collected Works) by
Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach.

Based on the fifth German edition 1998

The ‘seal’ drawings for the four plays were designed by Rudolf Steiner for
the first edition 1910-1913

Published by permission of the Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung,
Dornach

© Rudolf Steiner Nachlassverwaltung, Dornach, Rudolf Steiner Verlag
1998

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A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978 1 85584 642 5

Cover by Morgan Creative

Typeset by Symbiosys Technologies, Vishakapatnam, India

Printed and bound by 4Edge Ltd., Essex

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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

RUDOLF Steiner wrote and staged his first Mystery Drama in 1910; the second drama followed in 1911, and the third and fourth in 1912 and 1913. The first performances of the dramas took place under the direction of Rudolf Steiner in Munich as private events, only accessible to members of the Theosophical Society—and from 1913 the Anthroposophical Society—as follows:

The Doorway of Initiation at the Schauspielhaus on 15 August 1910

The Trial of the Soul at the Gärtnerplatz-Theater on 17 August 1911

The Guardian of the Threshold at the Gärtnerplatz-Theater on 24 August 1912

The Souls Awaken at the Volkstheater on 22 August 1913

The performance of the fifth drama was planned for the summer of 1914. As in previous years, Rudolf Steiner intended to write it before the rehearsals began. Tragically, the First World War broke out in August. The festival events had to be cancelled and the fifth drama, fully conceived by Rudolf Steiner, was sadly never committed to paper.

The complete performance of the four existing dramas, planned for the summer of 1923 in the newly built Goetheanum in Dornach, and for which Rudolf Steiner had already begun preparations, did not take place due to the catastrophic fire that destroyed the building on New Year's Eve 1922/23.

After Rudolf Steiner's death in 1925, the first two Mystery Dramas were performed in 1928 under the direction of Marie Steiner-von Sivers at the opening of the second Goetheanum, with the third and fourth dramas following shortly after.

The Doorway of Initiation on 30 September 1928

The Trial of the Soul on 4 October 1928

The Guardian of the Threshold on 29 September 1929

The Souls Awaken on 10 June 1930

A complete performance of the four dramas took place for the first time at Christmas 1930 for members of the General Anthroposophical Society and for the public on 6, 8, 11 and 14 August 1934. Since then, the four Mystery Dramas have been performed regularly, as public events, at the Goetheanum. They have also been performed in translation in many countries around the world.

In August 1923.

Performances

of Modern Mystery Dramas will take place
at the

Goetheanum

Dornach, Switzerland
(quite near to Bâle)

4 Series of performances will be given during
4 weeks.

Each Series takes one week and comprises 4
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Tickets will be issued for complete series or
for single Performances.

Admission to series of 4 Performances 200 fr. (Swiss)
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Handwritten announcement by Rudolf Steiner

INTRODUCTION

THE following four ‘modern Mystery Dramas’—as their author once named them on a flyer he wrote in English (see facsimile opposite) are the beginning of something quite new in the evolution of drama—and radically expand what it was previously possible to explore and present on stage.

It has been increasingly recognized that the earliest origins of drama lay in the distant past in the ancient Mysteries and their Mystery centres. These were seen as being of essential importance for the cultures of which they were a part, even though their teachings and rites were kept strictly secret. The claim to the very first drama has been made for a kind of play performed within Ancient Egyptian initiation rituals.* It is also known that some form of ‘ancient Mystery Drama’ formed part of the initiation rites neophytes underwent in the Mysteries of Eleusis in Ancient Greece.† The radical new step of drama being performed on an open stage, before a public audience, was taken by Aeschylus, the first of the great Greek tragedians. This step was not without its dangers. Aeschylus had been brought up in Eleusis and was accused of having betrayed the Mysteries in one of his plays,‡ a crime punishable by death. He was acquitted when it was proved he had never been initiated and that any similarity to happenings or teachings within the Mysteries was coincidental. Through Aeschylus, therefore, drama stepped out of its childhood home within the Mysteries and out into the public world. Aeschylus stumbled, as it were, out of the Mysteries, revealing them without intending to, as he (and the art of drama with him) stepped out into the open light of modern culture.

Over 2,000 years later, Rudolf Steiner, one could say, took the reverse path to Aeschylus. In no way abandoning, but rather developing further the great cultural gifts humanity had won for itself in the meantime, Steiner found the way once more into the realms formerly encountered in the Mysteries—and just as old forms of Mystery Drama existed in the old Mysteries, so he created new forms of Mystery Drama suited for the new possibilities of

today. He (and the art of drama with him) stumbled, as it were, not back into the old Mysteries but freely, consciously and openly, forward into new ones.*

Steiner was not rejecting drama as it had developed until then, but rather taking it further, in accordance with what is demanded and possible today.

He once briefly outlined the evolution of drama from Ancient Greece to Shakespeare, to what he was now attempting:

The Ancient Greek actors wished to avoid presenting the individual human element. That is why they wore extensions to their legs and feet (called 'cothurni') and let their voices resound through a simple musical instrument. For they wished to raise the dramatic action above the individual and personal.

I am not speaking, however, against naturalism, which for a certain age was inevitable and right. For when Shakespeare created his dramatic characters in their supreme perfection, the stage had been reached of presenting human beings in all their humanness. A very different need and artistic feeling was present at that time.

But now the time has come when we must find our way back to the spiritual, also in poetic art; we must find the way again to presenting dramatic figures in which human beings, as spiritual beings as well as bodily ones, are able to move amidst the spiritual happenings of the world, which permeate everything.

I have made a first weak attempt at this in my Mystery Dramas. People do not converse there as they do in the market-place or the street, but as they

do when higher spiritual impulses play between them, and their instincts, desires and passions are crossed by paths of destiny, of karma, as these develop over centuries and millennia in repeated earthly lives.

[...] We must not lose what we have gained by having for centuries now held up the imitation of nature as an artistic ideal. Those who deride materialism are bad artists as well as bad scientists. [...] We must have the will really to grasp hold of and to penetrate, spiritually, the material world; [...] We must—though not by developing dry symbolism or allegory—find our way back into the spiritual.*

Steiner described what he was doing as ‘spiritual realism’, for it presents spiritual realities on stage. Drama of this kind, he says—and it is our own experience working with the plays—can be deeply satisfying to people’s sense for reality, regardless of whether they view the world spiritually or materialistically. In the Mystery Dramas:

[...] a certain artistic element has been created in which everything is spiritually realistic. One who thinks realistically—a genuinely, artistic and sensitive realist—experiences a certain amount of suffering at unrealistic performances. Even what at a certain level can give great satisfaction can be at another level a source of pain. [...] Materialistic and spiritual things don’t need to but can contradict each other. But there is no need for what is realistic and what is spiritual to contradict each other and what is spiritually realistic can be admired and found wonderful [bewundenswert] even by a materialistic person.†

The plays are a strongly grounded in the human dramatic element— with a wide range of characters going through human trials and challenges, in many different spheres of life. When this human element is gone beyond— when the dramas expand to become Mystery Dramas— spiritual beings and realms and experiences are directly and artistically presented. It is a misunderstanding to think that Steiner is describing, cognitively, spiritual realities, as he does in his lectures and books. The more we work with the Mystery Dramas, the more we discover that every scene, however complex, is artistically and dramatically conceived, in ways befitting the realities being presented.

Their artistic form creates many new practical theatrical demands and questions regarding how to perform and stage them. In terms of their content, however, and what they present, they also go far beyond the previous limits of drama.

We experience, for example, the different aspects of people's souls— both harmonious and divisive—appearing on stage. Steiner's first Mystery Drama appeared shortly before the lectures he gave on psychosophy*—or spiritual psychology—and it is surely no coincidence when we hear in the 'Prelude' to The Doorway of Initiation that Sophia's husband is away at a psychology conference, where his new relationship to psychology is described as being unlikely to be understood—as unlikely, no doubt, as what is presented in these plays!

We see direct encounters of someone (Johannes) with their own double—or Doppelgänger. We see the appearance of beneficent spiritual beings on stage, such as the Guardian of the Threshold—and adversarial ones, such as Lucifer and Ahriman, experiencing how the latter two beings work and reveal (or do not reveal) themselves. We experience many forms of spiritual deceptions, trials and breakthroughs. We experience elemental nature beings (in the fourth play) and the presence of those who have died.

In the third play we also experience a character (Dr Strader) working on a new form of 'etheric' technology. Steiner made sketches for Strader's 'machines', models of which were created and presented on stage.

There are also (in the second and fourth plays) extended scenes depicting the characters' previous lives on earth and even (in the fourth play) scenes showing their experiences in the spiritual worlds between two lives. In the fourth play we also witness a neophyte's initiation in Ancient Egypt, followed by scenes where the characters who have inwardly beheld this event must come to terms with its consequences for their present lives.

Increasingly as the plays go on, and particularly in the third and fourth Mystery Dramas, the focus turns to the healthy transformation of modern civilization, specifically, in the fourth play, in the form of a modern factory. But in order to bring this about there is nothing, seemingly, either on earth or in the spiritual worlds, that can remain unaddressed. The fourth Mystery Drama has no 'happy ending' and the whole project in the play may even be said to 'fail' outwardly. In view of today's civilizational challenges and the threat of society plunging into some form of technocratic dystopia, to conclude with any kind of utopian solution would obviously be absurd.

Steiner's Mystery Dramas, if taken seriously, offer us, both individually and socially, huge help towards avoiding such a plunge. They offer no illusory ending, but they do bring every character to where they should prove able to meet quite differently, courageously and consciously, whatever the future may bring and ask.

The first Mystery Drama, *The Doorway of Initiation*, lays the basis for modern Mystery Drama. Aside from the extraordinary path travelled by Johannes Thomasius and the other characters, the possibilities of drama are developed throughout the play, until modern Mystery Drama has been born.

The second Mystery Drama, *The Trial of the Soul*, sees a heightened unfolding of what was begun in the first play. In *The Doorway of Initiation* we watch the metamorphosis of fairy tale (specifically of Goethe's fairy tale, *The Green Snake and the Beautiful Lily*) into mature Mystery Drama,

with human characters replacing the figures of Goethe's tale and direct spiritual experiences and encounters replacing fairy tale scenes. The Trial of the Soul, as its title suggests and as the main characters each discover in the first five scenes, is far from being a fairy tale. (Although it contains in Scene 5 the most extensive of all Felicia Balde's fairy tales within the Mystery Dramas.) The play's central scenes (6, 7, 8, 9) then present an extensive portrayal of the characters' previous lives in the Middle Ages, as experienced by three of the characters (Maria, Johannes and Capesius). In the following scenes these three characters come to terms (or are unable to) with the lives they have experienced—and the final scene (in the Sun Temple) picks up the threads of what remains unresolved and ends by looking ahead to all that may change this in future.

The third Mystery Drama, The Guardian of the Threshold, whose events happen thirteen years after those of the first play, begins with a previously 'secret' Mystery centre opening its doors to the public. This deed goes unexpectedly 'wrong', leading all the main characters into intense and interconnected crises. At the furthest point of these, they find themselves at the threshold of the spiritual world, where they face the trials through which they may not only resolve their individual crises, but also, eventually, play a part in healing the crisis in the Mystery school, transforming its way of working from one based on handed-down tradition to one suited to free and individual human beings now. This transformation then takes place in the final scene of the play. The immense journey of The Guardian of the Threshold leads, in the end, to the flowering of all that has been developing up till then within the Mystery Dramas.

In the fourth Mystery Drama, The Souls Awaken, what was achieved potentially at the end of the third play has now to become a reality within modern civilization, in the specific context of a factory. On the way towards this, alongside the engagement with the world of industry, the heights of the spiritual world (between death and a new birth), the depths of the characters' past lives (in Ancient Egypt) and the spiritual complexities of the human soul are met with and experienced as nowhere else in the Mystery Dramas. In resolving what has been shown to them of their past lives in Egypt, the characters of Maria and Johannes at last reach through to what they have striven until then to achieve. The last five scenes of The

Souls Awaken are then some of the shortest and most intense in all the plays. Despite the enormous new challenges the characters (and we) are faced with, what is won in these scenes has a seed-like character, capable of enduring the storms that may lie ahead and bringing about new life in future.

A fifth Mystery Drama was planned for the Summer 1914, but the outbreak of the First World War made this impossible and it was never written. Oskar Schmiedel, who performed in the original Mystery Dramas directed by Rudolf Steiner, recalls Steiner saying at that time that he ‘was planning on writing twelve Mystery Dramas’!*

To say more than this would be unwise. The Mystery Dramas speak for themselves better than anyone can, even Rudolf Steiner. When Steiner was once asked after a lecture to explain something about the characters in the Mystery Dramas, he replied: ‘I do not like at all to comment on or interpret these plays. I myself would be their worst possible interpreter [‘der allerschlechteste Interpret’], because I never had any concepts but rather the living figures themselves before my eyes.’†

He warned others against interpretation in no uncertain terms:

[...] an unfortunate thing may happen. If one tries, as I tried in my four Mystery Dramas, to present what cannot be expressed in ideas concerning the essential nature of the human being, there spring up sympathetic but not fully comprehending people who try to explain everything in ideas, who write commentaries. This—I repeat—is an appalling thing!‡;

When Steiner published the fourth Mystery Drama he must have been asked more than once to add some kind of introduction, to help people understand the play. He refused, saying:

In response to many questions I began yet again to try and add some explanatory remarks [...] This time too, however, I have stopped myself making this attempt. It goes against the grain to add something like this to a portrayal which should speak for itself.*

The greatest obstacle to more people taking up these plays remains, of course, their difficulty, intensity and depth. There is no getting around this, as William Blake knew well: ‘The wisest of the ancients considered what is not too explicit as the finest for instruction because it rouses the faculties to act.’†

There are two obstacles, however, which may have hindered people unnecessarily from engaging with these plays as they might—and which can perhaps, at least partly, be removed.

Firstly, as even a brief glance at the plays will show, the speeches are very long. For a contemporary English-speaking audience this can seem not merely off-putting but almost an affront to our expectations of what is possible on stage and what is not. Without denying the challenge of this, it is good to know, perhaps, that in the great works of German-speaking theatre, such as the plays of Goethe and Schiller, the speeches are also far longer than those in English-speaking theatre. Knowing that the Mystery Dramas, to some extent at least, spring from the background of such theatre may help us to meet them on their own terms, rather than expecting them to be something they are not. It is also possible, when staging them, to make visible, through mime or tableaux, images and experiences that are being

spoken of, which can sometimes be of great help to English-speaking or other present-day performers and audiences.

Secondly, the translations of the plays—so deeply valuable for those interested in them—have often been hard for people with no previous knowledge of Steiner’s work to connect to. In translating these plays it became clear to me that three levels of translation were necessary. The first was just to understand, in thought, what was being said. The second was to express this in English; not just to put the German sentences into English (which might still then sound German) but to re-cast them so that they sound English. Thirdly, it was necessary to put them into lines an actor could speak—and an audience could understand when hearing them.

This last stage (and even occasionally the second stage) has, in my opinion, sometimes been omitted by translators. I make no claims to perfection and new and ‘better’ translations will, I am sure, be made in future, but I hope nevertheless that my attempt to include this third level may enable some people to encounter the plays who might otherwise not have done.*

The first and second Mystery Dramas are in free verse, almost entirely in an iambic rhythm.† The third Mystery Drama is in blank verse—that is, in unrhyming iambic pentameter.‡ (This is the line Rudolf Steiner used throughout most of the Mystery Dramas, as did Shakespeare in most of his work.) The fourth Mystery Drama is in free verse—with lines, that is, of irregular length and rhythm. Whenever Steiner does not write in iambic pentameter, for example in the speeches of the soul-forces or in some of the meditations and verses in the plays, I have tried as far as possible to keep the original rhythm.

I began translating these plays while directing a production of the second Mystery Drama. The group had already started work when I arrived and was using a rendering of the play into English in blank verse. I made a few

changes to the text, where these seemed necessary, and needed to write these in the same rhythm. My first complete translation was of the third Mystery Drama, which I also wrote in blank verse.

When work began on the fourth Mystery Drama, I made a new translation into free verse, as this seemed fitting for this final Mystery Drama of Steiner's, with its contemporary setting and relevance.* I then translated the first and second Mystery Dramas and also wrote them in free verse, but found it best to keep this almost entirely in an iambic rhythm. I thus translated the plays in the rather odd order of third/fourth/first/ second.

I am grateful to all those I have worked with on these plays over many years, with a special thank you to all those who have made these translations possible. They are offered in the hope that these extraordinary 'new beginnings' may inspire more and more people and may continue to bear fruit in future.

Richard Ramsbotham

May, 2023

[* The Triumph of Horus: An Ancient Egyptian Sacred Drama —announced as 'The Oldest Play in the World'. Translated by H. W. Fairman \(University of California Press, 1974\).](#)

[* Many writers have described this drama \(concerning Demeter and](#)

† Many writers have described this drama (concerning Demeter and Persephone) within the rites of Eleusis. See, for example, Karl Kerényi's Eleusis: Archetypal Image of Mother and Daughter (Princeton University Press, 1991). Edouard Schuré wrote about this play in detail in The Great Initiates and The Genesis of Tragedy and the Sacred Drama of Eleusis (1936, republished by Kessinger Books). The latter contains Schuré's full (and bold) recreation of this 'Sacred Drama of Eleusis'.

‡ The play was Aeschylus's Prometheus Bound.

* In case the word 'stumbles' surprises anyone, I mean it in the positive sense of not creating something finished, but rather a new beginning. Steiner spoke very clearly about this: 'We are not trying [...] to represent things in the same manner as is done on the ordinary modern stage. Those who have some inkling of the transformative impulse our kind of spiritual knowledge should give to art will know that we are aiming at something quite different. They will also know that performances which will only be able to achieve a certain perfection in the future must make a beginning in all their imperfection in the present.' They are: 'the beginning of something which is to come, the beginning of something which will one day be regarded as artistic truth in the deepest and most spiritual sense of the words, however imperfect and rudimentary it may seem to you today.' (Lecture by Rudolf Steiner on 18 August 1911, in Wonders of the World, Ordeals of the Soul, Revelations of the Spirit (GA 129).

* Lecture by Rudolf Steiner on 20 May 1923 in: The Arts and Their Mission, Lecture 8 (GA 276).

‡ Lecture by Rudolf Steiner on 17 September, 1910 in: Three Lectures on the Mystery Dramas (Anthroposophic Press, 1983).

* The Doorway of Initiation was first performed in August 1910. At the beginning of November 1910 Steiner gave his four lectures on psychosophy. They are published in English in: A Psychology of Body, Soul and Spirit: Anthroposophy, Psychosophy, Pneumatosophy (GA 115), introduced by Robert Sardello.

* Erinnerungen an Rudolf Steiner by Oskar Schmiedel (Stuttgart 2001). Quoted in Die Uraufführung der Mysteriendramen von und durch Rudolf Steiner—München 1910-1913 by Wilfried Hammacher (Dornach 2010), in the section: ‘... Er plane, zwölf Mysterienspiele zu schreiben’, page 610.

† In answer to a question after a lecture in the Hague on 28 March 1913. In Fragebeantwortungen und Interviews by Rudolf Steiner, GA 244 (Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, 2022), page 485.

‡ Lecture by Rudolf Steiner on 18 May 1923 in: The Arts and Their Mission, Lecture 7 (GA 276).

* From Rudolf Steiner’s character notes at the beginning of The Souls Awaken.

† William Blake, letter to Revd. Dr Trusler, 3 August 1799.

* This is not at all to speak against any of the previous translations. Having translated these Mystery Dramas over several years, I have great appreciation for what each previous translator has accomplished. With

appreciation for what each previous translator has accomplished. with every new translation something new has been achieved and they have been and are of immense value for many performers, audiences and readers. The translations into English of all four Mystery Dramas (that I am aware of) are by Harry Collison (1925—Anthroposophical Publishing Co.); Hans Pusch (1973—SteinerBooks); Adam Bittleston (1982—Rudolf Steiner Press); and J. C. McCullough (2002-2005—The Modern Spirit Press). Michael Burton and Adrian Locher translated the fourth Mystery Drama, The Soul's Awakening, in 1994 (Temple Lodge Publishing) and Alexander Gifford has written lively versions of the first three Mystery Dramas in blank verse (working from Hans Pusch's translation).

† An iambic 'foot' has two syllables in a short-long rhythm (di-dum).

‡ A line with 5 (or 5 ½) iambic feet.

* These translations of the third and fourth Mystery Dramas, with an introduction, were published by Wynstones Press in 2017.

THE DOORWAY OF INITIATION

A Rosicrucian Mystery
through Rudolf Steiner



CHARACTERS

a) PRELUDE AND INTERLUDE:

Sophia

Estella

Two Children

b) THE MYSTERY:

Johannes Thomasius

Maria

Benedictus

Theodosius, whose archetype is revealed in the course of the play as the Spirit of Love

Romanus, whose archetype is revealed in the course of the play as the Spirit of Action

Retardus, only active as a Spirit

Germanus, whose archetype is revealed in the course of the play as the Spirit of the Earth-Brain

Helena, whose archetype is revealed in the course of the play as Lucifer

Philia Astrid Lunafriends of Maria, whose archetypes are revealed in the course of the play as the Spirits of Maria's

Professor Capesius

Doctor Strader

Felix Balde, who is revealed as the bearer of the Spirit of Nature Felicia Balde

The Other Maria, whose archetype is revealed in the course of the play as the Soul of Love

Theodora, a seeress

Ahriman, thought of as being active only as a Soul

The Spirit of the Elements, thought of as active only as a Spirit

A Child, whose archetype is revealed in the course of the play as a young Soul

PRELUDE

Sophia's room—the main colour is yellow-red. Sophia with her two children, a boy and a girl. Then Estella.

THE CHILDREN, SINGING:

Sophia accompanies them on the piano.

The sunlight's glory spreads
Through the world's wide spaces,
The birdsong echoes in joy
Through the air's heavenly fields,
The plants spring up and shine out grace
From the earth their mother,
And human souls arise
In their thankful hearts
Up to the spirits of the world.

SOPHIA:

Now, children—off to your room—and dwell on the words we've been singing.

Sophia leads the children out, Estella enters.

ESTELLA:

Hello, my dear Sophie. I hope I'm not disturbing you.

SOPHIA:

Not at all, my good Estella. I'm delighted to see you. (They greet one another and then:) Let's sit over here.

ESTELLA:

Have you had good news from your husband?

SOPHIA:

Very good. He's at a psychology conference. He says it's interesting, although he finds the approach there to many huge and significant questions unappealing. But what fascinates him, as a psychologist, is how, through a particular spiritual short-sightedness, people make it impossible for themselves to gain a clear view of the mysteries they're dealing with.

ESTELLA:

And he's giving a talk himself, isn't he, on an important theme?

SOPHIA:

Yes—on a theme both he and I find very important. He doesn't hold out much hope, though, that what he brings will have any effect, given the scientific attitudes of the audience.

ESTELLA:

I've been led here by the wish, my dear Sophie, that you and I might spend the evening together. Tonight is the performance of the play *Exiled* and

Uprooted, and you could give me no greater pleasure than by coming to see it with me.

SOPHIA:

It's slipped your mind, dear Estella, that this evening our society has its own performance, which we've spent a long time preparing for.

ESTELLA:

Oh dear, yes, I'd forgotten. I'd so happily have spent this evening with my old friend. I'd been looking forward to sitting beside you and gazing into the depths that lurk beneath contemporary life. But your ideology—that I find so alienating—will soon destroy even what little remains of the beautiful bond that has joined our hearts since we shared that same little desk together at school.

SOPHIA:

You've often said that; yet you've always had to admit that our opinions need not be any hindrance to the affection that's lived between us since the shared days of our youth.

ESTELLA:

It's true—I have often said that. But it keeps on causing bitterness in me to see how with each year that passes you grow ever more estranged from all that I find valuable in life.

SOPHIA:

But that's the very way we could be so much for one another—if we can each value and accept where our different perspectives have led us.

ESTELLA:

Aagh—I often let my reason tell me you are right. But something in me rebels against the way you look at life.

SOPHIA:

Then honestly admit to yourself that what you really ask of me is that I reject the inmost core of my being.

ESTELLA:

If not for one thing, I could have accepted it all. I can well imagine people with different ways of viewing the world resounding in complete sympathy with each other when they meet. But the direction of your ideas, in its whole nature, obliges you to assume a certain superiority. Other people are well able to stand side by side, and think of the other's opinions as caused by different possible viewpoints, but nonetheless to be equally justified. But your view of the world declares itself to be deeper than all others. It sees these simply as outgrowths of lower stages of human evolution.

SOPHIA:

You could know, though, from all our conversations, that those who share my way of seeing things do not make knowledge or opinions the final measure of someone's worth. And if we do indeed view our ideas as those that must be taken hold of, in a living way, if the rest of our life is not to lack all true foundation, we nonetheless try very hard not to set too high a value on someone because they have been able to become an instrument of what we see as the true goals of life.

ESTELLA:

That all seems finely said. But it doesn't take away one nagging suspicion. For I'm not going to fool myself that a world-view, ascribing to itself illimitable depths, can only end up, through its pretences of profundity, at a certain superficiality. You are much too dear a friend for me to want to point the finger at those who share your way of thinking, who swear by your ideas and yet display the most grotesque spiritual arrogance, wholly unaware that the emptiness and banality of their souls shouts from everything they say and do. Nor do I wish to point out that many of those

around you seem completely insensitive and even indifferent to the lives of others. The greatness of your own soul has, I know, never pulled you away from all that everyday life demands from those one must unhesitatingly call good. And yet, the very fact that you're leaving me alone this evening, when real life is authentically and artistically to be seen on stage, shows me that the ideas you hold about life are creating even in you—forgive me for saying so—a certain superficiality.

SOPHIA:

What does it consist in, this superficiality?

ESTELLA:

As we've known each other for so long, it should be clear to you how I've fully freed myself from a way of life bound by convention and the banalities of popular opinion. I have sought to understand why so many people must undergo seemingly undeserved suffering. I have worked hard to get up close to both the depths and the heights of life. I have even explored the sciences, as far as they're accessible to me, to glean all manner of explanations for things.

Well, to get to the point—the whole matter in front of us now—it has become quite clear to me what true art is. I understand, I believe, how it seizes hold of the wellsprings of life, and sets its true and higher reality before our souls. When I can open myself up to art like this, I feel I am sensing the beating, throbbing pulse of our times. And it's appalling for me to think that you, my dear Sophie, should show so little interest in such art, brimming with the stuff of life, and should prefer instead something in a

style I can only see as didactic, allegorical and hopelessly outmoded—which gazes on doll-like cyphers rather than living human beings and expresses its admiration for a series of symbolic happenings far removed from everything in daily life that arouses our compassion and our sense of being actively and sympathetically involved in it.

SOPHIA:

My dear Estella, you simply don't wish to understand that life is only to be found in its richest abundance there where you see merely dry, spun out thoughts. And that there might be people for whom what you see as 'reality brimming with life' is hopelessly insufficient if not viewed in connection with the source from which it actually springs. Maybe my words sound harsh. But our friendship demands complete honesty between us. Like so many others, you know the spirit only as the bearer of knowledge; you're only aware of the spirit in the form of thoughts. You want nothing to do with the living, creative spirit that fashions human beings with elemental power, the way that embryonic forces fashion the creatures of nature. In art, for example, what you and many others see as naïve, natural and original for me does away with the Spirit. Whereas our way of looking at the world unites fully free conscious activity with the naïve powers at work in the world. We raise the naïve and natural to consciousness, without robbing it of the fresh and abundant fountain-springs of its life. You believe that one's thoughts about the human character have no part in it—that this must somehow be formed by itself. You don't wish to see how thought wholly submerges itself in the creative spirit of the world, touches the living wellsprings of existence, and re-emerges as the creative seed-kernel itself. It's absurd to think that the forces in the seed teach the plant to grow—they show themselves to be a living reality within it—and just as little do our ideas teach: life-giving, they pour into us, setting our lives aflame. I thank the ideas now available to me for everything that gives my life meaning. I thank them not only for the heart-filled courage but also for the understanding and the strength through which I hope to make of my

children individuals who are not just conventionally able to perform some useful function in outer life, but who bear an inner peace and contentment within themselves. Well, my dear Estella—I won't go into everything—I don't want to say too much.

ESTELLA:

No...

SOPHIA:

But I'd like to say one more thing. I'm convinced that the dreams you share with so many can only come true if people are able to link what they call 'reality' and 'life' with the deeper experiences you have so often called fantasies and illusions. It might seem strange to you—but I experience much of what you see as genuine art merely as an unproductive criticism of life. For one will never satisfy any hunger, or dry any tears, or uncover any of the sources of corruption and depravity, if one merely puts on stage the outer manifestations of hunger, grief or corruption. The way these are normally shown is unspeakably far removed from the true depths of life and the complex and profound interrelationships between different beings.

ESTELLA:

When you speak like this—it's not that I don't understand you— you simply show me quite clearly you'd rather wallow in fantasies than face the realities of life. Our paths now really are separating. This evening I must do without my friend.

She gets up.

I have to leave you now; we'll remain, though, I think, old good friends.

SOPHIA:

We really must do—yes.

During the last words Sophia leads her friend to the door.

Curtain.

SCENE ONE

*A room which is rose-red in tone. On the right (seen from the audience) is the door to a lecture-hall; the characters gradually emerge from this hall and each lingers for a while in this room. During this time they speak out some of what has been stirred up in them by a lecture they have heard in the hall. Maria and Johannes appear first, then others join them. The lecture finished a little while ago and the speeches that follow are continuations of conversations that already began in the lecture hall.**

MARIA:

O my friend

We're so close

It's terrible to have to witness

Your soul and spirit

Withering in this way.

It makes me see as well

That all that's grown so beautifully between us,

These last ten years,

Uniting us,

Has borne no fruit.

Even this momentous talk

Where so much has been brought to us

That shines the brightest light

Into the dark, unconscious places of the soul,

Even this,

Has brought you only shadows.

The shocks and deep wounds you felt

After so many of our speaker's words

I experienced as if it was happening to me.

Your eyes,

When I saw them,

Used to shine back

Their pure joy

At all the things and beings around.

What the sunlight and the air,

Gracing the forms of nature

And unveiling the mysteries of the world,

Paint in swift moments that pass,

Your soul would seize hold of

In images of peculiar beauty.
Your hand, as yet unskilled,
Could not embody
In strong and radiant colours
The living dance your soul beheld.
But in our hearts
We beautifully believed
That with your soul
Immersed, as it was, so joyfully
And so inwardly
In all the happenings of the world
The future would surely bring
The hand's artistic mastery as well.
What the power of spirit-knowledge
So wondrously reveals
About the wellsprings of existence—
All this would pour
With infinite joy of soul
Into people's hearts
Through your art—

This was what we thought.
Future blessing and healing
Mirrored in forms of most radiant beauty—
As the fruit of your work—
This was how I pictured
Your soul's true striving.
But now it seems
The flame of strength within you
Has been extinguished,
Your infectious joy in creativity
Seems dead—
Your arm—which a few years ago
Guided your brush
With young, fresh power
Seems almost paralysed.

JOHANNES:

It's true.

Alas, that's how it is.

All the fire I used to burn with has gone.

That's how it feels.

My eye just blankly gazes

On all the splendour and beauty

The sunlight gives to the world.

My heart feels almost nothing

When the sky, in all its ever-changing moods,

Turns and plays around me.

My hand is in no way stirred

To compel into ever-living forms of art

What elemental powers,

From deep grounds of existence,

Momentarily conjure up before our senses.

I've lost the very urge to create,

Which before welled up in me so joyfully.

A numbness is spreading over my whole being.

MARIA:

It's the deepest sorrow to me

That this has been brought about in you by
All that I experience as the highest—
As the stream of holiness that runs through our lives.
My friend, within that ever-changing game
That people call existence,
An eternal, spiritual life is hidden.
And every soul interweaves within this life.
I experience myself in the midst of spirit-powers
Whose effects reach down as if into ocean-depths,
And I see people's lives
Like the ruffled waves on the water's surface.
I feel one with the whole purpose of life
That's striven for so restlessly,
And which to me seems only
The revelation of our own true being.
I saw how this would often unite itself
With the core of someone's soul,
Raising them to the very highest
For which the heart can yearn.
But the way it lives in me

Reveals it as an evil fruit,
Whenever my being touches
The beings of others.
This destiny of mine also shows itself
In everything I wished to give you,
Who lovingly drew near to me.
With me at your side
You courageously wanted to tread the paths
That should have led to an ennobling of your creative work.
And what has happened?
What constantly revealed itself to me, in its true being,
As the highest, most pristine life,
All this—was death for your spirit.

JOHANNES:

Exactly so.
What lifts your soul
Into light-filled spirit-heights,
Plunges me,

If I experience it together with you,
Into dark nether-realms of death.
When, in the early dawn of our friendship,
You guided me to that wellspring of revelation
That is able to illuminate those darknesses
The human soul enters every night unconsciously;
Through which our erring selves stray
When death seems to make a mockery
Of life's true purpose;
And when you helped me recognize the truth
Of our repeated lives on earth,—
Then it was possible to think
That I would develop
Into one who indeed lives in the spirit.
And I felt certain
That the artist's seeing eye
And true confidence in all I undertook artistically
Would only flower in me
Through the exalted strength of your inner fire.
And so I let that fire work on me—

And what happened? It robbed my soul of
The regular interweaving of its forces;
It squeezed out of my heart
Quite ruthlessly
All my faith in the world.
And now it's gone so far
That I'm no longer clear
Whether to believe or to call into question
The whole revelation from the spirit-worlds.
Moreover, I've even lost the strength to love
What speaks in you of the beauty of the spirit.

MARIA:

For years I've had to recognize
That the way I live the spirit-self
Turns into its opposite,
When it comes into contact with other people's ways of living it.
I've had to see as well
The bounteous blessings spirit-power brings

When it reaches people's souls on other paths.

Philia, Astrid and Luna enter.

It's communicated in words,
Yet the words change into this spirit-power
And lead a person's way of thinking
Up into the heights of the world.
There, in place of the dull sense that had lived there,
It creates a joyful sunlit mood;
It can transform the superficial dancing of the mind
Into seriousness and depth of feeling;
It gives one a sure ground and bearing in life.
And I—I am taken up completely
By this spirit-power,
And have to see
That it brings pain and devastation
When it streams from my heart into the hearts of others.

PHILIA:

It was as if a whole chorus

Professor Capesius and Doctor Strader enter.

Of attitudes and opinions

Was sounding together just now

In the circle that brought us together.

Amidst many harmonies

There were also several stark dissonances.

MARIA:

When many people's words

Present themselves like this before one's soul

It's as if, between them all, mysteriously,

The whole human archetype was standing;

It shows its different parts in many different souls,

As in the rainbow the one light

Reveals itself in many different colours.

CAPESIUS:

Thus I've striven earnestly for years
To find my way into the changing character of different times in history,
Always trying to get inside
What lived in the minds of human beings
Who taught about the true grounds of existence,
And tried to align all their activities
With the highest goals of life.
I believed I'd brought to new life within myself
The lofty power of thinking,
And through it had shed light
On many a riddle of destiny.
I was of the opinion
I could feel within myself
The strong and firm support
Of all my judgements
When new experiences
Pressed in on me with further questions.
But everything I've heard here, in amazement,

Both on other occasions and again just now,
About the kind of thinking cultivated here,
Shakes this firm support in me.
And when I think of the colossal power
Of the effects of this thinking in life,
Then my whole ground
Starts to shift beneath me.
I've spent so many days
Trying to express
What I had fathomed of the mysteries of the past
In words that would strike
The deepest chords in people's hearts.
And I was happy
When I could bring true warmth and enthusiasm
To even the tiniest corner of the souls
Of my crowds of listeners.
And I seemed to have achieved a lot.
I certainly can't complain of lack of success.
Yet all my work of that kind
Could only lead me to acknowledge

The opinion that people of action so love to stress:

That in real life

Thoughts are no more than pale shadows.

They can enrich the true creative powers within us,

But never actively shape these.

I've long resigned myself to simply say:

Where only pale thoughts reign

Life loses its lustre,

And all that life involves.

The innate talents of those gifted by nature—

And the power of destiny itself—

These show themselves in life as far stronger

Than the most mature words,

However profound and eloquent.

The vast and heavy mountain of tradition

And the nightmarish clouds of prejudice

Always crush the power of even the best words.

But what is happening here

Gives people like myself much to think about.

Such an effect would seem easy to explain

Were it a matter of the fanatical spirit of some sect

Flooding over people

And merely deceiving them.

But nothing like this is to be seen here.

The soul is spoken to through reason alone.

And yet: through words, real powers of life are created,

And they speak to the innermost core of the heart.

And this strange something,

That to those, like me, who travel older paths,

Appears to be merely pale thought,

Even takes hold of the realm of the will.

It's quite impossible for me to deny its effect;

It's just that I cannot give myself over to it.

This all speaks to me in such a peculiar way:

As if it wasn't a question of my rejecting what is experienced here;

It almost seems

As if this something

Were unable to bear within itself

The kind of person I am.

STRADER:

I couldn't agree more

With these last words of yours;

And I'd go even further and rigorously stress

That all the effects on the soul

That ideas give rise to in people

Can in no way determine

The value of those ideas as knowledge.

Nothing but the verdict of genuine science

Can decide

Whether truth or error

Is at work in our thinking.

And no one could seriously deny

That what is presented here, with feigned clarity,

Wishing to offer solutions to life's greatest mysteries,

Can in no way meet

The scientific demands of that verdict.

Though it speaks delightfully to the mind,

In fact it merely seduces the believing heart;

It claims to open doors to realms
Before which strict and conscientious research
Stands humbly at a loss.
And it would be right for those
Genuinely devoted to this research
To acknowledge
That no one can know
Where the wellsprings of our thinking flow from
And where the foundations of existence lie.
Such an admission may well prove very hard
To souls who long to fathom
All that lies beyond the bounds of knowledge—
Yet for the soul of the thinker
Every single glance one takes,
Either outwards into the world or inwards into oneself,
Harshly brings one up against the boundaries of knowledge.
If we turn away from reason
And from direct experience
We slip into the void.
And anyone can see

How little what's taken here as a new revelation
Is seriously prepared to submit itself
To our mode of thinking.
It's hardly very difficult to show
How it completely lacks
What gives support and ground
To all our thinking
And lends a sense of certainty.
These new revelations may well warm people's hearts;
To the thinker they're merely wild effusive dreams.

PHILIA:

This is the way that knowledge
Gained objectively, by reasoning,
Will always speak.
But the soul that can believe in itself
Needs something more.
It will always listen to words
Speaking to it of the spirit.

What it had already dimly intimated

It seeks to understand.

To say that things cannot be known

Might well seduce the thinker;

But not the human heart.

STRADER:

I can certainly feel

The validity of your objection.

It applies to those who merely speculate,

Who simply spin out threads of thought,

And ask endlessly what conclusions should be drawn

From their own pre-formed opinions.

But it doesn't apply to me.

I did not dedicate myself to thought

For any outer reasons.

I grew up, in childhood,

Among a circle of pious, religious people,

And saw ceremonies

Which took my senses away
Through images of those heavenly kingdoms
They know so well how to paint,
So consolingly, for the naïve.
I experienced the utmost bliss
In my boyish soul,
When I could soar up
And indulge myself
In the highest spiritual worlds;
And to pray was a need of my heart.
I was then educated in a monastery
Where all my teachers were monks;
Myself to become a monk
Was my inner longing
And my parents' ardent wish.
I was already preparing for my ordination
When a completely chance event
Made me leave the monastery.
But I must be very grateful to this circumstance;
As my soul had long been robbed of its inner peace

When this event saved it.

I had come to know so many things

That have no place in a monk's world.

In writings forbidden to me

I encountered the knowledge of nature.

Thus I learned to know the latest research;

And only with difficulty did I find my way with it.

I sought on so many different paths.

I certainly have not cleverly spun out

What has shown itself to me as truth.

In fierce inner struggles

I tore from my mind and spirit

All that had brought me peace and happiness as a child.

I can understand the heart

That yearns for the heights.

But because I recognized

All I had been taught of the spirit

To be a dream,

I then had to find the solid certain ground

That only research and science can give.

LUNA:

Everyone may understand in their own way

The meaning and the purpose of life.

I am certainly quite unable

To test, against the science of today,

The spirit-teachings I receive here.

I clearly feel, though, in my heart,

That my soul would perish without them,

Just as my limbs would without blood.

You use no few words, dear doctor,

In your struggle against us.

And what you've just told us

Of your own life-struggles

Lends weight to your words

Even for those people

Who are not capable of following what you say.

Yet I always have to ask myself

Theodora enters.

Why it is
That honest common sense
Finds words from the spirit
To be self-evident,
Which it always grasps
With real warmth of interest;
While if it seeks for soul-nourishment
From words such as you've just spoken
Only coldness floods over it.

THEODORA:

For myself,
Although I must feel happy and at home
Among this circle,
All that I've heard spoken here
Still seems strange to me.

CAPESIUS:

Strange? In what way?

THEODORA:

I don't like speaking of it myself.

Will you describe it, Maria?

Theodora leaves briefly.

MARIA:

Our friend has often recounted

The extraordinary way her life has developed.

One day she felt herself as if transformed.

And she met with no understanding anywhere.

Everywhere she went, the way she was

Only caused consternation in people and rejection

Until she arrived in our circle.

Not that we ourselves can understand

What she never shares with anyone;

But through the whole way we think

We gain deep interest

Even in what is unusual,

And let the true value be seen

In all human experience.

There was a moment

When our friend felt everything belonging to her own life

Disappear.

Her whole past was as though blotted out for her.

And again and again

Since this moment of change

She has experienced this soul-mood anew.

It only ever lasts a short time.

During the rest of her life

She is just like other people.

But when she falls into that state

She loses almost completely

The gift of memory.

The power of her eyes is also taken from her,

She feels, then, what is around her,

But cannot see it.

While this is happening

Her eyes shine

With a rare, unearthly light.

And in return,

Images appear to her,

Which at first were dream-like,

But which now are so clear

That they can only be understood

As prophecies of what will take place in future.

We have witnessed this many times.

CAPESIUS:

That's exactly what I like so little

About this circle;

That superstition mingles

With logic and reason.

Everywhere that people have strayed down these paths

This is always what happened.

MARIA:

If you can say this

You clearly don't yet understand

Our stance towards these things.

STRADER:

As for me,

I openly confess,

I'd far rather hear of revelations like this

Than these dubious spirit-teachings.

For even if I have no solution

To the riddle of such dreams,

I still look upon them as facts.

There's no chance, I suppose,

That we could witness

This strange frame of mind?

MARIA:

Perhaps. Here she is again.

It almost felt to me

As if this extraordinary state

Was wanting to reveal itself right now.

THEODORA:

I am impelled to speak:

An image stands before my spirit

In a glory of radiant light,

And from it words sound out to me;

I feel myself in future times

And can see people

Who are not yet living.

They too behold the image,

They too can hear the words,

Which sound out thus:

‘You lived your lives in faith

You found your comfort in hope,

Now find your comfort in seeing,

Be quickened to new life through me.

I lived in souls

Who sought me in themselves

Through the words of my messengers

And through their powers of devotion.

You saw the light that shines through the senses’ world

And could only believe in the creative worlds of the spirit

But now there has been won for you

A drop of the noble gift of spirit-vision.

Feel it now within your soul.’

A human being emerges

From that glory of light

And speaks to me:

‘You are to make known

To all who are willing to hear you
That you have beheld
What people will experience in future.
Christ once lived upon . . . the earth,
And the consequence of this life
Is that, in soul-form, . . . he accompanies human beings,
As they evolve through time.
He has united Himself with the earth's spiritual nature.
Human beings were not yet able to see Him,
As he appears in such a form of existence,
Because they lacked the spirit-eyes
Which only later would be theirs.
But the future is now near
When the people of the earth
Will be endowed with the new spirit-sight.
What people saw with their senses
During Christ's life on earth
They soon will behold with their souls
When the time has been fulfilled.'

She leaves.

MARIA:

This is the first time

She has spoken out like this

In front of so many people;

On other occasions

When she has been impelled to speak

Only two or three have been present.

CAPESIUS:

It seems extraordinary, though,

That she felt driven to this revelation

As if to order and upon request.

MARIA:

It might appear like that.
But we know how she is.
If at this very moment
She wanted her inner voice
To sound into your souls,
There was no other reason
Than that the true source of this voice
Wanted to address you all.

CAPESIUS:

I've heard
That the man seen as the soul of this circle
Has also often described
The future gift
She spoke of, as if in a dream.
Isn't it possible that the content of her pronouncement
Comes from him,
And that only the form it took is her own?

MARIA:

If that was the case

We would see no significance in it.

But the facts have been closely examined.

Before she joined our circle

Our friend was completely unaware

Of what our teacher had been saying.

And nor had a single one of us

Ever heard of her.

CAPESIUS:

Then we are faced

With one of those situations

Which so often abuse the laws of nature

And which have to be regarded as pathological.

Sound and healthy thinking alone

And the wakeful use of one's senses

Can illumine the riddles of life.

STRADER:

We are confronted, though, by a set of facts.

And what we've just heard

Is undoubtedly significant;

Even if one rejects everything else,

It could force one to consider

The telepathic transference of thoughts.

ASTRID:

Oh, if only you would dare to step

Onto the ground your thinking is so wary of!

If you did so, the delusion that makes

What people like this reveal

Appear strange and wondrous, even pathological,

Would melt away, like snow in the sunshine.

It's momentous, yes, but not some freak event.

For this miracle appears quite small to me

When I consider the thousand miracles
That happen every day around me.

CAPESIUS:

It's one thing, though,
To recognize and understand what's all around us
And quite another
What we encounter here.

STRADER:

There will be no need
To speak of spiritual realities
Until things are pointed out to us
That do not belong within the sphere
Strictly delineated by our science.

ASTRID:

The radiant sunlight

As it scintillatingly glistens in the morning dew,

Felix Balde enters.

The fresh mountain spring, as it wells up from the rocks,

The thunder, as it resoundingly booms from the clouds,

All speak a spirit-language

Which I did my very best to learn.

Of all the power and depth in this language

Your science

Offers only a pale reflection.

It was my soul's great joy and blessing

When that language finally broke into my heart,

Which only the living sounding word and spiritual teaching

Could bring about for me.

FELIX BALDE:

There are well-spoken words.

MARIA:

I can't help speaking out

How much my heart rejoices

Mrs Balde enters.

To see for the first time among us

The man I've heard so many things about

Making me wish

To see him here far more often.

FELIX BALDE:

It's unusual for me

To be with lots of people,

In fact, more than unusual.

MRS BALDE:

Oh yes, that's his way.

It drives us into complete solitude.

Year after year

We scarcely hear anything but our own words.

And if this dear man (pointing to Capesius)

Didn't occasionally visit us

In our little house

We would hardly know

That anyone else existed except ourselves.

And if the man

Who spoke in the hall just now

Whose beautiful words

Touched us so powerfully

Didn't often meet my Felix

When he's out and about on his work,

Then you'd know nothing at all

About us quiet forgotten folk.

MARIA:

So the professor visits you?

CAPESIUS:

I do, and may say quite openly

That I am deeply indebted to this good lady

And owe her the greatest thanks.

She gives to me in abundance

What no one else can give me.

MARIA:

What is the nature of these gifts?

CAPESIUS:

If I'm to speak of this

I must touch on something
That, to tell the truth, appears more wonderful to me
Than much that I've heard here,
For it speaks far more immediately to my soul.
In other places
I could hardly begin to find the words
That come so easily to me there.
There are times when I feel
Quite drained out and empty in my soul.
It feels then
As if the deep source, within me,
Of my knowing
Had dried up;
And as though not a single word from my lips
Would be worth listening to.
Whenever this terrible barrenness of spirit
Comes over me
I flee to the quiet refreshing solitude Of these good people.
And Felicia tells stories,
Creates the most wonderful pictures

Of beings, who inhabit the dream-world,
And lead a bright and colourful life
In fairy-tale realms.
She speaks in the same way
As do the myths and legends of ancient times.
I never ask where her words are from.
The only thing clear to my thought
Is how new life floods into my soul
And how my inner paralysis
Is banished and gone.

MARIA:

All that you say
About the wonder of Felicia's art
Accords most beautifully
With what Benedictus has said about Felix, his friend,
And the mysterious sources of his knowledge.

FELIX BALDE:

He who spoke earlier

Benedictus appears at the door.

As if his spirit only dwelled
In wide spirit-spaces and in eternities
Really has no cause
To say very much about my simplicity.

BENEDICTUS:

You are wrong, my friend,
Every word you speak
Is of inestimable worth to me.

FELIX BALDE:

I just had a certain cheekiness
And the urge to chatter away,

When you would often give me the honour
Of letting me walk beside you
On our paths through the mountains.
It was only because you hid from me
How much you know yourself
That I dared to speak.
But our time is up,
And we have a long walk back
To our quiet home.

MRS BALDE:

It was wonderfully refreshing
To be among people for once.
It won't happen again for quite some time.
Only the life in his beloved mountains
Will do for Felix.

Felix and Felicia leave.

BENEDICTUS:

She is absolutely right.

He won't be back for quite some time.

It was far from easy

To bring him here this time.

It is not to be laid at his door, though,

That no one recognizes him.

CAPESIUS:

I could never make head nor tail of him.

To me he was just

One of life's eccentrics.

Often when I was with him

He would happily talk away.

But his strange pronouncements,

Where he would tell one about the things

He thinks he knows,

Always left me completely in the dark.

He talks about the sun-beings
Who live in the stones,
And of the moon-demons
Who disturb their work,
And of the feeling the plants have for numbers.
And whoever listens to him, before long
Can make no sense at all of his words.

BENEDICTUS:

One can also feel
As if elemental powers of nature
Were seeking through his words
To reveal themselves as they really are.

Benedictus leaves.

STRADER:

I can already feel

That dark and difficult days
Will come upon me.
Since that time
In the solitude of the monastery,
When I first encountered scientific knowledge
Which had such a drastic impact
On the whole core of my being,
No experience has affected me as deeply
As this one has, with this seeress.

CAPESIUS:

I can't see how anything here
Could unsettle you like this.
But I'm frightened, dear friend,
That if you lose here
The sure and certain ground beneath your feet,
Then all will soon be shrouded for you
In dark and awful doubt.

STRADER:

Through many hours

I have been tormented by the terror

Of such doubt.

Other than this, I have no experience at all, myself,

Of the gifts of seership;

But often, when I am harshly racked

By difficult riddling questions,

A fearful nightmare being

Rises up like a spectre

Before my inner eye,

From dark spiritual depths.

It sits heavily upon my soul,

And horribly claws about my heart,

And from within me speaks:

‘Unless you can master me

With the blunt weapons of your thinking,

You will be nothing more

Than a fleeting deceptive image of your own delusion.’

THEODOSIUS (who has already come in earlier):

Such is the destiny of all people
Who only try and meet the world through thinking.
The voice of our spirit dwells within.
We have no power
To penetrate beyond the veil
Spread out before our senses.
Only the knowledge of those things
That disappear with time
Is given by our thinking.
What is eternal and spiritual
May only be found
Within our inner world.

STRADER:

A soul that may be granted peace
By the fruits of pious faith,

Needing nothing outside itself,
Can travel paths like these.
But this is not the way
The strength of true knowledge
May flower.

THEODOSIUS:

And yet there are no other ways

Romanus and Germanus enter.

To bring about genuine spirit-knowledge
Within the human heart.
Pride may well lead one astray

Helena enters.

Tempting one with false deceptive forms
Of the soul's true feeling,

And placing before people's gaze
Clairvoyant visions,
Where the only thing rightful and needed
Is faith's own beauty.
Of all that we have heard here,
Presented, with such brilliance,
As knowledge from the higher worlds,
The only thing that counts,
For our true humanity,
Is that in spirit-realms
The soul feels itself
Fully at home.

THE OTHER MARIA (who has come in with Theodosius):

For someone who only wants to talk
What you say may be enough.
In the midst of active life, with all its struggles,
Its yearnings for happiness, and its distress,
One needs to give to souls

A very different form of nourishment.
With me, an inner calling
Led me to devote the rest of my life
To those people
Whose fortunes had forced upon them
Destitution and hardship.
And I had to bring relief
To the sufferings in their souls
Far more often
Than to their bodily wounds.
In many situations
I felt the helplessness
Of my own will;
And must always draw new strength
From the immense richness here
That streams in
From deep wells of the spirit.
The magical warmth-filled power
Of the words that are spoken here
Pours itself into my hands

And flows back like healing balm
When my hands touch those in misfortune.
It changes on my lips
Into the right words of comfort
For hearts that have been racked through with pain.
I don't ask where the words spring from.
I see their truth
When they, themselves alive, bestow Life upon me.
And every day I see quite clearly
How the weak force of my own will
Gives nothing at all to the power of these words,
As day after day they recreate me
And give me back to myself anew.

CAPESIUS:

But there must be plenty of people
Who do extraordinary good in the world
Without knowing anything of this revelation?

MARIA:

Yes, there are undoubtedly many of them

In many places.

But our friend

Is trying to say something else.

You'd speak quite differently

If you knew about her life.

Where the unspent forces of youth

In their full bloom

Are at work,

Love will spring forth

In abundance

Wherever there is goodness

In the ground of the heart.

But our friend had exhausted her best forces

Through endless overwork;

And then the heavy weight of her destiny

Took away

Her very courage for life.

She had sacrificed her whole strength
Conscientiously caring for children
And when her dear husband
Was taken from her
Through an early death
Her courage failed.
As she then was,
To live on, weary and depleted, for the rest of her days,
Seemed the only lot she could expect.
But then, the workings of destiny
Led her to meet our spirit-teachings
And her life-forces
Underwent a resurrection,
Blossoming for a second time.
With new purpose in existence
Will and courage returned to her heart.
And so, in her, the spirit really has
Created a new human being
From a shoot that had withered.
When the spirit revivifies,

In such a fruitful way as this,
And with such creative power,
It surely grants validity as well
To the way in which it manifests.
And—
On the condition that one speaks
With no trace of pride,
And with the highest sense of morality
Living in one's heart,
Believing too
That these teachings have in no way
Been simply brought about by ourselves
But that the spirit alone
Interprets itself within us—
Then one is entitled to say
Without presumption
That in your way of thinking
There only flit and weave pale shadows
From the true fountain-springs of our lives;
And that the spirit inspiring us here

Intimately links itself with everything that
Deep down,
Spins the threads of people's destinies.
In the years since it's been granted me
To give myself to this life-giving work,
There have come towards me
More stricken hearts
And desperately yearning souls
Than many could ever imagine.
I appreciate the lofty soaring flight of your ideas
And the proud certainty of your knowledge;
I love how crowds of listeners
Sit devotedly at your feet,
And how many souls experience
The bright clarity of uplifting thought
Streaming from your works.
It seems to me, however,
That certainty
Only lives within such thought
As long as this remains in its own sphere.

The way of thinking I adhere to
Sends the fruits of its words
Deep into life's realities,
Wishing to plant its roots
In the depths of reality.
Your thinking cannot approach
The starry script of the heavens,
Which, in momentous signs,
Announces the new shoot sprouting
On the tree of humanity.
And the thinking that continues in the old way,
Though it seems clear and certain,
Can tend to the tree's hard outer bark;
But cannot reach
The living power of its core.

ROMANUS:

I find no bridge here
That could genuinely

Lead from ideas to deeds.

CAPESIUS:

Here they overvalue

The power of ideas;

You, however, wrongly value

The workings of reality.

For ideas, without question, are the seeds

Of all human deeds.

ROMANUS:

If this lady brings about much good in the world

This springs from her warmth of heart.

After people have been working

It is of course necessary,

That they learn and refresh themselves through ideas,

But in all true work in life

One thing alone—the cultivation of the will,

Involving skill and strength,
Will help bring us further.
When the loud whirring of cogs and wheels
Drums in my ears
And when people's hands
Pull contentedly on pulleys and winches,
Then I feel the active powers of life.

GERMANUS:

I have often said so frivolously
That I love all jokes and silly stories
And only in these see wit and brilliance
Or anyway
That these will always be, for my brain,
Good stuff to help me while away the time
Between work and pleasure.
But now I find these words
Embarrassing and tasteless.
The unseen power at work here

Has won me over.

At last I've learned to feel

That part of us that's stronger

Than our wit's fragile house of cards.

CAPESIUS:

And are you saying you've found such spirit-strength

Nowhere except here?

GERMANUS:

The life I was leading

Offered me many spiritual values.

The wish never arose in me

To pick their fruits.

But the way of thinking here,

Though I did little about it,

Drew me to itself.

CAPESIUS:

Well, we have spent some beautiful hours here
And must all be very grateful to the lady of the house.

They all leave—only Maria and Johannes stay.

JOHANNES:

Oh, please stay with me a little longer.
I'm scared—oh God—I'm trembling all over.

MARIA:

What's the matter, Johannes? Tell me.

JOHANNES:

First the words of our teacher,

Then the whole panoply of views of these people!

I feel shaken to my very bones.

MARIA:

How could what they said

Seize hold of you—

And of your heart—

So deeply?

JOHANNES:

In every moment

Each word

Was horrible proof for me

Of my own nothingness.

MARIA:

It certainly was of untold significance
To see so many intense life-struggles
And the riddles of people's lives
Pouring out in such a short time
In the weaving dance of this conversation.
And yet it is the peculiar character
Of the life we lead here
That it wakens in people's spirits
The power to speak
And what would otherwise only happen over long periods of time
Reveals itself here in a few hours.

JOHANNES:

The conversation was...
A mirror-image...
Of the whole of human life...
That in dreadful clarity showed me to myself.
The exalted revelations of the spirit
Enabled me to feel

How many a person,
Who believes themselves complete,
Contains just one aspect of the human being.
To bring together
All the different aspects
Within my own self
I boldly set out upon the path
That I was shown here.
And have become ... a nothing.
I'm well aware
What each of them is lacking.
And yet I'm nonetheless aware
That each stands in the midst of life
And I... in insubstantial nothingness.
In the few pregnant words that each one spoke
Whole lives were encapsulated.
But in my soul there rose up
A picture of my own life too.
The joyful life-filled years
Of my childhood were painted;

Then the years of my youth
Where proud hopes
Were awoken
In the hearts of my parents
By the talents of their son.
My great dreams of being an artist,
Which were my whole life in happier days,
They all surged up as a warning
From spirit-depths.
As did those dreams too
Where you would see me
Transforming what you lived in the spirit
Into colours and forms.

- - - - -

And fiery tongues of flame I saw, leaping upwards,
Consuming my artistic hopes and all my youthful dreams
And turning them to nothing!
And then another picture freed itself
From this dreadful, desolate nothing:
It was a human being,

Who once had linked her destiny to mine

In faithful love.

Years ago

She tried to hold on to me

When I was called back

By my mother's funeral

To the place of my birth.

I ripped myself away.

For the power was very great

That drew me to your circle

And to the goals proclaimed here.

I carried around no sense of guilt

From those days

When I tore a bond

Which was life itself to that other soul.

And even the message I received

That her life had slowly withered

And then at last was extinguished completely

Left me quite unmoved until today.

Earlier, in the hall, our teacher

Spoke profound words of how,
When we err in our spiritual striving,
We can harm the destiny of those people
We are linked to through love.
Oh, those words rang out horribly
From the picture of her that I saw:
And then like a monstrous echo—
There resounded from all around:
You are her murderer. Murderer.
And so, our teacher's weighty words
Gave the others cause
To look into themselves;
But they brought about in me
Consciousness of my most profound guilt.
I can recognize through them
How far, in my striving, and how badly
I have erred.

MARIA:

O my friend, in this moment
You are entering realms of darkness.
No one can help you there
Except for him alone, whom we have learned to trust.

Helena returns. Maria is called away.

HELENA:

I feel drawn back here
To stay with you a little while longer,
Who for many weeks now
Has looked so anguished.
How is it possible that the light,
Which shines with such radiance,
Can bring any shadows to your soul
That with all the power it has
Strives solely for the truth?

JOHANNES:

So with you—

Has this light only brought you joy?

HELENA:

Not just the kind of joy I knew before.

But the joy that springs up from the words

Through which the spirit reveals itself.

JOHANNES:

And yet I tell you—

The powers that work creatively

Can also crush you.

HELENA:

If this is possible

An error must subtly be
Winding its way into your soul.
And if from the living sources of truth
There are flowing towards you
Instead of the free gifts of blessedness
Cares and worries
And instead of true spirit-bliss
Sorrows and troubled moods
Then seek out the failings
That are hindering your path.
It is made clear to us so often
That health and health alone
Is the true fruit of our teaching,
From which there blooms strength for life.
How could it bring forth the opposite in you!
I see these fruits in so many
Who, trusting in me,
Join, as one, together.
The old ways of life
Grow ever more alien to the soul;

Fresh new wellsprings are opening up for the heart,
Which then renews itself.
To gaze into the grounds of existence
Does not create desires
That can torment or trouble someone.

She leaves.

JOHANNES:

It took me many years
To understand
That what the senses show can only be delusion
When not accompanied by spirit-knowledge;
To understand
That even words expressing the highest wisdom,
In your being,
Are only soul-delusion
Takes a single moment.

Curtain.

* In Rudlof Steiner's original production there was a grey bust of Ahriman at the back of the room (stage-right) during Scene One.

SCENE TWO

Outdoor landscape, with rocks and fresh springs; the whole surroundings are to be thought of as being within Johannes's soul; the following is the content of his meditation; later on Maria enters.

There resounds from the springs and rocks:

O human being, know yourself!

JOHANNES:

I've heard them now for years like this:

These mighty, echoing, challenging words.

They sound out to me from wind and water,

They sound upwards, ringing, from the earth beneath,

And just as in the little acorn-kernel

There is held in, mysteriously,

The whole gigantic form of the oak

So in the power of these words

There is held

Everything

My thinking can grasp

Of the being of the elements

Of souls—and of spirits—

Of the long journey of time—and of eternity.

Both the wide world and my own being

Are living in the words:

O human being, learn to know yourself!

From the springs and rocks resounds:

O human being, know yourself!

But now!—what's happening?

The words take on a terrifying life

Within me—

They weave darkness round me,

They open gaping black nothingness within me,

From the world's darkness there sounds out,

From the soul's gaping blackness there echoes, ringing:

O human being, learn to know yourself!

There resounds from the springs and rocks:

O human being, know yourself!

They wholly rob me now of myself.

I change and am changed with each hour of the day

And transform into the starry night.

I follow the earth on the path it travels.

I roar in the rolling thunder,

I flame in the lightning's flash.

I am.—O, I feel

I have long since vanished

From my own being.

I see my body's earthly sheath;

It's something quite foreign to me,

Outside me, far away.

Over there another body wafts its way towards me,

I must speak through its own mouth:

'He brought me bitter woe;

I trusted him so boundlessly.

He left me, in loneliness and grief,
He took from me all warmth of life
And shoved me down
Into the cold earth.'

She whom I left, poor soul,
I have just been her.

I must undergo her sufferings.

Knowledge granted me the power
To bear myself into another self.

O monstrous, cruel words!

Your light extinguished through one's own power.

O human being, learn to know yourself!

There resounds from the springs and rocks:

O human being, know yourself!

Now you lead me back once again

Into the sphere of my own being.

But I cannot recognize myself.

But how should I know myself like this!

Gone is my human form.

I seem to myself a rough and savage dragon

Born from lust and greed.

And I sense quite clearly

How a clouded, delusory image

Has hidden from me till now

My own horrendous form.

I will be devoured by the savagery of my own being.

Those words which have revealed

With such primeval power

The beings of suns and earths,

I now feel like a consuming fire

Racing through my veins.

They live in the beating of my pulse,

They throb in the pounding of my heart;

And even in my own thinking

I feel already strange and far-off worlds

Flaming up as wild desires.

These are the fruits of the words:

O human being, learn to know yourself!

There resounds from the springs and rocks:

O human being, know yourself!

There, rising up from the dark abyss,

What being is this—that gapes at me?

I feel shackles—

That keep me chained and shackled to you.

Prometheus himself

Was not so strongly hammered and bound

To the Caucasian mountain

As I am bound to you.

Who are you, hideous being?

There resounds from the springs and rocks:

O human being, know yourself!

Oh no.... I recognize you.

I am this being, myself.

To you, pernicious unconscionable monster, knowledge binds

Maria enters, at first unnoticed by Johannes.

Me, pernicious unconscionable monster.

I wanted to escape you.

The worlds I fled to, in my folly,

To be free of myself,

Have blinded me.

And now yet again I am blinded—in my blind soul:

O human being, learn to know yourself!

There resounds from the springs and rocks:

O human being, know yourself!

**JOHANNES (as if coming back to himself, he notices Maria.
His meditation passes over into an inner reality.):**

O my friend, you are here!

MARIA:

I have been looking for you, good friend;
Although I know how much you cherish solitude
After the opinions of so many people
Flooded your soul.
And though I know
That through my presence
I can't now help my friend,
Nevertheless
Something dim and unconscious
Drives me to seek you out at this moment
When Benedictus's words
Have drawn up from the depths of your spirit
Instead of light
Such intense grief.

JOHANNES:

How much I cherish solitude!
I used to seek it so often
So that, in solitude, I could find myself,

Whenever human grief and joy
Had wound me into labyrinths of thought.
O dear friend—those times are over.
Whatever Benedictus's words
First drew out of my soul,
Whatever the words of all those people
Forced me to experience,
All seems of little matter now
Compared to the storm
Brought on by solitude
And dark inner brooding.
Oh this solitude!
It hounded me into the world's wide distances.
It tore me from myself.
As someone else, I then arose,
Within that being to whom I brought such suffering,
And had to suffer the pain
That I myself originally had caused.
The cruel, dark solitude
Then gave me to myself again.

But only to face me with the horror
Of my own being's abyss.

- - - - -

The last refuge a person has—solitude—
Has been taken from me.

MARIA:

I must repeat to you what I said.
Only Benedictus can help you.
It's from him we must acquire
The foundation we both lack.
For you must know, Johannes,
That I too can no longer bear
The riddle of my life
Unless, through some indication from him,
The solution to it can reveal itself to me.
The high wisdom that only semblance and deception
Spread themselves over the whole of life,
When our thinking grasps merely its surface,

I have often set clearly before myself.
And again and again it said to me:
You must recognize—
For you are still surrounded by delusion
Though you often mistake it for truth—
That evil fruits could grow
If you would wish to waken in others
The light that lives in you yourself.
I am aware, dear friend,
In the best part of my soul
That even the intense and difficult challenges
Life by my side has brought you,
Belong to the thorny path
That leads to the light of truth.
You must experience all the horrors
Delusion can give rise to
Before the being of truth reveals itself to you.
Thus speaks your star.
But what that star-word also shows
Is that you and I must walk the spirit-paths together.

Yet when I seek these paths
The dark pall of night spreads before my gaze.
And this night grows ever blacker
Through much that I can only experience
As the fruits of my own being.
We must both seek for clarity in that light
Which can well disappear from sight
But can never be extinguished.

JOHANNES:

So you are aware, then, Maria
Of the vast soul struggles
I've just been going through?
Noble friend, a difficult destiny
Has indeed befallen you.
And yet that power that has so completely
Torn me apart, annihilated me,
Is far away from your being.
You can ascend into the brightest heights of truth,

You can direct your sure gaze
Into the confusion of human life,
Both in light and darkness
You will always protect
And uphold yourself.
With me, though, each and every moment
Can rob me of myself.
I had to disappear in those people
Who spoke about themselves so openly earlier on.
I followed one of them into the solitude of the monastery,
In the soul of another
I could hear Felicia's fairy tales.
I was each one of them;
Only I myself was no one and died away.
I would have to believe
That beings originate from nothing
To hold out any hope
That from the nothing in me
A human being might one day arise.
From fear into darkness I am led

And hounded through darkness into fear

By the unremitting ringing words of wisdom:

O human being, know yourself!

From the springs and rocks resounds:

O human being, know yourself!

Curtain.

SCENE THREE

A meditation room. Benedictus, Johannes, Maria and a child.

MARIA:

Here is the child;

She needs to hear some words from you.

BENEDICTUS:

My child, from now on

You will come and see me every evening,

To receive the words

That will make you whole

Before you enter the soul-kingdom of sleep.

Would you like this?

CHILD:

I would like this very much.

BENEDICTUS:

This evening, before sleep folds you in his arms,

Fill yourself inside

With the strength of these words:

‘Powers of light are bearing me

Into the home of the spirit.’

The child is taken out by Maria.

MARIA:

And now, as this child’s destiny

Will flow in future

Beneath the gentle shade

Of your fatherly protection and grace,
So may I too now entreat you
To grant me your guidance and advice,
I, who have been her mother,
If not through actual blood-ties,
Then still through wise powers of destiny.
You pointed out the path
That I should lead her on
From the very day I found her
There, outside my door,
Where her unknown mother had left her.
And all the guidelines you gave
For bringing up my little foster-child
Worked wonders upon her.
All of her faculties
Which had been resting, seed-like, in her body and soul,
Now emerged.
Thus your teaching revealed itself
To have sprung from that realm
Which had been home to this child's soul

Before it had fashioned its bodily form.

Our hopes in the child arose

And shone more brightly with each new day.

You know how hard it was at first

For me to win the child's affection.

She grew up under my care

And initially her soul was only bound to mine

Through force of habit.

Her stance to me was of one who felt

That I gave her what was needed

For the wellbeing of her body and the growth of her soul.

Then the time came when at last love

For her foster-mother sprang up in the child's heart.

Something happened that brought about this change.

The seeress came into our circle.

The child was happy to be around her

And said many a beautiful thing

In the magic charm of her presence.

Then came a moment when our wondrous friend

Was taken hold of by the spirit,

And our child beheld

The flash of gleaming light in her eyes.

The young soul felt shaken to her core.

In her shock she came to me.

From that time forth

The child has warmly given me her love.

But ever since she has received what I can give her

Not just instinctively,

But with her wakened feelings,

Ever since her young heart

Has begun to beat more warmly

The moment she lovingly meets my gaze,

Your rich wisdom has proved barren.

Much in her that had already ripened

Now withered.

What had already shown itself so frightfully with Johannes

I now saw appearing in her as well.

I have become an increasingly dark riddle to myself.

You can't protect me from the fearful question:

Why do I ruin both friend and child

When I try, lovingly,
To carry out with them the work
That spirit-teachings enable my heart
To see as good?
You have often pointed me to the high truth
That semblance or appearance
Is spread over the surface of life,
And yet, I have to have clarity,
If I am to bear this destiny,
Which is cruel and brings about evil.

BENEDICTUS:

A knot is forming in this circle
From the threads which karma spins
In world-evolving.
O my friend, your sufferings
Are part of a destiny-woven knot
In which divine deeds are intermingled with human life.
When, on the pilgrimage of the soul,

I had reached that stage
Where I was given the honour
Of serving with my counsel in spirit-spheres,
A divine being appeared to me
Which was to make its way down
Into the earthly realm
In order to inhabit
The bodily form of one human being.
The karma of humanity requires this
At this turning-point in time.
A great step forward on the world's evolving path
Can only happen
If gods unite themselves
With human destiny.
The spirit-eyes,
Which are to grow in human souls,
Can only unfold
If a god has first planted the seed for this
In one human being.
The task was then laid upon me

To find that person worthy

To receive the power of this divine seed

Into their soul.

I therefore had to bring together

An act of heaven

With one person's destiny.

My spirit-eye searched carefully—

And fell on you.

Your life's path had well prepared you

To be the instrument of grace.

You had made yourself receptive through many lifetimes

To all the most magnanimous ways

The human heart can live.

You bore, as spirit-heritage,

Within your gentle soul,

Beauty's noble being, virtue's highest claims.

And what your eternal individual I

Brought through birth into existence

Grew to ripe fruit

During your younger years.

You did not clamber too quickly
Up steep spirit-heights.
And so your striving for the spirit-worlds
Did not arise in you
Before you had fully taken hold
Of the senses' innocent joys.
Your soul came to know
Both anger and love
When no urge towards the spirit
Was present to your thought.
You sought to drink in the beauties of nature,
And enjoy the fruits of all the arts,
To add to the rich abundance of your life.
You could break into bright and cheerful laughter,
The laughter only children laugh
Who have as yet experienced nothing
Of the shadow-sides of life.
You learned to empathize with people's joy
And to feel sorrow for their sufferings
Before even an inkling dawned in you

To ask about the roots of joy and suffering.
The soul who is blessed by moods like these
Enters existence on earth
As the ripe fruit of many lifetimes.
Her innocent childlike nature is the flower
Not the root of her being.
And this soul alone was I allowed to choose
To be the vessel for that spirit
Who now should gain the power to work
Throughout our human world.
You can now grasp, therefore,
Why your being, should it flow out into other beings,
Must turn into the opposite of itself.
The spirit within you
Works in everything in the human being
That can ripen and bear fruit
For the realm of eternity.
Because of this it has to kill
Much that belongs only to the realm of time.
And yet these sacrificial deaths it brings about

Are seeds of immortality.
What springs to flower
From the lower death
Must arise into higher life.

MARIA:

So that's how it is with me. - - - - -
You have given me light,
But a light that steals my power of sight
And tears out of me my own self.
If I am merely the vessel of another spirit
And not my own self,
Then I will no longer tolerate a form
Which is nothing but a mask
And not the truth.

JOHANNES:

O my friend, what is happening to you!

The light is seeping from your gaze.

Your body turns rigid and lifeless,

Like a stone pillar;

I take hold of your hand,

But it's so cold—

Like death.

BENEDICTUS:

My son, you have undergone many trials,

But now, in this hour,

You face the severest one of all,

You see your friend's bodily covering,

But before my gaze

Her true self takes wing

And floats upwards into spirit-spheres.

JOHANNES:

Look! Look! Her lips... they're moving.

She is speaking - - - -

MARIA:

You gave me clarity,

Yes, clarity, which shrouds me in darkness on all sides.

I curse your clarity,

And I curse the one—you—

Who made me an instrument

Of wild, barbaric arts,

Through which you seek to deceive humanity.

Not for one single moment, till now,

Could I doubt in your exalted spirit-powers,

But now one moment is all I need

To tear out of my heart any belief in you.

I must finally recognize

That the spirits you serve

Are demons from hell.

I had to deceive others,

Because you had first deceived me!

I want to flee far far away from you,
Where not a syllable of yours can be heard,
Yet near enough
So that my curses find you!
You have robbed from me
The fire of my own blood
In order to give to your false god
What belongs to me.
May this blood's fire
Burn and scorch you!
I was made to believe
In deceit and delusion.
And to make this possible
You had first to make me
An image of deceit myself!
I have often had to experience
How the effect of my being
Changed into its opposite.
So let there now change
All that was love for you

Into a wild fire of burning hatred.

I will seek through all worlds

To find that fierce destructive fire

That flaying, can consume you.

I curs - - - aah - - -

JOHANNES:

Who is speaking here?

Not my friend. I do not see her here.

I see a dreadful, dreadful being.

BENEDICTUS:

Your friend's soul floats high in the heights,

She left behind her here

Only her mortal shell of semblance.

And where a human body

Is abandoned by the spirit,

There is a space

Which the great Adversary of the good
Seeks out
To find an entry
Into the visible realm.
He finds a bodily form
Through whom he can speak.
One such adversary now spoke
Who bears the ardent wish
To destroy the work
Entrusted to me
For many people's futures,
And also for you, my son.
And if I could take the curses
That our friend's form now spoke
As anything other
Than a powerful act of deception
Performed by the tempter,
Then you should no longer follow me.
The opponent of the good stood at my side;
And you, my son,

Had to see plunge into the darkness
All that is temporal in that being
To whom the whole of your love
Radiantly streams out.
Because you have so often heard spirits
Speaking from her mouth,
World karma did not spare you
From also hearing the prince of hell
Speaking through her.
Only now can you seek her for the first time
And recognize the true kernel of her being.
She should be your example
Of that higher human being
To whom you are to raise yourself.
Her soul floats high in the spirit-heights,
Where one finds the archetypal form of one's being,
Which knows itself grounded in itself.
You are to follow her into spirit-realms,
And you will then behold her in the Temple of the Sun.
A knot is forming

In this circle

From the threads

Which karma spins

In world-evolving.

My son, as you have held strong through all this,

You will also now develop further.

I see your star shining in full glory.

There is no place in sense-existence

For the battles that must be fought

By those who seek initiation.

All the riddles of sense-existence,

That reason is able to solve,

All that this existence gives rise to in people's hearts,

Whether it be born from love or hate,

And however fearful its consequences may be:

All this, to the spirit-seeker, must become a field

On which they can dispassionately

Cast their gaze from outside.

For forces must unfold for them

That are not to be found within this field.

You have had to win your way through
A profound soul-trial,
Which only those people face
Who find themselves rightly armed
For the powers belonging to spirit-worlds.
Had these powers not found you ready
For the path of knowledge,
They would have needed to lame your feeling,
Before you were permitted to know
What you have now learned.
The beings who gaze into the grounds of worlds
Lead those who strive for the heights
First of all up to that summit
Where it can be revealed
Whether they have been granted the strength
Consciously to behold spirit-being.
For those who have such strength
The way is opened—out of the world of sense;
The others have to wait.
My son, you have kept guard over yourself,

When forces from the heights took hold of you and shook you,

And when spirit-powers

Wrapped you in terror.

Your self has powerfully fought through,

Even when doubts raged in your own breast,

And threatened to deliver you

To powers of darkness.

You have become my true pupil

Only since that determining moment

When you were ready to abandon

All hope in yourself,

When you gave yourself up for lost,

And where your strength nevertheless

Upheld you.

From the rich storehouse of wisdom

I was permitted to give you

That which brought you strength

To uphold yourself,

When even you no longer believed in yourself.

The wisdom you had won through to

Was of truer worth to you
Than the faith you had been given.
You have been found ready.
The way is opened to you: you can be released.
Your friend has advanced upon the path,
You will find her in the spirit.
I can still point out to you the direction you must follow:
Let the whole force of your soul
Be kindled into flame
From words, which, resounding through me,
Give you the keys to the heights.
They will guide you,
Even when nothing guides you any longer,
That your earthly eyes can see.
Open yourself to receive them with your whole heart:

*The weaving spirit of the light, it shines
Through the wide expanses of space
Filling all the world with being.*

*The blessing of love, it warms
The unfolding course of time,
Heralding the revelations of all the worlds.*

*And spirit messengers, they marry
The weaving spirit of the light
With the soul revelations;*

*And when human beings
Can marry their true selves to both of these
They then do live in spirit-heights.*

O you spirits,
Able to be beheld by human beings,
Bring to life our son's soul.
Let there shine out within him
That which can irradiate his soul
With spirit-light.
Let there sound out within him,
That which can awaken his self

To joy in the quest for spirit-growth.

SPIRIT-VOICE (from back stage):

His thoughts rise up

To primal grounds of worlds.

All the shadows he has thought,

All the phantasms he has lived through,

Now float free from the world of forms,

The world of forms, which leads people,

Contemplating its bounty,

To dream in shadows,

Which leads people,

Gazing on its bounty,

To live in phantasms.

Curtain.

SCENE FOUR

A landscape, which through its particular quality is to express the character of the soul-world. First of all Lucifer and Ahriman appear; Johannes is visible at the side of the stage, sunk in meditation; he experiences the following in meditation.

LUCIFER:

O human being, know yourself,

O human being, experience me.

You have won your way free

From spirit-guidance

And have escaped

Into free earthly regions.

You sought for your own being

Amidst the entanglements of earth;

That you have found yourself

Was your reward,

Yes, your destiny.

You have found me.

Spirits wanted to lay a veil

Over your senses.

I ripped the veil apart.

Spirits wanted you

Only to follow their will.

I gave you your own will.

O human being, know yourself,

O human being, experience me.

AHRIMAN:

O human being, know me,

O human being, experience yourself.

You have escaped

From spiritual darkness.

You have found

The light of earth.

So now draw from my solidity

Truth's power.

I harden the sure and certain ground
Beneath you.
Spirits wanted to snatch away from you
The sense-world's beauty.
I work and weave this beauty
Into the density of light.
I will lead you
To true reality.
O human being, know me,
O human being experience yourself.

LUCIFER:

There never was a time
When you did not experience me.
I have followed you throughout lifetimes.
It was I who could pour into you
Your strong and single being,
Who could fill you
With delight in your own selfhood.

AHRIMAN:

There never was a time
When you did not perceive me.
Your earthly body's eyes
Have gazed on me
Throughout earth's evolving.
It was I who could shine out to you
In proud outer beauty,
In the bliss of world-revelations.

JOHANNES (speaking to himself, in meditation):

This is the sign Benedictus spoke of.
The two powers stand before the soul-world.
One lives within, as tempter,
The other obscures our gaze,
When we direct it outwards.
The one took on that woman's form just now,

And brought me face to face with soul-delusion,
The other one is found in everything.

*Lucifer and Ahriman disappear. The Spirit of the Elements appears with
Capesius and Strader, who he has brought up to the earth's surface from the
depths of the earth. One is to think that it is as souls that they see the
surface of the earth.*

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

So here you are now
At the place
Where you so fervently
Desired to be.
It was not easy for me
To satisfy your wish.
The elements and spirits
Broke out in storms and tempests
The moment that I had to step
Into their realm with you.
The manner of your minds

Caused discord and
Ran counter to
The wielding of my powers.

CAPESIUS (made young again):

Mysterious being,
Who are you,
Who has carried me through spirit-spheres
And placed me here, into this beauteous realm?

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

Human souls only see me
When the service I perform for them
Has reached its end.
And yet, through all time's ages,
They are obedient to my powers.

CAPESIUS:

I feel but very little urge or curiosity

To ask about the spirit

Who has led me here.

I feel, in this new landscape,

The forces of my life

Breathed through with warmth.

Within the light that shines here

My breast opens and expands.

I sense the whole mighty power of the world

Beating in my veins.

And expectation of loftiest accomplishment

Wrests itself free from my heart.

I wish that I could recast into words

The exquisite revelations of this realm

That so refresh and re-enliven me.

If I can open up to people

The uplifting, buoyant sense of spirit-fullness

Flowing into me

From all the wellsprings here,
Then human souls will soon be sure to flower
Into their finest state.

Thunder and lightning from the heights above and the depths below.

STRADER:

Why these tremors in the depths,
Why do the heights so thunderously resound,
When there free themselves from this young soul
The finest, fairest dreams of hope?

Thunder and lightning.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

For you human dreamers
Such easily uttered words of hope
Sound out so proudly.

But the dire delusion
Of thinking tangled up with error
Continually calls forth such reverberations
In world-depths.
You only hear them
At such times as these
That bring you near me.
You think you are busy building
The sublime temple of truth,
But the fruits of your work
Unleash the mighty powers of storms and tempests
In primal world-deeps.
Spirits have to shatter worlds
Lest what you create within the stream of time
Bring devastation and death
To the eternities.

STRADER:

Then for the eternities

What the greatest human research

Sees as truth

Would be but error and delusion!

Thunder and lightning.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

Error and delusion,

As long as all your mind researches

Is a world devoid of spirit.

STRADER:

I can well see how you may call

The joyful, boyish soul of my friend

A dreamer,

Who dares to paint his goal

With such exalted, idealistic fire.

But in my aged heart

Your words lose all their power and die away,
Despite the storms and thunderclaps,
Their violent helpers.
I fought my way from the peace of the monastery
To the proud sense for scientific research.
Through many long years
I have stood firm
Amidst the harsh storms of life.
When I share with people
What I have come to know
Through the deepest sense for truth,
They believe me.

Thunder and lightning.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

It would be right for you to acknowledge
That no one can know
Where the wellsprings of thinking flow from

And where the foundations of existence lie.

STRADER:

O, these are the very words
That in younger hope-filled days
Would often sound out so horribly
Within me
When what I had believed
To be the firm supports
Of human thinking
Wavered and shook.

Thunder and lightning.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

Unless you can master me
With the blunt weapons of your thinking,
You will be nothing more

Than a fleeting deceptive image
Of your own delusion.

STRADER:

Yet again!
These horrendous words as well
Once sounded out within me
When a seeress
Sought to snap the thread
Of certain thought in me,
Threatening to make me feel
The sharp thorns of doubt.
Yet that, happily, is past now.
I will not bow to you,
Or recognize your authority,
You ancient one,
Who with such extraordinary deception
Gives physical form
To the image of my own being

Presenting it to me
As the lord of nature.
Reason will conquer you,
But differently to how you imagine.
When once it has attained, in someone,
The proud and lofty heights of which it is capable,
It will then indeed prove the master
And not the servant of nature.

Thunder and lightning.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

The world has so been ordered
That for everything given
Something is always asked for in return.
I have given you your Self;
You are in my debt
And owe me payment.

CAPESIUS:

I wish to create

Out of my own soul

The spiritual likeness of everything I see.

And when nature reappears,

Idealized and transfigured,

Within the works of human beings,

She is rewarded well enough

By this, her true reflection.

And if you feel yourself

Related

To the great world-mother

And come from the depths

Where primal powers of worlds hold sway

Then let my will,

That within my head and heart

Wholly lives for these high goals,

Be the payment for your deed.

It has raised me up

From blunt and dimmed-down feeling
To proud heights of thought.

Thunder and lightning.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

You both can see
What tiny value
Your boldly uttered words have
Within my realm.
They call up the elements
And unleash the whirlwind
As wild opponents
Of harmony and order.

CAPESIUS:

Then fetch your payment
Wherever you may find it;

The urges of the human soul
Must give order and measure to themselves
On true spirit-heights.
It is impossible to create
When others desire to make use
Of one's creations.
The bird's sweet song,
That pours from its throat,
Is its own reward.
Human beings likewise
Receive payment enough
When, while they're creating,
They experience a state of blessedness
Fill their work.

Thunder and lightning.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

It is not up to you
To refuse me payment;
And if you can't afford to pay yourself,
Then tell the woman,
She who has endowed your souls with strength,
That she must pay on your behalf.

The Spirit of the Elements disappears.

CAPESIUS:

He is gone.
Well, which way should we turn now?
The immediate problem facing us
Is how to find our proper way
In these new worlds.

STRADER:

If we follow with full trust

The best path we now find
And employ caution and discretion,
This will lead us to the goal.

CAPESIUS:

I think we should rather
Stay silent about the goal.
It will be found by itself
If we obey, courageously,
The urge and impulse of our inner being.
And this says to me:
Let truth be your guide;
Develop strong forces in yourself,
And give to them a noble form
In all you bring about,
And then your steps will surely reach
The proper goal.

STRADER:

Yet right from the beginning
The steps that would bring help to people
And would create good fortune
Should not lack awareness
Of the right and proper goal.
Those who merely want to serve themselves
Follow just the promptings of their heart;
But those who wish to be of help to others
Must know for sure
What is necessary for their lives.

The Other Maria becomes visible—she too appearing in soul-form.

But look, what a strange, extraordinary being!
It is as if the very rock itself
Had given birth to it.
From which deep underground worlds
Do such beings arise?

THE OTHER MARIA:

I wind my way through rocky depths

And wish to clothe in human words

The rock's own will;

My senses sniff the being of the earth

And in the human head

I seek to think

The thinking of the earth herself.

I quaff the finest airs of life,

And then transform the airy powers

Into the breathing life

Of human feelings.

STRADER:

You cannot help us then.

All that must stay bound to nature

Is far from human striving.

CAPESIUS:

I love your language, lady,
And would all too happily translate,
In my own way,
The words you speak.

THE OTHER MARIA:

Your proud conversation
Gives me a most peculiar feeling.
Your way of speaking
Is incomprehensible to my ear.
But when I let your words
Sound out from my being
Quite differently,
They spread out
Over all there is in my surroundings,
Illumining your riddles.

CAPESIUS:

If you speak true,
Then change our questions
About the right and proper values in life
Into your language,
So that nature herself
May answer us.
For we ourselves are unable
So to ask the Great Mother
That she can hear us.

THE OTHER MARIA:

In me you see only the lesser sister
Of the high spiritual being,
Who dwells in that realm
From which you are newly come.
She has allotted me these fields of life,

That here I can make manifest,
For human senses,
Her image and reflection.

CAPESIUS:

So have we fled the very realm
Which could fulfil our longing?

THE OTHER MARIA:

Unless you find the path
Back to it again
Your lives will never flourish.

CAPESIUS:

Which then is the right path to take?

THE OTHER MARIA:

There are two paths.

When my strength grows

To its full height,

Then all the beings of my realm

Can radiantly shine out

In most sublime beauty.

Sparkling, glistening light then flashes

From rock and water;

The richest tapestry of colours

Spreads and weaves

Throughout the wide surrounding world,

And every being's playful cheerfulness

Fills the air with joyful, happy sounds.

If you can then surrender wholly

To the blissful, pure delights of my existence,

You will fly up on spirit-wings

To primal world-beginnings.

STRADER:

That is no path for us.

We call that in our language mystic rapture.

We want to keep our feet upon the ground,

Not float up into the clouds.

THE OTHER MARIA:

And should you wish to take

The other path,

You must renounce

Your intellectual pride.

Forget whatever reason commands.

First let a feeling for nature

Take hold of your whole being,

And let your child soul,

Innocent and untouched by thought,

Hold sway quite naturally

Within your adult breast.

Then you will surely come,
Although unknowingly,
To the true fountains of life.

The Other Maria disappears.

CAPESIUS:

We are, then, after all,
Just thrown back upon ourselves.
And all that we have learned
Is that it's right
We should work on
And wait in patience
For the fruits
That ripen from our working.

JOHANNES (as if from his meditation; both here, and in what follows, he is seated to the side and takes no part in the action himself):

And so I find again, within the soul-realm,
These people that I know.
The man, who spoke about Felicia's stories—
Except that here I could behold him
As he was when he was young;
And the other one, who in his youth,
Had wanted to become a monk—
Appeared to me as an old man .
And with them was
The Spirit of the Elements.

Curtain.

SCENE FIVE

*An underground rock temple, the hidden Mystery Site of the Hierophants.
(Benedictus, Theodosius, Romanus, Retardus; Felix Balde, the Other
Maria. Johannes in meditation, as in the previous scene.)*

BENEDICTUS (in the East):

You, who have become my companions

In the realm of eternal being,

I have come into your midst

To gain the help you each can give

To the thread of destiny

Of a human being

Who now from here

Is to receive illumination.

He has endured the trials of suffering

And has prepared the ground,

In bitter soul distress,

For the initiation

Which will grant him knowledge.

The mission laid upon me,

As spirit-messenger—

To bring to human beings

The treasures of this temple—

Is now fulfilled.

And now it rests on you, my brothers,

To bring my work to completion.

I have revealed the light to him

Which led him

To his first vision of the spirit.

But for what he beholds as image

To grow to truth in him,

Your work

Must now be joined to mine.

My word springs from me alone;

Through you do mighty spirits of worlds resound.

THEODOSIUS (in the South):

Here speaks the power of love,
Which holds and binds the worlds,
And gives to every being existence.
Let warmth pour into his heart.
He is to understand how
Through offering up the delusion
Of his own separateness,
He nears the spirit of the world.
You have released his vision
From the heavy sleep of the senses;
Now, from the womb of his soul,
Warmth will awaken his spirit.
You have drawn forth the Self
From its bodily covering;
Love will now make firm the soul,
Enabling it to be a mirror,
Through which there must be seen
What happens in the spiritual world.
Love will give the strength to him
To feel himself as spirit,

And thus create in him the ear
That hears the spirit-words.

ROMANUS (in the West):

My words too
Do not reveal my own being;
World-will speaks here.
And as to him entrusted to you
You have brought the strength
To live within the spirit,
So shall it also be that strength
That leads him on
Through bounds of space and ends of time.
He will now pass into those spheres
Where spirits are creatively at work.
They shall reveal themselves to him
And deeds they will require of him,
Which he will willingly do.
The goals of those who form the worlds

Will vivify and quicken him;
And those of the primal beginnings
Will fill him through in spirit.
The powers of the world
Will fill him through with strength;
The mighty movers of the spheres
Through and through illumine him;
And the sovereign beings of world-wisdom
Kindle him to flame.

RETARDUS (in the North):

Since earth's beginning
You have had to bear me
In your midst.
And so today as well
In your council,
My word must be given hearing.
Before you can fulfil
What you have talked about so beautifully,

It clearly will be quite a while.

Nor has the earth herself,

Through any kind of sign,

Announced to us

That she is now demanding

New initiates.

For as long as none have found their way

To this, our meeting-place,

Who, though not yet initiated,

Can set the spirit free

From sense-realities,

Just so long am I at liberty

To be a hindrance

To your enthusiasm.

They must first arrive and bring the message

That the earth now finds

The new revelation necessary.

And therefore, within this temple,

I hold back your spirit light,

So that when souls meet it unprepared,

It does not bring them harm
Instead of healing.
As long as spirit-wisdom
Could blind or dazzle their eyes,
I give to people, from myself,
That part that makes them see
No higher truth
Than that belonging to the senses.
Belief may also lead them to the spirit;
And through desires,
Which blindly grope within the dark,
The goals within their will
Can still be steered and guided.

ROMANUS:

We have indeed,
Since earth's beginning
Had to bear you in our midst.
But the time allotted to your working

Has now ended.

World-will feels within me

That those people are drawing near

*From the rocks, Felix Balde appears in his earthly form and the Other
Maria in her soul-form.*

Who, though not initiated,

Can set the spirit free

From sense-appearances.

To be a hindrance to our steps

Is permitted to you no longer.

From their own free will

They will approach our temple

And bring you the message

That they wish to join their aims with ours

And help in the spirit-work.

They have not felt till now

That they were ready for this.

They still clung to the belief

That powers of spiritual sight
Should be kept separated from reason.
They have now recognized
Where reason leads people,
When, cut off from vision,
It loses its way in world-depths.
They will speak to you of fruits
Born from your strength
That now must start to ripen
In people's souls.

RETARDUS:

You, who unbeknown
To you yourselves,
Have furthered my activity,
Should help me still.
If you will keep yourselves away
From all
That solely appertains to my domain,

Then the place strictly preserved
For your work too
Will always stay
The way it was.

FELIX BALDE:

A power from deep within the earth,
Addressing my spirit,
Commanded me to come
To the place of consecration.
She wants to let you know through me
About her need and her distress.

BENEDICTUS:

My friend, then tell us what
You have discovered,
Deep within your soul,
About the sorrow in the earth's depths.

FELIX BALDE:

The light that shines out in people,
As the fruit of all their knowledge,
Should be the nourishment
For those powers
Who, in the darkness of the earth,
Serve the progress of the world.
Now, for a long time already,
They must almost completely
Do without all sense
Of being satisfied and full.
For what develops these days
In people's brains
Serves the surface of the earth,
But does not reach
The depths below.
A new superstition
Fills and haunts

The heads of clever people.
They turn their gaze towards
The primal origins of worlds,
And in the spirit-spheres they want to see
But ghosts,
Fictitiously thought up and spun
From sense-delusions.
The merchant would surely think the buyer
Had lost his mind,
Who said to him:
‘The nebulous mists and vapours in the valley
Can thicken into coins and notes;
And this is the money
You shall be paid with.’
The merchant will not wait for any money
Made from mists and vapour.
And yet, when he’s thirsty
For solutions to the greatest riddles of existence,
He’s happy to swallow
The creation of whole worlds

From primeval nebulae,
When science offers these to him as payment
For his spiritual needs.
A professor who would discover
That a lay and unschooled creature,
Completely untested,
Wanted to elevate himself
To the highest peaks of learning,
Would treat him with mockery and contempt.
Yet science has no doubt
That some primeval animal,
Untested and void of spirit,
Could transform itself
Through its own strength
Into a human being.

THEODOSIUS:

Why don't you make known to people
And open up to them

The sources of your light,
Which with such radiant brightness
Shines from your soul?

FELIX BALDE:

People of good will
Call me a lonely thinker and dreamer.
For the others, though,
I'm just a stupid good-for-nothing,
Who, without their education,
Follows my own idiotic ways.

RETARDUS:

The very simplicity of what you say
Shows how uneducated you are.
You don't know that a scientific person
Is also clever enough
To make such an objection for themselves.

And if they don't
They know the reason.

FELIX BALDE:

I know quite well, of course,
That they're clever enough
To understand the objection;
But clearly not clever enough
To actually believe in it.

THEODOSIUS:

What should now happen
To give the powers of the earth
What they are so in need of?

FELIX BALDE:

For as long as on the earth
Only those find hearing
Who have no wish to remember
Their spiritual origin,
Just so long will powers
Of the metallic ores
Go hungry in the earth-depths.

THE OTHER MARIA:

Brother Felix, I hear from your words
That you think the time is at an end
Where our task has been to serve the earth's existence,
In order, from our own deep wells of life,
Without initiation through the light of wisdom,
To bring about a quickening
Both of spirit and of love.
In you arose the spirits of the earth
In order, free of science,
To create light for you.

And in me love was able to hold sway
Which springs forth of itself in human life.
From now on let us carry out our work
In union with those brothers
Who perform their sacrificial service in this temple
And thus bring much to fruit in human souls.

BENEDICTUS:

If you unite yourselves with us,
The work of consecration must succeed.
The wisdom I have given to my son
Will flower in him in all its strength.

THEODOSIUS:

If you unite yourselves with us,
The joy of sacrifice must arise.
And love will then weave warmly through
The spirit-seeker's soul.

ROMANUS:

If you unite yourselves with us,
Then spirit-fruits must ripen,
And deeds spring up, in the active life of spirit,
Which grow from the soul's true pupilship.

RETARDUS:

If you unite yourselves with us,
What will happen to me?
My deeds will bear no fruit at all
For the spirit-pupil.

BENEDICTUS:

You will transform yourself into another form of existence,
As you have done your work.

THEODOSIUS:

You will live on in the sacred work of others

If you sacrifice yourself.

ROMANUS:

You will bear fruit in human deeds

If I can tend the fruits.

JOHANNES (out of meditation, as in the previous scene):

To my inner eye there showed themselves

The brothers in the temple.

They were similar in their forms

To people that I know

Within the world of sense-appearance.

Only Benedictus was also similar in spirit.

The one who stood to his left

Is like that man

Who only wants to approach the spirit through feeling.

The third one was like that man

Who only acknowledges the powers of life

In winches and pulleys and outer work.

The fourth one is unknown to me.

The lady, who after her husband's death

Turned towards the spirit-light,

I saw here in her deepest being.

And Felix Balde appeared

Just the way he is in life.

Slow curtain.

SCENE SIX

The same setting as in Scene Four. The Spirit of the Elements is standing in the same place. In front of him, Felicia Balde; later Germanus. Johannes in meditation.

FELICIA BALDE:

You've had me summoned here;

What do you want to hear from me?

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

I gave two men as a present to the earth.

The spirit-power of both men

Was fructified through you.

When their souls had been lamed

By arid intellectual labour

They found a re-enlivening

In your words.

For what you've given them
You too are now in debt to me.
Their spirit is not rich enough
To pay me for the service
I have done for them.

FELICIA BALDE:

Over many years
One of these two men
Would come to our cottage,
To gain the strength
That gave his words their fire.
Later on he also brought the other with him.
And so they both devoured the fruits
Whose worth was then unknown to me.
Yet little good did I ever experience them
To give me in return.
As a present to our son they gave
Their kind of knowledge.

They meant it very well,
They had the best intentions
But our son, as a result,
Died in his soul.
He had grown up in the light
That Father Felix had won
From springs and rocks and mountains,
Through converse with spirits.
And that was joined by everything
That had burgeoned up in my soul
Since my earliest childhood.
Our son's awareness of the spirit
Died in the gloomy shadow cast
By dark science.
And in place of the bright and cheerful child
A man grew up
With a barren soul
And an empty heart.
And now
You're even demanding

That I pay

What they owe you.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

It must be so.

As you were first to serve

Their earthly part,

The Spirit now demands through me

That you complete the work.

FELICIA BALDE:

It's not my way to refuse

A task I ought to do;

But tell me first

If the loving service I have done

Will bring me harm.

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

The gifts that you first gave to them on earth
Robbed your child of his soul-forces.
The gifts you now are giving to their spirit,
Bring loss to your own self;
And this loss of life-forces you will suffer
Will show itself upon your body
As ugliness.

FELICIA BALDE:

You took from my child
All the forces of his soul;
And I'm supposed to walk about
As a monster,
For all to see,
Just so fruits can ripen in them
That bring about little good!

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

And yet you're bringing about
Great good for people
And also your own happiness!
When the new powers of spirit
Emerge in people's souls,
The child's life and the mother's beauty
Will flower again in higher form.

FELICIA BALDE:

Then what should I do?

SPIRIT OF THE ELEMENTS:

You have so often given inspiration to human beings,
So now inspire the spirits of the rocks;

FELICIA BALDE:

Very well - - - -

Once there was a being

Who flew from East to West,

Following the course of the sun.

Over lands and over seas it flew;

From high above it looked down

On all the hustle and bustle of human life.

It saw the love

That people have for one another

And the hate

With which they persecute each other too.

Nothing that it saw could slow that being in its flight.

For all that springs from love and hate

Is always everywhere the same,

Many thousandfold.

But over one particular house,

The being had to stop.

In it lived a very tired man.

He pondered upon human love

And pondered too on human hate.

His pondering had already etched
Deep furrows in his countenance
And turned his hair quite white.
And the being, feeling for his grief
Lost its guide, the sun,
And stayed there with this man.
There it was still, in his room,
When the sun went down.
And then, when the sun returned,
The being was taken up again
By the Spirit of the Sun.
And yet again it watched people
While away their course of life on earth
In love and hate.
And when, following the sun,
It came above that house a second time,
And lowered its eyes,
The man was lying dead.

Germanus speaks from behind a rock, so that he remains invisible.

GERMANUS:

Once there was a man,
Who roamed from East to West.
The desire for knowledge lured him
Over land and over sea.
According to the rules set down by wisdom he looked
On all the hustle and bustle of human life.
He saw the love
That people have for one another
And the hate
With which they persecute each other too.
The man saw himself at every moment
Stretched to the limits of his wisdom.
And yet how love and hate
Always rule what happens on the earth,
Could not be made to fit to any law.
He noted many thousand individual cases
But lacked any kind of overview.

As he went upon his way
The dry researcher met
A light-being;
The light-being
Had a hard existence
For it was in a constant battle
With a dark shadow-form.
'Who are you then?'
Asked the dry researcher.
'I am love,'
Said the one being;
And the other said:
'In me you look on hate.'
But the man no longer heard
The words of these two beings.
As a deaf researcher, from then on,
The man roamed from East to West.

FELICIA BALDE:

Who are you then,
Who distorts my words
So displeasingly,
In his own style?
It sounds like mockery
And it has never been my style to mock.

GERMANUS (stepping forward):

I am the spirit of the Earth-Brain;
In human beings
There only lives a dwarf-sized copy of me.
And so much that is thought in it,
When I display it giant-sized,
As it appears in my brain,
Is just a mockery of itself.

FELICIA BALDE:

So then you're mocking me as well!

GERMANUS:

I very often have to practise
This activity;
But usually people
Don't hear a word I say.
I seized the opportunity
To be there once, as well,
When someone actually hears me.

JOHANNES (out of meditation):

This was the man
Who said about himself
That spirit-light had seemed to enter
By itself into his brain.
And Felicia Balde appeared,
As did her husband,
Just the way she is in life.

Curtain.

SCENE SEVEN

The spirit-realm. Maria, Philia, Astrid, Luna, Child; Johannes, first from a distance, then coming nearer; Theodora, then finally Benedictus.

MARIA:

You, my sisters—you,

Who have been of help to me so often,

Help me too in this hour,

That I may let the ether of all worlds

Tremble and quake.

It shall harmoniously ring out,

And ringing, reach a human soul,

And permeate him through and through with knowledge.

I can behold the signs

That make our task clear.

Your work is to unite itself with mine.

The striving one, Johannes,

Is to be raised,
Through our activity,
To true being.
The brothers in the temple
Have held counsel
Over how to guide him from the depths
Up to light-filled heights.
They now expect that we
Awake in him the strength he needs
To fly on wings of soul
Into the heights.
Therefore,
You, my Philia, drink in
From widths of space
The clear and radiant being of the light.
Fill yourself creatively
With all the charms of ringing sound,
So that you may reach out to me
These gifts you gather up
From deep grounds of spirit.

I then can weave them into
The quickening circling dances of the spheres.
And Astrid, you as well,
Belovéd mirror-image of my spirit,
Bring to birth the power of darkness
In the flowing, radiant light,
That it may show itself in colours.
And fashion into form
The being of ringing sound;
So that the weaving substance of the worlds
Resoundingly may live.
Through this I can entrust
To the searching human mind
The feeling for the spirit.
And you, most strong Luna,
Fortified within,
Like the living core
At the heart of the tree,
Unite the image of your particular being
With your sisters' gifts

So that the seeking soul may grow
To certainty of knowledge.

PHILIA:

I will imbue myself
From wide world expanses,
With the clearest essence of the light,
And I will breathe into myself,
From far ethereal distances,
The life-blessing substance of ringing sound,
So that you may succeed,
Belovéd sister, in your work.

ASTRID:

And I will interweave
The radiating light
With softening darkness;
I will condense and fashion

The life of ringing sound.
Then it will glitteringly ring,
Then it will ringing glitter,
That you can guide, beloved sister,
The sunbeams of the soul.

LUNA:

And I will warm the substance of the soul
And will make firm the weaving ether of life.
They will condense themselves,
They will experience themselves,
And continually being in themselves
Hold themselves in their creative power,
That you, beloved sister, can bring to birth
The certainty of knowledge
Within the searching human soul.

MARIA:

From Philia's realms

May there stream forth the sense for joy;

And may the powers of nixis and water-beings

To shift and change,

Open up the subtle senses of the soul,

That the one who has awoken

Can experience

The worlds' joys

And the worlds' woes.

From Astrid's weaving

May there spring love's joy;

The drifting dancing life of the sylphs

Shall stir within the soul

Desire to sacrifice,

That the one

Who has been consecrated

Can refresh and quicken

Those weighed down with sorrow,

Those who can but beg for joy.

From Luna's strength

May there stream
Solidity and firmness.
The kindling power of the fire-beings,
It can create
Certainty for the soul;
So that the knowing one
Can find himself
Within the soul's weaving,
Within the life of worlds.

PHILIA:

I will make a plea to cosmic spirits
That their beings' light
May wondrously enchant the soul's new sense,
And that the sounding of their words
May bless his spirit-hearing;
So that the one who is to waken
Uplifts himself
On soul-paths

Into the heavenly heights.

ASTRID:

I will guide the streams of love

That warm the world

Into the heart

Of the consecrated one;

So he can bring

Heaven's goodness

To what is done on earth

And the mood of consecration

To the children of humankind.

LUNA:

I will implore from mighty primal powers

Courage and strength

And lay them deep

In the heart of the seeker;

So that trust
In his own self
Can guide him
Through life.
He then will feel grounded
And secure within himself.
He will pick the ripened fruits
Of every moment
And draw out seeds from them
For the eternities.

MARIA:

United with you, my sisters,
In this noble work,
What I so long for
Will succeed.
The call
Of the one who has been so sorely tested
At last reaches our world of light.

Johannes appears.

JOHANNES:

Oh Maria, it's you. You're here.

My suffering

Has borne me rich fruit.

It has released me

From that delusory image

That first of all I fashioned from myself

And then which held me captive.

It is to pain I owe my thanks,

That on the paths of soul I've travelled

I have finally reached you.

MARIA:

How was it then, the way

That led you here?

JOHANNES:

I felt I had shaken off

The senses' chains.

My gaze was then set free

From those bounds

Our present surroundings impose upon it.

I could see other things in a person's life

Than what the narrow confines

Of the present moment

Reveal.

Capesius, who to the eyes of my senses

Is in his older years,

The spirit placed before my soul

As a youth

Full of hopeful dreams

Setting out upon his life,

Where ever and again

There flocked around him

A devoted crowd of listeners.
And Strader, who still is young
In earthly life,
Who's hardly yet
Grown out of his years in the monastery,
I could see
As he would one day have to become,
If he kept on pursuing his goal
The way he's thought it out till now.
And only those people,
Who in the earthly realm
Are spirit-filled already
Appeared unchanged
Within the spirit-realm.
Father Felix and Mother Felicia,
When my spirit-eye beheld them,
Had kept their own earthly forms.
And then my spiritual guides
Honoured me with their presence
And spoke of gifts which would be mine

When I attain the lofty heights of knowledge.
And much more
That I had seen before
Through the narrow frame of the senses
I've now beheld as well
With my spirit-eyes.
And the clarifying light of discernment
Shone into my new world.
But I could not yet decide
Whether a dream was dawning in me
Or whether spiritual reality already surrounded me.
I did not know
If my spirit-sight was indeed
In touch with other things,
Or if I had merely expanded my own self
Into a world.
Then you yourself appeared.
Not as you are at this time,
Not as you were seen in the past;
No, I glimpsed you

As you are eternally in the spirit.
You were much more than just a human being;
I could clearly recognize
The spirit within your soul.
It did not do the things
That people do
Within their earthly bodies.
It acted as a spirit,
Who wants to bring about deeds
Rooted in eternity.
And now that it is granted me
To stand before you in the spirit,
Full light for the first time shines out to me.
I have already so strongly experienced your reality
With my eyes of sense
That here in the world of spirit
I also know now for certain:
No image of enchantment stands before me.
It is your true being itself,
In which I met you there,

In which I now may meet you here.

THEODORA (appearing):

I am impelled to speak.

A ray of glorious light, Maria,

Lifts free from your brow.

The ray begins to shape itself

And takes on a human form.

It is a man wholly filled with spirit

And other people gather round him.

I gaze into a time long since vanished.

And from the eyes of that holy man

Who has risen from your head,

There shines out

The purest soul peace,

And the inner enthusiasm of his spirit

Gleams through his noble features.

In front of this man I see a woman

Listening devotedly

To the words he speaks.

I hear the words.

And this is what they say:

‘You have gazed up in reverence

To your gods.

I love these gods

As much as you yourselves love them.

They gave your thinking strength,

They planted courage in your heart.

And yet their gifts all stem

From a spirit-being who is higher than them.’

I see

How the man’s words

Sent a wild stir rippling through the people,

Whipping up a frenzy among them.

I can hear their shouts:

‘Oh kill him, kill! He wants to steal

What the gods have given us.’

Calmly, the man keeps on speaking.

He tells them of the Son of God

Who descended to earth

And who overcame death:

He speaks of Christ.

And as he keeps on speaking,

The souls become peaceful;

Only one heathen heart

Still stands against him.

He vows to take revenge

Upon the man.

I recognize this heart;

It beats again in that child

Who has grown up at your side.

The man, the messenger of Christ,

Speaks to him:

‘In this life your destiny does not allow you

To draw near me;

But I will wait patiently,

One day your path

Will lead you to me after all.’

The woman who stands

Directly in front of the man

Falls down at his feet;

She feels transformed.

A soul prays

To the God who took on human form;

A heart loves

The human messenger of that God.

Johannes sinks on his knees in front of Maria.

MARIA:

Johannes, you should awaken to full consciousness

What is now dawning in you.

Memory in you

Has just won its way free

From the chains of the senses that bound it.

You have experienced me

And you have sensed yourself,

The way that we both were
When our destinies were joined
In a previous earth-life.
You yourself were the woman,
The wise one spoke of.
That was how
When I came to your tribe long ago
As a messenger of Christ,
You bowed down in reverence at my feet.
What in the mystery places of Hibernia
Had been confided in me
About that God
Who dwelled within the human being
And who had overcome the powers of death:
This sacred teaching I was allowed to bring to peoples
In whom the soul still lived
That made joyful sacrifice
To mighty Odin
And could only think with sorrow
On shining Baldur.

It was the power that grew within you
At that time
From the message I brought
That drew you to me
From the first day
Your earthly eyes saw me in this life.
And as this power has never ceased
To work on strongly,
But has remained unconscious for us both,
It wove into our existence
All the sufferings
We have struggled through.
And yet within that suffering itself
There lay the power
To lead us into the spirit-realm,
Where we now meet in truth.
Your pain became more than you could bear
Through the presence of that large gathering of people.
You are linked with them through destiny,
Which is why the revelations that they made

About their own true natures
Had such a shattering effect on your heart.
Karma gathered them around you
In order to awaken a power in you
That helped your life move forwards.
And this power
Has shaken you throughout your being
So that, freed from your earthly body,
You could ascend to spirit-worlds.
It is to my soul, though, that you are nearest,
And through all the pain
You have remained true to me.
It has therefore fallen to me
To complete the initiation
The spirit-light has granted you.
The brothers
Who carry out their service in the temple
Awakened your inner sight.
But you can only know
That what you have beheld is true

When you can find a being again, in spirit-realms,
To whom you are most deeply linked already
In worlds of sense.

So that this being could come towards you here
And meet you

The brothers sent me on ahead of you.

This was your hardest trial of all—

When I was summoned here.

I implored our guide, Benedictus,

To solve the riddle of my life

That seemed so cruel to me.

And blessing streamed from his words

When he spoke about his mission and of mine.

He told me of the spirit, to whose service

The power in me should now be dedicated.

At his words it was as if,

In a moment,

The brightest spirit-light wholly illuminated my soul,

And suffering, happily,

Had transformed itself to blessedness.

And one thought alone filled my soul:
He gave me light—
Yes, light, that gave to me the power to see.
United with this thought there was the will:
To devote myself completely to the spirit
And to become capable of the sacrifice
That could bring me near him.
This thought—it had the greatest power.
It gave the soul wings and carried me
Into this realm, where you have found me.
In that moment,
When I felt free of the earthly body,
I could turn my spirit-eye towards you.
It was not just Johannes I saw before me;
I saw the woman, who in ancient times
Had followed me
And closely joined her destiny with mine.
I therefore came to spirit-truth through you,
To whom I am most deeply linked already
In worlds of sense.

I myself had gained certainty in spirit
And was enabled
To give this to you as well.
Streaming out to Benedictus
A ray of most exalted love,
I went on ahead of you.
And he has granted you the power
To follow me into these spirit-spheres.

BENEDICTUS (appearing):

You have both found each other here
Within the spirit-realm,
And so I too
May once again be at your side.
I could grant you both the power
That has impelled you here
And yet
Could not myself accompany you.
The law so wills it

That I must obey.
You had first, by yourselves,
To gain the spirit-eyes,
Which make it possible for you
To see me here as well.
The path of spirit-pilgrimage
Has only now begun for you.
You now will stand in sense-existence
With new powers
And with the Spirit
That has been revealed to you
Will be able to serve
Humanity's true way forward.
Destiny has joined you
So that in unison with each other
You may unfold the powers
Which have to serve true creative good.
And wandering on paths of soul
Wisdom herself will teach you
That the highest of all can be achieved

When souls, who grant to one another
Spirit-certainty,
Faithfully unite themselves
For the sake of world-healing.
Spirit-guidance once united you in knowledge,
Now unite yourselves in active spirit-work.
The Powers of this realm now give to you
Through my mouth
These sacred words of strength:

*The weaving spirit of the light, it shines
From human being to human being,
Filling all the world with truth.*

*The blessing of love, it warms
The soul—through other souls—
Working blessed joy through all the worlds.*

*And spirit messengers, they marry
The works of blessing of humankind*

With the great aims of worlds;

And when human beings, who in another find themselves,

Can marry both of these,

The light of spirit shines through warmth of soul.

Curtain.

INTERLUDE

It is to be assumed that the preceding scenes were the performance Sophia went to, and that the next day her friend Estella comes to see her again. The following takes place in the same room as the one in the Prelude.

SOPHIA:

My dear Estella, forgive me for keeping you waiting; I needed to see to the children.

ESTELLA:

I've come back to see you already. You are so close to me, that whenever something affects me deeply, I always long to share it with you.

SOPHIA:

I'll always be here as your friend and with the warmest interest in all that you feel.

ESTELLA:

This play Exiled and Uprooted went so deep with me. It might sound very strange when I say that it felt like it only lasted a few moments, as if everything I've ever observed about human suffering was there in front of my soul.

With extraordinary artistic power the play doesn't only put on stage the outer crises so many people face, but also points in a wonderfully discerning way to people's deepest inner sufferings and soul-pain.

SOPHIA:

Of course one can't get a true sense of a work of art if one only hears about its content; but I'd love it if you could share something of what it was that touched you so deeply.

ESTELLA:

It had to do with the remarkable way the play develops. The playwright wants to show how a young painter loses all desire to create, because he begins to have doubts about the love he feels for a woman. She was the one who had given him the strength to take further and develop his hope-filled plans and sketches. Out of purest enthusiasm for his art, in her there had arisen the most beautiful sacrificial love. And it was thanks to this that he could experience, in the artistic realm, a complete unfolding of his powers. He blossomed, one might say, in the warm sunlight of his benefactor. From

his deep gratitude to this woman, with whom he was frequently together, there now grew in him a passionate love for her. And because of this he increasingly neglected a poor creature, who was faithfully devoted to him and who finally died from grief, for she had to tell herself that the heart of her beloved was lost to her. When he heard about her death he wasn't particularly affected by the news, as his feelings were only for his benefactor. And yet, he had ever more to recognize that her noble feelings of friendship towards him would never change into a passionate love-relationship. This drove out of him all his joy in creativity. He felt more and more barren and empty in his inner life. In this state there came back to his mind the poor woman who had once been his, who he had deserted. And a human being filled with bright hopes turned into the shattered ruin of a life. With no prospect of any future light or hope he withered away. And all this brought to life in the most intensely dramatic way.

SOPHIA:

I can easily imagine what a hugely powerful effect this performance would have had precisely on my dear Estella, who even in her youth suffered so deeply when she saw the fate of such people, who harsh life crises had driven into bitter despair and woe.

ESTELLA:

My dear Sophie, you misunderstand me in this regard. I can very well distinguish between a work of art and reality. And one fails to judge a work of art in its own terms if one brings into one's judgement the feelings one has in life about the events it portrays. This time it really was just the completely perfect artistic treatment of a profound life-question that so

deeply moved and shook me. And I recognized yet again, with utter clarity, how art can only ever attain its true heights when it deals with the rich and full experience of life. The moment a work of art strays from this it becomes untrue.

SOPHIA:

I can completely understand you when you speak like this. I have always admired those artists who succeed in portraying to perfection what you call true life. And I believe that it's particularly in our times that many have mastered this. It's just that precisely the highest achievements in this realm always left me feeling a certain uneasiness. For a long time I couldn't explain this. Then one day I gained the insight which answered it for me.

ESTELLA:

You no doubt want to tell me that your world-view put an end to your appreciation of so-called realism in art.

SOPHIA:

Dear Estella, we're not talking for now about my world-view. You know perfectly well that the uneasy feeling I've just described was present in me long before I knew anything about what you call my world-view. And it isn't only art that strives for realism that makes me feel this way, other

artistic directions make me feel the same way as well. This feeling rises up in me particularly when I become aware of what I call the untruthfulness, in a deeper sense, of certain works of art.

ESTELLA:

I'm really not following you at all any more.

SOPHIA:

Just consider, my dear Estella, how when we take hold of true reality in a living way, this has to make the heart feel a certain poverty in works of art, as even the greatest artist clearly remains a mere dilettante compared to great creating Nature herself. To me anyway even the most perfect artistic representation cannot give me what I receive from what a landscape or a human face reveal.

ESTELLA:

Yes, but that's in the nature of things and cannot be changed.

SOPHIA:

It could be changed, if people would simply become clear about one thing. They could tell themselves, namely, how absurd it is to make a copy, with our human abilities, of what higher powers have spread out before us as the truest imaginable work of art. And yet these very same powers have placed the striving within us to take the work of creation further, so to speak, in order to give the world what these powers themselves do not yet reveal to our senses. In all that human beings can create, the creative powers have left nature unperfected, incomplete. Why should we imperfectly imitate nature's perfection, when it is actually possible to transform what is imperfect in her and bring it to perfection? If you think of what I'm saying transformed into an intuitive, elemental feeling, you'll be able to imagine the uneasiness I feel in relation to so much that you call art. To see an imperfect representation of the reality placed before our senses must make us feel uneasy, while the most imperfect depiction of what is hidden behind what we observe can be a revelation.

ESTELLA:

You're speaking of something that doesn't actually exist. For no true artist ever aims merely to imitate nature.

SOPHIA:

And that's precisely where the imperfection of so many works of art lies—that the creative activity, by itself, leads out beyond nature, but that the artist is ignorant of how those realities appear that the senses are unable to perceive.

ESTELLA:

I see no possibility for us ever to understand each other on this point. It's bitterly painful to see one's dearest friend go down paths, in the most important inner questions of life, which diverge so radically from one's own. I continue to hope, nevertheless, that our friendship will see better days.

SOPHIA:

On this we should both, I think, be willing to accept whatever it is that life brings us.

ESTELLA:

Good bye, dear Sophie. (See you.)

SOPHIA:

Good bye, my good Estella.

Quietly—perhaps even once Estella has turned away: Yes. See you. Curtain.

(At the very end, the 'See you' in brackets is optional—but the German 'Auf wiedersehen' has an extra meaning that 'Good bye' does not.)

SCENE EIGHT

The same room as in the first scene. Johannes, Maria, Capesius, Strader.

JOHANNES (at an easel, in front of which Capesius and Maria are sitting):

So... Those really were the last brushstrokes.

Yes. I can happily say... the work is finished!

It's been quite particularly precious to me

To have been able, through my art,

To explore in its depths precisely your being.

CAPESIUS:

This picture is truly a miracle.

And an even greater one, in my eyes,

Is its creator.

The transformation that has come about in you

Is beyond comparison with anything
People like me
Ever thought possible.
Even now one can only believe in it
Because one's very eyes compel one to.
The first time I saw you was three years ago.
I was then enabled to enter that circle
In which you had risen up
To great heights of achievement.
At that time you were a man
Filled with terrible troubles and cares;
One look at your face was enough to show this.
I had listened to a talk in your circle
And afterwards felt the need to add a few words
Which only with difficulty
Wrestled their way free from me.
I spoke in the kind of mood
Where usually one's thoughts
Concern only oneself.
And yet my gaze was constantly focussed

On that painter weighed down with sorrows, burdened with grief,
Who sat in the corner and said nothing.

But the way he sat there, musing in silence,
Was very strange.

One could well have believed
That he didn't hear a single word
That was being spoken round him.

The anguish he was given over to
Seemed to have a life of its own.

It was as if rather than the person hearing
The anguish itself had the power to hear.

I don't think it would be untrue
To say he was completely possessed by anguish.

Soon after that day I met you again;
And already you were as if transformed.

Joy and blessing shone from your eyes;
Your whole being was alive with vigour and strength;
And ringing through your words was a noble fire.

You then expressed the wish to me
Which seemed very strange indeed.

You wanted to become my pupil.
And indeed you really have, for three years,
Enthusiastically immersed yourself
In everything I have to say about the history of the world.
As this brought our lives ever closer
I experienced the mystery of your artistic genius.
And each new painting of yours was like a miracle.

During this speech Strader has entered.

Up until then my thinking had been little inclined
To raise itself into worlds beyond the senses.
I was far from doubting them.
But to approach them as a researcher
I considered presumptuous.
And now I have to admit
That you have made me arrive
At a different opinion.
I have often heard you repeat
That your artistic genius

Is due solely to the gift
Of being able to experience consciously in other worlds,
And that you are unable to put anything in your works
That you have not first beheld in spirit.
I see quite clearly how the spirit
Actively reveals itself in your works.

STRADER:

I have never understood you as little as I do now.
The spirit has always shown itself, in a living way,
In every artist.
What makes Thomasius any different
From other artistic geniuses?

CAPESIUS:

I have never doubted
That the spirit shows itself to be at work in people;
But usually they remain unconscious
Of the spirit's real and living being.
Their creativity is inspired by a living spirit

But they do not understand it.

Thomasius, however, creates, in sense-perceptible form,

What he can consciously behold in the spirit.

And he has repeatedly told me

That for artists like him

No other kind of creativity is possible.

STRADER:

I certainly have great admiration for Thomasius;

And I freely admit that in this painting

Capesius, who I thought I knew,

Is opened up to me completely for the first time.

I believed I knew him;

This work of art clearly shows me

How very little I knew about him.

MARIA:

Dear Doctor Strader,

How are you able

To admire, so intensely, the greatness of the work

And yet to deny the source this springs from?

STRADER:

What on earth does the admiration

I express to the artist

Have to do with believing

In his spirit-vision?

MARIA:

One can, of course, applaud the work,

Even without believing in its source.

But in this case there would be nothing for one to admire

If Johannes Thomasius had not travelled the path

That has led him to the spirit.

STRADER:

One should not say, though,
That to devote oneself to the spirit
Is to apprehend it with knowledge.
Spirit-power actively creates in the artist
The way it does in trees or stones.
But the tree is not able to know itself;
Only the one who observes it can do this.
Artists live within their work
And not in spiritual experience.
And yet when I now turn my gaze
To your picture,
I immediately forget everything
The thinker finds so enticing.
The great strength of my friend's soul
Shines from these eyes
That are merely painted.
The inner activity and thoughtfulness
Which imbues all his research

Lives in this brow;
And the fine and noble warmth of his words
Streams from every shade of colour
With which your brush
Has solved this riddle.
Oh, these colours
Are an artificial surface only,
Yet they are not;
It is as if their visibility
Was just the means
Through which to make themselves
Invisible for me.
And these forms,
Which seem to be created out of colour,
Speak of the weaving of the spirit,
Speak of so much
That they themselves are not.
And all this they speak of—where is it?
Not on the canvas;
For there are only colours void of spirit.

Is it in Capesius then?

If so, why can't I see it in him?

Thomasius, you have painted a painting

That annihilates itself

The moment one tries

To hold it with one's gaze.

I cannot understand

Where this picture is taking me.

What is it

That's wanting to be grasped?

What am I supposed

To be searching for?

I'd like to rip my way through the canvas

To find what I am to look for.

Where can I grasp

What radiantly streams from this picture

Into my soul?

I must have it!

Oh, how lost and ensnared I am!

It's as though I've been placed under a spell

By phantoms!

An invisible phantom;

And my powerlessness cannot see it.

You paint phantoms, Thomasius.

You enthrall them into your pictures;

They draw one on to look for them

But never let themselves be found.

- - - - Aagh! How cruel and ghastly your pictures are!

CAPESIUS:

My friend,

You've completely lost right now

The composure belonging to the thinker.

Just think for a moment

That if a phantom were speaking from this picture

Then I too would have to be phantom-like.

STRADER:

Forgive me, dear friend,
It was simply weakness...

CAPESIUS:

Oh, speak but well
Of this moment!
It seemed that you had lost yourself completely.
In truth you have been lifted up
Beyond yourself.
For what has happened to you
Has often happened to me as well.
In such moments
No matter how strongly
One may feel armed with one's thinking
In fact one merely proves
A power has taken hold of one
That cannot possibly originate
In anything our reason or our senses apprehend.
Who let there live within this painting

Such a power?

What I've experienced through this picture

Makes me call it

A true and living symbol.

It's taught me to know my own soul

As I could never do before.

This self-knowledge, furthermore,

Was deeply and immediately convincing.

Johannes Thomasius

Was able to explore my inmost depths

Because he has the power,

Through his unusual vision,

To reach in spirit

Through one's outer form of sense-appearance

To the spirit-self.

I've therefore come to see

The ancient words of wisdom: 'know yourself'

In a completely new light.

To know ourselves

We first must find that power within ourselves,

Which, true spirit that it is,
Can easily hide from us.

MARIA:

To find ourselves
We must first unfold the power
Able to reach into our own being.
Those words of wisdom actually say:
Develop yourself inwardly
So that you may behold yourself.

STRADER:

If one was willing to admit
That Thomasius, through spiritual development,
Had acquired knowledge of the being
That lives in you invisibly,
Then one would be saying
That knowledge is different at each new stage of life.

CAPESIUS:

Yes—that's exactly what I claim.

STRADER:

If that were so

All thinking would be meaningless

And all knowledge mere delusion—like a mirage.

In each new moment I would have to lose myself.

Aagh! ... Just let me be... Please... I need to be alone. (Leaves.)

CAPESIUS:

I'll accompany him—and be what help I can.

Leaves, following after Strader.

MARIA:

Capesius is far closer to spirit-knowledge
Than he himself imagines.
And Strader is suffering deeply.
His spirit cannot find
What his soul so ardently yearns for.

JOHANNES:

Already with the first steps
I was allowed to take
Into the soul-realm
The beings of these two men
Stood before my spirit-sight.
I saw Capesius as a youth
And Strader at an age
He will not reach for a long time.
Much is hidden

In the fine youthful flowering
Capesius showed me
That his current life in sense-existence
Does not allow to ripen.
This drove me on to seek his true nature.
With him, for the first time,
I was able to behold
In the inmost core of another's being
How traits of this life
Reveal themselves to be the consequences
Of a previous life on earth.
I saw the inner battles he had struggled through,
And which, from another life,
Have formed his present-day existence.
And even though
I could not see with eyes of soul
The life he had left behind:
I saw nevertheless
The uniqueness of his character
That could not possibly derive

From present times.

I therefore could convey in the painting

What holds sway in the unseen depths of his soul.

My paintbrush was guided by Powers

Capesius has unfolded

From former lives on earth.

And if, through this, I have unveiled to him

His own essential nature

Then my picture has done the task

That I intended with it.

As a work of art

I don't see that much value in it.

MARIA:

The picture will work on

In that soul

To whom it has opened up the path

Into the spirit-world.

Curtain, while Maria and Johannes are still in the room.

SCENE NINE

The same landscape as in the second scene. Johannes; later on Maria.

There resounds from the rocks and springs:

O human being, experience yourself!

JOHANNES:

O human being, experience yourself!

I've searched for three long years for this,

The strength of soul that's borne on wings of courage,

Which gives the words reality and truth;

The words, through which, in setting oneself free,

One conquers,

And conquering oneself

Can find one's freedom:

O human being, experience yourself!

From the rocks and springs resounds:

O human being, experience yourself!

This strength of soul

Makes its presence known within,

Only gently, quietly audible

To my spirit-ear.

Within itself it bears the hope

That as its presence grows

It will lead the human spirit

From its narrow bonds into world-wide distances,

Just as the little acorn-kernel

Mysteriously expands itself

Into the whole majestic form of the gigantic oak.

The spirit can quicken into life

All that weaves in wind and water

And what moulds and firms the earth beneath.

The human being can apprehend

Everything—

In the elements

In souls and spirits

In the long course of time and in eternity—

That has seized hold of existence.

The whole wide being of the world

Is living in the soul,

When that strength has taken root within the spirit

Which gives the words reality and truth:

O human being, experience yourself!

From the rocks and springs resounds:

O human being, experience yourself!

I feel them sounding out within my soul,

Feel the words welling up, bestowing strength.

Light now lives within me.

The radiance of being speaks around me;

The soul's new-born light springs up in me.

World-radiance actively creates in me:

O human being, experience yourself!

From the rocks and springs resounds:

O human being, experience yourself!

Wherever the unbounded strength of these words follows me

I find myself protected.

It will light my path through the senses' darkness

And will uphold me in spirit-heights.

It will fill me

With the soul's plenty

For all future ages.

I feel within me world-being

And must learn to find myself in all worlds.

I see my soul

Quickened into life within me

By my own power.

I am at last at rest within myself.

I gaze on all the rocks and fresh springs around me;

They speak the language of my own soul.

I find myself again within that being

To whom I brought bitter woe.

From out of her I call out to myself:

‘You have to find your way to me again

And relieve my sufferings.’

The spirit’s radiant light will give me strength

To let this other self now live in mine.

O you hope-filled words,

From all worlds you stream out strength to me:

O human being, experience yourself!

From the rocks and springs resounds:

O human being, experience yourself!

You let me feel my own frailty

By placing me beside the lofty aims of gods;

And I can feel the blessing

Of those high goals

With their creative power

Within my fragile earthly self.

And from my being itself

The goal will be revealed

To which the hidden seed within me
Strives.

Through the life that's born from me

I wish to give myself to the world.

I wish to feel the words in all their power

That first sound out so gently in me;

Upon my spirit pathways

They will be like a quickening fire

Refashioning the forces of my soul.

I feel my thinking reaching down

To deeply hidden grounds of worlds;

And feel its radiance shining through them.

Thus it ever works on—

The seed-power of these words:

O human being, experience yourself!

From the springs and rocks:

O human being, experience yourself!

From light-filled heights a being shines towards me,

I feel graced with wings
On which to rise to meet it.
I wish to set myself free,
As all beings do
Who have conquered themselves.

From the springs and rocks:

O human being, experience yourself!

I now behold this being.
My deepest wish, in future times,
Is that I may be like this being.
The spirit in me will free itself
Through you, my lofty future goal.
I therefore wish to follow you.

Maria appears.

The spirit-beings who have received me
Have opened up my eyes of soul.

And as I look with seeing eyes
Into the spirit-worlds
I powerfully feel within myself:
O human being, experience yourself!

From the springs and rocks:

O human being, experience yourself!

O my dear friend, you are here!

MARIA:

My soul has led me here;
For I could see your star.
It's shining now in all its strength.

JOHANNES:

And I experience now this strength within me.

MARIA:

We are so closely linked to one another
That your life of soul
Lets its light shine out in my soul too.

JOHANNES:

O Maria, are you aware then
Of everything
That in this hour
Has been revealed to me?
I have achieved
The ground of trust
A person needs
Before all else,
For I have won
True certainty of being.
And yes, I feel the power of those words
That now may guide me everywhere:

O human being, experience who you are!

From the springs and rocks:

O human being, experience yourself!

Curtain.

SCENE TEN

Meditation room. Johannes, Theodosius, Benedictus. Lucifer and Ahriman.

THEODOSIUS:

You're able now to feel all worlds within yourself.

Experience me then as this:

The power of universal love.

A being that's shone through by me,

If it devotes itself to others, bringing joy,

Feels its own existence heightened and empowered.

And thus I work, with joy in all that grows,

For the upbuilding of the world.

Without my power there can be no existence

And nor can any being live without me.

JOHANNES:

Thus as the one bearing, spreading joy
Throughout the worlds, you step before my inner eye!
I feel the joy in creativity
Through my spirit-power
Drive me on, inspiring me,
When I behold you there
As fruit of my experience of myself!
You showed yourself within the temple to my spirit-eye;
I had no way of knowing at that time
If I was seeing dream or truth.
But now the blindfolds have been removed
That hid the spirit-light from me.
I recognize you in your true reality.
I will reveal your being
Through my deeds;
Which shall bear healing through your power.
I owe the deepest thanks to Benedictus.
For he, through wisdom, gave me power
To guide my spirit-sight into your world.

THEODOSIUS:

Feel my working in your depths of soul

And bear my power with you into all worlds.

In services of love you will experience blessedness.

JOHANNES:

I feel the presence, very near, of your warming light,

I feel how creative power is being born within me.

Theodosius disappears.

He has gone,

But he'll return

And give me strength from fresh springs of love.

Only temporarily can his light disappear;

And then it lives on in one's own being.

I therefore can be left alone now,

Experiencing in myself the presence
Of the spirits of love.
Through him I now can feel myself raised up
And he is to reveal himself through me.

He becomes uncertain, which gradually expresses itself in his gestures.

Yet what am I sensing in myself? - - - - -
It seems as though a being
Is drawing near me, spiritually.
Ever since I've been found worthy
To see with spirit-eyes
I've always felt like this
When evil powers
Were wanting to take hold of me.
But whatever may come
I have the power to resist.
Standing firmly in myself I can experience who I am;
And nothing can withstand the power of these words.
But no... what's this?

I am experiencing the fiercest opposition imaginable;

It must be the worst, most terrible adversary - - - - -

But let him come, he will find me ready and armed.

- - - - -

You must be he himself—the enemy of the good;

By your fierce strength you may be felt.

I know you want to shatter

Whatever tears itself from your dominion.

I will make strong that power within me

In which you play no part.

Benedictus appears.

JOHANNES:

O - - - - - Benedictus,

You - - - - - the very source of my new life.

It's not possible, no! - - - - -

It cannot, must not be you yourself!

You are but a delusory image.

You good soul powers, appear in me.
Shatter the illusion
That wants to lure me and deceive me.

BENEDICTUS:

Ask your soul itself
If it can feel
What my nearness, over many years,
Has given it.
It was through me
The fruit of wisdom
Grew in you.
It alone can help you forward
And keep you safe from error in the spirit-realm.
Experience me within you.
But if you would go forward and take further steps
Then you must tread the path
That leads you to my temple.
If my wisdom is to illumine you in future

It must flow from that place
Where I carry out my work in harmony with my brothers.
I gave you the power of truth.
When by itself, with all its strength,
This ignites and catches fire within you,
Then you will find the way.

He leaves.

JOHANNES:

Oh, he's leaving me.
Have I driven away delusion?
Or has he, in his true reality, gone?
How can I decide?

And yet I now feel strengthened in myself.
This was not some deception, but he himself;
Yes, you, Benedictus,
I experience you in myself.

You bestowed on me the forces
Which, as they live on within me,
Will distinguish truth from error.
And yet—I fell into delusion.
I shuddered sensing your presence near me
And when you stood in front of me
Could take you for an image of deceit.

Theodosius reappears.

THEODOSIUS:

You'll free yourself from all delusion
If you can fill yourself with powers of mine.
You were shown the way to me by Benedictus
But your own wisdom now must be your guide.
As long as you experience
Only what he's placed within you
You will not be able
To experience yourself.

So strive in freedom for the radiant heights;
Receive the strength I give for this free striving.

Disappears.

JOHANNES:

How wonderful your words sound;
I must experience them in myself.
When they completely fill my being
They then will wholly free me from delusion.

So work on further
In the true ground of my soul
Exalted beautiful words!
You can only have come from the temple—
For they were spoken by Benedictus's brother.
I feel them rising up already
From deep within me.

They will resound from me myself
Enabling me to fully understand them.
You, O spirit, who lives within me,
Rise up from where you are hidden,
And show yourself to me in your true being.
Yes, I already feel you drawing near.
You must appear to me.

Lucifer and Ahriman appear.

LUCIFER:

O human being, know me.
O human being, experience yourself.
You have won your way free
From spirit-guidance
And have escaped
Into free earthly regions.
You sought for your own being
Amidst the entanglements of earth;

That you have found yourself
Was your reward.
Make use of the reward.
Protect yourself
Amidst the great spirit-venture.
You find a very different being
In the wide realm of the heights.
It will cast you out
Into human destiny
And heavily oppress you.
O human being experience yourself.
O human being, know me.

AHRIMAN:

O human being, know yourself.
O human being, experience me.
You have escaped
From spiritual darkness.
You have found

The light of earth.

So now draw from my certainty

Truth's power.

I harden the firm and solid ground

Beneath you.

For you can also lose it.

In your wavering

You dissipate the power of being.

In the high realms of the light

You easily can squander

Spirit-strength.

You can become

The ruin of yourself.

O human being, experience me.

O human being, know yourself.

They disappear.

JOHANNES:

Oh what was this; from out of me arose Lucifer

And then Ahriman as well!

Am I experiencing only ever-new delusion

After pleading

So ardently for truth?

The brother of Benedictus

Evoked those powers in me

That only throw the soul into delusion.

THE FOLLOWING AS THE VOICE OF SPIRITS FROM THE HEIGHTS:

Your thoughts rise up

To primal grounds of worlds.

All that drove you into soul-delusion

All that held you bound in error

Now appears to you in spirit-light,

Through whose bounty,

Human beings in their beholding

Think in truth;

Through whose bounty,

Human beings in their striving

Live in love.

Curtain.

SCENE ELEVEN

The Sun Temple; the super-earthly hidden Mystery Site of the Hierophants.

RETARDUS:

You have both brought me bitter woe.
You have both carried out disastrously
The offices you were given by me.
That's why I've summoned you
Before my seat of judgement.
Capesius, it was I who gave you
The elevated manner of your mind
So that you spoke so gracefully
About ideas of human history and striving,
And should have had the power to convince.
I therefore guided your activity
Into those circles where you met Maria and Johannes.
The intellectual power and brilliance of your words

Should have had the effect

Of dampening down

Their tendency to spirit-vision.

Instead of this, you just surrendered

To their effect on you.

As for you, Strader, I opened up the way for you

To strict and certain paths of knowledge.

Through your strength of thought

You should have utterly destroyed

The magic power of spirit-vision.

But you lack all security in feeling.

Thinking's power slipped away from you,

When the chance of victory was yours.

My destiny is intimately bound

To your deeds.

Through you, Maria and Johannes, those seekers for truth

Are both for all time lost to my realm.

I have no choice—their souls

I must surrender to my brothers.

CAPESIUS:

I never could have been

A good ambassador of yours.

You gave me strength to characterize human life.

I could depict what had inspired people

At one time or another.

And yet it was not possible

To give my words, which painted pictures of the past,

The strength to really fill and nourish human souls.

STRADER:

The weakness I could not prevent afflicting me

Is just the image of your own.

You could give me the gift of knowledge.

But not the strength to silence all the yearning

That lives in human hearts and strives for truth.

I always had to feel, deep down within me,

Different powers than yours.

RETARDUS:

Well now you see the terrible effect of your weakness.

The brothers are approaching with the souls

In whom they will defeat me.

Johannes and Maria are both obedient to their power.

Benedictus enters with Lucifer and Ahriman—and behind them Johannes and Maria. Then Theodosius and Romanus; the Soul-Forces; Felix and Felicia Balde and the Other Maria; finally Theodora.

BENEDICTUS (to Lucifer):

There is no longer any space

Within Maria and Johannes

For power that's unseeing or unseen.

They have been raised to spirit-being.

LUCIFER:

I see indeed I'll have to leave these souls.

The wisdom they have gained

Gives them the powers

With which they can behold me.

I only have dominion over souls

As long as they cannot observe me.

And yet, in spite of this,

The Power assigned to me in world-becoming

Will still continue.

And even if I cannot tempt their souls

My spirit-strength

Will let rich fruits of greatest beauty

Grow ripe within them.

BENEDICTUS (to Ahriman):

Maria and Johannes

Have put an end, within themselves,

To Error's cold darkness;

And they have opened up their spirit-eyes.

AHRIMAN:

I must renounce their spirit.
For now they turn to the light;
But I am still at liberty
To make their souls delight
In all the show of sense-appearance;
They will believe no more
That it is truth,
But will be able to behold
How what's displayed before their senses
Reveals the truth.

THEODOSIUS (to the Other Maria):

Your destiny was intimately linked
With your higher sister's life.
I could give to her the light of love
But not the warmth of love

As long as you kept wanting to allow
Your fine and noble side
Only to arise from dark, unconscious feeling
And did not strive to see it clearly
In the full and radiant light of wisdom.
The influence of the temple cannot reach
To dark, unconscious impulses and drives,
Even when they wish to bring about the good.

THE OTHER MARIA:

I recognize what is fine and noble
Can bring about healing
Only when it lives within the light
And so I turn towards the temple.
My feeling will in future not diminish
The working of the light of love.

THEODOSIUS:

Your illuminated insight
Grants me the power
To open up the path
On which Maria's light of soul
Can make its way into the world.
It would always lose its power
Encountering souls who are as you have been till now
Who do not wish to marry love with light.

JOHANNES:

I see in you the same kind of soul
That governs me as well, deep down within;
As long as love's warmth within me
Kept itself apart from love's light,
I could not find the way to her,
Your higher sister.
The sacrifice that you bring to the temple
Shall have its living image in my soul.
The warmth of love within it

Will offer itself up to love's light.

MARIA:

Johannes,

Through me you have attained

Knowledge in the spirit-realm;

To spirit-knowledge you will join your soul's true being

When you can find your own soul

The way that you found mine.

PHILIA:

To you, from all of world-becoming,

There will be revealed the soul's pure joy.

ASTRID:

And now your whole being can be

Illumined through and through by warmth of soul.

LUNA:

And you may truly live yourself

When radiant light shines strongly in your soul.

ROMANUS (to Felix Balde):

You've kept yourself far away from the temple

For a long time;

You were only willing

To recognize enlightenment

When the light of your own soul

Revealed itself.

People like you take away my power

To give my light to earthly souls.

They wish to fashion and create

Only from the dark depths

All that they are meant to bring to life.

FELIX BALDE:

But now, from the dark depths,
It is human delusion itself
That has shown me the light
And let me find my way into the temple.

ROMANUS:

The fact that you have found the way here
Gives me the power to illuminate
The will
Of both Johannes and Maria,
So that it does not follow blind forces;
So that it gives itself instead
Its own direction
From the great aims of worlds.

MARIA:

Johannes, in the spirit
You have now beheld yourself
Through my self;
You will experience your being
As Spirit
When the light of worlds
Is able to behold itself in you.

JOHANNES (to Felix Balde):

I behold in you my brother Felix
That power of the soul
That held the will bound
Within my own spirit.
And you have wished to find the way into the temple;
So now, in my spirit too
I wish to show
The power of will the way

Into the temple of the soul.

RETARDUS:

The souls of both
Maria and Johannes
Free themselves from my realm.
How in future will they find
All that stems from my power?
During all the time they lacked
The true grounds of knowledge
Within themselves
They both enjoyed my gifts;
But now I find myself compelled
To let them go.

FELICIA BALDE:

That people can ignite
Within themselves

The fire of thinking
Without your help
I have already shown you.
There streams out of me
A knowledge
Able to bear
Living fruit.

JOHANNES:

And now this knowledge shall be married to the light
That's able to illumine human souls
From the abundant, radiant sources of the temple.

RETARDUS:

Capesius, my son,
You now are lost;
You have removed yourself from me
Before the temple's light could shine in you.

BENEDICTUS:

He has begun his journey on the path.

He feels the Light

And he will gain the power

To find deep down within himself

What Felicia up till now

Had to create for him.

STRADER:

So only I seem lost.

I am not able by myself

To banish all my doubts;

And I'm quite sure that on my own

I will not find the path again

That leads towards the temple.

THEODORA (appearing):

A glorious shining light
Floats upwards from your heart,
From which the image of a human being
Frees itself.
And springing from this human image
I can hear words;
Words, which sound out like this:
‘I have at last won for myself
The strength to reach the light.’
My friend, trust in yourself!
For you yourself will speak these words
In future days
When your time will be fulfilled.

Curtain.

THE TRIAL OF THE SOUL

Life-Pictures in Dramatic Scenes, as a Sequel to

The Doorway of Initiation

through Rudolf Steiner



CHARACTERS, FIGURES AND EVENTS

The spiritual and soul experiences of the individuals portrayed in The Trial of the Soul present a continuation of those in The Doorway of Initiation.

Professor Capesius

Benedictus, Hierophant of the Sun Temple

Philia Astrid Lunathe spiritual beings who mediate the connection of the human soul-forces with the universe

The Other Philia—the spiritual being who hinders the connection of the human soul-forces with the universe.

The Voice of Conscience

Philia, Astrid, Luna and the Other Philia—and also the Voice of Conscience—are not allegorical but as they are as realities for spiritual knowledge

Maria

Johannes Thomasius

Dr Strader

Felix Balde

Felicia Balde

Johannes Thomasius's Double (or Doppelgänger)

Lucifer

Ahriman

Twelve peasants (six men and six women)

Simon, the Jew—the previous incarnation of Dr Strader

Thomas—the previous incarnation of Johannes Thomasius

A Monk—the previous incarnation of Maria

The Grand Master, the leader of a branch of a mystical brotherhood

(The Grand Master is the previous incarnation of Hilary, who appears in the third and fourth Mystery Dramas)

The First and Second Preceptors of the same brotherhood

The First Preceptor is the previous incarnation of Professor Capesius

The First and Second Masters of Ceremonies of the same brotherhood

(The First Master of Ceremonies is a previous incarnation of Theodosius, the Second of Romanus)

The Spirit of Benedictus

Joseph Kean (in German original: Kühne)—the previous incarnation of Felix Balde

Mrs Kean (Kühne)—the previous incarnation of Felicia Balde

Berta, their daughter—the previous incarnation of the 'Other Maria' in 'The Doorway of Initiation'

Cecilia, called Celia, the foster-daughter of the Keans—the previous incarnation of Theodora in *The Doorway of Initiation*

Theodosius, Hierophant of the Sun Temple

Romanus, Hierophant of the Sun Temple

The events of the sixth, seventh, eighth and ninth scenes are the content of Capesius's spiritual retrospective vision into his previous life. Maria and Johannes Thomasius experience this same retrospective vision simultaneously (as the scenes themselves show); Strader does not, however, whose previous incarnation is only beheld by Capesius, Maria and Johannes Thomasius. The images of the retrospective vision into the fourteenth century are conceived as results of imaginative knowledge and thus present themselves, with regard to history, as an idealized portrayal of actual events and circumstances, which are only able to be recognized in the physical world through their effects. The way in which these lives transform and repeat themselves (from happenings in the fourteenth century to the present day) should not be seen as something universally valid, but as something that can only happen at a transition-point in time. Conflicts resulting from a previous life, therefore, in the way they are presented here, are likewise only possible for a time-period such as this.

SCENE ONE

Capesius's library and study. The underlying tone of it is brown. Evening mood. Capesius, then spirit-figures, who are soul-forces; afterwards Benedictus. This scene and those that follow portray events which occur several years after those of The Doorway of Initiation.

CAPESIUS (reading from a book):

‘Gazing with the soul’s eye
Into an unreal world without substance,
And merely dreaming
In thought’s shadow-images,
Determined
By laws of their own making—:
This is the way people often seek, in error,
For the meaning and the purpose of life.
They hope to draw up answers
From deep within their souls
To questions aimed at far-off cosmic worlds.

But such a form of contemplation lives in illusion
From the start, and in the end
Sees its spirit-sight, powerless,
Merely devour itself.'

No longer reading:

That's how Benedictus,
With his true seeing spirit,
Carves out in weighty, earnest words,
The inner path of so many people.
Each word hits home—reducing me to nothing - - - -.
They ruthlessly depict the truth
Of my own path.
And if a very god
Would now approach
On the raging blasts of the whirlwind,
In the violence of its wrath,
Its dreadful powers
Could not so rack me

Or seize me with terror
As these searing words of destiny.
Throughout my whole life
All I have done
Is weave in images
That sketch themselves, shadow-like,
In the soul's dream;
A dream that is nothing
But a deluded mirror
Of nature and the workings of the spirit;
And yet, from this ghost-like web of dreams,
Hopes to solve world-riddles.
With my restless seeking soul
I forever sought new goals—;
But now must clearly recognize:
I myself—was not present in my soul—
When the threads of thought,
Deluded and deceived,
Sought to span the far cosmic reaches.

My self-spun images
Always remained, therefore, empty musings.
But then—the young painter, Johannes,
Entered my life—;
Through using the true powers of his soul
He trod the path
To that ennobled state of spirit
That inwardly transforms the human being
And lets rise up
From deeply hidden realms of soul,
Those powers that create
The wellsprings of existence.
What grew to full maturity in him
From deep soul-foundations,
Rests, like a seed, in everyone.
And as this has been shown to me through him,
I know there is no greater sin than this:
To let our spirit-treasures waste away.

- - - - -

So, yes, I know

That I must seek more and more deeply - - - -

And not stay caught in doubts.

Before, in my conceit,

I might have been tempted

To the false view:

The human search for knowledge is in vain;

One must renounce all striving

For the wellsprings of life.

- - - - -

And if, before,

I'd realized, for sure,

As wisdom's ultimate conclusion,

That the powers

That live in human destiny demand

That we allow our individual being

To be dissolved

In unsubstantial nothingness:

Unflinchingly

I would have dared to do so. - - - -

To think like this, though, now

Would be a sacrilege
Since I've experienced so clearly
That I may never rest
Until the spirit-treasure in my soul
Is lifted up into the light of day.

Mighty spirit-beings
Have planted, deep within our souls,
The fruits of their labours;
And therefore we destroy the work of gods
If we allow these spirit-seeds
To go to waste, untended.
I recognize, through this,
Life's highest task and duty—;
But when I try and take
A single step into that realm
I have no right to turn away from,
I feel the forces failing me
Through which, buoyed up by pride of thought,
I wanted to elucidate the goals of life

In time's unfolding stream and in
The far expanses of the universe.
I used to feel
I pressed, quite effortlessly,
The thoughts out of my brain,
By which to grasp realities.
But now, when in the light of truth
I try and apprehend
The fountain-springs of life,
The instrument of thinking I make use of
Seems dull and leaden—,
I wrestle helplessly to form
Any clear images in thought
From Benedictus's solemn words,
That should unveil to me
The pathway to the spirit:

He reads again.

‘Reach down, in calmness, to your hidden depths of soul;

Let strength-filled courage be your guide.
Abandon all your previous ways of thinking,
As you sink down into yourself,
To lead you to yourself.
In killing out your own being's light
There will appear to you the true light of spirit.'

Capesius himself speaks again.

Ah! It's like I cannot breathe
When I exert myself
To grasp the meaning of such words.
And then, before I've any feeling what to think
Fear and panic seize me.
In chaos I experience
How it would be
If everything that has surrounded and supported me
Were crashing down and in its wreckage
Turning me to nothing.
Aghh! I must have read a hundred times

The words that follow - - - - :

And every single time

The darkness falling down around me

Has grown just ever darker.

Reading again.

‘There live within your thoughts cosmic, universal thoughts;

There weave within your feeling cosmic, universal forces;

There work within your will cosmic, universal beings.

In cosmic thoughts—lose yourself,

Through cosmic forces—experience yourself,

And out of cosmic beings of will—create yourself.

Do not seek your end in vast cosmic distances

Through thinking’s evanescent play of dreams - - - - ;

Begin in wide expanses of the spirit

And end within your own soul-depths:—

You find the aims of gods

As you recognize yourself in you.’

Through the experience of a vision, he sinks down powerlessly into himself.

As he comes back to himself, he speaks.

What was that?

Three figures, as soul-forces, hover round him.

LUNA:

You do not lack the strength

For high, uplifting spirit-flight.

This strength is grounded

In the human will.

It's able to endure

Through certainty of hope.

It's steeled and tempered

By sternly gazing on the future.

You only lack the courage

To pour into your will

Energetic confidence in life - - - -.

Be bold enough to dare

To plunge into the vast unknown.

ASTRID:

From cosmic worlds afar

From the radiant joy of sun-borne light—

From starry wide expanses

From the magic power that works through worlds—,

From heaven's soft blue ether

From the highest source of spirit-strength—

Now strive to draw new power of soul

And guide its bright resplendent rays

Into your heart's deep core

And living, warming knowledge

Will come to birth in you.

THE OTHER PHILIA:

Those evil, wicked sisters,

Are both deceiving you;

They want to spin your life into a web
Of fancy-filled illusion;
The vain, deceptive gifts
They offer you
Will melt away
If you attempt to hold them fast
With human strength.
They draw you on
To heavenly worlds of gods
But if you strongly seek,
Within their realm,
To take hold of yourself
As human being,
They'll shatter and destroy you.

CAPESIUS:

It's all too clear - - - -
That beings were speaking to me here - - - -
And yet, as clear as day, - - - -

Except for me,

There's no one here - - - - -

- - - - -

So was I merely speaking to myself - - - - - ?

That too is impossible;

For I could never have dreamed up

What I believed I heard - - - - -

- - - - -

Then am I even

The same person still

I was before?

His gestures show that he does not feel able to answer 'yes'.

Oh—I am—and I am not—

- - - - -

SPIRIT-VOICE (The Voice Of Spiritual Conscience):

Your thoughts are making their way down

Into the depths of human life.
What has enfolded you as soul
What has been bound in you as spirit
Now floats free to world-wide grounds of being;
To grounds of being, which lead people,
Drinking in their bounty
To live in thinking;
Which lead people,
Living their bounty,
To weave in semblance.

CAPESIUS:

Too much... too much - - - -
Oh, where is Capesius?
All you unknown powers,
I beg you,
Tell me
Where... is Capesius?
Where—am I—myself?

He sinks down into himself again, in deep contemplation.

BENEDICTUS (enters unnoticed by Capesius. Benedictus touches him on the shoulder):

It's reached my ears

You wish to speak with me.

I've therefore come here, to your home,

To look for you.

CAPESIUS:

It's so good of you

To answer me.

But you could scarcely have found me

More desperate—or in a worse state—

Than I am now.

And after all the agonies

I've just been tortured by,
That I am not lying paralysed
Upon the floor in front of you
Is thanks alone
To the kind and friendly look within your eyes,
As they met mine,
When your hand so gently woke me
From my appalling, frightful dreams.

BENEDICTUS:

I'm well aware that I have found you
Pitched in a battle for your life.
I knew long ago the time would come
When we would meet like this.
If we're to understand each other
You must grow used to changing the meaning
Of many words you know.
And so, do not be astounded
If in my language

Your suffering

Must have a different name.

- - - - -

This must be seen as your good fortune.

CAPESIUS:

So you increase the agonizing pain

That plunges me in darkness.

I felt just now, as if my very self

Had fled away

Far into the depths of worlds.

And that here,

Through the abandoned sheaths—or aspects—of my self,

Strange beings were speaking.

The only thing that gave me inner ground

Was that I felt

This spirit-dance of fancy-filled illusion

To be delusory,

And that this soul-deception

Lay behind my suffering.

This feeling is my one support—

Don't take it from me!

If I am not to lose myself completely,

Don't call this fever-fed delusion

Good fortune.

BENEDICTUS:

People can only lose

What separates them

From the true being of the world.

And if what they've misused,

In dream-like thinking,

For insubstantial ends,

At first appears lost to them,

Then they should seek for that

Which has eluded them.

They'll find it once again,

And then at last

They will devote it rightly
To human work and service.
To try and comfort you right now
Would merely be to play with clever words.

CAPESIUS:

No—you certainly are not the one
For teachings only speaking to one's reason.
Harsh experience has shown me this.
Like mighty deeds that journey to the heights
Then plunge to dark abysmal deeps,
So too
Do fiery flaming life and deathly cold
Stream through all the words you speak
Into people's souls.
They work like hints from destiny itself
Or like the turbulent storms of love
That life can bring.
I'd thought and researched ceaselessly

Before I met you; - - - -

The spirit's living power to create

And also to annihilate

I've only known

Since I have stepped upon your path.

- - - - -

All that your words unleashed within me

You saw when you came in.

I've often gone through torments

Studying your book of life;

The cup was filled today, though, to the brim—

Then through the words of destiny

The book contains

All my inner agony overflowed.

To understand your words

Still failed me;

But all their living power poured into my heart,

Like some elixir,

Conjuring into being magic worlds,

So that the daylight world of sense

Completely disappeared.

I saw these ghostly figures

Dancing, flitting round me.

Then words filled with dark, obscure meaning

Sounded out

From my sick and maddened soul.

I know you don't express in writing

Everything you bear within you,

Through your responsibility for people's souls;

And that to many of life's riddles

You only give the answer

When a person needs it.

Please grant me too

What I'm so desperately in need of;

For I must know

What robbed me of my senses and my reason

And conjured from the air

This whirling work of magic round me.

BENEDICTUS:

The words I speak and write
Do not wish just to say
What they convey as carriers of thoughts;
They guide the powers in the soul
To deep realities of spirit;
Their purpose is attained
Only when, in those who give themselves
To that which lives in them,
They set the power of vision free.
They are not fruits of my research;
They are entrusted me by spirit-beings
Who know the myriad signs
Through which world-destiny reveals itself.
It is the special character of these words
To guide one to the living springs of knowledge.
And yet it must remain the task of each alone
Who hears the words resound in their true being
To drink deep the spirit-waters from these springs.
And it is not against my words' intentions

That they transported you to worlds
That you found ghostly.
You stepped into a realm
Which must remain delusion for you
If in it you should lose yourself;
But which, if you can keep hold of yourself,
Within that realm, will open up for you
The first of all the doorways you must pass through
On the path to wisdom.

CAPESIUS:

How, then,
Can I keep hold of myself?

BENEDICTUS:

The answer to this riddling question
Will be given you
If you can face,

While wide awake within your seeing soul,
The many wondrous things
Which soon will come to meet you.
I see that powers of destiny and mighty spirit-beings
Are asking you to face an inner trial.

He leaves.

CAPESIUS:

The meaning of his words is still unclear to me,
And yet I feel them working in my being.
He's given me a goal - - - - :
I want to heed this hint from destiny.
He does not ask more intellectual striving;
He wants me to press on, as a researcher,
To true realities of spirit.

- - - - -

I do not know the nature of his mission;
But what he does commands my trust;

He has returned me to myself.

And so, although the magic beings,

That terrified and startled me,

May still for now remain unknown to me;

I will look forward

And freely face those things

That he has prophesied will happen.

Curtain, while Capesius stays standing in his room.

SCENE TWO

A meditation room—whose main colour is violet. A serious, but not a solemn or melancholic mood prevails. Benedictus, Maria, then spirit-forms, representing the different soul-forces.

MARIA:

Oh Benedictus, my teacher,
The bitter inner struggles I am going through
Drive me now to seek your wise advice.
An ominous foreboding claws up into my heart
And nothing I do
Can stop the thoughts
That constantly storm in upon me.
They touch the very kernel of my being;
They wish me to adhere to a command
Which if I do, seems like a sacrilege.
Powers of falsehood and deceit
Must be at work within me

Tempting and possessing me - - - - ;

Please—I beg you—help me - - - - ;

So I can banish them.

BENEDICTUS:

I never will withhold from you

The help you seek from me.

MARIA:

I know how intimately interwoven

My soul is

With Johannes and his path through life.

A weighty destiny

Has brought us both together;

And up in high exalted worlds of spirit

The divine will of gods did bless

And consecrate our union.

I see all this so clearly;

I know it has to be
A faithful image of the truth.
And yet—a sense of horror grips me
Even just to utter from my lips
The awful, sacrilegious words—,
And yet—I hear them very clearly
Sounding out from deep within me,
And every time I think I’ve overcome them
Sounding out anew—:
‘You have to separate from Johannes.
You may not keep him at your side
If you are not to harm his soul.
He has to walk the paths alone
That lead him to his goals.’
Benedictus,
I know that if you speak a single word
This harsh delusion
Will vanish from my soul.

BENEDICTUS:

Maria, it is a worthy, noble pain

That lets the truth

Now seem to you

A figure of deception.

MARIA:

You're saying—it could be—truth - - - -

But no!—the being of deceit even creeps

Between my teacher's utterances and my hearing.

Oh—please speak to me again.

BENEDICTUS:

You understood me rightly.

Your love is of a noble kind,

And Johannes has been very deeply linked with you.

But love must not forget

That she is wisdom's sister.

It has been of great blessing for Johannes
That his life, through long ages,
Was joined to yours;
But now his further path demands
That he should seek, in full freedom, his own goals.
The will of destiny does not speak of any
Separation in your outer friendship.
But it absolutely does demand
Johannes's free and individual deeds
Within the spirit-realm.

MARIA:

It's still only delusion that I'm hearing!
Then let me speak further now;
You must understand me;
For no false figure of deceit will dare
To shift and change my words before your ears.
I could easily let go of all my doubts
In what you say

If it was just the muddled path of earthly life
That wished to keep Johannes's soul
Closely bound to mine.
But on our bond
The consecration was bestowed
That joins two souls together eternally.
And spirit-powers spoke the words of blessing,
Which wholly banish every cause for doubt:
'He has won through to truth
Within the realm of the eternities,
Because he was most deeply linked to you already
In worlds of sense.'
How am I to understand this revelation
If now the very opposite
Is meant to be the truth?

BENEDICTUS:

You have to come to know
That even one who has been graced with many revelations

Can still lack much
That full maturity will bring them.
The paths to higher wisdom are complex and confusing;
Only they can rightly walk them
Who patiently can wander labyrinthine ways.
You were only able to see part
Of the reality
In the high realm of spirit-light,
When your inner eyes of soul beheld
A picture of the spirit-world.
The picture, though, is not yet full reality.
Johannes's soul and yours
Are joined by earthly bonds of such a kind
That to either one it may be given
To find the way into the spirit-realm
Through powers belonging to the other.
Nothing, though, has yet revealed
Whether you and he have proved yourselves
And answered the demands you need to meet.
You both were able to behold in image

What in the future you'll be graced with
If you can prove victorious in the trial.
That you've been shown the fruits of all your striving
Is not a sign
That you have reached your striving's goal.
You have beheld a picture - - - - ,
But it is your will alone
That can transform the picture to reality.

MARIA:

Although your words strike through me
Like harsh and bitter pain
After long experience of joy,
I've learned well enough
To yield to the light of wisdom
When it shows its rightfulness with inner power.
And what remained in darkness for my heart, till now,
Already starts to brighten and grow clear.
But when the mask of error

Leads one to experience
Intensest joy,
And powerfully presents itself as truth,
The darkness of the soul
Is hard to banish.
So if I am to follow what you've said
I will need more than you've already given.
You led my being deep into the soul
Where light was granted me
To clearly see those lives on earth
Which were my own in times long past.
I could experience how
My friend's soul and mine
Found each other long ago.
At that time
I led Johannes's soul
To recognize the Spirit-Word
In all its grace and truth.
And that I did so
I could see to be the seed

That growing, bore the fruit of friendship,
A friendship then found ripe for the eternities.

BENEDICTUS:

You were indeed found worthy to behold
The earthly paths that were your own
In long-past ages.
But you should not forget to ask yourself,
When you look back with spirit-eyes,
If you are sure there are no threads from other lives of yours
That still stay hidden.

MARIA (after a pause, where she has deeply wrestled with herself):

Oh how could I have been so blinded!
The sense of blessedness I felt
On seeing part of all my former days on earth
Allowed me to forget

In vain delusion
How much is still beyond my grasp.
I'm only sensing now
That I must gaze into the darkness
If I'm to trace the path
That leads from this, our present life,
Into those times when my friend's soul
Turned to mine, with such devotion.
O, my teacher,
I want to make a vow to you
That from now on I'll tame
The proud presumption of my soul - - - - !
It's only now I recognize
How vanity of knowledge
Can tempt the soul;
So that, instead of drawing strength
From all the spirit-treasures it is offered,
It just desires to use these gifts
To narcissistically shine light upon itself.
I know now,

Through the warning-call resounding from my heart,
To which your words lend strength,
How very far from my next goal
I must acknowledge that I am.
In future I will not impart a meaning
Too swiftly
To knowledge from the spirit-worlds.
I will treasure it as strength
That should form my soul—,
And not as if it were an oracle
Through which I'm spared the effort
Of recognizing in my life itself
The goals that I must strive to reach.
If I'd adhered to these words earlier
That ask for modesty,
The darkness would have lifted,
Enabling me to recognize
My friend's so richly gifted soul
Can only unfold freely
When it seeks out paths

That I have not imagined for it in advance.

And as I've seen this

I will attain the strength to do

What duty—and love too—demands.

I feel, though,

More than I have ever felt before,

That I am facing, in this hour,

A weighty trial of my soul.

When people usually tear out of their hearts

What lives in them of someone else

They do so because love

Has changed into its opposite.

They alter and untie the bonds uniting them,

But gain the strength to do so

From strong impulsive feelings and from passion.

But I, completely freely, must root out

Those influences from my soul

Which I saw come to life and realize themselves

Within my friend's deeds.

And yet throughout

My love must still remain unchanged.

BENEDICTUS:

You'll find the way to do this rightly

When you can recognize

What it is

That you've most deeply valued in this love.

For once you know which power in your soul

Is leading you, unconsciously,

You'll find the strength to do

What duty now must ask from you.

MARIA:

Your saying this already gives my soul the help

That it so badly needs.

I have to ask my inmost being

The stark and honest question:

What is the power that's driving me within this love?

It is the life of my own soul
That I see working
In my friend and all that he creates.
The fulfilment that I seek
I therefore find in my own self;
While living all the while
In the illusion I am selfless.
But I have failed to see
That in my friend
I'm only mirroring myself.
It was the dragon of egoism
Who veiled from me, deceptively,
What in fact was driving me.
Oh, now I have to recognize
That egoism takes a hundred different shapes.
And should one ever think it has been conquered
It only rises up more strongly
From the ruins of its power.
And then it even gains the strength
By which it can deceptively reveal

Delusion to be truth.

Maria falls into deep contemplation. Benedictus leaves.

The figures of the three Soul Forces appear.

MARIA:

You, my sisters—who I
Do find within my inmost being
When my true soul expands
And guides itself
To cosmic worlds afar,
Set free my inner powers of vision
From far ethereal heights
And lead them onto distant earthly paths;
That I may come to know myself
Within the course of time's existence

And then can guide my steps myself

From former ways of life

To new-found spheres of will.

PHILIA:

I will imbue myself

From tender depths of heart

With strongly striving light of soul;

And I will breathe into myself

From stirrings of the spirit

Life-bestowing, quickening power of will;

That you, beloved sister,

Can feel the light that shines

In former spheres of life.

ASTRID:

And I will interweave
The self's own feeling of itself
With selfless and devoted loving will;
I will set free
From prisons of desire
The growing, budding powers of will;
Transform your laming sense of longing
To spirit-feeling's true and quiet finding;
That you, beloved sister
Can come to know yourself
On distant earthly paths.

LUNA:

And I'll call forth the heart's renouncing selfless powers
And will make strong the soul's sustaining calm.
These both will marry
And raise from depths of soul
Bright, empowering spirit-light;

They'll permeate each other
And make far-distant earthly times
Audible to spirit-hearing;
That you, beloved sister,
Can find the traces of your life
In the evolving stream of time.

MARIA (after a pause):

If I can tear myself away completely
From confusing self-entangled feeling
And give myself to you:
So you may mirror back
From cosmic distances
My soul's true being:
I will be able to release myself
From this sphere of life around me
And come to know myself
In different forms of my existence.

A longer pause, after which she speaks the following.

MARIA:

You sisters, I behold in you pure spirit-beings

Who from the wide universe

Give quickening life to people's souls.

The powers that first take root in the eternities

You bring to fruit in human beings.

I've often been allowed,

Passing through the gates within my soul,

To find my way into your realms,

And to behold with inner eyes

The archetypal forms of earthly life.

But now I need your further help

For it is asked of me to find my way

From my present journey on the earth

To days long-past in human history.

Release my soul's true being

From its feeling of itself

In its life in time.

Open up the sphere of tasks and duties

Arising from my lives in earlier times.

SPIRIT-VOICE (The Voice of Spiritual Conscience):

Her thoughts are seeking now

In time's traces.

All the debts that she still owes

All the tasks and duties given her

Rise up from her soul's deep inner grounds;

Grounds, from whose depths

People, dreaming,

Do guide their lives;

Grounds, in whose depths

People, straying,

Do lose themselves.

Curtain, while all remain on stage.

SCENE THREE

*A room whose main colour is rose-red. A warm and friendly mood.
Johannes in front of an easel; Maria comes in later; then spirit-figures as
soul-forces.*

JOHANNES:

Maria didn't say a single word
The last time that she saw my painting.
Before, she's always given me
Rich treasures from her wisdom,
Revealing how the work might grow.
As little as I trust myself
To form a judgement
Whether I'm fulfilling with my art
What our spiritual path demands,
Just so much do I trust her—
And since I ventured on this painting
I've had the joy of hearing in the spirit,

Repeatedly, these strength-giving words:

‘Upon this path you will be able,’ I heard her say,

‘To dare to show to people’s senses

What only can be seen by spirit-eyes.

You will become aware

How forms, as thoughts do,

Master substance,

And colours, intimately linked to feelings,

Imbue with warmth

The active element of life.

And thus you will be able with your gifts

Even to portray the higher worlds.’

Experiencing the power of these words,

I hesitantly give myself to the belief

That I am drawing near the goal

That Benedictus showed me.

I often sat dejected and dispirited

Before my painting;

Frequently it felt presumptuous

At other times impossible

To represent in forms and colours
What my soul is able to behold.
I asked myself again and again:
How, with means
Belonging to the sense-perceptible realm,
Can one reveal the weaving world of spirit,
So utterly removed
From all the semblance of the senses,
That world that only opens
To the visionary eye?
Yet when I overcome my single being
And in accord with spirit-teaching
Can feel myself, through grace, transported
To world-creative powers,
My faith awakens then in such an art
That like our spirit-research
Is mystically true.
I learned to live within the light
And recognize in colour
The deeds and sufferings of the light,

The way adherents of true mysticism
Behold, within the realm beyond all form and colour,
Soul realities and spirit deeds.
Trusting wholly in such spirit-light,
I attained the gift
Of feeling with the flowing, surging sea of light
Of living with the radiant, streaming glow of colours;
In the colours' life, shone through with spirit,
In the light's pure heavenly weaving,
I sensed the presence of active spirit-powers.

Maria enters, without Johannes noticing her.

- - - - -

And when it happens
That my courage fails me
I always think of you, most noble friend.
My passion to create
Grows warm once more
Within the fire of your soul;

My powers of faith reawaken

In your spirit-light.

He sees Maria.

Oh—you're here- - - - - ,

I've been waiting for you so impatiently

But then didn't even notice

You walking in.

MARIA:

It makes me feel the greatest joy

To see my friend immerse himself so deeply in his work

That he is even able

To forget his friend.

JOHANNES:

Oh please don't speak such words—,

You know I can't create anything
Without your blessing.
There is no work of mine
That does not owe its origin to you.
You've purified and cleansed my being
In love's fire;
So that I now can bring to form,
Through my art,
All that is unveiled to you
Within the gleam of radiant beauty;
Which shines out, transfiguring existence
And filling beings with warmth,
And as it shines reveals the spirit-world.
I need to feel
The stream of my creative life
Pouring into me
From the deep wellsprings of your soul;
And then I'm given wings
On which I'm borne, far from earth,
Into the bright, fulfilling spirit-heights.

I love what lives within your soul
And I can bring it lovingly
To picture-form within my paintings.
Only love can generate those powers
Within the artist
That live on in their works
In fructifying ways.
And if, as artist,
I'm to bring down pictures
From limitless expanses of the spirit
Into the sense-perceptible realm
The spirit of the world must show itself through me
And my own being merely be its instrument.
I must be able
To burst the bonds of self-seeking;
So that I never wish
To paint delusional forms of my own making
Instead of spirit-worlds.

- - - - -

MARIA:

But if you had to draw
The painting's pure, original, image
Not from what my soul
Is able to behold
But solely out of you yourself,
The true being of beauty
Could then work on
With far more unity
From the ground
Of one person's soul.

JOHANNES:

I'd just be chasing
Thoughts spun out quite pointlessly
If I'd start mulling over
Which is better for me:

To give creative form to what your soul beholds

Or to seek the picture's origin

In me myself.

I know I'd never find it.

- - - - -

I can submerge myself in depths of soul

And find myself through grace in spirit-worlds;

I'm able too to lose myself

Within the senses' realm

And follow with my eyes

The miracles of colour

Through which I'm able to behold

Creation's mighty deeds.

When I am with my own soul, alone,

Then all I can experience within myself

Only leads the kind of life

That never presses on

To creativity.

But when I am permitted

To follow you to cosmic heights

And warmly, blissfully,
To experience after you
What you have first beheld in spirit,
I feel the spirit-vision lit with fire
That then flames on in me
And as it flames ignites the powers
That force me to create.

- - - - -

If I wanted
To put into words for people
What I can apprehend in higher worlds
It would be possible
To lift myself, alone,
To spheres where spirit speaks with spirit.
As artist, though,
I have to find that fire
That shines out from the work
Directly into people's hearts;
And I can only pour into the picture
The spirit-fervour

Magically streaming from it
Into people's hearts,
If first of all my soul can drink
The spirit's revelations
From your heart's depths.

- - - - -

How primal, archetypal powers,
In their longing, take on form;
And mighty forces of creation
Flare out spirit-sparks;
And how these,
Feeling the human being already, needing to be,
Manifest themselves as gods in time's beginnings:
All this, dear friend,
Through the way you often spoke,
Your soul enabled me to grasp, invisibly.
Within the tender rose-red ether
Of the spirit-world
I carefully tried to give what is invisible
Form;

Feeling how the colours have the longing
To see themselves, transfigured by the spirit,
In people's souls.
And thus, dear friend,
Your soul speaks as my own
From my paintings
Into people's hearts.

MARIA:

Think on this, Johannes,
That each single soul,
Since the world began,
Must develop, separately from others,
As an individual being.
Love should bind together separate beings
But should not wish to kill their differences.
The moment has arrived
Where we must face a trial of our souls,
A testing, to discover how they must

Go forward now upon the spirit-path

As best may serve

The good of each us,

Alone.

She leaves.

JOHANNES:

What was she saying, my friend?

Her words—they sound

So meaningless to me!

Maria! Come back! Well then I'll follow you,

I have to! Please! - - - -

The three figures of the soul-forces appear.

LUNA:

You cannot find yourself

Reflected in another soul.

The strength of every individual being

Must strike deep roots into the grounds of worlds

If it desires, rightfully,

To bring beauty from the spirit-heights

And plant it in the earth's depths.

Seize hold, courageously, of your own being,

So you, strongly formed within your soul,

Can offer yourself up to cosmic powers.

ASTRID:

You should not wish to lose yourself

Upon your inner, cosmic paths;

None can reach the far-off sun-filled realms

Who would deny their individual being.

Therefore prepare yourself

To journey on, through earthly love,

To deeper grounds within the heart,

Where cosmic, spiritual love may ripen.

THE OTHER PHILIA:

Oh do not listen to my sisters!

They lead you off to cosmic distances

And rob from you all earthly nearness;

They do not see how earthly love

Is intimately linked to cosmic love

Their beings live and rule in coldness;

Their forces always flee from warmth;

They wish to lure human beings

Away from warm soul-depths

To icy higher worlds.

Curtain, while Johannes, the Other Philia, Astrid and Luna remain on stage.

SCENE FOUR

The same room as in the first scene. Capesius and Strader.

CAPESIUS (to Strader as he enters):

Oh, welcome, friend! It's wonderful to see you.

Come in. I've so missed our conversations

And all our heated battles of words,

Where you would stand against me

With such unwavering clarity.

It's far too long

Since you last came here to my home,

As you would often do so happily.

STRADER:

I haven't had the time.

My life has changed drastically.

I no longer torment my brain

By spinning out despairing webs of thought.

I've placed, devotedly, my hard-won knowledge

Into the service of real work,

Where it can actually be of use in life.

CAPESIUS:

Have you abandoned, then,

The path that your research had led you on?

STRADER:

One could also say

That it's abandoned me.

CAPESIUS:

So what new goals are you aspiring to?

STRADER;:

Life is not able

To show us any goals

That we can clearly comprehend.

It's just a blind, unthinking mechanism

That grinds us through its whirling cogs and wheels - - - -

Until, worn out and weary, all our powers spent,

It hurls us out into the dark.

CAPESIUS:

I knew you in the days when you,

With so much boldness, dared to tackle

All the riddles of existence.

And I was there as well

When you experienced

The rich prize of knowledge you had won

Lose the very ground it stood on
And slip into the void,
And so I had to see you,
Deeply shaken, all your research vain,
Drink the bitter cup
Of disappointed dreams.
But never once did it occur to me
That you could ever rip the striving from your heart
That filled your whole being.

STRADER:

Do you remember still that day
When a seeress,
Through the truth of what she uttered,
Made very clear to me
The error of my path?
I had no choice
But to admit to myself
That no power of thinking

Is ever able to discover
The true springs and origins of life.
And not just this:
For if the light of highest wisdom
Is able to reveal itself
To that strange power of soul
That lady told us lived in her,
Then all our thinking
Can only ever be in error.
Beyond all doubt
Strict science, however hard it tries,
Will never reach to such a revelation.
And had there only been
This one defeat
Of my illusory hopes as a researcher,
I think I could have managed
To start again from the beginning,
And could have found the way to join
The paths that I had trodden
With these other paths.

But when I had to see
How some bizarre, outlandish kind of thinking,
Which seems like lunacy to me,
Transformed complete powerlessness
Into living, true creative power,
Then all my hopes
Vanished.

- - - - -

You must remember him?
That young painter we encountered,
Wandering on dubious spirit-paths? - - - -
After these two shattering blows of fate
I spent many weeks
Numbed and on the edge of madness.
When nature finally brought me back
To my senses,
It was with the resolve,
That nothing in the world could shake,
To stop all further seeking.
I needed even longer

To fully recover.
A joyless, bleak and difficult time.
I learned to do things
That could lead
To real and practical
Experience in life.
So now I run a factory,
Making screws.
But I am grateful to this work
Through which I can forget, for hours,
My futile struggle
With what? With nothing!
And the agonies it caused me.

CAPESIUS:

I must confess
I barely recognize my former friend
In him before me now. - - - -
But aren't there any other times,

Besides the ones you speak of,
When your old inner tempests
Quicken into life again,
And pull you out
Of this dulled-down existence?

STRADER:

I am not spared from inner tempests;
From times when all that battles in my soul
Is helplessness with more helplessness.
But destiny has not desired
New rays of hope,
For this completely lost and desolate life,
To find their way into my heart.
My wish, therefore, is to achieve
Renunciation.
The strength that this demands
May make me able
To transform my path of research,

To approach it very differently, in future,

If this life on earth

Should be repeated.

CAPESIUS:

What? Have I heard you right?

You've spoken of the repetition

Of your earthly life.

Have you won through then, after all,

Upon those spirit-paths,

Which still today

You only wish to see as highly dubious,

To this momentous, mighty truth

Of destiny?

STRADER:

So,

You've found out for yourself

The third thing

That's made me even more determined

To start a whole new life.

Upon my sickbed,

I tried for one last time—

Before I turned to other goals—

To gain a clear overview

Of all the knowledge I'd attained.

And over and over again—a hundred times—

I asked myself:

When we consider

Everything we now know

Of nature and the world,

What is it

That it teaches us?

- - - - There's no escaping from it - - - - :

Reincarnation—the repetition of our lives on earth.

Unless, in our thinking,

We wish to break,

With all that's been discovered
Over decades
By diligent research,
This cannot, must not
Be denied.

CAPESIUS:

Such an experience
Would have spared me so much grief.
Through many sleepless nights
I've lain awake
And longed for thoughts like this
To free me from my struggles.

STRADER:

For me, though,
This spiritual lightning-stroke
Snatched away

My last remaining forces.
I've always felt
The strong inner commitment
To test in life
Whatever thinking had shown me to be true.
And now, in those so deeply troubling days,
A chance event occurred
That gave me proof
From my own biography
Of how cruel the consequences are
Of this momentous truth.
For in its light
We ourselves
Appear to be the cause
Of all life's joys
And also all life's sorrows.
And this is often very hard to bear.

CAPESIUS:

I can't imagine such an event happening.
For what could possibly eclipse a truth
We never cease striving for
And which can make us
Absolutely certain of the spirit?

STRADER:

That might be your experience.
But I must feel quite differently.
You know the strange, ill-fitting story of my life—,
It seemed to be a merely chance event
That countered the intentions of my parents.
They'd wanted me to be a monk.
They often told me
They saw the heresy of their son
To be the greatest sorrow of their life.
I accepted it - - - -
And much more besides,
As one accepts one's life,

When viewing one's earthly pilgrimage
As narrowly confined
Between the bounds of birth and death.
And then my later life,
With all its shattered hopes,
Took on the form, for me, of something
That had no other cause beyond itself,
And therefore was explainable
Solely by itself.

I wish the day had never come
That made me view things differently.
You see, I've not yet shared with you
Everything
That destiny's inflicted on me.
For I am not the child
Of those two people
Who wanted me to be a monk.
When I was but a few days old
They, who had no children of their own,
Adopted me.

I've no idea who my true parents are.
So even when at home I was a stranger.
And I remained estranged
From everything that I experienced later.
And now my thinking forces me
To turn my gaze into the past, to former times,
When I myself
Tore my own connection to the world.
For thought exactly follows thought:
If anyone's pre-destined in this way
To be a thorough stranger to the world,
Even before
The dawning of their consciousness,
Then they,
Before they gain the rational power to choose,
Must have already willed this destiny.
And as I've carried on
Exactly as I was in the beginning,
It's quite impossible to doubt
That in a state of dullness

I'm controlled by powers
Who spin the pattern of my destiny
But never wish to show themselves to me.
What else do I need
To prove, most cruelly,
How thick the veils are
That hide from me my true being!
So judge then for yourself,
Without illusory hankerings after knowledge,
If my new truth has really brought
Illumination.
It's made me absolutely certain, though,
That I must carry on
In absolute uncertainty.
And it has shown to me my destiny
In such a way that I,
Half in pain,
And half in mockery like itself,
Have now repaid it, like for like.
It came to me

In one horrendous moment:
Tortured by bitter feelings
Of defiance and scorn,
I had to set myself
In direct opposition to life;
And laughing in the face
Of destiny's fantastic puppet-play,
I let go of the threads
And just surrendered to the darkness.
My one remaining thought was this:
Subsume me totally, O life,
Into your mechanistic cogs and wheels;
But I do not desire to know
The way you make the wheels turn.

CAPESIUS:

The man in you
Whom I have known
Cannot remain for long

In such a barren emptiness of knowledge,

Even should he wish to.

I see the days before my eyes already

When you and I will meet again

Quite differently.

Curtain falls, while they both stand facing one another.

SCENE FIVE

*A landscape, in the midst of which there is the lonely cottage of the Baldes.
Evening mood.*

CAPESIUS: (entering and approaching a bench in front of the cottage, on which

Felicia Balde is sitting.):

Hello! I hope perhaps that you'll allow

Your good old friend

To while away a little time with you?

He needs now more than ever

What he so often found here in your home.

FELICIA BALDE:

Already from afar

Your tired steps revealed to me,

And then, as you drew near, your eyes as well,

That pain and sorrow are, today,
Your soul's companions.

CAPESIUS (who has sat down):

As you well know,
Whenever I have visited before,
I've hardly brought
Much cheerfulness into your home.
Today, though, more than ever,
I ask for your forgiveness
And understanding
That I intrude, with my unpeaceful heart,
On your so peaceful world.

FELICIA BALDE:

In days gone by,
When almost no one else
Would visit us

It always brought us joy to see you here.

In spite of much that's come between us,

Nothing's changed our friendship,

Even now,

When our remote and quiet home

Is sought out by very many people.

CAPESIUS:

So is it true then, what I've heard,

That your dear Felix,

Previously so hermit-like,

Has recently become someone

Who lots of people wish to call on?

FELICIA BALDE:

He certainly has. Good Felix

Used to shut us off completely from the world - - - - .

And now he has to meet and talk

With plenty of people.

He sees this as his task and duty.

Before

He never would confide with anyone

The secrets woods and rocks and streams

Revealed to him

About the deeds of spirit-beings

And the living powers of nature.

He kept such knowledge closely held within

And anyway

It never seemed to be

Of any worth to others.

- - - - -

How the times have changed!

You won't believe how many people

Listen greedily

To all the knowledge and the wonders

Felix can reveal to them

Which once they saw as just

The ramblings of a simpleton.

And when my good, dear husband

Felix Balde appears from the house.

Must often talk for hours on end,

I sometimes long to have our old lives back,

When Felix always would explain, so seriously,

How only in the silence of the heart

Should souls receive and bear

The spirit-gifts bestowed on them, through grace,

From realms where gods abide;

And furthermore

That if one should disclose

Such lofty spirit-words

To ears still bound to worlds of sense,

One would be guilty of betrayal.

FELIX BALDE:

Felicia is having quite a struggle

To find herself
In our so very different life.
Before, she always would complain
About our isolation,
And now complains just as much
That with so many people here
We never have enough time
Alone together.

CAPESIUS:

What prompted you
To open up your home to visitors
That once was almost hidden from the world?

FELIX BALDE:

I did the bidding
Of the spirit-guidance
That speaks to me, within my heart,

When it demanded I be silent.
And now I wish to heed it also,
When it is telling me to speak.
People's inner nature changes
As the earth evolves.
We now have reached
A turning-point in time.
Elements of spirit-knowledge
Must be revealed to everyone
Who's willing—
And whose sensibilities are open—
To receive them.
I'm well aware that my approach to things
Little fits the forms
Acceptable today.
To put in words
The life of spirit-worlds
It now is necessary
That thought exactly follows thought
With strictest logic.

This, they say, is missing when I speak.
For true science, therefore,
Based on fixed and firm foundations,
My way of being, apparently,
Is just a good example
Of how someone may dream
Who, without a shred of science or education,
Wanders down their own paths
In search of wisdom;
Though some maintain
It's valuable
To see how here and there,
Amidst the madness and the muddle of my words,
Some nugget may be found
That normal reasoning
Can actually understand.
I am a man
Into whose heart
The revelations given to me
Must pour directly,

Undisturbed by intellect or art,

Simply as they are.

My knowing is not separate from words.

When I am in my heart's most sacred depths,

Or when I'm listening in to nature,

A kind of knowing lives in me

That has no need at all to seek for words - - - - :

It wears the clothes of language

Just as closely

As people wear their earthly body's form.

A knowing such as this,

That springs just as it is,

From spirit-worlds,

Can even be of help to one

Who does not understand it.

To anyone, therefore,

Who wants to come and hear

The things I have to say,

The door is open.

I'm well aware that many come

From simple curiosity
And other odd and petty motives.
But even if, for now,
Such people's souls
Are not yet touched or quickened,
The good will have been planted,
Deep within them,
And will work on in future.

CAPESIUS:

Please let me speak quite openly. - - - - -
For many years I've been amazed at you
And full of admiration.
Yet even I, till now,
Have found the sense
Of your so strangely uttered, riddling words
Impossible to grasp.

FELIX BALDE:

It will, quite certainly,

Reveal itself to you.

You seek with pure and noble

Heart and mind;

And so the days will come, in future,

When you will clearly hear

The voice of truth.

You're not aware, as yet,

Of just how vast and rich

The human being is,

As image of the wider cosmic realms.

Our head is the reflected picture of the heavens;

Spirits of the circling spheres

Are working through our limbs;

Within our breast there move and weave

The beings of the earth;

And set against them all,

Mightily opposing them,

Are demons from the Moon,

Whose task it is to cross
Those spirit-beings' goals.
What stands there, as a human being, before us,
What we experience—as the soul,
What as the spirit
Shines upon us and illumines us:
Hovered for eternities
Before the gaze of many gods,
And their intention was
To bring together powers from all the worlds
Which, when united, as a whole,
Then form the human being.

CAPESIUS:

They almost frighten me, these words of yours,
Which boldly wish to see the human being
As the accomplishment of all the gods.

FELIX BALDE:

That's why true spirit-science demands of one

Such great humility.

To anyone who seeks to know themselves

From pride or vanity

The gates of knowledge never open.

Felix Balde goes into the house.

CAPESIUS:

Dear Felicia, help me please,

The way you have so often,

By raising me into the world of images.

As your enlivening pictures

Expand and warm the soul,

I then will rightly grasp

The words I'm hearing.

FELICIA:

I've often heard dear Felix say
The words that he's just spoken.
As they lived on in me,
They set free
Picture after picture
From my heart,
A fairy tale,
Which I have always felt
That I should tell you.

CAPESIUS:

Oh dear Felicia, yes, please do so - - - - ,
Parched and thirsty,
I long to be refreshed
From your rejuvenating, bounteous store
Of images.

FELICIA:

Very well.

Once upon a time there was a boy,
Who grew up all alone, within the woods,
The only child of humble foresters.

Besides his parents

He hardly knew another person.

His build was frail and delicate:

His skin almost translucent.

His eyes, one could have gazed into for hours;

The deepest spirit-mysteries and wonders

Lay concealed in them.

And even if he only very rarely

Met another human being,

He never for a moment

Felt the lack of friends.

When, at dawn, the sun

Would touch and fill the nearby mountains

With glorious golden light,

Then through his pure, receptive eyes,

The boy would drink down deep into his soul
The spirit-gold:
His heart would then be like
The radiant morning sun.
But when the rays of dawn could not break through
The darkness of the clouds,
And when a gloomy, sombre mood
Would fall upon the mountains,
The boy's eyes clouded over,
And sadness weighed upon his heart. - - - -
And thus he was completely given up
To all the spirit ways and weavings
Of his little world,
Which, for him,
Were just as much a part of who he was,
As his own legs and arms.
And he was friends as well
With all the woodland trees and flowers;
Spirit-beings spoke with him, from all around,
From leafy crowns and tips and flower-cups - - - - ,

He understood their quiet whisperings - - - - .

His soul conversed with everything

Most people see as lifeless,

And as he did so,

Wondrous and miraculous things

From hidden worlds

Would open and reveal themselves to him.

When often evening came

And he had not come home

His loving parents worried where he'd be.

And he would then be at

A favourite place nearby,

Where a spring came bursting through the rocks,

And as the water hit the stones below

Splashed up in a dance of sparkling spray.

When the moonlight's silver sheen

Was magically reflected back

In the waterdrops cascading down

Then the boy could happily remain

For hours on end

By the rocky spring.
And forms, spiritually woven,
Arose before the vision of the boy
In the swift cascading water and the shimmering moonlight.
They then became three female beings
Who spoke to him of everything
His tender soul aspired to.
And when, one mild summer evening,
The boy again was sitting by the spring,
One of the enchanting spirit-women
Lifted up, within her hands,
An ever-moving multicoloured play
Of many thousand waterdrops
And gave it to the second spirit-woman;
And she then fashioned from
The many-thousand waterdrops
A beautiful and wondrous
Glistening silver chalice
And passed it to the third
Of these three spirit-women;

She lifted up the shining chalice
And filled it now to overflowing
With beauteous silver moonlight—
And this she gave then to the boy
Who saw all this with inner eyes
And childhood spirit-wonder.
But in the night that followed
This experience at the spring
He had a dream
In which the shining chalice
Was snatched away from him and robbed
By a wild and snarling dragon.
And after that
Three times only
Did the boy experience again
The miracle that happened at the spring.
And then the spirit-women stayed away
Even when the boy sat musing by
The rocky spring for hours on end
In the silver moonlight.

When three hundred three-score weeks—
Or seven years—had passed, three times,
The boy had long since grown into a man,
And left his parents' house among the woods
And moved into the hubbub of a city.
There, one evening,
Exhausted from his overtaxing work
He fell to musing on his life
Where it had led and what it still might bring him.
And suddenly he felt himself transported back
To his hallowed spring among the rocks.
And once again
He saw the spirit-women of the waters
And this time he could hear them speak as well.
The first one said to him:
'Think of me
Whenever you feel all alone in life.
I lift the vision of the soul
To far-off ether-realms and the expanses of the stars.
To all who wish to feel my presence

I give the magic drink of hope in life

From my miraculous chalice.'

The second spirit-woman also spoke:

'Do not forget me when

The courage life demands is threatened.

I guide the strivings of the human heart

Into the soul's deep grounds and up to spirit-heights.

To all who seek new forces from me

I forge and fashion strength of faith in life

With my miraculous hammer.'

The third one's words resounded so:

'Raise up to me your spirit-eye

When all the complex riddles of life assail you.

I spin the threads of thought

In depths of soul and in life's winding labyrinths.

For all who keep their trust in me

I weave the sun-filled rays of love of life

On my miraculous loom.' - - - -

And in the night that followed

This experience,

The man then dreamed a wild dragon slithered
Circling round about him,
But never could come near:
He was protected from the dragon
By the spirit-beings he'd seen in childhood
At the rocky spring
And which had then accompanied him
From his home among the woods
To the noisy city where he worked.

CAPESIUS:

Thank you, dear Felicia—
I go from here deeply enriched
By the gift you've given me.

He stands up and leaves. Felicia goes into the house.

Capesius, on his own, at some distance from the house, speaks the following.

CAPESIUS:

I feel immediately the healing power
Such pictures have, and how they can return
To thinking all the life and strength it's lost.
The woman's story was so simple, yet
It stirs and rouses forces in my thinking
Which lift and carry me to unknown worlds. - - - - -
Amidst the beauty here and solitude
I will surrender to the world of dreams
That surges in on me, and that has often
Nourished me with thoughts of far more worth
Than weeks and weeks of fruitless pondering.

- - - - -

He disappears behind some thick bushes.

JOHANNES (appears in the same forest landscape, lost in his own thought):

Was it a dream? Or was it reality - - - - ?

It is impossible to bear—what my friend

So calmly, softly, yet in deadly earnest,

Said... that we must separate.

Oh, if I could only think

That reason, contradicting

What the spirit wants,

Desired now to set itself between us.

As a false, deceptive image.

- - - - -

I cannot—no, I will not follow or obey

Maria's words of warning, that try

To override the voice of my own soul,

That never ceases to declare: 'I love her',

And this love of mine is the source and spring

Of all the work I ever wish to know.

What use is any striving to create,

Or any sight of lofty spirit-goals,

If they desire to rob me of the light

That can illumine all existence for me?

I have to be allowed to live

Within this light;

And if it's taken from me

Then I wish only death for all eternity.

I feel how my power ebbs away

When I attempt to think:

I now should travel paths

That aren't illumined by her light.

A fog, a mist, is weaving round me,

Spreading veils before my eyes,

Taking all that's so miraculous here—

That always paints these woods and rocks

For me, with such exalted beauty—

And turning it to chaos and confusion. - - - - -

A wild dream is whirling up

From the abyss - - - - -

Oh how horrifyingly it shakes me

To my very core - - - - -

- - - - -

Go... get away from me - - - - - !

I'm desperate for solitude,

Where I can be allowed

My own dreams;

Dreams that let me keep on striving

For what seems lost and gone - - - - -

- - - - -

- - - - - It will not go - - - - - !

Then I'll escape it—

He feels as if he's fastened to the ground.

What chains and fetters bind me,

Fix me to the spot!

Johannes's Double—or Doppelgänger—appears.

Aagh - - - - -

Whoever you may be,

Whether you have human blood—

Or whether you are purely spiritual—

Leave me - - - - -

- - - - -

Who is it - - - - - ?

A demon sets my self before myself. - - - - -

I cannot make it go away - - - - - ;

It is my own being's mirror-image - - - - - ;

It seems possessed of even greater power

Than this—my own—being - - - - -

THE DOUBLE:

I love you, Maria ...

With throbbing heart,

With fever in the blood,

That's the way I always am

Before you.

And when your gaze meets mine

Hot tingling joy shivers through me;

And when you press
Your dear beloved hand
Gently into mine
Ecstasy and bliss
Pour through me,
Filling all my limbs - - - -

JOHANNES:

You spectral form,
Dreamed up by nightmare,
Woven out of mists and vapour,
How dare you speak
Such vile blasphemy
Against the highest
Purest, feelings of the heart - - - - ?
What is it I've done wrong
That forces me to see
A lustful, sensual distortion
Of my love—which is to me

So sacred and so holy - - - - ?

THE DOUBLE:

I've often been beside you,

Listening to your words - - - - ;

I seemed to drink them in

Like hallowed messages from spirit-lands.

But more than any spirit-revelation

What I really loved

Was feeling you so near me.

And when you'd speak about our paths of soul

I would be filled with ecstasy and bliss

That pulse and surge so powerfully through the blood.

THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE:

Thus speaks, kept down, concealed, suppressed,

But neither mastered yet, nor banished,

Avoiding sight, so never showing,

In the blood, though, throbbing, flowing,
The secret power, the burning hidden fire
Of passion and desire.

THE DOUBLE (in a slightly different voice):

I may not ever leave you;
So you will often find me at your side;
I will not go from you
Till you have found the power to transform me,
Making me the likeness
Of the being you should become.
You're far from this as yet.
You only glimpse it sometimes
In the fanciful deluded dreams
Of your separate self.

Lucifer and Ahriman appear.

LUCIFER:

O human being, overcome yourself.

O human being, redeem me.

You've been victorious over me

Within the highest regions of your soul;

But I'm still strongly bound to you

Within your being's depths.

If you attempt

Completely to protect yourself from me

Then you will always find me

On the ways you walk through life.

O human being, overcome yourself,

O human being, redeem me.

AHRIMAN:

O human being, be bold and daring in yourself,

O human being, experience me.

You have been able to attain

Vision of the spirit-realms;
And so I had to ruin
The life-beat of your heart;
If you refuse my yoke and will not serve
And utilize my strength,
Then often you'll be made to suffer
Agonizing soul-distress.
O human being, be bold and daring in yourself,
O human being, experience me.

*Lucifer and Ahriman disappear, as does the Double. Johannes goes in
deepest thought off into the darkness of the forest.*

*Capesius reappears. Behind the bushes he has accompanied, as if in a
vision, the scene between Johannes and the Double.*

CAPESIUS:

What have I just experienced? It weighs me down
Like some oppressive nightmare. Johannes walked right by me;
And seemed absorbed in deepest contemplation.

He stopped—and then he suddenly appeared
To call out and to speak with someone—
Though no one but himself was there.
I felt as if a dreadful fear
Was pressing in on me;
And then I saw no longer
What was happening round me.
As if in sleep and quite unconsciously,
I was completely plunged into a picture-world,
Whose images I nonetheless
Can very well recall.
It must have been the shortest time
That I was sat there deeply lost in dream.
And yet how infinitely rich
That dream-world was
And how extraordinary it seems.
I could see men and women, very clearly,
From former times, and also hear them speak.
I dreamt about a spiritual brotherhood,
Which strove for the attainment

Of humanity's highest goals.

I clearly recognized myself among them.

I felt at home with everything.

Just a dream—a dream, though,

That affects me like no other.

I know that in my present life

I never have experienced

Anything remotely similar.

The feeling that it leaves me with

Fills my soul, however,

Like life itself in full abundance.

These pictures draw me, call me,

With elemental power - - - - :

Let them do so. How I wish

That I could see that dream again.

Curtain, while Capesius remains on stage.

SCENE SIX

The following scenes portray images of events that occurred in the first third of the fourteenth century. These images will later be shown to be the inner vision of Capesius, Johannes and Maria into their former lives.

A forest meadow. Huge high rocks in the background, on which a castle stands. Summer evening mood. Peasant men and women; Simon the Jew; Thomas, master of the practice of mining, who works at the local mines (Bergwerksmeister); a Monk.

The peasants are walking across the meadow and, when they stop sometimes, enter lively conversation with one another.

1ST PEASANT:

Look over there! Look! The evil Jew!

He'd never dare to come too near us;

He might hear words

That for a long time afterwards

Would scratch and burn his ears.

2ND PEASANT:

We have to let him feel, for once, quite clearly,
His insolence and gall;
That we won't bear them any longer
In this, our righteous fatherland,
Which he has slunk his way into.

1ST PEASANT WOMAN:

He is protected by the knights
Up there within the castle;
None of us is welcome there,
The Jew, though, they happily take in.
And he just does exactly what they want.

3RD PEASANT:

It's very hard to know

Just who is serving God and who the Devil.

We must be very grateful to our knights;

They give us work and give us food to eat.

Where do you think we'd be without them?

2ND PEASANT WOMAN:

Well I can only praise the Jew.

He healed me with his medicines

From a very serious illness

And was so kind and good to me.

And he has done the same to many others.

3RD PEASANT WOMAN:

But listen... I know a monk and he's revealed to me

The healing of the Jew is devilish.

We must be very wary of his poisons;

They change, it's said, inside the body

And let in every kind of sin.

4TH PEASANT:

The people here who serve the knights
Challenge all our ancient customs.
They say the Jew knows lots of things
That heal and bless, that will not be
Appreciated till the future.

5TH PEASANT:

I know that new and better times are coming:
I see them there before me in the spirit,
When pictures in my soul reveal
What bodily eyes can never see.
This is what the knights are trying to bring about for us.

4TH PEASANT WOMAN:

We owe our loyalty to the Church
That saves our souls from pictures of the devil,
From death and from the agonies of Hell.
The monks all warn us of the knights
And of the sorcerer, the Jew.

5TH PEASANT WOMAN:

Be patient—only for a short time longer
Will we have to bear the yoke
The knights have put around our necks.
The castle soon will be a heap of ruins;
A figure in a dream has shown me this.

6TH PEASANT WOMAN:

I'm overcome with fear of dreadful sin
Every time I have to hear
The knights are wanting to destroy us.
Goodness lives in everything they do;

And I must recognize they too are Christians.

6TH PEASANT:

However people wish to think in future

Should just be left to those

Who will live after us.

To the knights we're nothing but

The tools for all their devilish arts

With which they fight against

What's genuinely Christian.

When they've been driven out

We will not be their subjects any longer

And then can live exactly as we choose

Within this native land of ours.

The bells. Let's go. It's time for evensong.

Our souls will find there what they need

And what befits the customs of our fathers.

These strange new-fangled teachings aren't for us.

The peasants leave. Simon the Jew appears from the forest.

SIMON:

It never changes. I must always hear
From all around me nothing but
The age-old hate and mockery.
And yet the pain is never any less
Whenever I'm exposed to it.
The way I'm treated seems to have no cause.
One thought, though, often
Won't leave me alone,
And presses in on me this truth:
That all that we experience has a meaning.
And so, undoubtedly,
There even has to be a cause
Why people of my race are forced to suffer.
It's odd, but when I think about the knights
Up in the castle there,
I find their destiny is similar to mine.

Except that they
Have chosen for themselves, deliberately,
The life I'm forced to lead by powers of nature.
They keep themselves apart from other people,
So in a life of solitary striving
They may build up the forces that they need
To realize their goals.

I likewise feel my gratitude to destiny
For blessing me with solitude.
Thrown back only on myself
I could devote myself entirely
To the realm of science.

Its teachings have enabled me to recognize
Our time is pushing on to new goals.
Laws of nature, previously unknown,
Will show themselves to people;
Through this they will gain mastery
Of the world spread out before our senses,
Releasing forces from it
That they will place within their service.

Working in this way, I have done all I could

To further and improve the art of healing.

The nature of my strivings

Has been greatly valued

By the brotherhood of knights.

They let me research and examine

On their lands

The hidden powers in plants

And those within the earth itself,

For the sake of opening up

New ways of healing,

Leading to the future.

I work, therefore, according to their aims,

And must confess

That I have known much happiness

From many of the fruits

That I have gathered on my path.

He heads off further into the forest.

Thomas, the master miner, comes out of the forest. He is met by the Monk.

THOMAS:

I'll sit down here and rest a while.

My soul needs quietness

So I can find myself again

After all the wild storms

That I've been through.

The Monk comes towards him.

MONK:

My bold and loyal son, most heartfelt greetings.

You're here in search of solitude;

Your day's work done, you wish for peace and stillness,

So you may lift your mind to spirit-realms.

I'm pleased to find you in this mood,

My dear devoted pupil.

And yet there's sadness in your eyes? What is it?

Your soul seems wracked with troubles.

THOMAS:

The greatest joy is often joined by pain.

That's what my life has shown me recently.

MONK:

So happiness and pain

Have met you hand-in-hand?

THOMAS:

I have told you, reverend sir,

About my love for Celia,

The daughter of the foreman at the mines,

And that she too has given me her heart.

She'll soon become my wife.

MONK:

She will be true to you through thick and thin,
Through joy and pain, for she's a pious
And devoted daughter of the Church.

THOMAS:

Only such a wife
Could ever walk through life beside me;
For you have taught me, my beloved teacher,
The meaning of true piety
And devotedness to God.

MONK:

And what of you yourself?
Are you completely sure your soul

Will never cease to walk

The rightful path that I have led you on?

THOMAS:

As truly as the beating of your heart,

Will I remain, your true and loyal son,

Eternally devoted to the high

And holy teachings I have heard from you.

MONK:

So then... as I have heard about your joy,

Allow me too to learn about your pain.

THOMAS:

I've often told you of my younger years.

When I was almost still a boy

I set off wandering through the world.

I've worked in many different places.

Throughout this time

The wish was always in my heart

To meet my father, who I loved,

Although he'd never brought me

Any good.

He walked away and left my dear good mother,

Because he wished to make,

Unburdened by a wife and children,

A new beginning for himself.

He had a longing for adventure.

When he left us, I was still a child;

My little sister

Had only just been born.

And quite soon afterwards

My mother died from grief.

Some kind good people took my sister in

And cared for her,

Who later left the place that was our home

And moved elsewhere.

Since then I haven't heard

Another word about my sister.

As for myself, with help from relatives,

I learned the art of mining,

And came so far in it

That each new place I went

I easily found work.

And never once did I abandon hope

That I would find my father.

And now, today, when all my hopes at last

Have found fulfilment,

In the exact same moment

They have been wholly dashed forever.

Yesterday I had to go and speak

On some official matter

With my superior.

You know I've lost all love for him,

This knight, who is in charge of all my work,

Since I have learned you are his enemy.

Since then, I have made up my mind
To give up working for this castle.
The knight—I really don't know why—
Led our conversation to a place
That made it possible for him
To suddenly reveal to me
He was in fact... my father!
I wish that I could hide from you
What happened next....
Standing there before my long-lost father,
Who, his body bowed in grief,
Began to talk to me of days gone by,
I could so easily
Have quite forgotten all the pain
He'd caused my mother and myself...
If not for this, though:
That in the man in front of me
There stood your enemy.
In the daze that I was in
One thing alone was clear—

What an almighty gulf
Must separate me now for ever
From him, who I would gladly love,
Who I, with so much longing,
Have been searching for for years.
So I have lost him now a second time.
That's how I feel about what's happened.

MONK:

I would never wish to alienate you
From your ties of family and blood.
And yet please know
That all that I can give your soul
Will always be bestowed on you
With blessing and with love.

Curtain, as they both leave.

SCENE SEVEN

A room in the castle that was seen from outside in the previous scene. Everything is decorated with the symbols of a mystical brotherhood. First—the spiritually-minded knights during an assembly; then the Monk with one of the knights; later on the spirit appears of Benedictus, who died about fifty years previously. Lucifer and Ahriman. The Grand Master is assembled with four brothers (knights) at a long table.

**GRAND MASTER (in the twentieth century will become—
HILARY):**

You, my close companions

In the search to realize

The future goals of humankind,

Which we're called on

By the precepts of our order

To bring down from the spirit-worlds

And carry into earthly life and work:

I ask you now to show your loyalty

And stand beside me

Even in this time of grievous troubles.
Since the death of our beloved leader,
The head of our whole order,
Who offered up his life as sacrifice
To those dark powers
Who draw their strength from evil,
In order thus to serve,
Through all that's brought about by opposition,
The plan of wisdom—
Which even brings about the good from evil—
From that time forth—the moment of his death—
Has all our earthly striving been in vain.
Our enemies have overpowered already
Many of our order's strongest castles, - - - -
And many dear brothers,
Fallen in the fighting,
Have followed our exalted master
Far into the light-filled kingdom
Of eternity.
And soon the hour will strike for us as well,

In which these walls, surrounding and protecting us,

Must also fall.

On every side already

Our enemies are spying out the ways

To seize our lands and everything we own,

Which weren't acquired by us

For any profit of our own

But which were but the means

For us to bring together all whose souls were such

That we can plant there seeds for future times.

These seeds will germinate and ripen when

These people find their way once more

Back from spirit-lands

Into a later life on earth.

**1ST MASTER OF CEREMONIES (in the twentieth century
will become— THEODOSIUS/TORQUATUS):**

That our order must submit

To what the dark designs of destiny

Intend for it:
Seems understandable.
But that the institution
As it falls
Should drag down too
The individual lives
Of countless brothers,
Seems quite unjust
Within the scheme of universal law.
I'm not expressing a complaint;
For all our brothers willingly
Gave up their lives.
I do, though, seek to understand
The sacrifice demanded of someone
Who's joined a greater whole,
When powers of destiny
Condemn that greater whole to its destruction.

GRAND MASTER:

The threads of people's separate lives
Are wisely interwoven
With the wider-reaching threads
And destiny of humankind.
For in our ranks of brothers
Is many a one whose spirit-powers
Enable him to serve our order well,
And yet who nonetheless
Has flaws within his being.
The moral failings of his heart
Will find atonement through the sufferings
He must endure
In loyal service to the whole.
And as for those who bring from their own lives
No guilt at all,
And yet must tread the thorny paths
Belonging to the karma
Of our order as a whole,
Their suffering will grant them strength
To raise themselves into the higher life.

1ST MASTER OF CEREMONIES:

So does the order also tolerate
Such people in its midst,
Whose souls are not completely pure
And yet who still devote themselves
To all its noble, elevated goals?

GRAND MASTER:

Those who truly serve the greater work
Only ever weigh the good in souls;
They leave the bad to undergo atonement
In the further course of cosmic justice.
I've summoned you here now, my brothers,
In these days of grief and sorrow,
To remind you all, most earnestly:
It's fitting that we die in joyful spirits—
For the goals which in our lives

We've sworn in utter faithfulness to serve.

You are my brothers in the truest sense

When there sounds out courageously

Within your souls,

The sacred meditation of our order:

‘One has to sacrifice

One's separateness, one's life itself,

If through the revelations of the senses

One would see goals of spirit-worlds;

If one would dare

To pour into one's personal will

The might and strength of spirit-will.’

**1ST PRECEPTOR (in the twentieth century will become—
CAPESIUS):**

Noble Master, should you wish to test

The heart of every single brother,

You would hear ringing back to you,

The clearest and most shining echo

Of every word of our most sacred verse.
But we would like to hear you say
What sense we are to make
Of this: that our enemies
Together with our goods, our lands, our lives,
Also rob from us the souls
We've done our best to care for lovingly.
For every day reveals more clearly
How our people
Aren't submitting to our conquerors
Just because they're forced to;
But by themselves now learn to hate
The spirit-path we've shown them.

GRAND MASTER:

What we have planted in these souls
May well die out for now;
But people such as these,
Who've breathed our spirit's light,

In future will return
And bring back with them to the world
The fruits of our work.
This is how I often hear our great master
Speaking to my spirit
From the kingdom of the dead,
When silently, in meditation,
I plunge down deep into my soul
And forces waken in me
To live a while in spirit-worlds.
I then can feel
The presence of our master
And hear his words
Just as I would often hear them
In his life on earth.
He does not speak at all
About the ending of our work;
But only of the true fulfilment
Of our goals in a future time.

The Grand Master leaves with two brothers, while two remain behind.

1ST PRECEPTOR:

He speaks in just as real a way of spirit-worlds

As others speak of villages or towns - - - -

I find this way our leading brothers talk

Of other realms of being,

Overbearing and oppressive.

I'm very strongly bound, though,

And committed

To all our earthly goals.

2ND MASTER OF CEREMONIES (In the twentieth century will become— ROMANUS/TRAUTMANN):

I well remember what our master

Said of this, and hold it to be true:

Those who cannot hear

With utter faith

What is revealed to them
About the spirit and the spirit-worlds,
Are not incapable
Of grasping such a revelation.
Their failing lies elsewhere.
They well can sense,
But like to keep it hidden from themselves,
That they do not feel worthy
Of belonging to the higher worlds.
If someone can't accept, in all humility,
What's taught by spirit-knowledge,
There must be secret failings in their soul
They're wishing to deceive themselves about
And aren't yet willing to acknowledge.

They both leave.

The Monk appears in the same room; the 2nd Preceptor comes in to see him.

**2ND PRECEPTOR (in the twentieth century will become—
GERMANUS/ BELLICOSUS):**

What brings you here, to our house,
Which clearly counts for you
As territory of the enemy?

MONK:

I must consider everyone to be a friend
Who has a human face;
So states the strict rule of our order.
And yet what I, in carrying out my duty,
Must now demand from you,
May well make me appear your enemy.
I'm here at the behest of my superiors.
They want returned to them,
Completely peacefully,
The lands belonging to the Church,
As is set down

In ancient deeds and documents.
The piece of land, therefore,
That you have changed
And turned into a mine
By rights is the possession of our Church.
The way that you acquired these lands
Has absolutely no validity
Before official law.

2ND PRECEPT:

Judges could dispute for years
On whether it is lawful—or is not—
That we are calling these lands ours.
But in the light of higher law
It's clear that they belong to us.
This piece of land was barren ground
When our order bought it.
You did not know at all
That underground, within its depths,

The earth was hiding rich and precious ores.

Through hard work we've mined these ores

And brought them up into the sphere

Of human industry.

These treasures make their way today

To far-off lands, where they contribute

To the progress of humanity.

And many strong and loyal people

Work away today

Inside the mineshafts in that ground,

Which was just a wasteland

When you owned it.

MONK:

So are you saying you're not prepared

To take this matter to your brotherhood

And see to it they come and reach

An understanding with us, peacefully,

About the satisfying of our rights?

2ND PRECEPTOR:

As we are not aware
Of any guilt upon our part,
And are, in fact, quite certain
We are in the right,
We'll calmly wait and see
If even here you'll try and turn things round
And claim it's really you
Who are the victims of injustice.

MONK:

You only have your stubborn will to blame
If now we're forced to use quite different means.

2ND PRECEPTOR:

The honour of our brotherhood demands
We can't be robbed of what is rightfully ours
Except through a defeat in battle.

MONK:

Well then, my mission here is done;
More words between us are unnecessary.
Would it be possible to speak directly
With your leader? He who's in command here?

2ND PRECEPTOR:

The master will, I'm sure, be at your service;
But if you would, please wait here patiently.
He will not be here for a little while.

He leaves.

MONK:

What fate is this? That my position
Forces me to step inside the rooms
Of this abhorrent, hateful brotherhood.
Gazing out at me from every wall
Are symbols of the devil, images of sin.
Something hellish... almost has me in its grasp...
It's hard to breathe...
What's that? Those weird and sinister noises?
Dark and evil powers are all around me now.

- - - - -

As I know of no sin
I have committed,
I will oppose the Adversary,
Defy the evil one.

- - - - -

The horror's growing darker... stronger...
Oh - - - - -

The spirit of Benedictus appears.

You good beneficent spirits, help me!

Stand beside me now!

BENEDICTUS:

Be still, my son!

It often has been possible for me

To turn towards you—and to speak to you—

When the intensity and fire of your praying

Transported you into the realms of spirit.

So now as well take courage and be strong

And hear what you must understand

If spirit-light, instead of darkness,

Is to shine and to prevail in your soul.

MONK:

When I've reached out, imploringly, for clarity,

On difficult, important things,
And my devoted prayer
Found hearing in the spirit-world,
You have appeared to me, my hallowed master,
You, who were the glory of our order
While on earth,
You spoke to me from higher realms
Illumining my mind
And filling me with strength.
My soul's inner eyes beheld you.
My wakened spirit-hearing heard you.
So now as well I turn to you, devotedly,
To listen to the revelation
You will pour into my soul.

BENEDICTUS:

You're now inside the castle of a brotherhood
You charge with wicked, evil heresy.
It seems to hate all that we love;

And to revere what we consider sinful.
Our priestly brothers feel compelled
To root out and destroy
This sin against the spirit.
It's possible for them to base
What they are doing
Upon the words I spoke in life.
They're not aware these words
Can only then bear fruit in life
When they are rightly nurtured and developed
By those who've taken up my work.
Therefore let there arise in you,
In ways that suit a new and later time,
What I could think on earth.
This order lets itself receive its goals
From realms it reaches to through mystic knowledge.
View it in the self-same light
That I would do
If it was granted me
To walk and work among you now

In an earthly body.

This brotherhood aspires to reach the highest goals.

Those who dedicate their lives to it

Can subtly sense

What later earthly times will bring about;

Their leaders can behold already,

Prophetically,

The fruits that are to ripen in the future.

The forms and goals

Of science—and human life itself—

Will greatly be transformed in future.

And what this brotherhood of knights,

You're helping persecute,

Feels called on to accomplish

Are deeds that serve this future transformation.

Only when

We're willing to unite our order's goals

With those the heretics are seeking,

In peaceful common work together,

Will human life and progress flower

And bring about a healing on the earth.

MONK:

This warning...

That I've been found worthy to be given...

How on earth am I to follow it - - - - ?

It's radically opposed to everything

That I have come to see as right.

Lucifer and Ahriman appear.

Now other beings are also drawing near!

What do they want? Why are they there beside you?

AHRIMAN:

You now must heed instructions from elsewhere.

It can't seem easy for you to obey

Your predecessor's indications.

Bear in mind that he is living
In the region of the blessed.
What's laid on people there
As duties and commandments
Could only sow confusion
In your present circumstances on the earth.
Lift your gaze into his heavenly heights
If you seek to relish in the joy
That cosmic spirits, in their grace,
Will grant to far far distant days on earth.
But if you wish to work already now,
Rightly and effectively,
Then only let yourself be led
By that which speaks to reason and the senses.
You have succeeded brilliantly
In finding out the sins
That brotherhood of knights
Was forced to keep completely hidden.
They show you how their 'precepts
For the future of humanity'

Can live quite easily
Within the souls of sinners.
Knowing what you know
About this brotherhood
How could you ever wish
To live in peace with them!
Wrong and error are a bad soil;
That will not ever bear good fruit.

LUCIFER:

Your holy piety
Has shown to you the right way forward.
Of course the goals of different times
Transform and change;
But it's impossible that heretics
Should predetermine
What the future paths will be.
What's dangerous about this brotherhood
Is that it often speaks the truth

And yet so twists it

That the truth becomes

Of infinitely greater danger

Than mere lies.

A person who proclaimed, quite openly,

They were a servant of the lie,

Would be deranged if they believed

That people would desire to follow them.

These so-called spirit-knights

Are more intelligent than that;

They speak indeed, in hallowed terms, of Christ.

But why? Because they know this is the name

That opens every door to people's souls.

The easiest way to capture people's hearts

In service of Christ's greatest Adversary,

His counter-image, is to give that image

The very name of Christ Himself.

MONK:

I hear there sounding out from inner worlds,
Confusingly, those voices I have often heard,
And yet, which always sought to fight against
What piousness commanded me to do.

How on earth am I to take
The good and right way forward
When it's the path

That evil powers commend to me?
And yet, does it not almost seem - - - - ?

No! May I never even think it!
My good and wise teacher, he will guide me,
So that the meaning of his words,
That seem so difficult to understand,
Can be revealed to me.

BENEDICTUS:

I can point out to you
The right way forward,
If you allow the words

That once I spoke on earth
To permeate you through and through
Within your inmost soul.
And if you then aspire
To lift those words, in all their living power,
Into the worlds where you behold me now,
The right way forward
Will be clearly shown to you.

*Curtain falls, while the Monk, the Spirit of Benedictus, Lucifer and Ahriman
are in the hall.*

SCENE EIGHT

The same hall as in the previous scene. The 1st Preceptor and Joseph Kean (Kühne); then the Grand Master and Simon; later the 1st and 2nd Masters of Ceremony. Joseph Kean is there at the beginning; the 1st Preceptor enters and approaches him.

1ST PRECEPTOR:

You wished to speak to me.

What is it that you need to tell me?

JOSEPH KEAN:

What's brought me here

Is of importance both for you and me.

Do you know Thomas, the master miner?

He is employed by you.

1ST PRECEPTOR:

I do indeed, the fine upstanding man;
We value his achievements and his skill;
He's also greatly loved
By all who work under his leadership.

JOSEPH KEAN:

And do you also know my daughter, Celia?

1ST PRECEPTOR (ruffled):

I've seen her, yes,
When I have sometimes met you with your family.

JOSEPH KEAN:

Quite soon already, after Thomas moved here,
He'd come and see us often in our home.
He then began to visit more and more.

We saw that there had swiftly grown in him

The deepest fondness for our Celia.

We weren't surprised by this.

But all this time it seemed unthinkable to us

That Celia might return this love.

Her life was wholly given to prayer

And she would almost shun

The company of other people.

And yet it just grows ever clearer

How she is utterly devoted

To the man, the stranger from afar,

And gives him all her heart.

And as things stand, we're forced,

Against our will, no longer to oppose

Our daughter's wish to marry Thomas.

1ST PRECEPTOR (with gestures showing his uncertainty):

But what's the reason you oppose this marriage?

JOSEPH KEAN:

My lord, you know how deeply I'm devoted
To the spirit of the brotherhood.
It's with a very heavy heart
I've had to bear my daughter
Turning all her love to those
Who are accusing you and me of heresy.
The Monk, who is the leader of the monastery nearby,
And powerfully attacks our order's goals,
Has won our daughter's soul away from us.
As long as she is in my house
I'll never give up hope
That she'll abandon spirit-darkness
And find her way into the light again.
But I must give her up for lost
If she indeed will marry Thomas,
Who just like her seeks salvation
In the way presented by the Monk.
The Father has succeeded totally

In bringing Thomas round to his opinion
And making him adopt it as his faith.
I've shuddered every single time
I've heard the violent and abusive curses
Pouring from the mouth of Thomas
Every time the brotherhood was mentioned.

1ST PRECEPTOR:

The number of our enemies is huge;
It cannot matter much
If one more person joins them.
Your words do not make clear
Just what this marriage has to do with me.

JOSEPH KEAN:

My noble lord, you see this bundle - - - - ,
In it is contained convincing evidence,
Which no one but my wife and I have read.

No one else here knows of its existence.

But now it must be shared with you as well.

The girl, Celia, who's known of as our daughter,

Is not our child.

Her mother died when she was very young

And we then took her in and brought her up.

The rest of what I have to say

Makes it unimportant now

To tell you how this came about.

For years we never knew

Our foster-child's father.

And Celia still knows nothing of her origin.

She sees my wife and me as her true parents.

It could have happily remained so always;

For she's as dear to us

As if she were our own.

But many years after her mother died,

These papers here were given to us

That make it clear

Who Celia's father is.

The Preceptor becomes completely uneasy.

I do not know if you're aware of it;

But I have now no doubt at all -;

- - - - Her father - - - - is you, yourself.

That's everything I need to say to you.

And yet, because this is a matter

Of your family, your blood,

I am beseeching you for help.

Perhaps it will be possible for us, together,

To save the girl from spirit-darkness.

1ST PRECEPTOR:

My dear Kean,

You've always shown yourself a loyal friend.

I greatly hope

That I can also count on you in future.

But no one, either in these castle walls,

Or round about, in the vicinity,
Will surely ever hear
Of my relationship to Celia?

JOSEPH KEAN:

I pledge my word to you on that.
I will not cause you any harm.
All I'm asking for is that you help me.

1ST PRECEPTOR:

Please understand
I've no more time, right now,
To speak about this further.
I will have more to say tomorrow. Please come back then.

JOSEPH KEAN:

I will, of course - - - -

Till then - - - - .

Joseph Kean leaves.

1ST PRECEPTOR (alone):

How cruelly my destiny is sealed!

I left my wife and children,

Leaving them in misery,

Because I felt constrained

And hampered by them.

The paths my vanity then took me on

Led me to this brotherhood.

With elevated-sounding words

I vowed to serve the work of love

Carried out for all humanity.

And I could do this, somehow,

Laden with that guilt

Arising from the opposite of love.

The wise guidance given by the brotherhood
To people's lives
With me was shown quite clearly.
It took me in its midst
And made me serve its strict rules and orders.
I had no choice, but had to get to know
Myself and all my failings,
Which on any other path,
Quite certainly would not have happened.
When through a stroke of destiny
My son then moved here, very near me,
I thought that higher powers, in their compassion,
Were showing me the path to my atonement.
I've known for ages
That the girl the Keans adopted
Is the daughter I abandoned.

- - - - -

The brotherhood is facing its destruction;
The knights, in true devotion,
Will give themselves to death,

Aware the goals will always now live on
For which they offer up their lives.
I've felt for quite some time now
That I am utterly unworthy
Of such a death.
And so the resolution kept on growing in me
To tell the master openly
About my situation, and to ask him
To discharge me from the order.
I wanted then to dedicate myself
Completely to my children,
And thereby find whatever expiation
Is still possible within this life.
I see it very clearly now.
The son was never drawn here
By his longing for his father;
Though this was what his good true heart believed.
No, he was led here by the powers
Within his blood, that join him to his sister.
His other bonds of blood must have been loosened

Through the father's wrong. For otherwise
That Monk could not have wholly stolen him from me,
The way he did. He's done this so successfully
That now the brother and the sister too
Will both estrange themselves, completely,
From their father.
So all that's left for me to do
Is to make sure my children learn
The truth, at last, about their background—
And then, in resignation, just await
The blows of fate and the atonement
That those powers will bring
Who keep account of all our debts
And write the record of our lives.

The Preceptor leaves.

After a pause, the Grand Master and Simon come into the hall.

GRAND MASTER:

From now on, Simon, you must stay inside the castle.

Ever since the foolish story has been spread

About your sorcery, for you to step

Outside these walls is far too dangerous.

SIMON:

I find it bitterly painful

That people, through their ignorance,

Can so aggressively reject the help

One only offers for their good.

GRAND MASTER:

Whoever, through the grace of higher powers,

Can gaze into the depths of people's souls,

Beholds the inner enemies they harbour

Who violently oppose their own being.

The battles our opponents are preparing for,

Against us,
Are just an image of the mighty war,
One power within the heart,
At enmity with others,
Perpetually wages.

SIMON:

These words you speak, my lord,
Address me in my deepest core.
I never could be called a dreamer;
But wandering through the woods and fields alone,
An image often rose up in my soul,
My will had no more influence upon
Than things our eyes can see.
I see:
A human being, standing there before me,
Who very lovingly
Reaches out his hand to me.
The features of his countenance

Bespeak a pain and suffering
I've never seen before.
Every part of me is wholly seized
And overcome by the greatness
And the beauty of the man in front of me;
I want to throw myself down at his feet
And humbly devote my life to him,
This messenger from other worlds. - - - - -
But then, the next moment,
A wild and burning rage
Sets my heart on fire.
I'm powerless,
Against the urge
To whip up flames
Of opposition in my soul - - - - -
And I must push away the hand
Reached out to me so lovingly.
And by the time I come back to myself
The form of radiant light has disappeared.
When I reflect upon

What's shown itself, quite often, to my spirit,
A thought arises in me
Which can shake me to my inmost depths.
My heart is drawn to your teachings
Which speak about the spirit-being
Who came down from the region of the sun,
And who, appearing through a human form
That mortal senses could perceive,
Wished to be experienced and understood
By human hearts;
I can't pretend
The beauty in your noble teaching
Does not move me—
And yet I cannot open up and yield
My soul to it, in full devotion.
I wholly recognize your spirit-being
To be each human being's archetype;
But when I wish to turn to Him, in faith,
My own being stubbornly, defiantly
Resists. So in myself

I must experience the war
Which is the archetype
Of every outer battle that there is.
I'm often troubled by the weighty riddle
At the root of my entire life:
'What does it mean
That I can understand you
But can't devote myself, in faith, to what
Your noble revelations speak about?'
I follow loyally
The model that you set before me;
Yet am at odds with everything that is
That model's origin and final goal.
And if I have to recognize
That this is how I am,
Then doubt drowns out all faith
That I may find myself within this life.
The fear often even fills me that
The unresolved, confusing remnant
Of this doubt may follow me

Through future earthly lives.

GRAND MASTER:

The image you beheld, dear Simon,
Stood, in glorious light, before my spirit
While you depicted Him so vividly.
And then, as you continued speaking,
The image widened out, before my inner gaze,
Became ethereal;
And I could then behold
What brings together and unites
Our human destinies with world goals.

The Grand Master and Simon leave.

After a pause, both Masters of Ceremonies enter the hall.

1ST MASTER OF CEREMONIES:

I openly admit to you, dear brother,

I often find our leader's gentleness
Incomprehensible, considering
The stark injustice of our enemies.
They do not even wish to hear our teachings
Which they horrendously portray as heresy
And as the working of the devil.

2ND MASTER OF CEREMONIES:

The master's gentleness springs from our teachings.
We cannot say it is life's highest goal
To understand each person's soul,
And yet not understand our enemies.
There are, among them, many people
Who genuinely follow Christ's example.
But even in their case, were they to wish
To hear our teachings with their outer ears,
The deepest sense would still stay hidden from them.
Think how you yourself, dear brother,

Against resistance and reluctantly
Opened up your ears to spirit-hearing.
Our masters' teachings have revealed
How future men and women will, through spirit-light,
Behold the radiant Being of the Sun
Who lived but once within an earthly body.
We joyfully believe this revelation
Because we trust our leaders so completely.
Yet recently, the man whom we acknowledge
As our head, spoke these important words:
'If you already wish to see, prophetically,
What only in the future
Will reveal itself to people,
Your souls must ripen slowly.'
The master then went on:
'You never should believe
That after just the first
Trial of your soul
This prophetic vision of the future
Will appear to you.

For once you have been granted certainty
That human lives return and reappear,
Only then will you be forced to face
The second trial,
Which will unloose your self-delusion,
That soaring free,
May totally blot out your spirit-light.’
The Master added then the solemn warning:
‘In your most silent hours of meditation
Examine very often
How such delusion, as a monster in your souls,
Can easily become the greatest danger
On the spirit-seeker’s path.
Those who succumb to it
Would like to look on human life
Even there where spirit alone
Reveals itself to spirit light.
If you would worthily prepare yourselves
To take in with your eyes of soul
The light of wisdom of the Christ Himself,

You must keep careful watch upon yourselves,
Lest you are caught by self-delusion,
Just when you think it furthest from your soul.’
When we become quite clear about these words
We soon give up the false opinion
That we, today, might easily pass on
The lofty teachings we ourselves profess.
For now we must be glad
That we can meet so many people, who
Unconsciously receive, already,
The seed for future lives on earth.
This seed, in someone,
Often shows itself at first
As bitter opposition to those powers
That it will turn to, later on.
Within much of the hate
That’s hurled against us
I only find the seeds of future love.

1ST MASTER OF CEREMONIES:

Without a doubt, it's only words like these
That can unveil the goals of highest wisdom;
And yet it seems so difficult, right now,
To live one's life completely in their light.

2ND MASTER OF CEREMONIES:

Here too I follow what my master said:
'It is not given to everyone
To live earth's future in advance.
There always must be people, though,
Who see, prophetically,
What future times will bring,
And dedicate their hearts to powers, who wish
To save all being from the present moment
And safely guard it for eternity.'

Curtain falls, while both Masters of Ceremony are still in the hall.

SCENE NINE

The same meadow in the forest as in Scene Six. Joseph Kean, Mrs Kean, their daughter Berta; then the twelve peasant men and women; later the Monk; finally Celia and Thomas.

BERTA:

Please, dear mother,

I'd love to hear from you that story,

That Celia would often speak about.

For you know all the tales and stories

That our dear father brings back from the knights,

And which you tell so beautifully

That many people love to sit and listen,

Rapt, each time you tell them.

JOSEPH KEAN:

The fairy tales are in truth
A treasure for the soul.
The gifts they give our spirits
Go on living after death
And will bear fruit in later lives on earth.
They let us dimly intimate the truth;
And then this intimation leads us
To the knowledge that we need in life.
It's pitiable—
If only people understood
All they're being given by our knights.
Celia and Thomas, sadly,
Are now quite deaf to all of this,
For they have chosen to receive
Their wisdom from elsewhere.

BERTA:

I'd like to hear the tale today
That speaks of good and evil.

MRS KEAN:

I'd love to tell it to you. Listen:

Once upon a time there was a man

Who pondered much

About the workings of the world.

And he would rack his brain the most,

And feel the greatest torment,

When trying to understand

The origin of evil.

He couldn't find an answer to this question.

'The world was born from God,' he told himself,

'And God has only good within himself.

So how can evil people

Spring from what is only good?'

And ever and again

His thinking led him nowhere;

The answer would not let itself be found.

But then one day, that lonely ponderer,

As he was walking, caught sight of a tree,
In lively conversation with an axe.
The axe was saying to the tree:
'I can do what you cannot.
For I can cut you down;
But you can never do the same to me.'
At which the tree then told the haughty axe:
'A year ago a man came by,
And with another axe
He cut the wood from my body
Which he then used to make your handle.'
And when the man had heard this conversation
A thought sprang up within him
Which he could not put clearly into words,
But which completely answered nonetheless
The question as to how it's possible
That evil stems from good.

JOSEPH KEAN:

My daughter, think this story over;
Then you'll see how through observing nature
Knowledge can arise in human heads.
I know how very much grows clear for me
When in my thought I let the tales live on
Through which our knights so wisely teach us.

BERTA:

I'm very simple, really,
And know that I would never understand
The things that all the clever people say
In complicated words about their science.
I have no sense at all for things like that.
Every time that Thomas talks of what
He's busy with, I almost fall asleep.
But when dear father brings the fairy tales home
From up there in the castle,
And as he tells them adds his own words too,
Often going on for hours,

I feel that I could listen endlessly.
Celia often speaks of being pious,
And thinks it's something that I cannot do.
But when I call the fairy tales to mind,
And see their images,
And feel them fill my heart with deepest joy,
It's then that I experience

Real piety.

Joseph Kean, Mrs Kean and Berta leave.

After a moment the peasants come onto the meadow.

1ST PEASANT:

My uncle came home yesterday.
He's been away for ages,
Working as a miner in Bohemia.
He spoke with us for hours

About the things he's heard upon his travels.

There is excitement everywhere.

They're closing in upon the spirit-knights.

Everything has been prepared

Against our brothers here as well.

Quite soon the castle will be seized and toppled.

2ND PEASANT:

The main thing is they do it quickly.

And lots of us, I know,

With great delight,

Will join in the attack.

I, for sure, will be among the first.

1ST PEASANT WOMAN:

You'll run towards your doom.

Who could ever be so stupid

Not to think about

How strongly fortified the castle is
And how they will defend it?
The battle will be quite horrendous—
A disaster.

2ND PEASANT WOMAN:

Simple peasant people
Shouldn't get mixed up
In things they do not understand.
But many of them travel now
From place to place round here
And everywhere they go, do all they can
To whip up a rebellion.
It's even reached the point
Where people who are sick
Are crying out in pain
But are not given any help.
The good kind man,
Who used to help so many people,

Was beaten up so cruelly
He now can never leave the castle.

3RD PEASANT WOMAN:

The fact is
Many people felt so angry and so bitter
When they heard what caused the sickness
That had broken out among our cows.
The Jew had brought it on by witchcraft.
He has a way to make it look
As though he heals people,
So he can use his hellish arts
To serve the powers of evil.

3RD PEASANT:

This stupid talk of heresy
Has been fruitless;
Everyone had all they needed,

And finding nothing else to do
They wasted their free time
In evil gossiping.
And then someone,
Who knows the ways of human nature,
Cunningly insinuated
That the Jew had practised witchcraft on our cattle.
And not surprisingly the storm erupted.

4TH PEASANT:

I thought you'd know by now
What war and all its miseries mean.
Our fathers have described to us
The frightful times they lived through
When everywhere one went,
Armies, with their troops of soldiers,
Occupied the land.

5TH PEASANT WOMAN:

I've always said to you:

These lords and their dominion have to go.

I was shown clearly in a dream

How we can serve the troops

Who will be sent here to besiege the castle,

3RD PEASANT:

And give them all the help we can.

6TH PEASANT:

It's not a question now

Of whether we should still believe in dreams.

The knights desired to make us smarter

Than our fathers were.

So let them now experience

How extremely clever we've become.

Our fathers let them in here;

And we will chase them out.

I know the secret passageways

Through which one can, without detection,

Steal into the castle.

I used to work in there

Before my anger drove me out.

I want to show those knights

How very useful science can be.

4TH PEASANT WOMAN:

He's certainly not thinking

Anything that's good.

His words, they frighten me.

5TH PEASANT:

I know already,

From a spirit-image I beheld,

How a traitor leads the enemy,

On secret paths, straight into the castle.

6TH PEASANT WOMAN:

I find such visions sinister and out of place.

Whoever still is able here

To think in Christian ways

Knows well that honesty,

Not treachery,

Will ultimately free us all

From evil.

6TH PEASANT:

I let the people chatter on

Then do what's useful and effective.

Many of them blame as sinful

What they themselves could never do

Because they lack the courage.

But let's go on our way.

Here comes the holy father.
We wouldn't want to bother him.
Till now I've always followed
Everything he says so easily.
Much of what he said
Today, though, in his sermon,
I couldn't understand at all.

The peasants leave in the direction of the forest.

After a pause, the Monk comes down the path across the meadow.

MONK:

The paths of soul on which we travel
Become confused and tangled
When we are only led by our own selves.
It must have been my inner weakness
And the weakness of my heart
That allowed those figures of delusion,
To appear before my eyes

When I was in that hall within the castle.
And that they were in conflict with each other,
Simply shows how little still
The forces of my soul are able to unite
And work harmoniously together.
So I will strive anew
To kindle in my soul the words
That have the power to bring me light
From spirit-heights.
The only ones who can desire
To follow other paths
Are those whose self-delusion
Blinds and dazzles them.
The soul can only overcome deception
When it proves worthy of the grace
That can reveal to it, through wisdom's words,
The spirit-light that streams from founts of love.
You high and noble Power,
That's able to illumine
All the teachings of our fathers,

I know that I will find you,
When I am able to escape
The darkened shadows of my self,
With an unerring, true and pious heart
That's given in devotion.

After a pause Celia and Thomas come onto the meadow.

CELIA:

My dear brother, many times,
When in the silent fervour of my prayers,
I bowed, with my whole soul,
Before the living source of all the world,
And when the longing to be one with it
Would overflow my heart,
A shining light appeared before my spirit,
Which streamed out gentle warmth.
This light would change then and become
The image of a human being,

Who looked at me with loving eyes,
And words resounded from this image,
Saying:
‘You once were left through human self-delusion,
But you are now upheld by human love,
So wait until your longing finds the path
On which that love may then be led towards you.’

The human image
Very often spoke to me like this.
I never could explain those words.

The dim sense, however,
Lived in me, refreshingly,
That one day, somehow,
They would be fulfilled.

And then, beloved brother,
When you came here,
And when I first set eyes on you,
I nearly lost my senses,—
You were exactly like
That human face I’d seen.

THOMAS:

Your dreams and your presentiments
Have not deceived you;
Your longing's led me here to you.

CELIA:

And when you wanted me to be your bride,
I thought that this had surely been ordained
By spirit-destiny.

THOMAS:

That the spirit wished to bring us both together
Could not have been more clearly shown to us,
Although at first we understood it wrongly.
It seemed to me, the more I got to know you,

The spirit-world was blessing me
By giving me a wife. But then instead
I found at last my long-lost sister.

CELIA:

And nothing now
Should ever separate us
Anymore.

THOMAS:

And yet how much still stands between us!
Your foster-parents connect themselves
So deeply with the brotherhood,
Which I must utterly reject.

CELIA:

Their hearts are over-filled with love and goodness;
You'll find in them, I know, good friends.

THOMAS:

My faith will keep me
Far apart from them.

CELIA:

Through me, though, you will find the way to them.

THOMAS:

Your foster-father, Kean, is stubborn;
He'll always merely see as darkness
What is, for me, the source of all our light.
It wasn't till my riper years that I
Have turned, at last, to find this light of truth.

What I had heard about it as a child
Hardly ever came to consciousness,
And later on my only thought
Was how to rightly learn the science and the skills
That could provide me with my livelihood.
And only after moving here could I then
Find the teacher, who set free my soul.
The words I heard from him
Bear all the signs of highest truth.
He's wholly filled with gentleness and goodness
And speaks in such a way that heart and head
Must both devote themselves together
To his holy teaching.
Before, I had done all I could
To understand the knights' quite different spirit-path;
But found that it must always lead to error.
The only spirit-powers that it works with
Are those which are indeed reliable
In earthly things,
But which can never lead to higher worlds.

How could I ever find the way, therefore,
Into the hearts
Of people like your foster-parents,
Who are convinced that they will find salvation
In this great heresy and error?

CELIA:

I hear your words, dear brother;
They do not seem inspired by peace.
And yet while you were speaking them
A peaceful image rose up in my soul
From former days.
Many years ago, upon Good Friday,
I saw again that image I've described,
Who bore my dear beloved brother's features.
This time he said:
'The human soul arose from God's own ground;
In dying, it descends to depths of being;
From death, in future, it will free its spirit.'

I only realized later on:

This is the motto of our knights.

THOMAS:

O sister, no.

So must I now hear sounding from your lips

The evil verse, so sacred for our enemies,

Who view it as

The very highest spirit-truth.

CELIA:

My heart cannot feel any sympathy

For all the outer actions of the knights,

And I shall always be devoted to the faith

That so uplifts you.

But I could never tell myself

That those who, as the goal of all their teaching

Tread such paths of soul,

Are not following in Christ's own footsteps.

I am a faithful pupil of the spirit

And must confess that I believe

That on that day, my brother's spirit wished

To speak to me about the goals that could

Eventually bring peace to human souls.

THOMAS:

The powers of destiny appear to make impossible

In life,

That human souls find peace with one another.

For in the very hour they brought our father back

They snatched him from us.

CELIA:

To hear you speak like this about our father

Causes me such searing pain;

It jangles all my senses.

Your heart is drawn towards him lovingly,
But when you wish to think
Of really finding one another
Once again, you tremble and draw back.
You follow so devotedly our teacher,
In his wisdom,
But fail to hear the real message that he brings,
Of love,
Which streams out from his heart through all his words.
I feel I'm up against
A dark, confusing riddle:
I see the goodness of your heart,
And see your faith,
And stand in horror facing the abyss
That opens up so frighteningly between them.
And if the living hope did not console me
That love must always be victorious in the end
I'd lack the courage and the strength
To bear this suffering.

THOMAS:

Dear sister, you do not yet know
The irresistible, compulsive power of thought,
When it takes hold, completely, of the soul.
It is not just the son who stands against the father;
But thought opposes thought. - - - -
I feel its overwhelming power within me;
To turn against it now
Would be the very spirit-death
Of my own being—and who I am.

The curtain falls, while Thomas and Celia are still in the meadow.

The following is the continuation of the events portrayed in the first five scenes.

SCENE TEN

The same landscape as in Scene Five; Capesius is awaking from the vision he has had, which has shown to him his previous incarnation.

CAPESIUS:

What is this foreign landscape? A bench,

A cottage and a forest clearing ...

I do not know them, do I? They seem to be

Insisting that I know them. So oppressively.

I feel the whole gigantic burden of them

Weighing down on me.

This seems to be reality.

But no, it all—is merely image,

Woven from the stuff of dreams.

I know how all these images

Are formed and fashioned

By the soul's relentless thirst and longing.

I have emerged, as if waking
From this longing
And from the wide-spread spirit-ocean.
From somewhere deep within, though, stirs
The terrifying memory of this longing.
How searingly
Its thirst for world-existence burned.
The craving for delusion,
Born from want and deprivation,
Burned me up completely.
With fierce tempestuous speed
I followed my desire for being,
Though all existence simply wished to flee from me.
One single moment, like eternity,
Poured into my soul such agonizing,
Overwhelming storms of suffering,
That nothing but a whole long life can bring.

Before this,

Before I faced the horror of this longing,

There stood before me what it was

That caused this horror.

I felt myself spread out into

The wide expanses of the universe

Devoid of any being of my own.

But no, it was not I who felt this way,

Another being did so, that had sprung from me.

I saw both human beings and human deeds

Arising out of cosmic thoughts, that streamed through space,

All pressing urgently to manifest themselves

And pushing through to being.

And then these placed before my eyes

In pictures that were palpable

A whole abundant living world;

From out the substance of my soul

They took the power to conjure out of thought

New being and existence.

The more the world began condensing round me

The more I lost the feeling of myself.

And words now sounded from this picture-world,
That hurtled in on me and thought themselves.
From life's deficiencies and failings
The words created beings
And from life's virtues and good deeds
They gave these beings strength.
And then from widths of space I heard them
Ringing out in warning:
'O human being, recognize and know yourself
Within your world.'
A being then appeared before me,
Who showed my soul to be, in truth, his own.
Then those resounding cosmic words spoke on:
'Until the time when you can think this being
As wholly interwoven in the circle of your life
You're but a dream that dreams yourself.'
I could not think in clear forms at all
But only see creative forces
Surging through confusedly
From nothingness to being, and

From being into nothingness.
But if I try and reach back further,
Remembering what I saw before this,
A living picture shows itself to me,
That is not seething and confused,
The way all was, that I experienced later;
It shows in all their details, rather,
Quite distinctly, human beings and human deeds.
I clearly know, within this picture,
Who these people are and what they do:
I recognize these souls that I behold,
Though all are wearing different bodily forms.
I look on this, as if I ought to feel myself
A being who belongs within this world;
And yet what stands before me,
Like life itself in all its fullness,
Leaves me cold and wholly without feeling.
Only later on, it seems,
In what I have just gone through in the spirit—
Did I experience its powerful effect upon my soul.

I well could recognize myself, and others too,
Among a spirit-brotherhood,
But as a picture from the long-forgotten past
Rising up from hidden springs of memory.
I see my son then, Thomas, as a miner,
And have to call to mind the soul,
Who as Johannes shows himself to me today.
The woman who is now the seeress,
Appears before me there as my own child.
Maria, friend now to Johannes,
Shows herself there as the Monk, who
Vehemently condemns our spirit-brotherhood;
And Strader has the countenance of Simon,
The Jew. In Joseph Kean and in his wife
I see the souls of Felix and Felicia.
I clearly see, in overview, the lives
Of all these other people and my own,
But as I dwell on them,
And give my whole attention up to them,
They vanish from my spirit-gaze.

And I can feel how all the stuff of dreams,
Of soul, from which these images were woven,
Gently pours into my soul.

And I feel wholly permeated now
By blissfulness. It seems I have been freed
From all the limitations of the senses.

My being is expanded now
Into the distant reaches of the universe.

It's in this way that I experience
That long, long moment that I lived through,
Before that tableau of a former life
Was placed before me.

And I can now look even further back:
Condensing out of cosmic powers of thought,

I see appearing here the woodland

And the cottage, where Felicia and Felix
So often gave me solace in my troubles.

And now—I'm back here, in the world again,
From which I've been so far removed, while lost
In distant earthly times and far-flung spaces.

And that which just a while ago
I looked upon without a trace of feeling,
Those images that showed me to myself,
Now float and lie, like hazy soul-forms,
In front of all my senses can perceive.
The images now have the power of nightmare
Threatening and oppressing me.
They're surging, seething through the depths within me.

They open up the gates of worlds,
The vast, expansive distances of space.

What storms so violently into my being's depths,
What's breaking in on me from distant cosmic worlds?

A VOICE AS SPIRIT-CONSCIENCE:

Feel—what you have seen,
Experience—what you have done.

You are arisen now anew into existence.

Till now you have but dreamed your life.

Remake it for yourself

From noble spirit-light;

With visionary power of soul

Recognize the work of true existence.

But if in this you fail,

You will be bound, eternally,

To being without being—to nothingness.

Curtain falls, while Capesius is still present.

SCENE ELEVEN

The same meditation room as in Scene Two. Maria, Ahriman.

AHRIMAN:

Benedictus spun the threads of thought,

So cunningly, that you have followed.

They've tangled you in error perfectly.

And both Johannes and Capesius

Are victims of the same deceitful vision.

Their gazes fell, like yours, upon a life

In distant days on earth.

And now you think to find within that time

The lives preceding those you live today.

From error you will simply breed more error

If you allow your tasks and duties

On your earthly paths

To be determined by the fruits

Of such imaginary, deceptive knowledge.
That all that Benedictus did
Was take these pictures from your brain
And then transpose them into earlier times:
You clearly can discover for yourself.
You saw those people of before
Hardly changed from how they are today.
Men were men there too, and women women;
The qualities they had were even similar.
You cannot be in any doubt, therefore,
That what your spirit-eye projected back
Into the mists of history,
Was not the truth, but just the fanciful,
Deluded images of your own soul.

MARIA:

I see you as the father of deceit and lies.
But I know too you often speak the truth.
And anyone who wanted to reject completely

All your words of counsel,
Would needs fall prey to gravest error.
For as delusion wears the mask of truth,
To be quite sure of capturing human souls,
So people easily fall victim to
Deception, if, from fearful cowardice,
They try and slip past every source of error.
It is not just delusion
That we owe to you:
For from the Spirit of Deception too
Has sprung the power
That gives to us the faculty
Of certain judgement and discernment.
I therefore stand against you now in freedom
And oppose you. You've attacked me in
That aspect of my soul, which always
Must keep watch in utter wakefulness.
In light of all your brilliant intellectual
Reasoning, it certainly may seem
That pictures from my brain

Have simply been transferred to earlier times.

And yet I ask you this:

Can your wisdom open up the doors

To every age on earth?

AHRIMAN:

There are no beings in any spirit-realm

Who, as enemies, will stand against me

When I need to enter

Former ages on the earth.

MARIA:

The highest powers of destiny

Have wisely placed you in the role

Of Adversary;

For you bring further all of those you hinder.

By reaching down into the depths of human souls

You give to them the power of freedom.

From you spring all the powers of thought,
Which are indeed the cause
Of knowledge's deceptive images,
And yet they are what guides us too
In all our sense for truth.
In spirit-worlds there only is one realm
Where that sword can be forged
The sight of which you can't abide
And so must flee from.
It is the realm where human souls
Build knowledge first through powers of reason,
And then rework, transform it, into spiritual wisdom.
If at this moment, therefore, I can rightly
Forge the word of truth into that sword,
Then you'll be forced to vanish from this place.
Listen, therefore, father of deceit,
And hear if I now speak victorious truth.
There are such times in earthly evolution
When old powers slowly die away, and as
They do, already see the new ones grow.

In seeking former earthly lives
My friends and I all found ourselves
Together in the spirit, at exactly
Such a turning-point of time.
Human beings, completely true in spirit,
Were active then, united in a brotherhood
Of souls, which followed aims it had brought down
From mystic heights. At turning-points like these,
Seeds are planted, carefully, in people's souls,
Which only fully ripen in the future.
The qualities these people have, in their next lives,
Will then be similar
To those they had before.
Thus many who were men
Will once again be men, in their next life;
And many women women.
The length of time between these lives
Is shorter, too, than usual.
Your vision of such turning-points of time
Is partial and uncertain. Therefore you

Can never gain an overview of them,
As they unfold, that's free from error.
Remember how we met inside the castle
Of that spirit-brotherhood:
And you spoke words that sought, through flattery,
To loosen and set free from inmost depths,
My egoistic sense of self.
The memory of that time gives me the power
To stand against you now and to oppose you.

Ahriman disappears with a reluctant gesture. Thunder.

MARIA:

So he's been forced to flee from here; this place
That Benedictus has so often blessed.
But I have wonderfully been shown
How swiftly souls may stumble into error
If they avoid the sure and certain paths,
And open themselves up, quite unawake,

To what their spirit-hearing tells them.

The Adversary has colossal power

To seize upon life's contradictions,

And thereby rob the soul of certainty.

But when that light appears,

That shines out from the living source of wisdom,

And grants to spirit-vision radiant clarity,

The Adversary must then fall silent.

Curtain closes, while Maria is still in the room.

SCENE TWELVE

The same room as in the previous scene. Johannes and Lucifer.

LUCIFER:

Johannes, listen! Take a look
At what has happened to Capesius.
And recognize in him those fruits
That have to ripen every time that souls
Desire to open up too soon to spirit-realms.
He knows what's written in his book of life
And what his obligations are for many lives.
But knowledge, if it lacks the power
To transform into deeds in life, just leads
To pain and suffering that destiny
Had not intended.
For whether deeds succeed or not
Does not at all depend on knowledge, but

On the ripeness of a person's will.
And poor Capesius, with every step he takes,
Will now be forced to ask himself:
Am I fulfilling all the duties and demands
Accruing from my former life?
So over everything he meets
A light will spread, that pains and dazzles him,
And which will leave him helpless.
It kills the very powers
That working in the deep unconsciousness
Of human souls
Have always been their safest guides;
And nor can it enhance their conscious minds.
And so it simply lames
The body's deep instinctive power and vigour
Before it can be mastered by the soul.

JOHANNES:

I now can see the error of my life.

I tore out of my body
The soul-powers that imbued it,
And proudly bore them up to spirit-heights.
By doing so, I did not lead a human being,
In his wholeness, up into the light,
But just a frail and fleeting soul-shadow.
He rapturously enthused about
The spirit's vast expanses
And felt himself to be at one
With world-creative powers.
He wished to merge in blessedness with light
And in the colours to behold light's deeds.
As artist he believed that he
Could recreate, in forms and colours
That the senses could perceive,
Realities of spirit worlds.
That being who took on my features, showed
To me the dreadful truth about myself.
I dreamed about
The purest love between two souls,

But in my blood the wildest passion raged.
And now I've seen the life on earth
That is the origin of this one.
It shows me what I have to strive for.
How could the soul
Who lived, before, within the body
Of the miner, Thomas,
Expect to tread
The lofty spirit-path I have been on?
The way that Thomas lived his life
Must show me what my present goals must be.
I wanted to achieve in this life now
What only can bear fruit for me in future.

LUCIFER:

My light alone can help you now
And be your certain guide upon your way—
Just as you've followed it before.
The spirit-path you have been trying to tread:

Can wed your spirit, happily, with higher worlds,
But it will just bring agony to your soul,
Which it will plunge in darkness.

JOHANNES:

What has someone achieved,
If they must just surrender, soullessly,
To spirit-worlds!
At the end of all their lives on earth
They will just be the being that they were,
When at the dawn of time
Their human form emerged
From out the womb of worlds.
But if I yield to all the urges
Which from unconscious depths
Are surging up so powerfully
And seeking full reality in life,
The whole great universe
Will then be working through me.

I won't know what it is
That spurs me on to action
But it will be the mighty will of worlds
That leads me on, to bring about its goals.
This cosmic will knows just how life should be,
Although our knowledge cannot grasp it.
It can let pour, throughout our being,
Abundant life, which vivifies the soul.
I will surrender to it totally
And will not deaden or deny it any longer
Through vain and barren spirit-striving.

LUCIFER:

It's I who work within this cosmic will
When it streams powerfully through human souls.
Until they can experience me fully
They are still intertwined with higher beings.
It's I who make them first
A truly human being

Who as a separate self can take
Their rightful place within the universe.

JOHANNES:

For ages I have thought
That I completely knew you;
I see now that there only lived in me
A phantom-form of you, a mirage,
Pictured to me by my spirit-vision.
I must experience you, feel you,
Live you through my will,
And then can overcome you in the future,
If that is what my destiny ordains.
So let the spirit-knowledge I achieved too early
Slumber from now on, deep down in my soul,
Till life itself awakens it.
But now in boundless trust
I yield completely to the will
That's so much wiser than the human soul.

Johannes leaves with Lucifer.

SCENE THIRTEEN

The Sun Temple; the hidden Mystery Site of the Hierophants. Lucifer, Ahriman, the three Soul Forces. Strader, Benedictus, Theodosius, Romanus, Maria.

LUCIFER:

Victorious, the Lord of Wishes stands before you;
He has attained possession of that soul,
Who even where the Spirit-Sun was shining out its light,
Was forced to feel his kinship with our realm.
For at the perfect moment, I found the way
To dazzle him and to confuse his vision
Of that glorious light, which he
Was only serving dreamingly.
But when I turn to you, my battle-comrade,
All my hopes of our great victory in
The spirit-realm must vanish once again.
You've failed to gain possession of the soul,

Who would have brought success to all our goals.

Because of you,

The soul that has surrendered to my power,

May only be held captive by me

For a while, within our realms,

And pointlessly, for then I'll need

To hand him back to our opponents.

For our full victory the second one

Is needed too, who has escaped your grasp.

AHRIMAN:

The time is not propitious for my work;

I find no means of access to these souls.

Another one approaches now,

Whose soul I've harrowed through and through.

He has no spirit-knowledge yet

But rigorous power of thought impels him on.

So in this place I must give way to him;

He's here quite unaware, in deep unconsciousness.

The three soul-forces appear with Strader.

PHILIA:

I will imbue myself
With radiant power of faith.
I will breathe deeply in
Enlivening strength of trust,
From soul delight in striving:
So that the spirit-sleeper
May be awoken by the light.

ASTRID:

And I will weave together
Enlightening words of revelation
With quiet, devoted joy of soul.
I will intensify
The glorious rays of hope.

In darkness light will shine,
In light the colours glow:
So that the spirit-sleeper
May be upborne by helping powers.

LUNA:

To light of soul I will give warmth;
To power of love give strong foundations.
They thus will grow in courage,
They will redeem themselves
And as they soar on high
Will wish to garner weight:
So that the spirit-sleeper
May shed his cosmic burdens
And light-filled joy of soul
May finally set him free.

Benedictus, Theodosius and Romanus enter.

BENEDICTUS:

I've summoned you both here—companions to me,

As you are, in seeking for the spirit-light

That should illumine human souls.

You know the nature of the radiant sun

Within the soul: in brightest noon it often

Shines out strongly; while, at other times,

It only weakly glows through all

The cloud-dreams of the soul; and often

It must just surrender to the darkness.

The temple-servant's spirit-sight

Must gaze into the depths of souls

In whom the light from cosmic heights

Is powerfully shining.

But they must also find those hidden goals

That in the darkneses of human souls,

Are guiding still, unconsciously,

Their gradually unfolding powers.

The spirit-beings who grace the human soul

With spirit-nourishment from cosmic powers,
Have now appeared within this sacred temple,
To guide a man upon his path
From spirit-night into the light-filled heights.
He's still enwrapped within the sleep of knowledge;
There has already rung out loudly though
The spirit-call
In the unconscious strata of his being.
And what's been spoken in his depths
Will also reach, quite soon, his spirit-ears.

THEODOSIUS:

This soul could not re-find itself, till now,
Within the spirit-light,
That shines through all the senses' revelations,
And which unveils the meaning of the earth.
This soul could only see the spirit of God
Remote, removed from nature,
And all that's natural, estranged from God.

And so, through many lifetimes,
He had to feel the meaning of existence
Obscure and alien to him;
And he would always only find
Such bodily sheaths as vehicles for his being,
Which severed him from people and the world.
Within the Temple now, he'll gain the strength
To feel another being as his own,
And through this will acquire the power as well
That frees one from the labyrinths of thought
And lets one drink the living waters
From the source of life.

BENEDICTUS:

Another man is also striving
For the temple's light;
But only later will he near these portals
And seek admittance to this hallowed place.
Throughout a life devoted to the search

For knowledge, he has planted, deep down in
His soul, the seeds of thought. The spirit-light
Could shine on these and ripen them,
Outside the temple. Thus he could behold
The way his present life reveals itself
To have resulted from another life
That he had gone through long ago.
He's wholly conscious now of all
His errors in that life and their effects;
But lacks the strength to carry out
The tasks and duties that self-knowledge
Painfully makes him feel.

ROMANUS:

Capesius, through the temple's power,
Will recognize how in one life a person
Must accrue a burden of responsibilities
Which will take many lifetimes to fulfil.
Through this he will acknowledge fearlessly

His soul must bear through death the consequences
Of the errors it has made.
He'll win the battle which will open up
For him the doorway to the spirit
When he can bravely face the Guardian,
Who stands before the threshold of the spirit-world.
The Guardian will reveal to him
That none can ever rise into the heights
If what is written in their book of destiny
Makes them fearful.
Courageously he'll understand:
Self-knowledge always must
Engender sufferings—
For which it knows no words of consolation.
The power of Will will be the friend of those
Who step into the future full of courage;
And, drawing strength from living springs of hope,
Boldly face the sufferings of knowledge.

BENEDICTUS:

I greatly thank you both. As true devoted
Servants of this temple, you have wisely
Marked the paths along which you can lead
These spirit-seekers, Strader and Capesius,
To their goals. But now our service here
Imposes on us all a different task.
You see the Lord of Wishes at our side;
He was allowed to enter here,
Into this place of consecration,
Because Johannes's soul
Could open wide to him the portals
Which otherwise are firmly shut against him.
Johannes, our brother,
Whom we led through his initiation,
At present lacks the power,
Courageously to shun the words
That forged themselves from darknesses
And worked upon him.
Good powers will only strengthen in him when,

Through opposition,
They at last experience themselves.
Quite soon, therefore, he'll feel our brotherly love
Embracing him again within the temple.
Till then, however, we must keep
His spirit-treasures safely guarded,
As it is now his will to plunge
Into the realms of darkness.

Addressing Lucifer.

I must now turn to you, who only briefly
May preside there, in the place you stand.
It is not in the temple's power as yet
To wrest away from you Johannes's soul.
In future, though, it will be ours again
When in Maria, our sister,
Those fruits of soul attain maturity,
Whose flowering we can already see.

Maria appears.

She's seen how closely linked to her
Johannes was
Within her previous earthly life.
He followed in her ways already then,
In times when she
Was wanting to oppose the Light
Which she now serves with such devotion.
When soul-bonds prove so strong
That they outlast the spirit's transformation,
The power wielded by the Lord of Wishes
Will necessarily be shattered
On the rocks of their unshaking ground.

LUCIFER:

Who was it who determined
There should be a rift between
Johannes and Maria?

Benedictus himself! And anywhere
Where people separate from one other,
The field is opened up for my dominion.
I never cease my search
For where the soul is severed;
So in the end I may release,
For all eternity,
The free unshackled earth-existence
From all its bonds of cosmic servitude.
Maria's being, in the habit of a monk,
Made the soul now living in Johannes
Turn away completely from his father.
This too has planted seeds for me
Which I, quite certainly,
Will find the way to ripen.

MARIA (to Lucifer):

There are in human beings springs of love,
To which your power can never reach.

These springs are found and opened
When errors made in former times,
Which burden one, unconsciously,
Are clearly seen, in later lives, in spirit;
And are,
Through freedom and the will for sacrifice,
Transformed to deeds, the fruits of which
Then bless humanity and bring true healing.
The powers of destiny have graced me with
The vision of far distant days on earth;
They've given me the signs as well that show me
How to guide my power of sacrifice
So healing comes about within those souls,
Whose threads of life will always interweave
With mine, throughout the earth's evolving.
I saw Johannes's soul, in his former life,
Turning from his father,
And saw the powers driving me
To make the son become a stranger
To the father's heart.

Because of this the father now confronts me,
Chiding me
About this ancient debt I owe him.
The cosmic words he speaks to me are clear;
And they leave signs and symbols
That express themselves in deeds in life.
The rift I opened up between father and son
Had to appear, in different form,
In this life too, which once again
Has closely linked Johannes's soul with mine.
In all the suffering I had to bear,
Through severing the ties
Between Johannes and myself,
I see the consequences,
Wrought by destiny, of my own deeds.
If now my soul stays faithful to the light
The spirit-powers shine upon it,
It will create new forces for itself,
Through all its gifts of service to Capesius,
As he walks his challenging path through life.

And with the forces thus attained
It will see clearly then Johannes's star,
Shining brightly, even then, when he,
Misled and held by fetters of desire,
Has wandered from the path that light illumines.
And so the spirit-vision
That has revealed to me those former times,
Enables me to see
The form that I must give to soul-relationships,
In this time now,
So that the forces of my life,
Awaking from unconsciousness,
Can now work on in healing ways
To serve the progress of humanity.

BENEDICTUS:

In ancient days on earth
A knot was formed out of the threads
That karma spins in world-evolving.

It weaves three people's lives together.

And on this knot of destiny

The radiant spiritual light

From this so sacred place

Is brightly shining now.

I now must turn to you, Maria.

For you alone, of those three souls,

Are present now

Within this hallowed site of consecration.

May that high, exalted light

Shine on in yourself and heal those forces

That once so tightly wound together

Your threads of life

With those of both Johannes and Capesius

Into that interwoven knot.

The father could not find, in earlier times,

The son's heart; but now the spirit-seeker

Will be your friend's companion

Upon their path into the spirit-land.

Your task is now to strongly hold

Johannes's soul within the light.

The way that once you held him bound to you
Meant he could only follow you unconsciously.

You handed him his freedom,

When he was still completely lost in you,

And caught up in delusion.

You will re-find him, when at last

He wins back for himself

His individual being.

If your soul stays faithful to the light

The spirit-powers now shine upon it,

Johannes's soul will strive, in thirst, for yours,

Even from those regions where

The Lord of Wishes holds him captive;

And through the love uniting him to you

He'll climb back up again to light-filled heights.

For those who can, from darkest depths of soul,

Behold, quite consciously, the spirit-heights,

Can pass in living ways through light and darkness.

They've breathed the air, from far-off spirit-worlds,

Which re-enlivens one eternally - - - -

And lovingly uplifts all human life

From depths of soul to radiant sun-filled heights. - - - -

Curtain.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE THRESHOLD

Soul Events in Dramatic Scenes

by Rudolf Steiner



CHARACTERS, FIGURES AND EVENTS

The Guardian of the Threshold depicts, in a series of dramatic scenes, events in the soul-lives and spiritual lives of the characters. These scenes continue the events in my earlier dramatic representations of life—The Doorway of Initiation and The Trial of the Soul. Together with this one, the three plays form a whole.

In The Guardian of the Threshold the following characters and beings appear:

I. THE BEARERS OF THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENT:

1. Benedictus, the leader of the Temple of the Sun and the teacher of a number of people who appear in The Guardian of the Threshold. (The Temple of the Sun is only referred to in the The Doorway of Initiation and The Trial of the Soul.)
2. Hilarius Gottgetreu—Hilary—Grand Master of a mystic brotherhood. (In The Trial of the Soul he was shown in a former incarnation as the Grand Master of a spiritual brotherhood.)
3. Johannes Thomasius, a pupil of Benedictus.

II. THE BEARERS OF THE ELEMENT OF DEVOTION:

4. Magnus Bellicosus, named Germanus (in The Doorway of Initiation), the Preceptor of the mystic brotherhood.

5. Albert Torquatus, named Theodosius in The Doorway of Initiation, the Master of Ceremonies of the mystic brotherhood.

6. Professor Capesius

III. THE BEARERS OF THE ELEMENT OF WILL:

7. Friedrich Trautmann, named 'Romanus' in The Doorway of Initiation, Master of Ceremonies of the mystic brotherhood. The reincarnation of the second Master of Ceremonies of the spiritual brotherhood in The Trial of the Soul.

8. Theodora, a seeress. (With her the element of will has been transformed into natural seership.)

9. Dr Strader

IV. THE BEARERS OF THE ELEMENT OF SOUL:

10. Maria, a pupil of Benedictus

11. Felix Balde

12. Felicia Balde, his wife

V. BEINGS FROM THE SPIRITUAL WORLD:

Lucifer Ahriman

VI. BEINGS OF THE HUMAN SPIRITUAL ELEMENT:

The Double of Johannes

The Soul of Theodora

The Guardian of the Threshold

Philia, Astrid, Luna—the spiritual beings who mediate the connection of the human soul-forces with the universe

The Other Philia, the spiritual being who hinders the connection of the soul-forces with the universe

The Voice of Conscience.

These spiritual beings are not intended allegorically or symbolically, but as realities, which are equally present for spiritual knowledge as are physical personalities.

1. Ferdinand Reinecke (approximate meaning of German name—fox)
2. Michael Edelmann (nobleman)
3. Bernard Redlich (honest)
4. Francesca Demut (humble)
5. Maria Treufels (faithful as a rock)
6. Louisa Fürchtegott (god-fearing)
7. Friedrich Geist (spirit)
8. Caspar Stürmer (stormer)
9. Georg Wahrmund (truemouth)
10. Maria Kühne (bold)
11. Hermine Hauser (homely)
12. Katharina Ratsam (good advice)

These are the reincarnations of the twelve peasant men and women in The Trial of the Soul.

The events of The Guardian of the Threshold take place about thirteen years after those of The Doorway of Initiation. The way in which lives are repeated in The Guardian of the Threshold should not be taken as a generally valid rule, but rather as something that can take place at a turning-point of time. The events of Scene Eight, for example, between Strader and the twelve citizens are thus only possible at such a period of time. The spiritual beings appearing in The Guardian of the Threshold are in no way to be thought of as allegorical or symbolical; those who know a spiritual

world to be a reality, may very well present beings such as these, which have just as much reality there as beings have in the sense-world. Anyone who takes these beings to be allegories or symbols misunderstands the entire character of the events in *The Guardian of the Threshold*. That spiritual beings do not have a human form, as they must necessarily do in a dramatic presentation, goes without saying. If the writer of this ‘series of soul events in dramatic scenes’ had considered these beings to be allegories, he would not have depicted them in the way he does. The division of the characters into groups (3 x 4) was not sought after nor placed, beforehand, as the basis of the play; it resulted—afterwards, for thinking—from the events depicted, which were conceived completely on their own and which create such a division by themselves. It would never have occurred to the author to place them there as a foundation from the beginning. To mention them here, as having resulted from it, though, may be permitted.

Rudolf Steiner

SCENE ONE

A room of which the basic colour is indigo-blue. It is intended as the entrance hall leading to the room in which a mystic brotherhood carries out its work. Twelve people are present, engaged in informal discussion; they are all interested, in one way or another, in the activities of the mystic brotherhood. In addition, Felix Balde and Dr Strader are present. The scenes of the play depict events which happen about thirteen years after those of The Doorway of Initiation.*

FERDINAND REINECKE:

So here we are. Each one of us has come
In answer to the strangest invitation
Sent out to us by those who've always kept
Apart from folk like us, believing in
Their very, very special spirit-goals.
Yet now, apparently, the cosmic plan
Has been unveiled before their spirit-eyes
That they are meant to link themselves with folk
Who face life's struggles on their own, without

Initiation in their temple's rites.

Personally, I've never had much time

For spiritual groups that have to work in secret.

I'd rather stay with healthy human thinking

And common sense. And listen, friends—I'll bet

This spirit-brotherhood that's called us here

Has absolutely no intention to

Enlighten us about their highest goals.

With nebulous dark mystic formulas

They'll keep us in the Temple's outer rooms—

And use us to gain popular support

For what they want to do. Thus they intend

To make us blind and passive helpers while

They arrogantly lord it over us—

Our spiritual superiors. They will

Not think us capable of taking one

Small step towards the real light—

Filled treasures that their sanctuary conceals.

I'll tell you what their real being is:

Vast spiritual pride and trickery, dressed up

To seem quite humble in their prophets' robes.
We should leave now and not have anything
To do with all the 'wisdom' they proclaim.
But so it does not seem we're just rejecting
Out of hand their holy work without
Considering it—I would advise you all
At least to hear whatever they may say—
What they intend, these 'wisdom-bringers'—then
Just follow what your common sense dictates.
If you make this into your guide and leader,
You'll never fall for all the traps and lures
Laid out for you by these great mystagogues.

MICHAEL EDELMANN:

I do not know, I cannot even guess
What spirit-treasures are entrusted to
These people, who desire to find a bridge
To us. But I know several people who
Are members of this group and find each one

Of them a fine, upstanding person. Yes—
They never say a word about the source
From where their knowledge springs; they keep this secret.
Their deeds, though, and the way they live their lives
Reveal the goodness of the source from which
They draw. And all that springs from their circle
Bears unmistakably the mark of true
And loving kindness. Therefore I am sure
The reason will be good that leads them now
To wish to join with those, like us, for whom
The mystic ways are strange, yet understand
The search for truth and for life's highest goals.

BERNARD REDLICH:

You go too far. I think we should be cautious.
The mystics clearly feel their time is over
Or will be soon. For do you think, in future,
That any rational mind will care that much
What 'mystic temples' preach about the truth?

So when we hear what aims these ‘brothers’ have,
If they sound sensible to common minds,
It would be reasonable to join with them.
But then—if they desire to cross the bridge
That separates their lofty light-filled world
From this one—then there’s no more mystic robes
And special airs and privilege. They’ll have
No greater nor no lesser value than
The way they’re valued in the popular mind.

FRANCESCA DEMUT:

Oh dear. What nonsenses we hear. You seem
Completely blind to that true spirit-light
That’s always shone its rays of wisdom through
The world, from mystery centres such as this one,
Illumining and comforting and healing souls.
But only those who let this light invade
Their heart, and feel it fill their souls with warmth,
Will recognize the value of this hour.

It is the moment when—even for those
Who feel themselves too weak to undergo
Stern trials of soul in hidden sanctuaries—
The Mysteries are opening their doors.

MARIA TREUFELS:

You're right that many signs make clear today
That much will have to be transformed in souls
Who seek for spirit-guidance in their lives.
However, very little indicates
That mysticism and the mystic paths
Can give to human souls the strength they need.
Our times, it seems to me, need leaders who,
When they employ their natural gifts unite
True genius with skill, and so can feel
Within their work on earth the purpose of
Their lives. Such people even seek the roots
Of spiritual deeds within the mother-ground
Of true reality, and thus, without

Illusions, walk in ways of service for
The world. I'm utterly convinced of this.
It's Dr Strader, therefore, in my eyes,
Who has what's needed, more than all these mystics,
To show to everyone the new ways forward.
How long have we all felt so painfully
That through the wonderful creations of
Technology, the soul is shackled, bound,
That by itself would freely seek the spirit.
But suddenly there is a hope at last
That no one would have dreamed about before.
In Strader's workshop wondrous machines
Are working now, in miniature, which soon,
When working on a larger scale, will quite
Transform the nature of technology—
And take away from it that sting, that weight,
That so oppresses many souls today.

STRADER:

I thank you for these words so full of hope
About my work. It does indeed seem that
It has succeeded. Even though there's still
A certain bridge to cross between our trials
And our experiments—and application.
But technically, so far as we can see,
It's all completely feasible. I do
Not wish to seem immodest, but perhaps
I may say more about this and describe
The feelings that have fired me in my work.
My starting-point was this—that looking back
At human history we plainly see:
The more the human spirits learned to master
The forces that control the physical world,
The more has human labour grown divorced
From heart-filled feeling and become a thing
Quite void of soul. Our work grows ever more
Mechanical and governed by technology
And so does life itself. You can't
Imagine how much thought has been put in

To solve this question. How to stop machines
From laming us within our souls and spirits?
It led to very little, asking just
How people should relate. I too have spent
Long hours wracked in thought upon this question,
But all my efforts always led me nowhere.
I nearly reached the bitter point of view
That it is written in world destiny
That all our triumphs in the realm of matter
Must stand opposed to progress in the spirit.
But then, amazingly, as if by 'chance',
Engaged in work completely unrelated,
The thoughts poured out of me that showed the way
At last to solve this question. After that
Each day brought new experiments until
We witnessed, unmistakably, this great
Harmonic resonance of forces, which,
Just purely technically, will bring the freedom
Necessary to evolve in spirit.
Once developed fully, never more

Will people have to live demeaning lives
In mechanized environments that sap
All dignity and real human life.
The forces of technology will so
Be shared with everyone that all
A person needs to carry out their work
May comfortably be theirs to use, in their
Own homes, and fashioned just as they determine.
I've needed, first, to tell you of these hopes,
To show the background for my views about
The invitation you have all received
To meet the Rosicrucian brotherhood.
When souls begin at last to find themselves
And to unfold their full potential, then
May impulses be blessed and come to good
That link us with realities of spirit.
If you would see this rightly, understand
The open gesture of the Rosicrucians
Is wholly in accord with many other
Signs we see. The spirit-brothers wish

To freely share their gifts with all, because
These are what everyone, in truth, requires.

FELIX BALDE:

These words we've heard are spoken by a man
Who has enriched our time with mighty gifts
Within the world of sense. Within this realm
There is no one to rival Dr Strader.
Myself, by travelling very different paths,
I've also found the true needs of the soul.
Perhaps, therefore, I too may be allowed
To speak. When I was young I always felt
That destiny itself was guiding me
To seek those treasures hidden deep within
Our being's inmost core. I felt that there
Was to be found the light of wisdom that
Could then illumine all our earthly goals.
By grace I learned to walk the mystic's path,
In solitude and quiet contemplation.

Upon such paths I saw how everything
That makes us masters of the realm of matter
Just leaves us blind and stumbling through darkness.
And all the knowledge gained by sense and reason
Is also but a guessing in the dark.
The way to reach the true and living light
Is only by the mystic paths. Not everyone
Can find these, though, as I did, without help.
Our scientific knowledge must remain
A soulless corpse as long as it rejects
The light that, since the genesis of earth,
Has shone within the truest Mysteries.
So if this Temple—on whose threshold light-
Filled roses wrap themselves in glory round
The sign of death—extends to you its hand:
Receive that hand with love into your own.

LOUISA FÜRCHTEGOTT:

Well thank you, sir. But if we have a sense

For our own dignity, we must rely
Upon our individual power of judgement
In seeking for the spirit and ourselves.
Don't blindly trust the leadership of others;
In doing so you'll lose your very self.
Even the light that shines as wisdom, deep
Within our inmost core, we'd like to feel—
Does not deserve our spirit's recognition
Unless it's possible to prove its truth.
For light can all too well be dangerous
If on no evidence we follow it.
For all too often what a person thinks
To be a vision of the grounds of worlds
Is nothing but the soul's projected wish.

FRIEDRICH GEIST:

We all should feel the need to understand
The mystics' spirit-path. It seems to me
We'll only find illusion not the truth,

If taking not one step upon their path
We think to know just what their vision is.
The mystic, though, they say, relates to truth
Like someone who will climb a mountain peak
Because they wish to see the heavenly view.
They wait till they have reached the top and do
Not try and tell themselves beforehand what
That vision is, to which their journey leads.

FERDINAND REINECKE:

It's utterly irrelevant right now
To ask how people should relate to truth.
I can assure you that this brotherhood
Has no desire to hear our views on this.
A quite particular event, you see,
So I have heard, has forced the brothers to
Invite us here. And the event is this:
Johannes, who I think you know
Was once a member of some spiritual group

With ‘mystic goals’. And he has now disguised,
In forms of knowledge everyone can trust,
The wisdom that ‘initiation’ brings.
Through this he’s now a most successful author—
Who’s loudly praised amidst the widest circles,
For writings which, beneath their cloak of logic,
Contain just wild, fanatic, mystic ramblings.
Now even many serious researchers
Extol the gospel that Johannes brings—
And thus his fame is spreading dangerously.
So what do the initiates make of that?
They’re terrified. If this goes on, the view
That all the secrets of initiation
Are theirs alone would be ridiculous.
They therefore try and take under their own
Protection all that’s happening through Johannes.
They want to make it seem they’ve always known
This gospel would be given to the world
To serve their work—that all of this was planned!
I tell you all—if at this gathering now,

When soon the brothers shall appear, they are
Successful in persuading us to join
Their cause—then they will publish to the world
That everything Johannes writes and says
Was given out by powers of destiny—
And thus, they hope, even just common sense
Will understand, or better still believe,
The world-importance of their brotherhood.

CASPAR STÜRMER:

He's absolutely right. It really is
Incredible this 'mystic school' can claim
It somehow guides humanity. It shows
How little they esteem the progress made
By healthy powers of judgement since it has
Been proved that nature and the soul can be
Explained in purely mechanistic terms.
To independent minds it's very sad,
To say the least, to see a mind as clear

As Dr Strader's fall for this delusion.
Someone who's mastered mechanistic forces,
Like him, should know that true psychology
Must firmly do away with mysticism.
The pseudo-science put out by Johannes
Should warn a man like Strader that even
The sharpest minds, if they make this mistake,
Will soon be chasing wildest fantasies.
Johannes, if he'd disciplined himself
For his creative work, by thinking that's
In tune with nature, with his gifts could well
Have come to real fruits of knowledge. But
Instead he sought the mystic ways of art,
A route to catastrophic error. Well,
This spirit-brotherhood knew instantly
How they could make this error serve their goals.
They hope they'll gain great praise and recognition—
And will do if you all are gullible—
For it will seem Johannes now has proved
Their mystic knowledge, which is but a dream.

GEORG WAHRMUND:

That anyone can utter words like these,
So painful for the listener, clearly shows
How still today the insight we can gain
When we behold the course of spiritual life
Has barely yet begun to be evolved.
Look back into the very earliest days
Before that science, which has its heyday now,
Was even present as a seed, and try
And understand what lived in human souls.
It will be plain for you that in this hour
This brotherhood will carry out a deed
The wise plans of the world have long foreseen.
This moment has been waiting. It could not
Occur till that great work had been accomplished
Johannes finally achieved. Completely new
Will be the way the spirit-light may shine
In him—illuminating the human soul.

This light already shone in everything
That people have created on the earth.
But where did this light have its source? This light
That shone in human souls unconsciously?
The signs all point towards that mystic wisdom
That had its home within the Mysteries
Before humanity was led by reason.
The spirit-brotherhood that's called us here
Wishes to let that mystic light now shine
Upon the work that bravely seeks to climb
From human thinking to true spirit-knowledge.
And we, who by some grace have been allowed
Within this sacred place at this great hour
Shall be the first, as non-initiates,
To see the spark of heavenly light leap forth
From heights of spirit to the depths of soul.

MARIA KÜHNE:

Johannes has no need of the support

Or blessing given by the Rosicrucians.
For in a serious, scientific way
He has described the journey of the soul
Through many lifetimes and through spirit-realms.
And through this deed that lofty, radiant light
To which the mystic temples claim to lead
Now stands revealed even to people who
Have never yet approached such temples' thresholds.
Johannes well deserves the recognition
That he's received in such abundance, for
He's found the way to give to thinking freedom,
Which mystery schools have long sought to deny.

HERMINE HAUSER:

And so the Rosicrucians in the future
Will only live in people's memories.
The very thing that they're announcing now,
When it becomes aware of its own power,
Will undermine the ground the temple stands on.

They boldly seek to join in future what
Lives in the Mysteries with science and reason.
What could be more ironic? He to whom
They now open their doors so willingly—
Johannes—in the future will be seen
As he who brought about the temple's doom.

STRADER:

I was severely criticized for saying
That if we see things rightly we will wish
To help, together with this brotherhood,
Take further what Johannes has achieved.
One stormy gentleman found this view 'sad
To say the least'—for surely I should know,
He said, the dangers of such mysticism
To any genuine knowledge and research.
The strange thing is, though, that I always felt
I understand the best that spiritual life
When utterly absorbed and focussed on the power

Connecting me with mechanisms of
My own creation. Thus the way that I
Related to my work and my inventions
Revealed to me what lives in mystery centres.
I'd often think while I was working: What,
I wonder, would I be to someone, if
They only tried to know about me how
Those forces work I placed in these machines?
And what, by contrast, am I to a soul
To whom I lovingly am able to reveal
My inmost self? I'm very grateful to
Such thoughts, which opened up the door to that
Which truly lives within the mystics' teachings.
Through this I know, though uninitiated,
That in the Mysteries the souls of gods
May lovingly encounter human souls.

KATHARINA RATSAM:

The words that Dr Strader has just spoken

Of the life within the Mysteries
Resound, I hope, even to those of us
Who have not neared before the temple-thresholds
That only an initiate can cross,
But are not wholly strangers to their teachings.
It isn't hard to see why, in the past,
Our ancestors perceived the mystics as
The enemies of true belief and light.
They had no chance to even intimate
What could be hidden so mysteriously
Within the temple walls. But things have changed.
No longer do the mystics hide their light.
They share quite openly what can be known
To non-initiates. And many souls
Who have received this light and felt it quicken
Have felt, through this, the forces of their souls,
That had been slumbering unconsciously,
Now suddenly awake to life within them.

Three knocks are heard.

FELIX BALDE:

They're here! The spirit-masters of this place.
Or will be very soon. Then all of us
May hear the words they say. But only those
Who are entirely free from prejudice
Will understand them truly and recognize
Their light. The living power of the initiates
Will show its strength to hearts and wills that are
Prepared to sacrifice illusion
When they can sense the shining light of truth.
This power, though, is quite without effect
When wills are firmly set in their illusion
And have already slain the sense for truth.

FERDINAND REINECKE:

Such words are valid, when a person wants
Through self-reflection on what lives within

Their inner world to get to know themselves.
However, when this mystic group appears
It would be better to remember the
Reliable reports that history
Has handed down about such 'brotherhoods'.
They show that many people let themselves
Be lured into the 'mystic temples' when
They learned, through occult-sounding words, that they
Would rise within these temples, step by step,
From lower grades of wisdom to the higher,
And reach at last the vision of the spirit.
What happened to such people? Well, they tell
That first they had to look at certain signs
And symbols and to think about their meaning.
They hoped that later, in the higher grades,
The hidden wisdom in these signs would be
Unveiled to them. But when they got there, what
They found was that the 'spiritual masters' knew,
In fact, very little about these signs,
And offered only trivialities

About the meaning of the world and life.

And those who weren't befuddled by these words,

Or duped, or captured by their vanity,

Could see right through it—and would walk away.

It might be good, therefore, I think, right now,

If we're prepared to hear not only fine

And elevating words, but also, maybe,

One or two historical reports.

Again, three knocks are heard.

The Grand Master of the mystic brotherhood, Hilarius Gottgetreu, enters. Behind him follow Magnus Bellicosus, the second Preceptor; Albert Torquatus, the first Master of Ceremonies; and Friedrich Trautmann, the second Master of Ceremonies. The people already gathered divide and group themselves on either side of the room.

FRIEDRICH TRAUTMANN:

Dear friends, you all are very welcome here.

This is a precious moment, both for you

And for ourselves—and bridges a divide

That has not ever yet been crossed. You stand
Before our temple's ancient sacred portal
And will, we hope, from now on join your ways with ours.
No casual whim has called you. Signs that our
Highest masters could behold within
The wisely guided scheme of earthly life
Demanded that this call should be sent out.
It has been known that in our times the wise
And holy service of the Mysteries
Should join with general human understanding.
But what the signs revealed to us was this:
Before this could occur, someone must
Appear who would transform the knowledge based
On reason and the senses, so that it
Could truly apprehend the spirit-worlds.
This has happened! Johannes has been able
To give the science of our day a work,
That offers proofs, in its own language, for
Realities of spirit which, before,
Could not be found, except on mystic paths

And in the temples of initiation.
This work must now become the solid band
Uniting you with us in spirit-life.
You will be able to experience,
Through this work, the strong foundations of
Our teachings. Through this you'll acquire the strength
To then receive, with confidence, the knowledge
One can only gain on mystic paths.
A life, dear friends, could beautifully unfold,
That brings together general understanding
With all that lies within the Mysteries.

MAGNUS BELLICOSUS:

Our brother has described how hidden signs
Revealed to us the need to call you here
Before this threshold. Our master will enlarge
More deeply on the meaning of this call.
The task that falls to me is now to tell
You more of that great man whose work has made

This moment possible. Johannes was
A painter, utterly devoted to
His art, before he felt the spirit-call
To turn himself to science. As an artist
He only had developed his unique
Extraordinary gifts when he had met
With groups committed to true mysticism.
They led him to that high master, who
Could set him on the path of spirit-vision,
In accordance with the ways of wisdom.
And then he painted—borne into the heights
Of spirit, and experiencing himself
Amidst the powers of world-creation—paintings
That could breathe and work like living beings.
This might have led another artist to strive,
Remaining in their own particular field,
For all the highest goals they could attain.
But for Johannes, this was but the spur
That urged him on to seek for how to use
The faculties he had acquired, so that

They best could serve humanity.
And it was clear to him, that only then
Could spiritual knowledge receive a true foundation,
If science's use of sense and intellect
Could, with the help of the artistic spirit,
Be freed from rigid forms, and also strengthened
Inwardly, and thus experience
The being of the world. Johannes's
Artistic creativity, that he
Could easily have used to serve himself,
He sacrificed, quite willingly, to serve
The greater human spirit. Recognize,
Dear friends, the being of this man—
And you will understand the call we sent, and will
No longer hesitate to follow it.

HILARY:

In the name of that great Spirit, who
Reveals himself to souls within this sacred

Place, we now appear to all of you,
Who until now were not allowed to hear
The words that here sound out their mysteries.
The powers who guide the hidden goals of Earth
Could not, in primal days of old, reveal
Themselves in light to everyone. For just
As only gradually, with children, must
The forces ripen and grow strong, that later
Lead to knowledge, so did humankind,
Itself, need slowly to unfold its powers.
The stirrings of the soul at first were dull,
Which later should prove worthy to behold
The spirit-light that shines in higher worlds.
But at the dawn of life on earth, there were
Sent down, to wisely guide humanity,
Exalted spirit-beings from higher realms.
They brought to birth, within the Mysteries,
The spirit-forces which in secret streamed
Through people's souls, who were quite unaware
Of their exalted leaders. Later, though,

These masters chose, from human beings themselves,
Disciples, who through lives of trial and harsh
Renunciation, proved themselves mature
Enough to be initiated in
The sacred teachings of the Mysteries.
And later on, when these disciples of
The first, original masters showed that they
Were worthy now to guard this sacred treasure,
Their wise, exalted masters made their way
Back to their true and distant spirit-homes.
Thereafter the disciples of the gods
Themselves selected people to succeed
Them in their work. And so it carried on
For generations numberless to us.
Even today, all genuine mystic schools
Descend directly from that primal one,
Which stems from higher spirits. We, who serve
Here, humbly carry on that ancient lineage.
We'd never speak of our deserving, just
Of grace bestowed by higher spiritual powers,

Who choose weak human beings as their emissaries,
And who entrust to them those sacred treasures,
Which can set free the spirit-light within
The soul. We open up to you, today,
These treasures, friends. The signs are most auspicious;
Within the cosmic plan they now reveal
Themselves, quite clearly, to the spirit-eye.

FERDINAND REINECKE:

The reasons that you bring, you say, are found
In far-off cosmic worlds; reasons that
Are meant to prove that we should join with you,
And thus enable the great work of Johannes
To have its full effect for the first time.
However beautiful your words may sound,
They cannot conquer the opinion,
In simple hearts, that if this work indeed
Contains what every human soul requires,
Then it will prove itself by its own power.

Its great significance is said to be
That in it nothing mystical, but science
Itself, supports the truths of spiritual science.
Excuse my asking, but, if this is so,
What can be gained if praise bestowed upon

It by the mystics guarantee its full
Success, and not its own inherent worth?

ALBERT TORQUATUS:

That science that Johannes has, through all
His noble powers of reasoning, unveiled
Before the world, will neither gain nor lose
From our recognition, or from yours.
But through it people then may find the path
On which they can approach true mystic knowledge.
This science will have done but half its work
If it becomes an end and not a path.
It now is up to you to understand

The time has come, the moment has arrived,
For reason and the mystic paths to join.
This deed could quite transform the modern world,
Uplifting it to previously unknown heights,
If carried out at this auspicious hour.

Curtain.

* This was added here in an earlier stage direction: 'Above it is the Rosy Cross. On each side of the door two pictures which represent, beginning from stage-right, the prophet Elijah, John the Baptist, Raphael, the poet Novalis.' (Included in Harry Collison's translation of *Four Mystery Plays*, Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1920.)

SCENE TWO

The same room as in the previous scene. Those who had been assembled there originally have left. There are present: Hilarius Gottgetreu, the Grand Master [known as Hilary]; Magnus Bellicosus, the second Preceptor; Albert Torquatus, the first Master of Ceremonies; Friedrich Trautmann, the second Master of Ceremonies; Maria; Johannes Thomasius; of those assembled at the beginning there remain only: Felix Balde, Dr Strader.

HILARY:

My son, you are most welcome. Now the work
You have accomplished must receive the seal
Of age-old sacred knowledge—and, within
This hallowed place, the Rosy Cross bestow
Upon it all its sacred power of blessing.
What you have brought the world, we now shall offer
To the spirit, making it bear fruit,
Within those worlds where human power grows ripe,
To serve the evolution of the world.

MAGNUS BELLICOSUS:

To give your great work to the world, you've needed

Now, for years, to keep apart from much

That prior to that was dearest to your soul.

You had a spirit-teacher by your side.

So that your soul could fully bring to birth

In you your individual powers, he left you.

You also had a true companion—your

Dear friend. She also left you—for you had

To find what can be found when people only

Follow powers of soul within themselves.

You've overcome this trial, courageously.

What once was taken from you, for your good,

Will for your good be given you anew.

See! Your friend is here! As we have wished:

It's she who will receive you in this temple.

You'll also greet your teacher very soon.

And friends who stand upon the threshold of

Our temple join with us in the desire

To hail your presence here as knowledge-bringer.

FELIX BALDE (To Johannes):

Mysticism, through your deed—which always
Sought the spirit-light on paths within—
May now be opened up to science too,
Which only likes to honour sense-existence.

STRADER (To Johannes):

For souls who truly strive for spirit-knowledge—
Though life still keeps them firmly linked to matter—
For these souls, too, you opened up the paths
That now can lead them, rightly, to the light.

JOHANNES:

Exalted master and most noble sirs—

You all believe you see the man before you
Who has been able, through his inner trials
And strength of spirit to create a work
That's worthy of your praise and to be offered
Your protection. He, you think, will be
The one to reconcile, successfully,
The science of today with age-old, sacred
Mysticism. And if anything,
Believe me, other than the voice of my
Own soul, could give me faith in what I've done,
Then it would be your words.

TRAUTMANN:

Our master's words
You need not doubt, express but what you feel
In your own soul. Your inner voice, therefore,
Will find here all the faith and strength it needs.

JOHANNES:

Oh how I wish that it were so! That I
Was humbly standing here beseeching that
High favour—that the Temple might bestow
It's blessing on my work. I could believe
In this when I received your word, which made
It known you wished to give my work protection,
And wished to let me step across this threshold,
Which only an initiate can cross.
But on the way, which led me to this place,
A world was opened up to me to which
It is impossible you wished to lead me.
In all his greatness, Ahriman stood there
Before me. Then I learned that he it is
Who fully understands the occult laws
That guide the world. Whatever people think
They know about him counts for nothing. Only
When one's seen him in the spirit can
One understand him. Only Ahriman
Could make me see and feel the horrifying

Truth of my creation. I could see,
Through him, how all the praise of scientists
And critics fails to recognize that the
Creation does not lead a separate life
From its creator. Thus my work will always
Stay connected to me. Thus, although
This work is good and through itself may lead
To good, it's possible that I, from spirit-
Realms, may change what I've achieved to evil.
From spirit-lands I'll have to pour
My influence into what shows itself
As consequence of deeds of mine on earth.
And if I let stream evil from the spirit-
Worlds into these consequences, then
What's true will cause more harm than error could.
Nor is there any doubt I will in future
Turn to evil all that follows from
My deed. For Ahriman has clearly shown
That what ensues will all belong to him.
When I was hard at work, enthused, enraptured,

Because it led so certainly from step
To step upon the path of truth, I cared
For nothing but the part of me engaged
In research. All the rest of me was left
Untended. Wild desires and impulses
Could grow inside me. What were once just seeds,
When left alone, ran rampant, led their own
Unfettered life and grew to full-blown fruits.
I thought myself in highest spirit-worlds;
But lived in fact in deepest darkness of
The soul. And Ahriman has shown to me,
With brutal clarity, the power of those
Desires and drives—that in the future they'll
Become my very being. Thus I know
What influence I'll wield. Before my book
I'd turned devotedly to Lucifer,
Whose realm I wished to know and understand.
But only now I see what I could not,
When wholly given up to my creation:
That Lucifer surrounded all I thought

In pictures filled with beauty—yet was all
The time creating wild desires.
Though dormant Now, they will in future rule my being.

TRAUTMANN:

How can someone so far evolved as you
Know all of this so clearly, and yet still
Believe he cannot free himself from evil?
And yet you see what threatens you with ruin...
Destroy it then! Courageously both save
Yourself and all that follows from your deed.
The spirit-pupil must, unflinchingly,
Eradicate what hinders his ascent.

JOHANNES:

I see you're ignorant of higher laws.
What you demand, I could fulfil it now.
And everything you say to me I too

Could tell myself. But karma rules. And what
Today it lets me do, tomorrow it
Will not allow. Yes—things will come to pass
That bring about a darkening of my spirit.
This can't be helped. I've told you what will be.
And everything in earth or heaven that
Could bring my work an evil consequence
I'll seize on greedily and seek to make
It part of human culture. Ahriman
I then will have to love and give him gladly
All that I've achieved in earthly life.

Pause, during which Johannes ponders deeply.

If all of this concerned myself alone,
I'd keep it in the quietness of my soul.
I would await, in full tranquillity,
What lies ahead for me, upon my path.
But it concerns your brotherhood as badly.
For karma, gradually, will balance out

The evil consequences of my work—
For me and other human souls as well.
The fact that you, though, made so grave an error
Is much more serious for earthly life;
You are the leaders of this life and should
Know how to read within the spirit-worlds,
And therefore you should not have failed to see
This work should have been carried out by someone
Else, and not by me. You should have known
It now must be forgotten—until later
One would come who'd build it up anew—
Who'd have a different influence on their work.
Your judgement—and your lack of it—has stripped
This brotherhood completely of its right
To stand as leader of this sacred work.
Because my vision shows me this about you,
I have appeared today upon your threshold,
For otherwise I'd never have come near it,
Now that I know this work, that's capable
Of good and harm, can take no blessing here.

HILARY:

Dear brothers, friends, what here has been begun

Cannot be taken further at this time.

We must remove ourselves—and go to where

The spirit can make clear to us its will.

Hilary leaves the hall, with Bellicosus, Torquatus and Trautmann. Strader and Felix also leave. Only Johannes and Maria remain where they were. The hall darkens. After a brief pause, the three spirit-figures of Philia, Astrid and Luna appear in a cloud of light, and group themselves in such a way that at first they conceal Maria. What follows is the spiritual experience of Johannes.

PHILIA:

The soul, it is thirsting

To drink of the light

That streams from those worlds

Which an all-caring will

Keeps veiled and unseen.

The spirit is trying
With longing, to listen
To divine conversations,
Which benevolent wisdom
Conceals from the heart.
Thinking that seeks
In regions of soul,
Where far from the senses
The hidden holds sway,
Is threatened with peril.

ASTRID:

The souls are expanding
That follow the light
And reach into worlds
Which open to those
With the courage to see.
The spirit is striving
To blessedly live

In divine, godly regions
Which radiant wisdom
Proclaims to the seers.
The hidden, it beckons
To those boldly seeking
The fields high above
Where far from one's thinking
Life's mysteries hide.

LUNA:

The soul, it is ripening
And fashioning vision,
That springs from those forces
A will that is fearless
Enkindles within us.
From primal foundations
The magical spirits
Gain power of redemption,
Concealed from the senses

By barriers of earth.
And souls that are seeking,
Are following traces
To find those bright doorways
That gods keep locked tight
To a will gone astray.

VOICE OF CONSCIENCE (invisible):

Your thoughts are wavering, trembling
On the brink of being's abyss.
All that used to support them you have lost.
And what once would illumine them like the sun
Is blotted out for you.
You go astray in cosmic depths
Which people drunk with longing,
Wish to conquer.
You shudder, facing grounds of worlds,
Where all that can give comfort to the soul
Must be abandoned.

The last words pass over immediately into the following words of Maria, who is still concealed by the spirit-figures and is invisible. She speaks at first in a spirit-like voice, but inwardly.

MARIA:

Incline your soul, therefore,
Towards the powers of love,
Which once could permeate your hope
With living warmth,
Which once could shine into your will
Their spirit-light.
Rescue out of loneliness
The seeking forces of your heart—
And feel the nearness of your friend
Amidst the darknesses you strive through.

The spirit-figures and the cloud of light disappear. Maria becomes visible at the place where she had been previously. The experience from now on returns to the physical plane.

JOHANNES (out of deep contemplation):

Where have I been? The forces of my soul
Unveiled to me my whirling inner chaos;
The conscience of the world revealed to me
What I have lost; there sounded then, amidst
The darkness, blessing me, the voice of love.

MARIA:

Johannes, the companion of your soul
May once again be present at your side;
And she may follow you to depths of worlds,
Where souls attain the feeling of the gods,
Through shattering inner victories that destroy,
And boldly from destruction win back being.
And through the endless empty fields of ice
She's gained the right to lead her friend, where he'll
Attain that light, which spirits must create
When darknesses may lame the powers of life.

My friend, you stand upon that threshold
Where everything one has achieved
One has to lose. You often gained a glimpse
Of spirit-worlds, and drew from this the strength
Which made you capable of your creation;
And this creation now seems lost to you.
Don't demand that this be otherwise.
To do so would just rob from you all strength
To find your further way into the spirit.
Whether you walk in paths of truth or error
You'll always hold the doorway open,
Through which your soul may take its rightful steps,
If you can learn to bear courageously
Necessities that spring from spirit-realms.
This is the law of spirit-pupilship.
As long as you can entertain the wish
That what has happened to you might be
Different, you'll lack the strength that's needed
To uphold yourself in spirit-worlds.
That you have lost what has been won by you

Enables you to know how rightly to
Transform your spirit-path in future.
That understanding you have always used
To judge your actions, from this moment on
You can no longer call on, if indeed
In utter earnestness you know it lost.
Your being, therefore, must become completely
Silent—and await in silence what
The spirit brings; and only be your guide
Again, when you have won yourself anew.
Often you have met the solemn Guardian
Who keeps stern watch upon the threshold,
Separating worlds of sense from spirit-being;
But never yet have you gone past him.
Always at his gaze did you turn back
And only from the outside saw that world.
You have not been within that spirit-world
Spread out around you; now, though, be prepared
For all that will reveal itself to you,
When you are not just able to approach,

But also, by my side, to cross the threshold.

Curtain.

SCENE THREE

In Lucifer's realm. A space not bound by artificial walls, but by plant-like and animal-like forms and by other strange, fantastical forms. To the left is the throne of Lucifer. There are present, to begin with, the soul of Capesius and Maria.*

MARIA:

You, who's known to me, within the realm
Of sense-existence, as Capesius
Why here, in Lucifer's domain, are you
The being I meet first? There's danger just
To breathe the air the regent spirit breathes here.

CAPESIUS:

Don't speak to me about Capesius.
Who once, upon the earth, struggled through
A life he long since saw but as a dream.

He fixed his mind on what took place within
The stream of time. He thought he would discover,
Thus, the forces that give rise to human
Cultural life, and all that flows from it.
His soul attempted to retain all that
It knew about these forces. But from this
Realm here, it's possible to view the knowledge
He was cultivating then. He thought
He grasped true images, that could have opened
Up realities; but seen from here
It is quite clear they are but idle dreams
That spirits weave into weak souls on earth.
For people cannot bear reality.
What fear and dire confusion they would feel
If they were able to experience
How spirits guide the stream of all existence.

MARIA:

You speak as I have only heard those speak

Who never yet were incarnate on earth.
Such beings say that earth-life has no meaning—
And matters little in the universe,
But those belonging to the realm of earth
Who know they owe it thanks for their best forces,
Must hold a very different opinion.
They value many threads of destiny
That join the earthly and the cosmic worlds.
Even Lucifer, so powerful here,
Keeps his gaze quite fixed upon the earth,
And seeks to steer all human deeds so that
His spirit then may pluck their ripened fruits.
He knows that if he found no spoils upon
The earth, he soon would fall to darkness. So
His destiny depends on it as well.
It's like this too for other cosmic beings.
And when, in image, we behold the goals
That Lucifer is striving for, and then
Compare these with the goals of powers to whom
He stands in opposition—we may know

That Lucifer can best be thwarted through
The victories we gain over ourselves.

CAPESIUS:

The person who converses with you here
Finds those times quite dreadful when he's forced
To wrap his body round him, which still lives,
And which has kept its earthly form, although
The spirit can no longer master it.
At times like these the spirit feels the worlds
That he most highly treasures are collapsing.
It seems a narrow cruel prison shuts
Him in, whose bars look out on nothingness.
All memory of his life is blotted out.
He often feels the people round about him
But cannot understand the things they say.
He grasps but certain words, which rise above
Their speech, and these make him remember all
The beauty he may see in spirit-worlds.

He is and isn't then within his body.
To see his life in it, from here, brings fear.
And all that he can do is crave the moment
Freeing him completely from that body.

MARIA:

The body that belongs to souls on earth,
Bears the means, through images sublime,
To recreate, within itself, divine beauty.
These images, though their existence
In the soul appears but shadow-like,
Are nonetheless the seeds, which as the world
Evolves, must one day blossom and bear fruit.
And we only perceive the true sense of
Our lives of soul, when in our bodies there
Is felt the strength that leads towards the real 'I'.

CAPESIUS:

Oh do not speak this word, before the being
Who now appears to you in spirit-realms,
And who on earth lives as Capesius.
When that word sounds, that burns him in this place
Like fire, he'd like to flee.

MARIA:

So do you hate
The very thing that gives humanity
True being? If this word causes you such fear
How can you live within this realm? For nobody
Could even reach this place who can't
Experience the being of this word.

CAPESIUS:

The one before you here has often stood
In front of Lucifer, who rules this realm.
And Lucifer could then reveal to him

That human souls, who can use consciously
The strength arising from their earthly bodies,
Only bring great harm into the kingdom
That obeys his will—whereas those souls
Who live quite powerlessly within their bodies,
And yet have spirit-sight—these merely learn
In Lucifer's domain and cannot harm it.

MARIA:

I know that one can only learn through vision
In this spirit-realm and not through words.
What vision has revealed to me just now
Through your appearing here the way you have,
Will prove a strong step forward for my soul
Upon its path of spirit-pupilship.

CAPESIUS:

But one receives not only teachings in

This place. One also faces duties here.
You have conversed here with a being, whose name
Whilst in his body is Capesius.
The spirit-glimpses you have had into
Your previous lives on earth reveal that through
Your karma you are much in debt to him;
You therefore must approach Lord Lucifer
And ask the radiant bearer of the light
Permission to protect Capesius
On earth. You'll know, in your great wisdom,
What you can do for him, so that he's led
To you again, in later life on earth,
And then, through you, the debt may be erased.

MARIA:

Should I then let this duty, which I deem
So sacred, be fulfilled through Lucifer?

CAPESIUS:

You will, of course, wish to fulfil this duty.

And only Lucifer can help you do so.

But look—he's here himself—the Lord of Light.

Capesius leaves. Lucifer appears and, during the course of his speech, Benedictus.

LUCIFER:

Maria, you desire before my throne

To win self-knowledge for that human soul

To whom you stand so near in earthly life.

But only through his gazing on my being

Will he, in truth, gain knowledge of himself.

He does not need your help to come to this.

How could you possibly believe that I

Would grant what you are seeking for your friend?

You still name Benedictus as your teacher.

He is my great opponent on the earth,

Who to my enemies devotes his strength.
He has already snatched from me too much.
Johannes, though, has separated from him—
And has made me, instead, his guide and teacher.
Because he lacks still full clairvoyant vision,
He cannot yet behold my truest being;
Later, though, through me, he will achieve this—
And when he does—he will be wholly mine.
But you I order not to speak a word
In any way referring to Johannes,
As long as you remain before my throne.
A single word like this would burn me here.
For words are deeds within this place, and from
Them, further deeds will have to follow.
But what would have to follow from your words—
That may not be!

BENEDICTUS:

You have to hear her. For

Where someone's words possess the power of deeds
This is the consequence of former deeds.
The deeds already have been done, that force
You, Lucifer, to now obey her will.
Maria, you'll know, is my true spirit-pupil—
Whom I could lead up to that point where she
Could recognize her highest spirit-duty—
Which she will carry out unswervingly.
By carrying out this duty, she will form,
Within Johannes, healing forces, which
Will have the power to free him from your realm.
Maria bears a sacred, solemn vow
Within her, which, in the evolving world,
Can quicken into life such healing forces.
You soon will even hear this vow in words;
But if, through strength of thought, you'd dim, for once,
Your radiant body of light, which gives
You all your magic power to oppose
And gain control of every form of selfhood,
You'll surely hear this vow's resplendent healing.

This will become so strong in future, that
Its force of love will powerfully draw
Johannes into its own realm.

MARIA:

Johannes will appear within this place.
But not just in that customary form
That souls consider as their own.
There will appear as well that other being
That humans bear within them, unobserved—
That stronger, truer likeness of themselves.
Johannes, if he only recognized
You, as he knows you in his earthly form,
Would not gain everything he needs to take
His rightful steps upon his path of soul.
So you must grant unto his stronger likeness—
That powerful living image of himself—
What he will need upon those spirit-paths
On which I'll have to lead him in the future.

LUCIFER:

Johannes, then, must now appear to me?

I feel indeed the power that you wield.

It has opposed me since the world began.

Johannes and his etheric likeness—or Double—appear from opposite sides.

JOHANNES:

I face you once again, my likeness, mirror-

Image. Always you've appeared before

So that I've had to look with horror on

Myself. I understand you still but little.

And yet I know it's you that guides my soul.

You are the block and hindrance to my freedom.

You are the reason too I cannot grasp

What in reality I am. I need

To hear you speak in front of Lucifer

To see what I must still achieve in future.

THE DOUBLE:

It's true that many times already I've
Appeared before Johannes, bringing him
To know himself. I only worked, though, in
His silent depths, still hidden, even now,
From what he knows. But then, some time ago,
My whole existence changed, transformed, within him.
Maria, years before, stood by his side—
He felt himself at one with her, in spirit;
I showed to him his soul in fact was led
By unacknowledged passion and desire.
He understood this just as accusation.
But you, exalted bearer of the light,
Showed sensuality the way to place
Itself in service of the spirit. From
Maria Johannes had to separate.
Since then he sought the discipline of thought,

Which has the power to purge and heal the soul.
And all that streamed, like light, from his pure thinking,
Poured also into me. I was transformed.
His purity I feel in me as well.
He has no cause to fear me if he now
Feels drawn towards Maria. But, he's still
Held bound within your kingdom. Lucifer,
Release him! In this hour I call him back.
He's able to experience my being
And you will not determine what this means.
He needs me now, so that his thinking's joined
By warmth of soul and strength of heart, which now
May truly come to birth within him. Through me
He must win back his full humanity.

LUCIFER:

Your striving's good. But in the way you wish—
Impossible! If I would give you to
Johannes in that form which years ago

You showed to him, he very soon would offer
All his love to thought and pale, cold knowledge;
The warm and personal self in him would seem
Unfeeling, void and as if it were dead.
My powers can never serve to make him thus.
Experiencing me he shall discover
Personality and life of self.
You I now must change, transform, for his
Own good, and so he now develops rightly.
For ages now I have prepared what will
Appear in you so clearly. You will show
Yourself in future as a different being.
Johannes will no longer love Maria
As in past ages he has done. But love
He will, with all the overpowering strength
Of passion he experienced for her.

BENEDICTUS:

You wish to change the work of beauty that

We have achieved, and make it serve your ends.
You once could bind Johannes to you, through
His strength of heart; but now you see you'll need
To bind him even tighter in your chains,
If you're to keep his being as your own.
Johannes seeks his rightful path—
To let his heart entirely obey his spirit.
If he succeeds, the deed of knowledge that
He has accomplished on the earth, would have,
In future, to be given to those powers
That you have fought against since earth began.
If you succeed, through cunning, to transform
The love Johannes felt towards Maria,
Into the passion that your aims require,
Then he indeed, from out the spirit-worlds,
Will change the good he could achieve to evil.

MARIA:

Then things can still be saved? And it is not

Decreed Johannes must succumb unto
Those powers wishing to usurp his deed?

BENEDICTUS:

If all the forces stay as they have been
Till now, then, yes, he would succumb. But if
At the propitious moment, you allow
Your vow to take effect within your soul,
Then this will greatly change things in the future.

LUCIFER:

Then work, compelling powers
And elemental spirits, feel
The power of your master.
Make straight the path
Along which can be led
Away from bounds of earth
Into bright Lucifer's domain

All that my wishes crave

And that must be obedient to my will.

THEODORA (appears):

Who calls me here? This realm is strange to me.

I know love only when the worlds of gods

Reveal themselves with love within my soul—

When warmth, which weaves its blessing in my heart,

Enables me to speak true spirit-words.

JOHANNES'S DOUBLE:

I feel how you transform my whole existence.

You have appeared and I am one who can

Do nothing now unless you fill my being.

Through me Johannes will belong to you.

From now on he will turn to you that love,

That once sprang from his heart towards Maria,

So tremblingly and with such glowing fire within.

He saw you years ago but did not feel,

Back then, how deep within his soul there stirred

In him, unconsciously, the warmth of love.
This now will surge to life within him, and
Completely fill his being with that power
That makes him turn his thoughts to you alone.

BENEDICTUS:

The rightful moment fast approaches us.
Lucifer has now let loose his strongest
Power. Maria, your inner path of soul,
With all its might, must stand against him now.

MARIA:

You, who bear that light that always wants
To make love only serve one's self alone,
When earth began, you gave weak humans knowledge,
When they had first been destined by the gods,
Without their own self-will, unconsciously
To follow what the spirit willed. Since then

Each human soul has been the stage on which
You've never ceased to battle with the gods.
Already, though, the times are nearing, which
Must bring defeat to you and to your realm.
A bold, courageous thinker has now found
The way to free all knowledge from your gifts,
So that it can devote itself instead
To all the truest gods of humankind.
Because Johannes, by what he has done,
Has freed that fruit of knowledge from your grasp,
Through which you tempted humankind, you wish
To tempt him now, through love, which in his plan
Of destiny, he shouldn't ever feel
For Theodora. You desire, with love,
To fight with wisdom; just as once, with wisdom,
You sought to fight with love. But know that in
The heart, with which Maria now confronts
You, lives the strength, acquired by her spirit-
Pupilship, to always keep self-love
Away from knowledge. Never will I feel

From this time forth, that bliss that people feel
When thoughts grow ripe. My heart's prepared
To serve in sacrifice—through which my spirit
Will only ever think in such a way
That offers to the gods the fruits of knowledge.
Knowledge will become for me an act
Of service. What I shall achieve through this
Will powerfully stream into Johannes.
And when within his heart in future he
Will often hear your words: 'The human being
Can only find in love what makes him strong',
His heart itself will powerfully reply:
You offered human beings, when earth began,
The fruits of wisdom—which they gladly ate. The fruits of love, though—
they must only let
Themselves receive—when offered by the gods.

LUCIFER:

Then I will fight!

Brief darkness.

BENEDICTUS:

And fighting serve the gods!

Thunder.

Curtain.

* The following stage direction, from Harry Collison's translation, adds regarding the scenery for Scene Three in the productions that Rudolf Steiner directed: 'In the background are arranged three transparencies showing: the upper half of Raphael's 'Disputa' (stage left); Leonardo's 'Last Supper' (middle); and Raphael's 'School of Athens' (stage right). These are illuminated from the back of the stage whenever Maria or Benedictus challenges Lucifer. At other times they are invisible.'

Collison adds in his Commentary on Rudolf Steiner's Four Mystery Plays (Rudolf Steiner Publishing Co., 1949): 'In the original production of the play the statues: Laocöon, Venus de Milo and Michelangelo's Slave, were also on the stage'. (These would become invisible when Benedictus or Maria spoke.)

SCENE FOUR

A room whose main colour is rose-red. It belongs to the home of Strader and Theodora, his wife. From the way the furniture is arranged, one can see that Theodora and Strader carry on different kinds of work in this room that they share. On his desk there are models of machines; on hers things that have to do with mysticism. The two of them are in conversation, in which they contemplate, together, their seventh wedding anniversary.

STRADER:

It's seven years, to the day, that you
Became the dear companion of my life
And the source of light, illuminating
An existence, which, before, only
Darkness always threatened to approach.
I was a man so poor in spirit, when
You joined me by my side and gave me what
The world, till then, had kept away from me.
For many years I had been trying to
Discover, strictly scientifically,

Life's values and the purpose of existence.
But one day I was forced to recognize
That these attempts were all completely futile.
Through you I could perceive, quite clearly, how
The spirit seeks to show itself in someone,
And how it can reveal those things that had
Escaped my knowledge and my powers of thinking.
Upon that day I saw you in the group
Of people that was led by Benedictus
And I could listen to your revelation.
Then later, in Johannes, I could not
But recognize the strong effects of spirit-
Pupilship within a human soul.
What I experienced through all of this
Robbed me of my faith in science and reason
And yet could show me nothing at that time
That could have brought me any understanding.
I wanted nothing more to do with thinking,
I wanted just to spend my life in dullness;
My life seemed not worth living any more.

And then I lived a tortured, bleak existence
Until I met you for the second time.
And soon, this time, we both became close friends.

THEODORA:

I so well understand how on this day
Your memory can bring before your soul
So livingly the life of former times.
My heart—it also feels the need today
To gaze back to that time when we both met
And with such blessing joined our lives together.
That was the time I always felt that power
Strengthening, that made me able to
Receive true knowledge from the spirit-worlds.
And under Felix Balde's special guidance
This power could ripen in me to the height
At which it stood then, seven years ago.
Around that time I met Capesius
In Felix Balde's lonely woodland cottage.

After all his years of research, he
Had struggled through to spirit-pupilship.
He really wanted now to get to know
My kind of vision into spirit-worlds.
I'd meet him very often after that.
And in his house I then met you—and I
Could bring your suffering mind some healing.

STRADER:

And then my soul received true light, that for
So long had just been gazing into darkness.
I saw now what the spirit really is.
You let me hear and recognize so thoroughly
Your revelations from the spirit-worlds,
That all my doubts just vanished—disappeared.
The overwhelming way this worked on me
Was such that I, at first, could only see
In you the mediator of the spirit.
It needed longer till I recognized

That more than just my spirit listened to
The words unveiling to it its true home;
My heart as well was given to the speaker
And could not manage now without her nearness.

THEODORA:

Then you confided in me what you felt.
It was so very strange, the way you spoke.
It was as if it was impossible for you
To form a single thought that maybe all
The longing in your heart might be fulfilled.
That's how your words all sounded—asking but
A true friend of your soul for some advice.
You spoke about your needing help from me,
And also how, to face your troubled state,
You needed such great strengthening in soul.

STRADER:

That you, my spirit-messenger, could be
Ordained by destiny to be my wife,
Was very far away from all my thoughts
When, seeking help, I opened up to you.

THEODORA:

And then the words I could not help but utter—
Words the heart itself had set free from
The heart—that it could not be otherwise;
For hearts must often show our destiny.

STRADER:

And then—when there was uttered from your heart
Those words of destiny—great waves of life
Streamed throughout my soul, which at the time
I could not feel, which only later rose
In memory from deep within the soul
And then were felt as rays of healing light.

And I could fully know all I remembered,
Though I had not experienced it, for I
Was far, as yet, from apprehending spirit.
That was the first time I had ever known
The spirit shine directly in my soul.
That has not ever been repeated, yet
It filled me with such inner certainty
That brightly will illumine all my days.
And this led on to seven beautiful years.
And I have come to feel how even the
Mechanical technology I serve
Can let itself be fructified by souls
Who can relate directly to the spirit.
It was that spirit-power alone, you gave
In such abundance, that enabled me
To so perceive the interplay of forces,
That, like something given, suddenly
That creation stood before my spirit
From which, indeed, so much can now be hoped.
Within the light you shone, my soul could feel

Its forces growing into fullness, which
Would just have withered, had it lived alone.
The certainty in life that I had gained
Became so strong, I still remained myself
And upright when, so shatteringly, Johannes
Damned his own accomplishment in knowledge
Before the Rosicrucians, and pronounced
Against himself such harsh, condemning judgement,
In the very hour that could have brought
Him to the pinnacle of his whole life.
I still maintained my inner certainty
When the outer world appeared to show
To me an endless sea of contradictions.
And all of this I gained through you alone.
The revelations of the spirit I
Received from you, first brought me long-sought knowledge.
And when those revelations came no more
You still remained my source of strength and light.

THEODORA (as a broken sentence, in deep thought):

And then the revelations came no more...

STRADER:

It's this that's often been of grave concern
To me. I've wondered if, perhaps, you suffered
Deeply from your loss of seership,
But to spare me, never spoke of this;
And yet your equanimity revealed
You bore, quite calmly, all that life had brought.
It's only recently that you have changed;
The radiance of joy does not surround
You now; your eyes' soft glowing light is fading.

THEODORA:

That my spirit-revelations left me
Did not pain me. Destiny had changed
My path—and I accepted this quite calmly.

They have returned. This is my agony.

STRADER:

Theodora, now, for the first time, in all
These seven years, I cannot understand you.
Your vision of the spirit-worlds has always
Been for you a source of inner blessing.

THEODORA:

Quite different are the revelations now.
At first, just like before, I feel compelled
To dampen down completely my own thinking;
But whereas, previously, when I'd become
A silent, empty vessel, waiting, soon
There wove around my soul a gentle light,
And then the spirit-images appeared,
There now is born, instead, an unquiet feeling,
Of something, yes, unseen, and yet I know

This power I feel assails me from outside.
And through my inner world there floods such fear
I can't throw off—it takes control of me.
And all I want to do is flee that being—
Invisible and yet abhorrent, vile.
It moves towards me, overflowing with
Desire, so I must hate that revelation.

STRADER:

I cannot see how this is possible
With Theodora. Such experiences,
Normally, are seen but to reflect
What is at work in one's own soul. But your
Soul could not ever show itself like this.

THEODORA (painfully, slowly, in deep thought):

I know. I'm all too well aware of this.
And so, with all the strength my soul could muster,

I sank myself, devotedly, into
The world of spirits, and implored those beings
Who previously inclined to me so often,
To show me, through their grace, how I
Could find the causes of my suffering.

Broken words follow.

And there... it was... that shape of light... again... It formed... into the
image... of a man... I clearly saw... Johannes...

**STRADER (painfully, overcome by a sudden inrush of
feelings):**

What? Johannes...

The man in whom I always put my faith.

— — — — —

Pause, then in painful reflection.

When I now summon up before my soul...

The way that he opposed the brotherhood...

His words about himself and Ahriman...

Theodora sinks into her thoughts and gazes into emptiness, as if her spirit is completely absent.

O Theodora... now what do you see?

Curtain.

SCENE FIVE

A room in the woodland cottage which, in The Trial of the Soul, was seen as the Baldes' home. There are present: Felicia Balde, Felix Balde, Capesius, Strader.

MRS BALDE:

And so we may not feel again the radiant
Beauty of her being till we ourselves
Enter the world that has now taken her
Away from us before her time. A few
Short weeks ago we still experienced
So thankfully, the gentle mildness, which
So warmly breathed through every word she spoke.

FELIX:

My wife, Felicia and I, both loved

Her from our deepest, inmost soul.

We therefore understand your grief and sorrow.

STRADER:

Beloved Theodora, yes, she spoke

Of Frau Felicia and Father Felix

Even in the last hours of her life.

She also knew so intimately all

That life can bring you here from day to day.

I have to find my way then on my own.

She was the ground and meaning of my life.

All she gave can never die for me,

And yet . . . she is not here.

FELIX:

With you

We lovingly will send our thoughts towards

Her in the spirit-worlds and we will be
United with her once again in future.
And yet I have to say: it was a very
Great surprise to hear her life had ended.
For there was formed in me, over the years
A vision, which, at certain moments, quite
Unsought, will show me people's inner power
Of life. This vision, though, with her, misled me.
I really only ever could believe
That Theodora still for years, on earth,
Would give that love which has brought so much help
To many people, both in joy and sorrow.

STRADER:

It's very strange the way it all happened.
Her mood, through everything, since I have known her,
Was always one of perfect health and balance.
Only since she first became aware
That something, unknown, haunted her, desiring

To be near her, did a sense of gloom
Increasingly take hold of her,
And suffering then streamed throughout her being.
And one could see how what she battled with,
Within, consumed the forces of her body.
When through my worry I would weigh upon
Her, with the questions that I asked, she said
She felt quite at the mercy of those kind
Of thoughts, which rouse up fears and work like fire.
When, through powers of thought, she ventured to
Behold the cause of all her suffering,
Always to her spirit-eye appeared...
Johannes... who we both esteemed so highly.
Yet this impression always left her with
A powerful feeling, telling her quite clearly
That, from now on, she must fear Johannes.

CAPESIUS:

It is the stern decree of destiny

That Theodora and Johannes should
Not ever meet, within this life, in passion.
If one of them has feelings for the other
That are not grounded in the spirit alone,
They set themselves against the laws of worlds.
Johannes violates, within his heart,
The strict command of powers of destiny:
He should not direct to Theodora
Thoughts, within his soul, which cause her harm.
He feels, though, all that he should never feel.
And through this opposition, he is forming,
Even now, those forces, which, in future,
May deliver him to powers of darkness.
Theodora, driven by force, against
Her will to Lucifer, experienced
Unconsciously the Lord of Light then fill
Johannes full of sensual passion for her.
Theodora and Maria—to whom
Johannes is entrusted in the spirit—
Found themselves, within the selfsame moment,

In the realm so hostile to the gods.

It was intended that Johannes should

Be separated from Maria and through

False powers of love be bound to Lucifer.

What Theodora thus endured in soul

Became in her an all-consuming fire,

Which working onwards brought her sufferings.

STRADER:

Please tell me, Father Felix, what this means.

Capesius speaks so riddlingly of things

My soul cannot begin to understand

And yet still finds appalling, horrible.

FELIX:

Capesius, through those inner paths of soul

He felt himself compelled to walk upon,

Has gradually been driven ever further

Into his strange, unusual spirit-mood.
His spirit lives in higher worlds
Completely disregarding all those things
Which speak to people through their earthly senses.
He carries out as if by habit only
Everything he used to do in life.
He keeps on visiting his friends, and even
Spends long hours with them, although, while near
Them, he seems far away, within himself.
However, what he sees in spirit, this
Has always been correct, each time that I
Have tested it through my own soul research.
In this case too, therefore, I have to state
My own belief, that on his paths in spirit,
He has indeed received into his soul
The truth of Theodora's destiny.

FELICIA:

It is so very strange, he pays no heed

At all to conversations people
Have around him; and his soul, released
From its connection with the body, seems
As if it only gazed on spirit-worlds.
But certain words affect him nonetheless,
And draw him back from his great isolation,
And then he tells of things in spirit-realms
Which seem, somehow, connected to this world.
At other times, whatever one may say
In front of him, it seems one has said nothing.

STRADER:

But if he spoke the truth—how dreadful—monstrous!

Theodora's soul appears.

THEODORA'S SOUL:

Capesius has been permitted to

Gain knowledge of my being within the world
I now inhabit. Everything that he
Has spoken here is true. Johannes, though,
Despite all that has happened, must not be
Allowed to fall. Maria in her heart
Has lit the flame of sacrificial love;
And Theodora will, from spirit-heights,
Send blessing rays of strong and healing love.

She makes a gesture of blessing.

FELIX:

You must remain completely calm, dear Strader.
She wants to speak with you. I understand
The signs that she is giving us; so listen.

**THEODORA (who has made a movement with her hands
towards Strader):**

Johannes has clairvoyant powers: and thus
He'll find me even in the spirit-realms.
He must not do so until he's prepared
To look for me, completely free of passion.
In future he will also need your help.
I entreat you now: please give him this.

STRADER:

O my Theodora! You still turn
Towards me, even now, with healing love!
Just say then what it is you wish to happen.

Theodora makes a sign towards Capesius.

FELIX BALDE:

She shows that she can speak no more. She wishes
Us to listen to Capesius.

Theodora disappears.

CAPESIUS:

Johannes, when he wishes to make use
Of spirit-eyes, can still see Theodora;
And not even her death itself therefore
Will kill the harmful passion that he feels.
All he will need to do is act in other
Ways than he has done when Theodora
Still was living in her earthly body;
His passion now will strive towards the light
That can reveal itself to her from spirit-
Heights, although she has no earthly knowledge.
Johannes is to seize that light, so that
Through him, it may be won by Lucifer.
Then, through the light of gods, could Lucifer
Keep held within his realm, throughout long ages
Of eternity, the science that
Johannes has attained through earthly forces.

For Lucifer, since earth itself began,
Has always looked for those who have attained,
Through false desires, the wisdom of the gods.
He wishes now to bring together purest
Spiritual vision with human knowledge, which
Would thereby change itself from good to bad.
Johannes, though, will certainly be brought
To leave his evil paths if Strader can
Direct himself to goals which can, in future,
Spiritually transform our human knowledge
And thus approach the knowledge of the gods.
Strader must, if he's to know these goals,
Now turn to Benedictus, as a pupil.

Pause.

STRADER:

Dear Felix, help me understand. Can it
Be true Capesius was bidden to

Reveal these things to me by Theodora?

FELIX:

In recent times I've very often held
Most earnest counsel with my inner being
To gain illumination on this man.
I'll happily confide all that I know.
Capesius is undergoing true
And rightful spirit-pupilship, though his
Behaviour might make it seem otherwise.
It is laid down, within his destiny,
That one day he will carry out great tasks
In spiritual life and in the life of culture.
He only can fulfil these if his spirit,
Even now, prepares itself for them.
His being, though, was also much inclined,
Instead of seeing light on spirit-paths,
To dedicate itself to that false science
By which so many souls are blinded now.

The stern-faced Guardian at the solemn threshold,
Between this world of sense and spirit-worlds,
Had quite unusually strict demands
When, finally, Capesius reached that portal.
To the man whose search had been so earnest,
The doorway had to open, but he then
Immediately shut again behind him.
Had this not happened, through the way that he
Had previously acquired his forces, while
In sense-existence, he would then have not,
In spirit-realms, made any further progress.
The way that he can best prepare himself,
For that high service he will have to carry
Out in future, is to pay the present
Time no heed, and let it pass him by.
To only one thing still does he pay heed.
The fairy tales that I so often told him;
He drank them in and always felt them like
A deep refreshing draught, that could renew
His thinking and refill his empty soul.

CAPESIUS:

Fairy tales can also reach the spirit-realms,
If you can also tell them in the spirit.

FELICIA:

Then every time that I compose myself
And speak my tales with my inner being,
I'll think of you with love, so that they may
Be heard by you as well, in spirit-realms.

Curtain.

SCENE SIX

A space which is not bound by artificial walls, but which is surrounded by intertwining, tree-like plants and shapes, which spread out and send shoots into the interior space. As a result of natural processes the whole place is in wild motion and at times filled with storms. At the beginning of the scene, Capesius and Maria are on stage.

BENEDICTUS (as yet only audible, not visible):

Within your thinking, cosmic thoughts are living.

CAPESIUS:

The noble voice of Benedictus. Here

His words resound in spirit-tones. The same

As those which in his book of life he's written

For his pupils; hard to grasp and harder

To experience. Where in spirit-worlds is this,

Where words resound that challenge souls on earth?

MARIA:

You've wandered in the spirit-world so long
In such a way that much has been revealed;
And yet you do not recognize this realm?

CAPESIUS:

I easily understand how here a being
Communicates its deep, essential self
Not through itself, but through all else around.
The whole is full of light even when the part
Alone is often dark. But when what here
Exists desires to actively create
With beings of the earth, the soul begins to lose
Its understanding. Not the part alone,
The whole as well is often shrouded then
In deepest darkness. Why there should re-echo
Here the words that Benedictus wrote

For souls on earth makes all that happens here
A riddle.

BENEDICTUS (still invisible):

Within your feeling cosmic powers are weaving.

CAPESIUS:

Another saying of Benedictus given
To people on earth! Said here in his own voice.
It streams, and so gives rise to darkness
Through this region's limitless expanse.

MARIA:

I feel already what must be experienced
Here, amidst this region's endless distance.
Benedictus, close, is calling me.

He wants to show to me, within this place,
What even souls disciplined to the light
Can never grasp, when joined to worlds of sense.
They must be able to seek out their teacher
In those places where he does not just
Coin words, in language, indicating beings,
But where he can call forth the living script
Which speaks with world-wide meaning to the soul.
I will release my inner being from earth-
Existence, and await what wills to be
Revealed from spirit-worlds; and when I turn
Again towards the earth, this will, as thought,
Shine forth its knowing light within my soul.

BENEDICTUS (appearing from the background):

Attain yourself in cosmic powers of thought,
And lose yourself through life of cosmic powers;
And you will find, through you, the goals of earth,
Reflecting bright within the cosmic light.

CAPESIUS:

Benedictus, in the spirit, now

Is even here himself—not just his words.

Does then the spirit-teacher bear his earthly

Knowledge, livingly, to spirit-places?

And what do these words mean, when uttered here,

Which work quite differently in earthly life?

BENEDICTUS:

Capesius, during the times you spent

On earth, you came into my circle, though

You never consciously became my pupil.

CAPESIUS:

Capesius is not here in this place;

And nor does his soul wish to hear of him.

BENEDICTUS:

You have no wish to feel yourself within

Capesius. But you, in memory,

Should gaze upon him, spiritually.

It was the strong and active power of thinking

That unveiled for you the life of spirit.

And then your soul-life freed itself from thinking's

Shifting play of dreams within the body.

It felt itself too weak to journey with him out

Of cosmic distances to depths of soul.

Too strong only to look with him through darknesses

Of earth on light-filled spirit-heights.

I must accompany whoever has

Received the spirit-light from me on earth,

Whether they became my spirit-pupil

Knowingly or just unconsciously.

And I must guide them further on the paths

That they, through me, set out on in the spirit,
Your seeing soul that finds itself in cosmic
Distances, has learned to approach the spirit.
For you can follow it, freed from your body.
But you cannot behold, as yet, quite
Free from thought, the true being, in spirit-realms.
You can lay aside the body of the senses,
But not the fine-spun body of your thinking.
The world in its true form you'll only see,
When nothing tied to your own being remains,
To cloud for you true clarity of sight.
For only those who've learned to see their thinking
From outside, the way clairvoyant powers
See the body, once set free from it,
Can enter full realities of spirit.
See therefore, in images—that powers
Of seership may then transform to knowledge—
Thoughts, that take on form, like living beings,
Beheld in space, that mirror human thinking.

A soft, friendly light begins shining. The soul-forces, Philia, Astrid and Luna enter in a luminous cloud. Capesius and Maria leave.

VOICE (spoken in chorus by PHILIA, ASTRID and LUNA):

Now thoughts hover near

Like weaving of dreams

Arising as beings

Essential to souls;

Self-fashioning will,

Self-wakening feeling,

Self-mastering thinking,

Emerge for the dreamer.

As these words are sounding, Lucifer enters on one side and Ahriman on the other. They take their places on either side of the space.

LUCIFER (expansively, emphasizing every word):

Within your willing cosmic beings are working.

*From Lucifer's side, beings move forward,
representing thoughts. They carry out dance-like
movements which portray the thought-forms
corresponding to Lucifer's words.*

AHRIMAN:

The cosmic beings are confusing you.

*After these words, thought-beings appear from
Ahriman's side, carrying out dance movements that
correspond, as forms, to his words. Afterwards the
movements of both groups are carried out together.*

LUCIFER:

Within your feeling cosmic powers are weaving.

The thought-beings on Lucifer's side repeat their movements.

AHRIMAN:

The cosmic powers are misleading you.

The thought-beings on Ahriman's side repeat their movements; then both move again together.

LUCIFER:

Within your thinking cosmic thoughts are living.

Repetition of the movements by Lucifer's group.

AHRIMAN:

The cosmic thoughts are leading you astray.

Repetition of the movements by Ahriman's group.

Then the movements are repeated four times—each group, separately, one

time, and three times together.

The thought-beings disappear to left and right. Lucifer and Ahriman remain. Philia, Astrid and Luna appear from the background and speak the same words as before, slightly altered.

VOICE (spoken in chorus by PHILIA, ASTRID and LUNA):

So thoughts hovered near

Like weaving of dreams

Arising as beings

Essential to souls;

Self-fashioning will,

Self-wakening feeling,

Self-mastering thinking,

Emerged for the dreamer.

Philia, Astrid and Luna disappear. Capesius re-enters. After he has spoken a few words, Maria appears—who is at first invisible to him.

CAPESIUS:

The way the soul experiences itself
Is inwardly; it feels itself within.
The soul believes that it does think, because
It sees no thoughts spread out in space before it.
And it believes it feels, for feelings don't
Shine out, like lightnings flashing from the clouds.
It sees the worlds of space and looking up
Beholds the clouds above... if this was not
The way it was: if lightnings flashed, and yet
There were no eyes to see them—the soul would then
Believe the lightning was within itself.
The soul does not see Lucifer, from whom
Our thoughts all spring and all our feelings flow;
So it believes that these are ours alone.
Why does it submit to such delusion?
O soul—give yourself the answer... but...
From where? From you? Don't even try... Perhaps
The answer too... would not be yours... would be...
From Lucifer...

MARIA:

But even were this so—

Is that a reason not to seek? Descend

Into the depths to find the answer.

CAPESIUS:

How can a being hear my inmost soul?

MARIA:

No soul is separate here. Only the body

Brings us separation. Here in words

The other speaks, each one can hear themselves.

And so you only tell yourself, when I

Tell you: to seek the answer in the depths.

CAPESIUS:

But in the depths... there threatens dreadful... fear.

MARIA:

Yes, for certain it is there! But ask
Yourself, once you have pressed into its realm,
If it may not reveal itself quite clearly.
Ask Lucifer if it is he, who pours
This fear into the weakness of your soul.

LUCIFER:

All those who flee me love me. Children of
The earth have never ceased to love me, though they
Feel they shouldn't. All my deeds they seek.
In frigid forms of truth they would be starved
Throughout long ages of the earth, did I

Not drop the pearl of beauty in their souls
To brighten up their pale existence. Into
Artists' souls, especially, stream my powers.
Whatever human beings have ever seen
As beauty springs from me and finds its
Archetype within my realm. So ask yourself
If I am one you'd ever need to fear.

MARIA:

Fear is a stranger in the land of light.
It is desire that Lucifer inspires,
Not fear—which comes from quite another realm.

AHRIMAN:

I was a god, an equal of the gods.
Till they curtailed my ancient rights, I wished
To shape all human beings for Lucifer
In such a way that they would be

A world unto themselves. As Lucifer
Would only ever wish to show himself
In spirit-realms as equal among equals,
Desiring to be an example only,
Not a ruler over other beings,
I strove to give the human being strength
So they could prove the like of Lucifer.
And had I stayed within the realms of gods
That would have been the case when earth began.
The gods, though, wished to be the lords on earth,
And so they had to banish from their realms
My strength, and bind it in the subterranean
Depths, lest I gave people too much power.
And so, only from here, from the abyss,
Can I send out my forceful strength towards
The earth; but on the way—it turns—to fear.

During Ahriman's final words Benedictus appears.

CAPESIUS:

Whoever hears what each of these two powers
Has spoken out into the widths of worlds—
Will know through this to seek out fear and hate—
And recognize the realms from which they spring.

BENEDICTUS:

Begin to know yourself in cosmic words—
And feel yourself in power of cosmic thought.
And as you've now beheld outside yourself
What you in dreaming saw as your own nature,
So find yourself—and shudder not, in future,
At the word, which rightfully resounds,
And which shall show to you your own being.

CAPESIUS:

From now on, therefore, I may be my own
Again. And I will seek myself, for seeing

Myself in cosmic thought, I now may live.

BENEDICTUS:

Then join all you have won, just now, to what

You've gained before, as something for the world.

In the background, Felicia Balde appears at Benedictus's side, dressed in her ordinary clothes.

FELICIA (In the tone of one telling a fairy tale):

Once there was a radiant child of gods.

It felt itself at one in spirit-worlds

With all those beings who weave in wisdom there.

It grew up, cared for by the father of truth,

To be a primal power within his realm.

And as it felt its ripened will creating,

Stirring, in its radiant body of light,

It often gazed with deep compassion to

The Earth, where souls all longed for truth.

And turning to the father of truth, it said:

‘Human beings are thirsting for the drink

Which you can give them, from your heavenly source.’

The father of truth, in serious mood, replied:

‘The sources over which I must stand guardian

Let light stream out from shining spirit-suns;

And only beings who do not need to thirst

For air to breathe are able to drink light.

And this is why I raised that child, on light,

Who feels compassionate for earthly souls,

And can bring light to birth in those who breathe.

So find your way to human beings and bring

The light within their souls towards my light,

In holy trust and quickened by the spirit.’

The radiant being of light then turned to those

Who breathe, and doing so, experience life.

On earth it found good people everywhere

Who welcomed it with joy into their souls.

It guided then their gaze, in faithful love,

Towards the father at the source of light.
And when the being heard the people speak,
With happy minds, about imagination—
As though it was a magic word—it knew
It had been joyfully experienced
Within good human hearts. But then, one day—
A man approached who had no feeling for
The being, who gave it cold and distant looks.
‘I guide people’s souls on earth to the father of truth
At the source of light,’ the being said to the stranger.
The man replied: ‘You weave just wild dreams
In people’s spirits and deceive their souls.’
And since that day, when this was spoken, many
People slander and reject that being,
Who’s able to bring light to breathing souls.

The soul-forces—Philia, Astrid, Luna and the Other Philia—appear in a cloud of light.

PHILIA:

The human soul finds,
That drinks of the light,
In fields high above,
It strongly awakes.

ASTRID:

The spirit can feel,
That lives unafraid,
Experiencing worlds,
It forcefully stands.

LUNA:

That one has the will,
Who strives for the heights,
In deep grounds of being,
With strength to endure.

THE OTHER PHILIA:

The human being strives
To the bearer of light
Who opens up worlds
Which quicken in people
The zest for delight.
Ecstatic amazement
Distracting the spirit,
In bright heavenly fields,
Awakens in souls
The radiance of beauty.
What's won now, can comfort
The feelings which venture
To tread upon thresholds
So strongly protected
From souls that know fear.
And strength it is found
By the ripening will
Which fearless encounters

The spirit creators

Sustainers of worlds.

Curtain—while Benedictus, Capesius, Maria, Felicia, Lucifer, Ahriman and the four soul-forces are still in their places.

SCENE SEVEN

A landscape of fantastic forms. It is majestically composed—out of forms created by swirling masses of water on one side, and out of blazing, whirling flames on the other side. In the middle, there is a chasm, from which fire flashes out, which towers upwards to a kind of portal, in front of a form, in the shape of a mountain, made of fire and water.

THE GUARDIAN:

What wild, unbridled wishes thunder here?

Thus rage those souls, who would approach me here

Before they've won true quietness, within.

Such beings are merely driven by desire—

Not by that power which when it speaks creates—

Because it could create itself in silence.

Such souls as these I must send back to earth.

In spirit-realms they would spread chaos and

Confusion, and disrupt the deeds that cosmic

Powers, in their wisdom, are preparing.

They'd even do great damage to themselves.

Their self-begotten wild, destructive urges
They'll deem exalted forces of creation,
For they will take delusion to be truth
When earth's dark veil can give them no protection.

Johannes and Maria appear.

JOHANNES:

You do not see, before you here, the soul
That in the past so often neared you from
Johannes, Benedictus's spirit-pupil—
Although the form Johannes bears on earth
It still must call its own. That soul approached you,
Filled with the desire for knowledge. But
He couldn't bear the nearness of your presence.
And so, whenever he experienced you,
He wrapped himself in selfhood. And thus he often
Gazed on worlds that seemed to show to him
The origin and meaning of existence.

Within those worlds he found the bliss of knowledge—
And the powers, as an artist, which
Could guide his inmost feelings and his hand
Into the very traces of creation—
In such a way that he in truth believed
That cosmic powers experienced themselves
In him, and left the record in his paintings
Of their work. He did not know that nothing
Lived in all he thought as he created
But his own soul. Just like a spider, wrapped
In self-created webs, he merely spun
Himself, and thought himself the world.
He once believed he saw Maria in spirit
But only saw the image she had left
In him, mistaken for her spirit-self.
And when, occasionally, he glimpsed himself
In truth, his wish was to escape himself.
He thought he lived in spirit, but could only
Really find himself within his blood.
He learned to know the power of this blood;

This was reality; all else but image.
Through blood alone he gained true vision; and
It showed him who, in distant days on earth,
Had been his father and beloved sister.
His blood led him to blood-relations; then
He knew how strongly we deceive ourselves
When we desire to vainly climb from matter
To the spirit. Spirit-striving often
Binds us more to matter than a life
That's dimly stumbled through. Realizing this,
Johannes hurled himself into the hands
Of him who even in his seeming could
Not thus deceive; of Lucifer, who's real,
Even just as image. Gods only
Approach a person truthfully; but Lucifer
Remains himself regardless whether
People's vision of him's false or true.
And so I know it's a reality
I feel, believing I must find that soul
Which he did bind to me within his realm.

Possessed of all the power that Lucifer
Can lend, I'll force my way beyond your threshold,
Knowing there I'll find my Theodora.

GUARDIAN:

Johannes, be aware of what you know!
What lies beyond this threshold is not known
To you: and yet you know all my demands
Before you can set foot within this realm.
You must first free yourself from many powers
You've gained within your earthly body's life.
You are only permitted to retain
What has been granted you in purest spirit-
Striving, and which has stayed pure.
But this you've thrown away to Ahriman—
And what was left has Lucifer corrupted.
I must take all this from you at the threshold
If you desire to rightly pass across.
Then nothing will remain. In spirit-lands

You'll find yourself a being who has no being.

JOHANNES:

I will have being—and will find Theodora—

She must become my source of heavenly light,

That always for her soul beyond the earth

Reveals itself with such abundant grace.

I need no more than this. And you in vain

Oppose my path, even if the power I've gained

On earth does not match up to all your past

Opinions of what goodness is in spirit.

MARIA:

You, who since the origins of Earth,

Have had to guard the threshold to this realm,

You know what is required of beings of

Your age and kind if they're to enter it;

And human beings who encounter you,

If they just bring themselves, and cannot show
Rich fruits of spirit-striving, also must
Be turned away, go back to earthly life.
But to your threshold this one here could bring
The other soul, to whom he's closely linked
By destiny. High spirit-powers have
Appointed you to keep all human beings
Back, who if they passed beyond your threshold
Would but bring destruction on themselves.
Your portal, though, you are allowed to open
To those souls, who feel that love in spirit-
Realms, and let it permeate their being,
Which your gods had foreordained for them,
Before they were opposed and fought against
By Lucifer. Before his throne my heart
Has made the solemn vow to serve such love
Through future times, so knowledge streaming into
Souls from Lucifer may never harm it.
And people, from now on, will always need
To find each other, who, with strength of mind,

Can listen to the love-filled revelation
Of the gods, as once they listened to
The words that Lucifer could speak of knowledge.
Johannes, when within his earthly body,
Now has little hearing for my voice,
Compared with when in previous days on earth,
I showed to him what in Hibernia's sacred
Places I myself had come to know
About that God who lives in human beings—
Who triumphed over death itself because
He lived love's very being. My friend will learn,
In spirit-realms, to hear again the Word
From me, for which his ear is dulled on earth,
Deluded as it is by Lucifer.

JOHANNES (as if beholding a being in the spirit):

Maria, do you see—the venerable
Old man in flowing robes—his serious face—
And noble brow—such radiance in his eyes?

He walks through crowded lanes and streets, but all
With reverence let him pass, not wishing to
Disrupt his train of thought, for one can see
With what great power of thinking, deep within
Himself, he contemplates essential truths.
Maria, do you see?

MARIA:

I see him, yes—
With your soul's eye. To you alone, though,
Does he wish to show himself. This vision
Is of great significance for you.

JOHANNES:

I'm seeing now into his soul. Within
Its depths resounds what he's just heard; before
His eyes there stands his wise, beloved teacher.
Just now he was with him. The teacher's words

Fill up his soul. His thinking moves right to
The fountainhead of all existence;
As people in long-distant days on earth,
Although their souls still lived but as in dream,
Could be so near perceiving worlds of spirit.
The old man's soul is travelling paths of thought
That he has heard from his exalted teacher.
But now he's vanished from my inner gaze.
If I could see him but a little longer.

I now behold, within the crowd, some men
Discussing him. I hear their words. They speak
Of that old man with absolute respect.

In youth he was a bold and mighty warrior,
Burning with ambition and desire
For fame; and desperate to be hailed the greatest
Fighter in his ranks; in battle-service
He committed fierce and numberless
Atrocities, upon his quest for glory;

And often he would cause much blood to flow.
But then there came the time when luck
Upon the battlefield left him. In
Disgrace he journeyed home and there met scorn
And mockery. Full of pride and still in search
Of fame his soul was filled with violent hatred.
He saw his own compatriots as foes
To be destroyed when opportunity
Allowed. But as he saw that even with
A thousand swords he could not take revenge
On all his enemies, he then began
To overcome himself. He conquered pride
And lust for fame. And in old age he made
The further resolution then to join
The little group of spirit-pupils meeting
In his town. The man, who was the teacher
Of this circle bore within him all
The wisdom masters from primeval times
Had handed down to the initiates.
I hear this from those men within the crowd.

My heart expands with warmest love when I
Perceive, in inner sight, this aged man,
Who after all his battles, urged on by
Ambition, won the greatest battle human
Beings can win—he overcame—himself.
But why, here, do I behold this man,
Whose very image blesses me? The feelings
He evokes cannot be new. Through many
Previous lives we must be linked, for me
To feel such overwhelming love as this.
I must have been his pupil once and gazed
On him with eyes of wonder. How I long
To meet again, right now, the soul that knew
This body as its own—wherever it
May be—on earth or somewhere else. I'll show
It all the strength of love I feel. This soul
Will bring to life in me again good forces,
That worthy, solemn, human bonds created.

MARIA:

But are you sure, Johannes, that this soul,
If it approached you now, would still appear
In all its former holiness and light?
What if it's caught in feelings quite unworthy
Of its former state? For many human beings
Would blush with shame if they could see how far
They are from what they once have been. Perhaps
This man is filled with passions, helplessly
Misled by his desires, and you would look
On him in tragic disillusionment
And grief.

JOHANNES:

Maria, how can you say these words?
I don't see what could make you say this.
Do thoughts move very differently here
Than in the places that we know on earth?

GUARDIAN:

What is revealed to you, Johannes, in
This place, brings you a testing of your soul.
Now gaze into dark layers of your being.
You wish for this, unknowingly—yet still
May do it. That which has lain hidden from
You, in your depths, as long as you lived blindly,

Lucifer appears.

Will now appear before you, robbing you
Of all the darkness that's protected you.
Now recognize the human soul for whom
You long with burning love—which lived within
The body of the aged man you see.
So recognize who you most strongly love.

LUCIFER:

Immerse yourself within your being's depths
And recognize your strongest powers of soul.
Then learn to know how strength of love alone
Can raise you up within the worlds of change.

JOHANNES:

Yes, at last I feel the soul who wished
To show herself to me—yes—Theodora—
She appeared to me. She wished to stand
Before me for she knew that I will see
Her once beyond this threshold. I may love
Her; I have seen her in a previous life.
This shows to me my love is right and good.
In you alone I'll find myself again
And through you attain my future goal.

GUARDIAN:

I have no power to stop what you will do.
You have seen in image-form that soul
You love most deeply. You will see it again
Beyond my threshold. See and feel if it
Can bring the blessed healing that you dream.

THE OTHER PHILIA (appearing):

Oh do not heed the solemn Guardian,
He leads you into barren wastes
Of life—and takes away all human
Warmth. His vision scans the spirit-heights,
But knows not human suffering—
Which souls can only bear
When wrapped in warmth of earthly love
Against cold cosmic spaces.
Austerity he knows
But gentleness abhors
And powers of desire
He's hated since

The genesis of earth.

Curtain.

SCENE EIGHT

The realm of Ahriman. A dark ravine-like space, enclosed by mountains, made of black masses of rock, which tower up in fantastic forms. They reveal skeletons everywhere, which appear to crystallize out of the mountain masses, but in white. Ahriman stands on a ledge. Hilary and Friedrich Trautmann enter.

FRIEDRICH TRAUTMANN:

I've visited this kingdom countless times.

But nonetheless—it seems to me so dreadful

That, precisely here, we often gain

Instruction for some task essential for

Our Brotherhood and for the goals we serve.

HILARY:

The seed that rises greenly from the earth

Must first have died. Down here, all dead things come—

But not to rot. For here they are transformed
And win new life; and if our brotherhood
Would plant the seeds for future human deeds,
It has to gather them from worlds of death.

TRAUTMANN:

The Lord that governs here is sinister;
And if it was not stated in our books—
Which are the greatest treasures of our temple—
That he we meet here's good—then often one
Would think that he is evil.

HILARY:

Not just books.
My spirit-vision also says to me
That goodness is what he reveals. You'll see.

AHRIMAN (in a disguised voice):

I know why both of you are here again.
Johannes has just wandered from the path;
You're hoping to discover, in my realm,
How rightly you may lead that human soul,
Who often now has stood upon your threshold.
Because you think Johannes wholly lost,
It seems to you that Strader now must be
The man to serve your mystic brotherhood.
But he, in fact, has me to thank for what,
From natural forces, he has won for human
Progress; for it's me who is the ruler
There, where from the sources of creation
Forces gain their strength, which can be used
Mechanically. And so, whatever it
May be he will create for humankind,
Will also have to turn towards my realm.
But, this time, I will take charge myself
Of what from now on happens with the man.

For with Johannes all your work could just
Have brought me grief. And so, if you
Desire to serve the spirit-powers, then
With Strader, you must first attempt to earn
What with Johannes you let slip away.

Ahriman becomes invisible.

TRAUTMANN (after a pause in which he withdraws into himself):

My noble master, something weighs on me.
I've kept on trying to ignore it, knowing
What's demanded by our brotherhood;
But much of what takes place within our ranks
Brings a bitter struggle in my soul.
I've always tried to keep my dark thoughts down,
So grateful for the spirit-light you shone;
But often clearly seeing you deceived,
And how your words have proved so gravely wrong,

I've felt as if a nightmare haunted me
That harshly robbed my soul of any peace.
Now yet again your words are clearly false.
You seriously believe the spirit here
Can be in any way a source of good?

HILARY:

The cosmic ways are strange and hard to grasp.
I see, dear brother, we will have to wait,
Till higher powers reveal to us the way
That's in accordance with the work we do.

Hilary and Trautmann leave.

AHRIMAN (who has reappeared):

They see me, but can't recognize me. Fools!
For if they knew who reigns here, they would never
Journey here for help. A visitor

Of mine they'd piously condemn to hell!

The twelve people enter, who had gathered in the antechamber of the mystic brotherhood at the beginning—though it is indicated that they are walking blindly in Ahriman's realm. They speak words, which do indeed live in their souls, but which they know nothing about. They are experiencing unconscious dreams in their sleep, which can be heard in Ahriman's realm. Strader, however, who has also entered, is half-conscious in relation to what he experiences, and so will later be able to remember it.

STRADER:

Inspired by Benedictus, I have worked
To grasp the inner power of thinking's life.
It's led me here—the kingdom of the dead.
How strange. I'd hoped to rise into the spirit
And there receive the truth from wisdom's heights.

AHRIMAN:

If you conduct yourself aright, the wisdom
To be gained here could suffice your soul

For ages hence.

STRADER:

And who is this my soul

Confronts? Which spirit speaks in you?

AHRIMAN:

You'll know him later if you can recall

What you've experienced here.

STRADER:

And why are all

These people drifting through your dark domain?

AHRIMAN:

Their souls alone are in this place, aware
Of nothing; for at home their bodies lie
In deepest sleep. But here will be revealed,
As clear as day, what's in their souls, and what
When they're awake, they rarely know.
They cannot hear a word of what we say.

LOUISA FÜRCHTEGOTT:

The soul should not unreasoningly believe
In revelations, striving, sick with pride,
For light-filled, mystic states. I stand with strength
Upon the solid ground of modern science.

AHRIMAN (only audible to Strader):

You cannot guess how drenched with pride you are—
And blindly lead yourself into the dark.
She'll offer you good service, Strader, in
Your work, attained through me; for that she needs

No faith in spirit, which her pride disdains.

FRIEDRICH GEIST:

The mystic paths are powerfully alluring:
In future I will never lack the zeal
To give myself completely to the wisdom
That I can garner from the Temple's words.

MICHAEL EDELMANN:

My pure heart hungers for the truth; my prayers
Ascend to heaven. Surely my desire
For light will lift me to the highest realms,
Where I will shine: the Temple's best disciple.

GEORG WAHRMUND:

The spirit-treasures of true mysticism,

Whenever they have been revealed to me,
Affect me deeply and they always have;
Wholeheartedly I will continue striving.

AHRIMAN (only audible to Strader):

They mean it well; but all their striving's weak
And superficial. Thus I can exploit
Their spirit-essence, using it to serve
My enterprise for many decades still.
They too appear quite useful for my goal
To make your new technology unfold
With startling brilliance for humanity.

MARIA TREUFELS:

When reverence for the universe unites
With clearest sight of life's realities—
The healthy sense for life will of itself
Bring to the soul the ripest spirit-fruits.

AHRIMAN (only audible to Strader):

She speaks, in dreaming, of realities;
She'll dream them even better when she wakes.
And thus I'll have no joy of her for now
But more, I hope, next time around. For then
She'll be an occultist and on demand
Reveal to people who they've been in former
Lives, right back to when the earth began.
But loyalty's not in her: in a previous life
She slated you viciously, whilst now
She highly praises you. Things change, you see.
For now, she'll bring more luck to Lucifer.

FRANCESCA DEMUT:

The lofty realm that mysticism knows
Will one day form our being as a whole,
When thoughts receive their nourishment from feelings,

And feelings let themselves be led by thoughts.

KATHARINA RATSAM:

Though people strive indeed to find the light

They do so in a most peculiar way;

For first they blot it out then are surprised

That they can never find it in the dark.

AHRIMAN (only audible to Strader):

These are the souls who love to feel the rightness

Of their words; but they lack strength beneath.

For now they're inaccessible to me.

Their deeds in future, though, will make this change.

They're miles from what they think themselves to be.

BERNARD REDLICH:

Imagination is a dangerous friend.
It tricks the mind with wild, fantastic dreams.
Be cautious in your quest for knowledge: only
Strictest thinking masters all life's riddles.

HERMINE HAUSER:

Creation is a state of ceaseless change.
All things are fluid, shifting—and evolve—
Whoever seeks to fix a world in flux
Will never grasp the mystery of life.

CASPAR STÜRMER:

The poet and the dreamer waste their days
In fantasy. Their vigour drains away,
Enfeebling them for earth-life. What we need
Is healthy people, helping practically.

MARIA KÜHNE:

A soul that does not mind if it decays

Will let mere outer forces shape its life.

The worthy human being wants to grow And to develop what she bears
within.

AHRIMAN (only audible to Strader):

What these poor souls contain is merely human.

Impossible to know what they'll achieve.

Let Lucifer do what he wants with them.

He could make them believe that they do nothing

But unfold the strength of their own souls.

And so—perhaps—he hasn't lost them yet.

FERDINAND REINECKE:

To comprehend the world it is enough

To use plain reason and our common sense.

To find our way in life we should take hold
Of what is useful and what we enjoy.
To seek before all else for wisdom, and
Give feeble people lofty goals can lead
To absolutely nothing on the earth.

AHRIMAN (only audible to Strader):

The special, carefully picked philosopher!
He'll be the same again in his next life.
With him I merely balance the accounts.
From twelve I must keep seven for myself
And give the other five to Lucifer.
I study people sometimes, and I ask
What kind they are and what each one can do;
And once I've picked out twelve, my search is done.
A thirteenth one would be just like the first.
For then, you see, when I have drawn these twelve
Into my realm, according to the colour
Of their souls, then many more must follow.

To himself so that Strader cannot hear him, he closes Strader's ears.

In fact I've managed none of this as yet—

The earth has never wished to yield to me.

But I will strive through all eternity—

And make good use of everything I can—

Till victory one day—perhaps—is mine.

Audibly to Strader again

You see I do not trade in pretty words,

Nor seek to please mankind. Whoever seeks

More polished words, as inspiration

For their goals, must find them somewhere else.

Yet if with reason and a sense for truth

You can observe what happens here, through me,

You'll recognize that only I can give

What children of humanity all need

If they are not to lose themselves on earth.

I'm needed even by the gods; for they
Will only ever free a soul from me
When I have first been active in their depths.
So if one day my enemies succeed
In making people gullibly believe
That I can be dispensed with, souls will
Of higher worlds, while power ebbs away.

STRADER:

You see in me a soul who well might follow
You—and do you service. What I've seen
Here seems to show that only lack of sense
And judgement makes someone your enemy.
No. You used no pretty words. You all
But mocked these souls, as you described their different
Destinies.

What you can offer people,
I must confess, I see as good. Through you

They'll gain the strength for good—and what is evil
This will be their own. And even all
Your mockery, if people better knew
Themselves, they'd share with all their heart.

But what strange power compels my soul to speak?
I utter words, which if I found them true
On earth, would shatter and destroy me.

You have to think the way you do, and I
Can do no other than accept your words.
But only here is it the truth; if it
Should try and prove itself on earth, it would
Be false. I can't go on with normal powers
Of thinking.... They are blocked.... Are at an end.

What's this? In all the roughness of your words
There echoes out—your pain. And suffering.
Hearing it, I too am filled with pain.

To see you—makes me just—lament and weep.

Strader exits quickly.

Maria and Johannes appear, both fully conscious—so that they can hear all that happens and can speak consciously.

JOHANNES:

Maria, this place is filled with terror. Fear
Is dense and presses right into my being.
Where can I find the strength to ward it off?

MARIA:

My solemn, holy vow rays out its strength;
Allow yourself to feel its healing power—
If you're to bear the pressure of this place.

AHRIMAN (to himself):

Ha! These two are sent by Benedictus
So they can gain experience of me here
And thus may come to know me.

The rest is spoken so that Johannes and Maria can hear it.

The Guardian, Johannes, had to send
You here, into my realm, upon your way
Towards that light you seek in depths of being.
I can give you truth—and bitter pain—
That pain I've suffered for millennia—
For though the truth can reach me here, it must
First wholly separate itself from joy—
Before it dares to enter through my gates.

JOHANNES:

Bereft of joy, then, let me see that soul
Whom I desire so burningly to see.

AHRIMAN:

All wishes and desires need warmth of soul;
But here—all wishes freeze—in ice and cold.

MARIA:

And in the endless, empty fields of ice,
I've gained the right to lead my friend, where he
Will win that light, which spirits must create,
When darknesses can lame the powers of life.
Now feel, Johannes, all your strength of soul.

The Guardian appears on the threshold.

AHRIMAN:

The Guardian himself must bring that light

For which your soul so passionately yearns.

JOHANNES:

I will behold her clearly—Theodora!

THE GUARDIAN:

The soul that you did see upon my threshold,
Appearing as it lived in former times,
Enflamed in you, at this your time of trial,
The strongest powers of love within your soul.
As you still stood outside this realm, and sought
To pass across, you saw his soul as image.
But images that spring from wishes often
Mask illusion. Now, though, see in truth
The soul that lived within that aged man.

JOHANNES:

I see him once again, in flowing robes—
That warrior in youth, who in old age
Could conquer his own self. O noble soul,
Who graced this form, why have you hid yourself
From me so long? I know you well. I know
You must be Theodora. No one else.
Your veiled image changes—shows you as
You really are—yes! Theo.... I myself.

At the syllables 'Theo', the Double appears.

THE DOUBLE (coming right up to Johannes):

Recognize me. See in me yourself.

MARIA:

And I may follow you to depths of worlds,
Where souls attain the feeling of the gods,

Through shattering inner victories that destroy,
And boldly from destruction win back being.

Thunder and gathering darkness.

Curtain.

SCENE NINE

A friendly landscape in morning sunlight. There is a town in the background, with many factory buildings. Benedictus, Capesius, Maria, Johannes and Strader walk freely back and forth in conversation, in different groupings.

CAPESIUS:

It is here, in gentle morning sunlight,
Where Benedictus often turns himself
Devotedly towards his pupils, who,
In hallowed mood, can listen to his wisdom.
Over there, lies all that cuts off souls
So ruthlessly from all the wondrous beauty
That surrounds us here, where we receive
Such blessing from the holiness in nature.
Amidst the desolation of that sea
Of houses, Benedictus constantly
Endeavours, through his loving deeds, to heal

And lessen people's bitter suffering.
But when he wisely tells his pupils of
The spirit-worlds, in words they understand,
He wishes then for hearts that have been opened,
Sun-like, through the free creative powers
That here reveal themselves, awaking souls.
I, too, am by good fortune now permitted
To gain the blessing that his words can give.
He's taken on the burden, lovingly,
Of guiding me, in spirit, into spirit-
Realms. And so, whenever he is near,
I feel as if I am myself again.

BENEDICTUS (approaching):

A knot, Capesius, woven from the threads
Of karma, in the circle of my pupils,
At last begins to loosen. Your free deeds
And those of others lead to this unravelling.
Find your helpers now—in hearts devoted

To the spirit-guidance I too serve.
United with them you'll complete the work
For which you have been well-prepared in spirit.

CAPESIUS:

I've recognized you and will follow you.
I gazed into my soul, after I'd heard
Your words, like beings, in spirit-worlds, and you'd
Restored me to myself; and then I saw,
In spirit-light, the goals which all my future
Lives on earth must serve. And now I know
It is from you I'll find my proper way.

BENEDICTUS:

If you unite with Strader and Johannes
You can do much to bring about a healing
In humanity. Your powers of soul
Have been prepared through many lives, so that

Together you may form a trinity,
Which will be able to do much on earth.

CAPESIUS:

Then I must thank the strict unbending powers
Of destiny—which I had found so cruel
And meaningless at first—for showing me,
When it was right, my purposes in life.

A pause while he considers.

How wonderfully you led me. First it seemed
Impossible to lift myself into
Those worlds of spirit that your words portrayed.
For ages, when I sank into your works,
I just met thoughts; then all at once
I found Myself within the very life of spirit-
Worlds. I barely knew then how to live
And be within the ordinary world.

BENEDICTUS:

The ordinary, outer world would always
Have concealed for you the life of spirit;
Had this not dampened down this outer world,
Through stronger power, and rendered it a shadow.
Thus you have had to know full spirit-sight,
While others first must open eyes of soul.

*During Capesius's last words, Strader approaches;
the three of them walk away, and after a short time,
Benedictus returns with Strader.*

STRADER:

Your words transported me beyond my
Earthly form. Awaking to myself once more,
Within my body, I was filled with deep
And numbing pain. The sorrow that I felt
In time brought back the memory of all

I'd been through, up until that terrifying
Moment when, in front of Ahriman,
I had to see how there all thinking stops.
And then I had to question—why your words
Should lead me to that place where souls are only
Seen as units fitted to what he
Desires to make out of my work. He picks
Out twelve and seeks to make them serve his ends.

BENEDICTUS:

You know, though, why those souls that Ahriman
Displayed to you, precisely sought your help,
When he desired to influence their fate?

STRADER:

All this was also shown me by my pain.
I saw what in a previous life had linked me
To those within the spiritual brotherhood.

Its members reappear today as those
Who lead the mystic temple. And I saw
As well how in the mediaeval days
The peasants treated me, who now are these
Twelve citizens. I felt how Ahriman
Is wishing to exploit the bond that must
Still keep them tied to me in future lives.

BENEDICTUS:

The cosmic powers always guide their deeds
According to right measurement and number,
So that they're wisely woven in the world.
The outer senses see the sun pursue
Its path through twelve stellar constellations.
This shows how through long ages things unfold
On earth. These powers will shine into your work.
But Ahriman desired to use those powers,
Instead, to shape those human souls themselves,
And bind them to you by strict laws of number.

STRADER:

As I have grasped both measurement and number
I'll know in future how to free my work
From Ahriman's domain, and make it be
Of rightful service to the gods of earth.

BENEDICTUS:

You have had to learn through Ahriman
The universal sense of numbers' laws;
This was necessary for your soul.
You had to know this realm, according to
Your path into the spirit, for your true
Creative gifts to blossom and bear fruit.

They exit. Maria and Johannes enter from other side.

MARIA:

Johannes, happily you have succeeded
In winning knowledge from cold realms of truth.
No longer will you weave in images
What souls within the body only dream.
For thoughts that would spring only from themselves
Are very far indeed from world-becoming.

JOHANNES:

And that they do this, happens from self-love,
Which likes to see itself as thirst for knowledge.

MARIA:

Whoever wishes to devote himself
To human progress, and to perform deeds
Of living power, within the course of time,

Must first entrust himself to powers, who through
Their battling, are able to bring measure
And number, both in order and in chaos,
Into deep world realities. For only then
Does knowledge first become true life,
That can reveal itself in human souls,
When they can bring to memory in the body
What they've experienced in spirit-realms.

JOHANNES:

I see my path. I have to feel myself
As twofold from now on. Through you and
Benedictus, I'm a being that knows itself
In spirit, who possesses faculties
That aren't my own. What you've both given is
Another being within me—ready now
To give to others what he has been graced
With. He will serve the world as best he can,
But nothing from my normal self must mingle

With it, marring this new being, who knows
That he's but at the start of true self-knowledge.
He'll guide his own steps forward, helped by you,
And thus will form his destiny in future.

MARIA:

Whether you walk in paths of truth or error,
You'll always hold the doorway open,
Through which your soul may take its rightful steps,
If you can learn to bear courageously
Necessities that spring from spirit-realms.

Curtain.

SCENE TEN

The temple of the mystic brotherhood which appeared in Scenes One and Two. At the beginning of the scene Benedictus and Hilary stand in the East; Bellicosus and Torquatus in the South; Trautmann in the West.

BENEDICTUS:

My pupils have each found the way, according
To their different paths of destiny,
To let the spirit-light shine in their souls.
What each one has achieved must now bear fruit
For both the others. This can only happen
If they are willing, in this sacred place,
To join their strengths, in true and rightful measure,
To form a higher unity. Through this
They'll waken, for the first time, to true life
What must, if they're apart, remain as being.
They stand upon the threshold of this temple
Of initiation. May they now

Unite their souls and let them sound together,
As world-destiny decrees—so that
The harmony of spirits can attain
What one alone cannot. To what has
Worthily held sway here since the dawn of time
They will bring something new. The pupils I
Will lead before you, you my temple-brothers,
Have had to face harsh trials in spirit-worlds
To find their way here. They'll respect the sacred
Rites and ancient holy practices
Which here shine out their spirit-light. Yourselves,
Who've faithfully performed, for many years,
This spirit-service, will receive new tasks
In future. Cosmic destiny calls people
Only for a time to serve within
The Temple. Then it gives them other tasks.
The Temple has itself been sorely tested.
Guardian of the light, it was protected
From darkness, in a grave and fateful hour,
By the error of one man. Johannes

Recognized, unconsciously, he should
Not cross the threshold to this Temple till
He'd crossed that other threshold, of which this
One's but a symbol. So he closed the doors
Upon himself, which you had wished, through love,
To open to him. Now he'll reappear
To you, quite differently, and worthily
Receive from you initiation's blessing.

HILARY:

We humbly seek to offer to the spirit
What ripens and bears fruit within our souls.
And wish to strive so that our wills become
The revelation of the spirit's will.
The Temple's led, unfailingly, by wisdom's
Powers—you show the path that you could read
Within the cosmic book of destiny
When each of these your pupils passed their trials.
So let them enter and unite their strength

With ours, here in this hallowed sanctuary.

At a knock from Hilary—Johannes, Capesius, Maria, Felix Balde, Felicia Balde and Strader enter the Temple. Trautmann and Torquatus lead in those entering, in such a way that Johannes stands in front of Benedictus and Hilary;

Capesius in front of Bellicosus and Torquatus; Strader in front of Trautmann; and Maria stands with Felix and Felicia in the middle of the temple.

HILARY:

My son, the words one utters in this place,
Incur a crying guilt in spirit-worlds,
Unless they are inspired by truth alone.
And just as great as is this guilt are all
The forces of destruction it unleashes
Upon the one unworthy to be here.
Aware of the effect of temple words,
The man who stands before you has attempted
To serve, as best he can, the spirit-world,
Before the holy symbol of that Light

Which shines from out the East upon our earth.

It is the will of destiny that you

Become the one to serve now at this altar.

But know this too: the one who gives you this

Authority, and these the keys of his

High office, gives you also all his blessing—

With all the power that this place imparts.

JOHANNES:

Exalted Master! Only folly and

Presumption, in the frail human being

Before you here, could ever make him wish

That he might now succeed you in your holy work.

He does not have the right to take a single step

Across the threshold of this temple. Yet

What he could never wish upon himself,

Must humbly be accepted when he's called

By powers of destiny. I had to know

Myself, in spirit-realms, completely worthless.

It was not I, therefore, who could allow
Myself to stand here. Benedictus, though,
And my true friend, Maria, have formed in me,
A second human being, of which the first,
In time, will merely be the bearer. Yes—
I have been granted, on my path of spirit,
A self, which can be strong and can reveal
Its full, creative powers, even if
The bearer still must know himself far distant
From the highest human goals. When thus
We feel the second being awake in us,
We always have to keep this stringent rule
Before our spirit-eye: that nothing from
Our personal self may ever be allowed
To enter, jarringly, into that work
Not done by us but by our second self.
Within our selves, invisibly, we have
To work, so that we grow, and thus become
What we may be. Our personal struggles we
Must bear through life, shut tight within our souls.

That in my personal self I have no right
To stand within this place, I told you when
I first was here. That other self, though, now
Entrusted to me, sees himself as called
By destiny to carry out, as best
He can, the work of guardian from this place,
As long as this is asked him by the spirit.

TORQUATUS (to Capesius):

Capesius, from now on, at this place,
Where love should stream through wisdom, as the sun
Streams out its warmth so powerfully at noon,
You shall perform the temple's sacred service.
Whoever offers up their spirit here,
To serve the mystic work, must face great dangers.
For Lucifer is always able to
Approach, unseen, he who does good service
Here, and to impress on each one of his words
The seal of the opponent of the gods.

You stood before the Adversary's throne,
And could behold what follows from his deeds,
And thus, for your task here, are well prepared.

CAPESIUS:

When one has seen the Adversary's realm,
As destiny has granted me to do,
One knows that good and evil are but words
That people hardly ever understand.
Whoever would see Lucifer as only
Evil, should say that fire too is evil,
Because it has the power to destroy,
And should call water evil too, because
In it someone may drown.

TORQUATUS:

Lucifer
Appears evil, then, through other things

And not through what he signifies himself.

CAPESIUS:

That cosmic spirit who, when earth began,
Was able to bring light to human souls,
Must perform tasks within the universe
Which, to spirits who can understand
Necessities, prove neither good nor evil.
For good can turn to evil, if a bad
Intention, serving but itself, corrupts it;
And what seems evil can transform to good
If beings of goodness guide it on its path.

TORQUATUS:

And thus you know what you will always need
When standing here. For love, it does not judge
The powers at work within the universe.
It values them, and asks how it may use

Whatever springs to life from grounds of worlds.

BENEDICTUS:

But love will often speak in quiet words

And needs to be supported in the soul.

It therefore will unite itself to all

That wills to serve, in noble trinity,

The spirit-goals belonging to the temple.

Maria will unite her work with yours.

The vow she spoke in Lucifer's domain

Will radiate its blessing power here.

MARIA:

The deep words you, Capesius, have spoken,

Are true, when rightly springing from that spirit

Who shows to human beings the way of love;

But lead to error upon error when

They spring from bad intentions and transform

To evil in a person's soul. It's true
That Lucifer reveals himself before
Our souls, as Bearer of the Light, when these
Turn to the spirit-realm. The human soul,
Though, always wishes to awaken in
Itself, what it should only gaze upon,
With wonder. Souls should see the radiant beauty
Lucifer reveals, but never fall
Under its power, so he can work within them.
When he, the bringer of the light streams out
His wisdom, filling words with pride of selfhood,
The bold and free example to all beings
Of shining individuality—
Then may the soul rejoice in bringing out
Its inwardness and celebrate in joy
All it can feel and all it loves in life.
But human beings, more than other spirits,
Need that God, who does not only claim
Our wonder, as he shines in outer glory—
Who only then reveals his greatest power

When he takes up his dwelling in the soul
And who proclaims with love the life in death.
The human being can turn to Lucifer
To feel delight in all that shines as beauty;
Through this he may well feel himself;
but must Not wish that Lucifer be his own being.
But to that other spirit humans call
When they have rightly learned to know themselves:
It is the loving goal of earth's own soul:
Not I, but Christ is living in my being.

BENEDICTUS (turning to Maria):

Your soul, Maria, when it turns to the spirit,
As it vowed to do, before the throne
Of Lucifer, is strong enough to shine
Into this temple, showing it the ways
Of healing for the world; and Christ will shine
With warmth and light, the sense of spirit-love
Within this place. What your soul thus can offer

To the world is linked to your own life
By one particular knot of destiny.
Once long ago a son turned from his father
Due to you. And now you lead the son
Back to the father. In a former life
Johannes was Capesius's son.
The father asks no longer that Maria
Repay her debt to him through Lucifer—
For now she has erased her debt through Christ.

**BELLICOSUS (speaking to Hilary and Benedictus—often
turning to Felix and Felicia):**

Light from spirit-heights is streaming now
With power into the sanctuaries—if souls
Can rightly open to it. But those high
And lofty powers of wisdom which reveal
Themselves in temples such as this one now
Have also chosen other paths to souls.
The signs of these our present times show clearly

That all these different paths must now unite.

The Temple has to link with souls who have

Not sought the light along its paths

And yet are also inwardly illumined.

In Felix and Felicia there step

Such souls into this holy sanctuary

Who bring to it their rich, abundant light.

FELICIA:

All I can do is tell those fairy tales,

Whose images arise, completely by

Themselves in me—about the source of these

In spirit all I know is what Capesius

Would often say. I humbly must believe

All I would hear, when he described my soul's

True character; and thus I also accept

What you describe of why the temple's called me.

FELIX:

I've come not just because you summoned me.

I am obedient to the spirit-core

Of my own being; and it guided me,

Entirely independently, to seek

This temple-sanctuary. Many times, my soul

Has journeyed in the higher worlds. At first,

A crushing loneliness approaches you;

All littleness is stripped away, leaving

Only your spirit core, which must be strong

And patient to endure. Eventually,

The darkness dwindles and you find yourself

At one with everything and full of light.

I found myself within that world which showed

To me the deepest grounds of our existence.

Upon such spirit-pilgrimage I've often

Found my way to living temples just

As like to this one here, that we can see,

As living spoken words are like our writing.

TRAUTMANN (to Strader):

Your task, dear Strader, is to speak that word
In future, in the temple, which, compared
To what Johannes speaks will be as sunset
To the hopeful glow of dawn. You had
To stand in spirit at that place which brings
All thinking to a standstill. As your hand
Could only strike a hammer in the air,
And never feel its strength, without an anvil,
So could thinking never realize
Itself, if Ahriman did not oppose it.
Within your life, your thinking always led
To obstacles, which caused you pain and bitter
Doubt. Through these you learned to know yourself
In thinking, as the light can only see
Its radiant power through reflection. Life's
Reflection is revealed in image, by
The temple-servant's word that's spoken here.

STRADER:

For long, it's true, the light of thought shone only
As reflection in my life. But then
For seven years the spirit showed itself
To me in brightest light and opened up
My soul to worlds, before which, previously
My thinking had stood still, in pain and doubt.
This light, now made more inward in my soul,
Will never die throughout eternity,
If I can realize my spirit-goals
And if there should spring healing from my work.

THEODORA (becoming visible as a spiritual being at Strader's side):

I have been able to win light for you,
Because your strength aspired to my light,
When finally your time could be fulfilled.

STRADER:

And thus your light will also shine, you spirit-
Messenger, on all the words my soul
Will speak here. Theodora's being
Is consecrated with me at this place
To carry out this holy task of service.

Philia, Astrid, Luna and the Other Philia appear in a luminous cloud of light.

THE OTHER PHILIA:

From altars of temples
True thoughts are arising To sources of worlds.
What lives in the soul
What strives in the spirit
Wings its way from the world
That is bounded in forms—
And spirits of the worlds incline

To human beings with blessing grace
To kindle spirit light.

PHILIA:

I will beseech from cosmic spirits
That by their beings' light
Be guarded sense for soul,
And that their sounding words
May free the spirit ear
That there may not be lost
What has been awakened
On paths of soul
In human life.

ASTRID:

I will direct
The streams of love
Which warm the world
Into the spirits
Of the initiates;

So that the hallowed mood

May be preserved

In human hearts.

LUNA:

From the primeval powers

I'll beg for strength and courage

And make these the helpers

Of willing sacrifice;

That it may change

What times behold

To spirit seeds

That grow throughout eternities.

Curtain while all, including Theodora, Philia, Astrid, Luna and the Other Philia, are still in the temple.

THE SOULS AWAKEN

Spiritual and Soul Events in Dramatic Scenes

by Rudolf Steiner



CHARACTERS, FIGURES AND EVENTS

The spiritual and soul events presented in *The Souls Awaken* should be thought of as taking place about a year after those depicted in the previous Mystery Drama, *The Guardian of the Threshold*.

In The Souls Awaken there appear the following characters and beings:

I. THE BEARERS OF THE SPIRITUAL ELEMENT:

1. Benedictus. The personality seen by a number of his 'pupils' as being the knower of profound spiritual relationships. (He is presented in the previous soul-portrayals, *The Doorway of Initiation* and *The Trial of the Soul*, as the leader of the 'Sun Temple'. In *The Guardian of the Threshold* that spiritual stream expresses itself through him which wishes to put a living and present spiritual life in the place of a merely traditional one, such as is preserved by the 'mystic brotherhood'.) In *The Souls Awaken* Benedictus is no longer to be thought of as simply standing above his pupils, but is interwoven, with his own soul-destiny, into the soul-experiences of his pupils.
2. Hilary Gottgetreu. The knower of traditional spiritual life, which in his case is linked with his own spiritual experiences. (The same individuality presented in the previous soul-portrayal *The Trial of the Soul* as the Grand Master of a 'mystic brotherhood'.)
3. Hilary's Office Manager.
4. Hilary's Secretary. (The same personality who appears in *The Guardian of the Threshold* as Friedrich Geist.)

II. THE BEARERS OF THE ELEMENT OF DEVOTION:

1. Magnus Bellicosus. (Named Germanus in *The Doorway of Initiation*. The Preceptor of a 'mystic brotherhood' in *The Trial of the Soul* and *The Guardian of the Threshold*).
2. Albert Torquatus. (Named Theodosius in *The Doorway of Initiation*. The same individuality appears in *The Trial of the Soul* as the first Master of Ceremonies in the 'mystic brotherhood' depicted there.)
3. Professor Capesius. In *The Trial of the Soul* his individuality appears as the first Preceptor.
4. Felix Balde. (The bearer in *The Doorway of Initiation* of a certain nature mysticism; the bearer here in *The Souls Awaken* of subjective mysticism. The individuality of Felix Balde appears as 'Joseph Kean' in *The Trial of the Soul*.)

III. THE BEARERS OF THE ELEMENT OF WILL:

1. Romanus. (He is reintroduced here under the name used for him in The Doorway of Initiation, because this corresponds with the essence of his being which he has worked through to in the years between The Doorway of Initiation and The Souls Awaken. The name is used for him in The Guardian of the Threshold which is to be thought of as his name in the outer world. He is referred to there by that name because his inner life is of only little significance in the events that occur. His individuality appears in The Trial of the Soul as the second Master of Ceremonies in the mediaeval 'mystic brotherhood'.)

2. Dr Strader. (His individuality appears in The Trial of the Soul as 'Simon the Jew'.)

3. Dr Strader's Nurse. (The same personality who is named Maria Treufels in The Guardian of the Threshold. In The Doorway of Initiation she is called 'The Other Maria' because Johannes Thomasius's imaginative knowing forms the imagination of certain powers of nature in her image. Her individuality appears in The Trial of the Soul as the Keans' daughter 'Berta'.)

4. Felicia Balde. (Her individuality appears in The Trial of the Soul as 'Mrs Kean'.)

IV. THE BEARERS OF THE ELEMENT OF SOUL:

1. Maria. (Her individuality appears in The Trial of the Soul as 'The Monk'.)

2. Johannes Thomasius. (His individuality appears in The Trial of the Soul as 'Thomas'.)

3. Hilary Gottgetreu's Wife.

V. BEINGS FROM THE SPIRITUAL WORLD:

1. Lucifer.

2. Ahriman.

3. Gnomes.

4. Sylphs.

VI. BEINGS OF THE HUMAN SPIRITUAL ELEMENT:

1. Philia. 2. Astrid 3. Luna The spiritual beings who mediate the connection of human soul-forces with the cosmos.

4. The Other Philia. The bearer of the element of love, in the world to which the spiritual personality belongs.
5. The Soul of Theodora. (Her individuality appears in The Trial of the Soul as ‘Celia’, the Keans’ foster-daughter and the sister of ‘Thomas’ [in whom the individuality of Johannes Thomasius is presented.])
6. The Guardian of the Threshold.
7. Johannes Thomasius’s Double.
8. The Spirit of Johannes’s Youth.
9. The Soul of Ferdinand Reinecke—in Ahriman’s realm in Scene Twelve.
(He only appears as ‘Ferdinand Reinecke’ in The Guardian of the Threshold.)

VII.:

The personalities of Benedictus and Maria also appear as thought-experiences—in the second scene as those of Johannes Thomasius; in the third scene as those of Strader. In the tenth scene Maria appears as the thought-experience of Johannes Thomasius.

VIII.:

In the fifth and sixth scenes of The Souls Awaken the individualities of Benedictus, Hilary Gottgetreu, Magnus Bellicosus, Albert Torquatus, Strader, Capesius, Felix Balde, Felicia Balde, Romanus, Maria, Johannes Thomasius and Theodora appear in the spirit-realm as ‘souls’—and in the temple (in the seventh and eighth scenes of The Souls Awaken) as personalities living in a long-distant past.

With regard to The Souls Awaken, a remark may also be made similar to what has been said about the previous soul-portrayals. Neither the spiritual and soul events nor the spiritual beings are intended merely symbolically or allegorically. To anyone who wished to interpret them in this way, the true character and beingness of the spiritual world would remain far distant. Even in the appearance of the thought-experiences (in the second, third and tenth scenes) nothing merely symbolical is presented, but real soul-experiences, which for the person entering the spiritual world are just as real as the people and events of the sense-world. For such a person The Souls Awaken presents a completely realistic soul-portrayal. If it was a question of symbolism or allegory I would quite definitely have omitted these portrayals.

In response to many questions I began attempting once again to add some ‘supplementary remarks’ by way of explanation of this ‘soul-portrayal’. As before, however, this time too I have stopped myself making this attempt. It goes against the grain to add something like that to the portrayal which should speak for itself. Both in the conception and the execution of the portrayal such abstractions cannot play any role at all. They would only have a disturbing effect. The spiritual reality that is depicted places itself before the soul with the same necessity as do the things we perceive physically. It is self-evident that the images of spiritual perception seen by healthy spirit-vision relate differently to the beings and events involved than the way perceptions of the physical world relate to their corresponding beings and events. On the other hand it has to be said that the way in which the spiritual events present themselves before the soul perceiving them contains within it, already, both the disposition and the composition of such a portrayal.

Munich, August 1913

R. St.

SCENE ONE

Hilary Gottgetreu's accounting office ('Comptoir'), not very modern in style. It can be imagined that Hilary is the owner of a factory creating many different products out of wood. The Secretary and the Manager are in conversation; (Hilary; later Strader.)

SECRETARY:

And look! Now even our friends in Georgeholme
Are saying how dissatisfied they are.

MANAGER:

Them as well? The whole thing's really pitiful.
And always it's the same reasons.
One also sees how painful these friends find it
That now they need to break with Hilary.

SECRETARY:

Yes. It's in letter after letter.

'Lacking in punctuality ...'

'Workmanship not up to the standards of your competitors in the field ...'

And wherever I go

I hear the same thing

Over and over again.

The good name and solid reputation of the firm,

Handed down to us through generations of Hilary's family,

That once we too were able to increase,

Is swiftly vanishing.

The opinion is going round

That Hilary is being duped

By so-called visionaries and dreamers

And that his wild, enthusiastic raptures

Have robbed him of that conscientiousness and care for detail

Which before, made all the products of the firm

Unique and widely known throughout the world.

The same vast numbers of people

As used to praise our work so highly

Are now loudly complaining about it.
It's been remarked on for a long time already
How Hilary allows himself to be led into error
By people seeking for 'very special' spiritual powers.
His soul has always had such inclinations;
But previously he always knew how to keep them separate
From the working day.

Hilary comes into the room.

MANAGER (to the Secretary):

It's necessary, I think,
For me to talk with the head of the factory alone
For a little while.

The Secretary leaves the room.

My deep concern and worry
Make me wish to take the opportunity

For a rather serious word with you.

HILARY:

What is it

That causes my adviser

Such concern?

MANAGER:

A whole number of things make it quite clear

That our production is continuing to decline.

We are failing to achieve what we should.

And the voices of complaint are growing louder.

People say the quality of our products is deteriorating

And that our competitors are outdoing us.

Many deplore—quite rightly in my opinion—

The breakdown of our punctuality,

MANAGER:

Which was once the hallmark of our firm.

If this continues, even the best friends we have

Will soon cease to be satisfied with us.

I have been fully aware of this for some time.

To tell you the truth, it doesn't worry me.

I must, of course, though, discuss it with you.

You've been far more than an employee—

You've always stood by me as a loyal friend.

So I'll explain quite clearly

What I've often just hinted at.

Whoever wants to create the new,

Must be able to experience, quite calmly, the collapse of the old.

I have no wish to manage the work in future

The way it's been done up till now.

Making profits, benefiting only a few,

And thoughtlessly generating products for the market of earthly life,

With no concern for the consequences,

Seems to me unworthy, since I've understood

How work itself can be ennobled
If it receives the stamp of people active in the spirit.
From now on, Johannes Thomasius, as an artist,
Will lead the new department of our work
That I will build for him nearby.
His spirit will give an artistic form
To what we produce mechanically,
Creating products for everyday use
Which as well as being useful, also have nobility and beauty.
Industry and Art must be united—
Daily life be filled with an aesthetic sense.
Thus, to this corpse-like body—
As I see our work now—
I shall bring the soul—
Which alone can give it meaning.

MANAGER (after some reflection):

The plan for such a wondrous enterprise
Goes quite against the spirit of our times.

For everything that we achieve
Can only hope to reach perfection
By being very strictly specialized.
The mighty powers in life that utterly impersonally
Combine the different parts to form a whole,
They thoughtlessly give every separate part
A value, which wisdom cannot give it.
And even without this,
Your project would still be in vain.
How would you ever find someone
Capable of carrying out this plan
That you've thought out so beautifully?
I simply don't believe it's possible.

HILARY:

My friend, you know I do not follow dreams.
I would never have set myself such high goals,
If a lucky star had not led to me
The man who can bring about what I'm striving for.

It amazes me you haven't noticed
That the man for this is Strader.
One who knows his spirit in its true being,
And has a sense for the highest human tasks
Should not be called a dreamer
If he feels as one such task
The need to provide for this man a field of work.

MANAGER (surprised):

Strader!
Is he not a living example of how human thinking can become blinded
When it loses its grasp of reality?
That his machine originated in genuine spiritual inspiration—
I do not doubt.
And if one day it can be realized,
The healing effects will certainly flow from it
Which Strader believed so close at hand.
But for a long time it will remain only a model,
Because the forces which he needs to make it work

Have not yet been discovered.

It saddens me that you could think

That any good would ever come from entrusting your work to this man,

Who has already experienced the shipwreck

Of his boldly thought-out creation.

There is no doubt this led him to the spirit-heights,

Which will always lure the human soul,

But souls should not attempt to scale them

Till they've attained the necessary powers.

HILARY:

The fact that you've praised the spirit of this man,

While attempting to denounce him,

Only confirms his worth.

According to your own words, it was not his fault

That his invention didn't succeed.

Surely, therefore, to be working among us here,

Where nothing from the outside now opposes him,

Is the right place for him to be.

MANAGER:

Even if I try and overcome all my objections,
And try and think as you do,
There's more that forces me to disagree.
For who will there be to appreciate what you produce,
And show sufficient understanding to make use of it?
All your capital will be swallowed up
Before the work's even begun.
And that will be the end of it.

HILARY:

It's completely clear that my plans
Would have to be seen as imperfect
If understanding cannot first be created
For our new approach and new way of working.
What Strader and Johannes are working on
Will need to be brought to completion

At the place which I will set up
For the furthering of spiritual knowledge.
What Benedictus, Capesius and Maria will make known there,
Will awaken in people the need
To permeate daily life with spiritual revelation.

MANAGER:

Well, you'll certainly make your little clique happy
Living just for itself, far from the world.
But you're shutting yourself off from true human life.
I know your aim is to overcome egoism,
But the truth is you'll be feeding it.

HILARY:

You seem to think of me as some dreamer
Who thoughtlessly denies the experience life has brought him.
This is exactly what I would be doing,
If for a single moment I saw success the way you do.

What seems valuable to me, may well fail outwardly.

But even if the whole world would ridicule it,

And for this reason it collapses,

Still, it would have been placed here,

On earth, as an example, even if only once.

It will work on, spiritually,

Even if it doesn't survive in earthly life.

A portion of that power will be created in it

Which will eventually bring about

The marriage of spiritual goals and earthly deeds.

Spiritual science makes this clear.

MANAGER:

I had wanted to approach you

With what I felt duty-bound to discuss as an employee of your firm.

But the way you speak enables me

Also to speak quite openly with you,

As friend to friend.

Working alongside you, as I have, I've felt the need

For years now, to try and gain knowledge

Of those things you devote yourself to,

And to which you give so much of your energy.
I could learn about this in books
Which sought to reveal spiritual knowledge.
Although the worlds they pointed me towards are closed to me
I was able to imagine for myself, intuitively,
How those human beings must feel
Who devote themselves faithfully to such spiritual disciplines.
Through my own research, I confirmed
What many experts in this field clearly describe
About the type of person who feels at home in the spiritual world.
Above all else it struck me
That, in spite of all precautions,
When such people have to leave the high realms of their spiritual
experience
And return to earth,
They're not able to distinguish between reality and illusion.
Out of the spiritual world in which they have been living,
Certain images emerge
That prevent them correctly perceiving the physical world
And deceptively confuse the power of judgement needed for our earthly
life.

HILARY:

What you put forward as an objection
Merely strengthens me, because it shows
That in you I have one more colleague,
Close to my future plans.
How could I have guessed
That you'd have made yourself familiar
With the kind of souls
Wishing to join me in my work?
You know the dangers which threaten them:
You'll therefore also be able to see from their deeds
That they know the paths which will protect them.
Soon you'll gain a trust in the whole situation;
And in the future I'll find in you,
Yet again, the adviser I cannot do without.

MANAGER:

I cannot give myself to deeds
Whose effects are unclear to me.
The people in whom you put your trust
Seem to me to have fallen into exactly
The kind of delusion of which I spoke.
And those who choose to listen to them
Will be drawn into it as well. Such power of delusion
Overrides all conscious goal-oriented thinking.
You will always find me at your side,
Ready and willing to offer my advice,
For as long as you base your work
On the firm foundation of earthly reality.
Your new way of working, though, is not for me!

HILARY:

By your refusal, you jeopardize this work
Which is there to serve spiritual goals.
Without the advice and help you give, I would be lamed.
Consider also what a deep and earnest sense of duty

Must arise when destiny gives such a clear sign,
As I have to recognize, in the gathering together of these people.

MANAGER:

The more you go on like this,
The more you convince me that
You've fallen into error, and don't even know it.
You think you are serving humanity:
In fact you're only serving the little circle of people
Who, because of your support, will be able
To devote themselves for a little longer
To their spirit-dream.
This place will soon be bustling with activity,
Which these souls will no doubt see as 'spiritually ordained';
In fact it will be a phantom of hot air,
Which will eat up all the hard-earned fruits of our work.

HILARY:

If you will not offer me your support,
The future does indeed appear bleak.

Enter Strader.

Ah, dear Strader, I've been expecting you...
What's just transpired makes it necessary
For us to postpone our outing,
And to discuss certain important matters instead.
My old friend has just confided in me
That he cannot go along with what we're planning.
So let us now hear from the man
Who has fully committed himself to our work.
Much depends now on how people's souls
May find one another; we confront each other
Like different worlds, and yet we are asked
To unite our strengths and thus create something
Of great importance for the world.

STRADER:

So Hilary's entrusted colleague will not
Support the hope-filled project, which
Precisely your wisdom makes possible?
But our plan will only then be able to succeed
When well-tested practical experience
Wisely joins with goals that serve the future.

MANAGER:

I do not intend merely to withhold my support.
I would also like to show to my good friend
The complete pointlessness of what he's doing.

STRADER:

I'm not surprised that you should think
That any plan that bears the name of 'Strader'
Is doomed to failure.
I've had to witness the collapse of an even greater project,

Because the forces are still hidden in our time
That have the power to make what's well-thought-out materially effective.
People know that I must thank spiritual illumination
For what did prove its validity, yet could not come to life.
This testifies for people against my powers of judgement
And at the same time kills their faith that the wellsprings
Of true creativity on earth are to be found in the spirit.

- - - - -

It will be hard, I know, for me to convince people
That through this experience I have gained the strength
To avoid making the same error twice.
I had to go wrong then, in order this time
To steer safely past truth's rocky cliffs.

- - - - -

Your doubts, though, are completely understandable.
Your kind of spirit, in particular, must find
Almost no value in the way we work.

- - - - -

But it is also said you wish to keep your working life
Strictly separate from a striving for the spirit,

Where we seek, through our own forces,
To work transformatively upon our souls,
You want to see that as a matter
Only for those times when we are not working.
To bring together, though, our inner, spiritual work
With the work we do in the physical world—
This is the goal of that spiritual stream
Which has clearly shown to me
The way life must develop.

MANAGER:

For as long as we offer up what we attain in spirit
Only to the spirit,
Our souls are ennobled and our lives
Find their meaning.
But when spirit also wishes to experience existence
And even to master other realities than its own,
It approaches realms where
Truth is often threatened by illusion.

I've gained this insight through my own efforts in understanding spiritual matters.

And it is this that has formed my attitude today—

Not my natural inclinations, as you've wrongly assumed

From what others have said of me.

STRADER:

So then it is a spiritual error in you

Which makes you oppose my views with such hostility.

Our difficulties will therefore grow ever greater.

It's relatively easy for the spiritual researcher

To work in partnership with other human beings,

Who have let themselves be instructed

By nature and by life, about the meaning of existence.

But when thoughts, which claim to spring

From spiritual sources,

Come into conflict with others when they attempt to unite—

Then harmony can seldom be achieved.

After musing in silence.

Yet ... whatever must happen, will happen.

Please—make a new examination of my plans.

Perhaps it will make you change

The opinion that you formed of them at first.

Curtain, while each remains fixed in thought.

SCENE TWO

A mountain landscape. In the background, Hilary's house in the vicinity of the factory, though the factory is not visible. On the right—a waterfall. Johannes and, unknown to him, Capesius.

JOHANNES:

Rock walls, rising steeply from the earth—

Towering up... their silent being

Fills all space, creating vast riddles.

It does not mortify the soul, in an agony of questioning,

That does not wish to understand the revelation of existence,

But only to gaze upon it

And drink in its living blessing.

Around these rocks ... the flickering play of light—

Their bare, flat surfaces ... their silent strength.

And here, the forest... green shades darkening into blue.

This is the world in which Johannes's soul

Weaving for itself images of the future,

Would happily linger.

Johannes's soul must feel within itself

The depths and widths of this majestic world.

Creative powers will then release in him

Capacities to reveal to human hearts

The magic of the world, transformed through art.

Johannes would be capable of none of this, though,

If not for Maria, whose tender warmth

Awoke, so lovingly, the forces of his soul.

I thank the wise guidance of destiny

For bringing me so near to her.

What a brief time since I've known her

Present at my side; what a deep union

Has been formed, in these few weeks,

Between my soul and hers.

Her spirit lives in me, even when she's far away;

When I call up before my soul the deepest strivings of my will,

It is she who thinks within my thinking.

Maria appears as a thought-form of Johannes.

Maria, here in front of me? But in what form?

She should never appear to me like this.

So spiritually stern—so ‘worthy’—

Freezing all earthly feeling—no—

Johannes cannot—will not—

See Maria like this—

It cannot be the same Maria

That wise powers of destiny

So gently led towards me.

Maria vanishes from Johannes’s vision.

Where is the Maria who had such love for Johannes—

Before she had transformed his soul

And led it into frosty heights of spirit?

And also the Johannes—who loved Maria—

Where is he now? He was here a moment ago;

Blissfully restoring me to myself.

But he's vanished. The past

Cannot so cruelly wrench him from me.

Maria again becomes visible to Johannes.

MARIA:

Maria, as you wish to see her,

Does not exist in worlds where truth prevails.

The spirit of Johannes, waylaid by soul-delusions,

Wanders into realms of untruth; free yourself

From the power of your wishes, which tempt you.

The raging storm of your soul I feel within me;

It robs me of the peace I need.

It is not Johannes who sends this storm into my soul;

But a being he has long since overcome within himself.

It wanders now, in phantom-form, through widths of spirit-space.

Recognize it! And it will dissolve into nothingness.

JOHANNES:

This is Maria—in truth.

She speaks about Johannes as at this time

He really does appear to himself.

Long ago he raised himself to a state of being

Quite different from what the fantastic play of dreams

Paints for me, as I have allowed my soul

To be lulled into a peaceful, drowsy twilight state.

But this dreamy state does not yet possess me.

I can still flee from it—and want to now.

It often draws me into its orbit—and then it seeks,

With all its strength, to wholly win me for itself - - - -;

But it drives me to free myself from it.

For years it has filled me, in the depths of my soul,

With spirit-substance—

And yet—

I do not wish to know it any more.

- - - - -

You alien being in Johannes's soul—

Leave me! Give me back to myself, as I once was—

Before you began to work within me.

I wish to see Johannes

Wholly freed from you. - - - -

Benedictus, also as a thought-form of Johannes, appears beside Maria.

BENEDICTUS:

Johannes, heed the voice of warning in your soul!

The one fills you spiritually, who has arisen

Now as the primary power of your being,

He must faithfully hold sway, at your side,

Demanding of you that, within your will,

You fashion into human form the forces of his being.

Hidden within you he must work

So that you may eventually become

What you already know to be your distant future goal.

Your personal struggles you must bear through life,

Shut tight within your soul. You yourself

You will only win, when you let yourself,
Courageously, be ever more fully possessed by him.

MARIA (seen as a thought of Johannes):

My solemn holy vow rays out its strength,
Which shall preserve for you what you've achieved.
You find me in the frozen fields of ice,
Where spirits must themselves create the light
When darkneses may lame the powers of life.
Seek for me in depths of worlds, where souls
Must battle to attain the feeling of the gods,
Through victories that win from nothingness new being.
But never seek me in the shadowy realm
Where tattered soul-remnants win, from delusory being,
A fleeting life—and where the spirit is wrapped
In a fantastic play of dreams,
Because it seeks oblivion in self-enjoyment
And seriousness seems too much trouble.

Benedictus and Maria disappear.

JOHANNES:

She speaks of delusion - - - -

- - - - But how beautiful it is!

It is alive; Johannes feels himself within it.

Within it he also feels the nearness of Maria.

Johannes has no desire to know how the spirit

Solves riddles in dark depths of soul.

But he does want to create—and to work as an artist.

So, let there still stay hidden for him

That which, were it conscious,

Would only wish to gaze on higher worlds.

He sinks into further contemplation. Capesius gets up from his seat, shaking himself as if from profound contemplation.

CAPESIUS:

Have I not just clearly experienced, in my own soul,
The images of longing created, almost
In a dream, by Johannes?
Thoughts flared up within me, that
Did not come from me; - - - - which only he could have.
The being of his soul lived in mine.
I saw his younger self, as he deludedly
Saw himself in spirit and frivolously
Shunned the ripe fruits of his spirit. - - - -

- - - - -

But how? Why am I experiencing this now?
It is no ordinary happening for the spirit researcher
To behold the soul of another within oneself!

- - - - -

I've often heard from Benedictus
That only they can do this—for a short time—
Who have been singled out, by grace of destiny,
In order to be raised up one step higher
On their spiritual path. - - - -
Can I think that this applies to me?

Something that may only happen rarely,
For it would be terrible if at any time
The seer could eavesdrop on other people's souls!

Did I see the truth? - - - - Or was it delusion
That let me dream of another soul?
I must find out from Johannes himself.

Capesius approaches Johannes who now becomes aware of him.

JOHANNES:

Capesius—I thought that you were miles away.

CAPESIUS:

My soul felt very near to yours.

JOHANNES:

Near to mine—in this moment—it can't have done!

CAPESIUS:

Why are you so shocked?

JOHANNES:

No, no... I'm not shocked - - - -

Enter Maria.

JOHANNES (to himself):

- - - - - His gaze ... He really does see right through me.

CAPESIUS (to himself):

His shock shows me that I've seen the truth.

He turns to Maria.

Maria, you've appeared at the right moment.

Perhaps you can solve the heavy riddle weighing on me.

MARIA:

I didn't expect to find you here, but Johannes.

Sensing that he was wrestling with some great riddle

I came to look for him—you, though,

I imagined at peace, contemplating

The beautiful goals of the project

That Hilary now makes possible.

CAPESIUS:

Beautiful goals? What are they to me?

They're just a burden now.

MARIA:

A burden? But you were so happy

That this was just what you were hoping for?

CAPESIUS:

What I have experienced in this hour of destiny

Has wrought a complete change in me—

Any kind of earthly activity would now damage

The powers of seership that have awoken in me.

MARIA:

Whoever has been able to walk on paths of spirit

Experiences many such destiny-laden signs.

He must follow them, in soul;

But he cannot have interpreted them rightly

If they turn his earthly duties into a burden.

Capesius sits and falls briefly into a state of contemplation.

Lucifer appears to Maria.

LUCIFER:

All your efforts are in vain.

Within his heart, powers are at work

Which allow me entrance to his soul.

Maria—direct your seership

Into his soul depths—you will see

How with spirit-wings he lifts himself free

From your work on earth, so filled with love and warmth.

Lucifer remains in the landscape. As Maria turns decisively to Capesius to rouse him from his contemplation, he comes to himself of his own accord.

MARIA:

If Johannes, on his spirit-path,
Was to feel burdened by his earthly duties,
It wouldn't be justified—but it would be understandable:
For his task is to create things, outwardly.
But yours is to share spirit-knowledge with people,
So you'll remain in the sphere of the soul.

CAPESIUS:

Spirit-power is lost far more in words
Than in creating outer things.
Words force us to use concepts for what we see;
But concepts are enemies of seership.
The spiritual experience I had
Was only visible to my inner eye
Because that soul that appeared to me,
Though known to my earthly self,
Has never been fully grasped by it.
If my experience proves true, then nothing
Will hold me to this project.

I will have to feel that lofty powers

Point me now to other goals

Than those Hilary has in mind.

Facing Johannes

Johannes—speak plainly—just now,

When you were lost in contemplation,

Were you feeling long-past wishes of your soul

Arise again in you, like your present self?

JOHANNES:

Is it possible then for my spirit's wild confusion

To reproduce itself and be the inner experience of someone

else? And does the seeing of it so strengthen the error

That it then becomes part of the wider world, outside us?

Johannes sinks again into contemplation. Maria turns her gaze to Lucifer and hears him speak.

LUCIFER:

I find the gates open to this soul as well!

I will use this situation well!

If this soul too is filled with spirit-wishes,

Then must the work of love,

Which through Hilary is now so dangerous for me,

Collapse and fail!

All Maria's power within Johannes I shall destroy. Then everything she could achieve will fall to me!

Exit Lucifer. Capesius consciously straightens himself up and speaks with ever-greater confidence.

CAPESIUS:

There can be no doubt. I did see truly.

I was able to see what Johannes was living through.

It is also quite clear, that his world

Could only reveal itself to me, because mine

Has never sought to grasp his conceptually.

The spirit-path demands complete solitude.

Only those who encounter each other conceptually

Can work together. The soul can only reach

The wide spheres of the worlds of light

If it keeps itself far away from human life.

- - - - -

I find in Father Felix my example.

In proud solitude he seeks the spirit-light,

On pathways strange to other people.

And his search has been successful—because

He has always kept himself far away from conceptual life.

I shall continue to follow his path: and your work,

Where spirit-sight is burdened by earthly reality,

Will no longer tempt Capesius.

He leaves.

MARIA:

This is how it is with human beings

When their better self sinks into spirit-sleep,
And powers of wishes nourish them,
Until they are once more able to awaken,
Filling with light their true spirit-nature.
This is the sleep that all people sleep
Before they are awakened by spirit-sight.
They know nothing of this waking-sleeping,
They seem awake—because they always sleep.
Whenever the seer moves from his true state of being
To such a kind of waking, he falls asleep.
Capesius will now leave us.
It's no passing whim, but his whole condition,
Which drives him away from our goals.
That he turns away from us, is not his doing.
One sees in it powerful signs of destiny.
The rest of us must therefore devote ourselves
To the work even more strongly.

JOHANNES:

Maria, don't demand of Johannes, right now,
That he steel himself for new goals.
Like Capesius, his soul needs spirit-sleep,
So it may ripen its quietly germinating forces.
One day, I know, I will make myself strong enough
To work for spirit-worlds,—but don't ask now
That I become active—not now!
It was me, remember, who drove Capesius away.
If I had been ready for this work, he would be as well.

MARIA:

You drove Capesius away? You must be dreaming!

JOHANNES:

I dreamed quite knowingly—
Yes, I dreamed while wide awake.
What to cosmic powers is but semblance
Showed itself to me as a completely clear image

Of where I am in my development.

I know for sure: my wishing, my desiring, was my very self.

And so Johannes was present in my soul

As he used to be, before his spirit seized hold of him

And filled him with that second self.

He is not dead; Johannes's life of wishing and desiring

Renders him the companion of my soul.

Though I have dazed him, I have not conquered him.

He demands the right to his own existence

Every time that second self... must fall asleep.

And always to stay awake—is too much for it.

And so it was sleeping in that moment

When Capesius experienced within himself

How that other being tore me from myself.

And so the power that drove him away

Is at work in me and not in him—the power

That will not allow us

To turn our spirits to this earthly work.

MARIA:

The spirit-powers draw near—call on them!

Turn your gaze to depths of spirit-worlds.

And wait, until the powers at work there

Feel what it is, in your own true being,

That moves in affinity with theirs.

They will conjure you up, before your spirit-eye,

Enabling you and them to become one.

And the spirit in you will speak with spirit-beings;

Listen closely to this spirit-conversation.

It will bear you into spheres of light

And bind you, in your essence, to the spirit.

What is dimly glimmering to you now, from far distant times,

You will see quite clearly, in the light of the world.

It will exert no power over you,

For you will freely direct it.

Compare it with the elemental beings,

With different kinds of shadows and spectres.

Place it next to every kind of demon

And you'll experience what it really is.

But come to know yourself in realms of spirits
Who join together primal world-beginnings;
Who know their nearness to the fountain-springs of life;
And give direction to the spheres' wise aims.
Such cosmic vision will so strengthen you
That, amidst the surging waves of spirit,
You will be able to unite that which lives
In the very core of your soul, with yourself.

It is the spirit's will I tell you this.
Just listen then to what you have been conscious of
And yet, till now, have not been wholly wedded to,
In depths of soul.

JOHANNES:

Clearly showing that he has roused himself to a strong decision.

I will hear it—in spite of myself—I will!

From both sides of the stage enter elemental beings. From stage-right—small, steel-grey, gnome-like beings. They are nearly all head, which droops forward, and they have long, mobile limbs, well adapted for gesturing but clumsy for walking. From stage-left—slim, nearly headless, sylph-like forms, their feet and hands something between fins and wings. Some of them are yellow-red with sharply-outlined figures; the others are blue-green and less defined. The words spoken by all these beings are accompanied by expressive gestures, which develop into dance.

CHORUS OF GNOMES:

We harden, we strengthen
The glittering, dusty matter.
We loosen, we crumble
The stiff and crusty strata.
We nimbly crush the hard-stuff,
And slowly fasten loose-stuff,
With bodies made of spirit
And woven out of thinking-matter—
Already quick and clever,
When sleepy human beings
At earth's beginning still were dreaming.

CHORUS OF SYLPHS:

We weave, we unravel

The airy water-surges.

We sunder, we scatter

The living sun-force in the seed.

With care we thicken powers of light,

And lessen wisely force of fruiting,

With bodies, soul-enwoven

And flowing out from radiant feeling,

Which ever-living glimmers,

That human beings living

Find joy in earth-becoming's meaning.

CHORUS OF GNOMES:

We laugh and we chuckle,

We mock and we snigger,

When human beings stumbling,

With human senses fumbling,
Perceive what we've created
And think their brains can comprehend it.
When really spirits working
Have conjured it before their stupid staring.

CHORUS OF SYLPHS:

We nurture, we cherish,
We ripen, we quicken,
When children into life first entering,
When aged ones in error weaving,
Are nourished by our workings;
And children and the aged ones
All dim enjoy within time's streaming What we eternally are pondering.

These elemental beings form two clusters and remain visible in the background. From stage-right the three soul-forces appear—Philia, Astrid and Luna—with the Other Philia.

PHILIA:

They ray forth their brightness
As lights filled with loving
That blessedly ripen;
They warm with their mildness
They heat with great power,
As the world of becoming
Seeks effectual being;
That effectual being
Brings souls joy and delight
Who with love do surrender
To the radiant light.

ASTRID:

They weave what is living
As fashioning helpers
In arising of being.
The earths they burst open
The airs they fast thicken,

That there be transformation
In creation's great striving.
That creation's great striving
Makes happy the spirits
Who feel themselves weaving
In the life of creation.

LUNA:

They're carefully moulding
As active creators,
The malleable matter;
The edges they sharpen
The surfaces smoothen,
That rightly be builded
The forms as they stand there;
That forms as they stand there
Enthuse people's wills
For right ways to build
As active creators.

OTHER PHILIA:

They pluck all the blossoms
As wild carefree users
And work like enchanters;
They dream all that's truthful
Uphold all delusion;
That the seed which is sleeping
Be awakened to life;
For now waking dreaming
To souls is revealing
Enchantment that's weaving
Throughout their own being.

*The four soul-forces leave stage-left, together with the elemental beings.
Johannes, who during the previous events, was sunk in deep contemplation,
arouses himself from it.*

JOHANNES:

‘For now waking dreaming
To souls is revealing
Enchantment that’s weaving
Throughout their own being.’
These words still clearly sound within me—
All that I was seeing, though,
Has fled from my soul in chaos. - - - - -

- - - - -

But what power is it that stirs in me when I ponder:

Enchantment that’s weaving

Throughout their own being.

He falls again into meditation. Before him, as his own thought-form, there appears the Spirit of Johannes’s Youth, with Lucifer at its left side, and the soul of Theodora at its right side.

SPIRIT OF JOHANNES’S YOUTH:

Your wishes and desires, they feed my life,
My breath drinks deep the dreaming of your youth;

When you make no attempt to enter worlds

Where I can't follow—then I exist.

But when you lose me in yourself

Then I in pain must serve cruel shades

And do their dreadful work.

Sustainer of my life—do not abandon me!

LUCIFER:

He will not abandon you—I see desires

For light within his being's depths

Which cannot follow in Maria's footsteps.

When these desires, with all the glory they give rise to,

Fully illumine Johannes's creative soul:

He will not wish to see their precious fruits

Be squandered in that realm

Where love alone holds sway, without beauty.

Then he'll no longer prize that self so highly

That, by over-estimating knowledge,

Seeks to throw away its best forces to the shades.

When wisdom's light starts shining in his wishes
Their worth for him will fully be revealed;
They'll have but little value for him
While they remain submerged in darkness.
Until his wishes reach the light of wisdom,
It will be me who will sustain you—loyally—
With that light found deep in human souls.

- - - - -

Johannes still lacks pity for your sufferings,
Each time he strives to gain his light-filled heights
He always lets you sink among the shades.
And then he can forget that you, his child,
Must undergo your spell-bound life, of pain.
But from now on, I'll be there at your side
When you, a shadow, shiver through his guilt.
And I, Lucifer, by ancient right

Spirit of Youth winces at the word 'Lucifer'.

Will seize for myself, in the depths of his soul,

What he leaves unguarded
In his flight to the spirit.
This treasure I'll then bring to you
To make lighter your dark solitude
In the world of shadows.
But you will only be fully freed from enchantment
When he can once again unite with you.
He can put this off—but not prevent it.
For Lucifer will have his ancient rights.

THEODORA:

You spirit-child—in the dark realm of the shades
You live out Johannes's youth. From realms, though,
Warmed through by love and filled with light,
The soul who protects Johannes lovingly leans
Towards you. She wishes to redeem you from enchantment—
If you are willing to receive from her feeling
That which will give you a life in blessedness.
I would join you with the beings of the elements,

Who work unconsciously in the surrounding world,
And always keep away from wakefulness of soul.
You can fashion forms with spirits of the earth
And shine out forces with the souls of fire,
If you'll offer up your knowing life unto that will
Whose light, which has no human wisdom,
Shines with ever greater strength.
You'll keep your knowing, which is but half your own,
Safe from Lucifer, and be of most valuable
Service to Johannes. From the being of his soul
I will bring you what makes him thirst for your existence,
And reaches out to him refreshingly
The gift of spirit-sleep.

LUCIFER:

But beauty she can never give you—
Which I will dare to snatch from her.

THEODORA:

I will let beauty spring from noble feeling—
And ripen in the work of sacrifice.

LUCIFER:

She'll tear away from you your free will
And give it to the spirits who rule in darkness.

THEODORA:

I will awaken that spirit-filled vision
That knows it is even free from Lucifer.

Lucifer, Theodora and the Spirit of Johannes's Youth disappear. Johannes, awakening from meditation, sees the Other Philia approaching him.

OTHER PHILIA:

For now waking dreaming

To souls is revealing
Enchantment that's weaving
Throughout their own being.

JOHANNES:

O mysterious spirit—it was your words
That opened this world to me!—
Yet only one of all its wonders seems important to me now.
That shadow that showed itself to me with Lucifer and Theodora—
Is it to be found—in realms of spirit—
As a living being?

OTHER PHILIA:

It is living—yes—and is, through you, awakened to existence.
Just as everything shows itself in image-form
Within a mirror, when its surface is lit,
So must everything you see in spirit—
Before full maturity grants you the right to such vision—
Be mirrored livingly within the realm
Of half-waking spirit shadows.

JOHANNES:

So it is only an image—thus mirrored through me?

OTHER PHILIA:

But an image that lives and will stay alive

As long as you hold fast

To a life once lived, within you—

That you may daze

But cannot yet, for sure, completely conquer.

Your awakening, Johannes, will be nothing but illusion,

Till you yourself redeem that shade

Given by your guilt, a trapped, enchanted life.

JOHANNES:

How grateful I am to this spirit.

It brings me true advice - - - -

Which I must follow.

Slow curtain, while the Other Philia and Johannes remain motionless.

SCENE THREE

The same landscape as in the preceding scene. Magnus Bellicosus, Romanus, Torquatus and Hilary enter from stage-left, deep in conversation.

BELLICOSUS:

But if the Manager, in his stubbornness, will not bend,
How can the work succeed
That Hilary wishes to place
In such loving service to the world?

ROMANUS:

The objections raised by the Manager—our friend's loyal colleague—
Do not only carry weight with those who arrive at their opinions
After considering the outer demands of life—
Are they not also in tune with the mystic's true opinion?

BELLICOSUS:

But they have no place at all among those
Who spiritually surround and support our goals.
The pupils of Benedictus took over from us,
In our Mystic work;—Hilary is now wishing
To create for them a setting for their work,
So that their spirit-fruits may come to maturity.
Wise powers of destiny brought them together with us
Within the temple; our friend [Hilary]
Is merely answering the call of spirit-duty
That was made known to us within the temple.

ROMANUS:

But are you sure you understand correctly
What the spirit commanded? Doesn't it make much more sense
That Benedictus and his pupils
Should keep themselves within the inner temple
And not yet tread the rough path

That Hilary wants to lead them on?

For even with him, spirit-vision can change all too easily

To a sleep, where the soul but dreams.

BELLICOSUS:

I'd have hoped never to hear you say such things!

They might be said by Hilary's Manager

Who only gains from books, the knowledge he has.

But you are called upon to recognize the signs

That show themselves upon the mystic path.

The manner in which Benedictus's pupils were led to us

Speaks a clear language. They have been

Brought together with us, so we may follow

What is shown to their clairvoyance.

TORQUATUS:

Another sign, though, shows

That the full blessings of the spirit-powers

Have not streamed down upon the work
Placed before our souls within the temple.
Capesius has separated from Benedictus
And his circle of pupils.
The fact that he has not yet experienced
Within himself the wakefulness of soul
That Benedictus by now was hoping to find in him
Casts serious doubts upon the teacher's reliability as well.

BELLICOSUS:

Though I'm still far from the gifts of real seership,
I will often feel how a certain event
Unlocks an intuitive foreboding in me.
The first time I saw Capesius, at his place in the temple,
The thought oppressed me that destiny had brought him
Both near to us and far from us at the same time.

ROMANUS:

I well understand this foreboding of yours.
But the intuitive sense that I had at that moment
Was that none of these new occult friends of ours
Was so closely bound to me, by destiny, as Strader.
For me such intuitive feeling is just a sign
Pointing out to me the direction
Where my thinking should set to work.
But when it's time to turn to action
I must then eradicate this intuitive feeling
Empowering my thought.
The strict rules of occultism teach me this.
I do indeed feel closely connected to Benedictus's pupils
In the sphere of the spirit,
But if I am to find the way back
From this inner circle
To everyday life on earth,
Then only with Strader
Would I dare to do this.

Ahriman appears in the background and passes from stage-left to stage-right without being seen.

TORQUATUS:

Hilary's Manager doesn't see Strader at all

As the sure spirit

Able to be effective in outer life.

And my own inner voice, if I listen to it,

Reveals that Strader completely lacks

The proper soul mood for mysticism.

What outer signs can convince him of,

What his own reasoning can grasp of life in the spirit,

Stir in him the powerful drive to do research.

But he's still a long way from direct spiritual experience.

How could such a person's spiritual creativity

Be anything else

Than a dark, mystical web of dreams?

ROMANUS:

Up until now he has not gone far enough

Down the spirit-path of his friends
To have become linked to those opponents of the soul,
Which are of great danger to many a mystic,
If they pursue him into sense-existence.

BELLICOSUS:

If you believe him free of such opponents
Then nothing stands in the way of your helping him—
So that the great work Hilary
Wants to carry out through him
Can be achieved.
When the Manager hears how highly you revere Strader,
While he holds him in such low regard,
It will be sure to shake his confidence in his own judgement.
You alone are capable of winning him over.
He's well aware that
Owing to the way you cleverly will think things through beforehand,
Everything you've done in outer life
Has always been successful.

ROMANUS:

My dear Hilary, if you place Strader at your side,
And, free of illusion, will keep the rest of Benedictus's pupils
Far away from your work,
You will no longer be on your own;
For I would then not only give you the help
That Bellicosus asks of me,
I would furthermore place everything I own at your disposal,
In order to serve, as effectively as I can,
Strader's beautiful plans.

HILARY:

How can you possibly think that Strader would part now
From Benedictus's other pupils—
And without them simply seek his own spirit-goals?
The others are as near to him as his own self.

ROMANUS:

They may, of course, be near to him, as people.

Only that part of his soul, though,

Which is still in deep spirit-sleep,

Could imagine that he is spiritually united to them as well.

Very soon, though, I think we'll see

How that sleeping part as well can waken into life.

They exit stage-right. From the other side enter Capesius, Strader, Felix and Felicia.

CAPESIUS:

All I can do at present

Is to follow the spirit inwardly, within my soul.

Were I to take on the burden of outer work,

Attempting to make the spirit manifest in the world of sense,

I'd have to pretend to grasp the ground of existence

In worlds whose being

Has not gained full reality as yet

Within me.

I can only behold as much of cosmic existence

As takes on form in me.

How can what I create help other people,

If when I create it

I am just indulging in myself.

STRADER:

What you are saying, if I understand you,

Is that all that you would create

Would bear the stamp of your own being;

And that you'd therefore only be giving the world

Your own self?

CAPESIUS:

Until my own inner world

Bumps up against some other being,

That's how it is.

Just how little I'm yet able to enter the world of another,

I had painfully to admit to myself,

When recently I awoke for a brief moment to full clarity.

FELIX BALDE:

I have never heard you say these things.—

But - - - - I have never understood you as well

As now, when nothing but your own self is speaking.

There resounds through your words the true mood of mysticism,

Which has been my discipline for many years.

Only this can perceive the light

In which, through clear vision,

The human spirit can knowingly experience itself

Within the cosmic spirit.

CAPESIUS:

Feeling how near I've come to you,

I fled here to you from a commotion
That would have killed my inner world.

STRADER:

In the past I often understood the things you're now saying;
I saw them as wisdom, - - - - but right now
Not a single word of it makes sense to me.
Capesius and Father Felix—they both...
Conceal dark meanings in clear words...

- - - - -

I seem to be experiencing your words as just
The outer clothing of certain soul-powers,
Which drive me far away from you into worlds
Quite distant from your kind of spirit.
Worlds I don't wish for—because it is your worlds
I have to love With my inmost soul.
It's easy to bear the opposition
Now threatening my work from outside.
Yes—even if my whole will should be shattered

In the face of it—I could endure.

But to do without your worlds—this is impossible for me.

FELIX BALDE:

Human beings cannot find the spirit world

If they attempt to enter it by seeking.

It gave me great joy once, hearing you speak

About your invention;

How what you did not want to achieve

By seeking with your intellect

You received as illumination.

Then you were near mysticism's true mood.

- - - - -

To strive for nothing - - - - - only to be still and at peace,

The inner being of the soul wide open - - - - -;

That is the mystic mood. Whoever can awaken it,

Leads their inmost soul to the realm of light.

Outer work makes such a mood impossible.

If through mysticism you try and accomplish outer work,

With mystic delusions you'll destroy your life.

STRADER:

I need you both—but I cannot find you.

That which unites us—you see no value in.

How can people ever find each other, to work for the world,

If Mystics refuse to step beyond their own beings?

FELIX BALDE:

The realities of vision are fragile and tender.

Were you to carry them

Into the world of your activity and work,

They would dissolve into nothing

As you passed across.

In devout reverence for the spirit-powers that hold sway,

Allowing spirit-vision to be at peace within the heart—

Only thus do mystics near the world of action.

CAPESIUS:

And should they attempt to enter it some other way,
It will show them very well how error works within it,
But not the glorious, light-filled being of wisdom.
I was able to see into someone else's soul—
I know my inner sight did not deceive me.
But I only saw the error of that soul.
This was all I could see, as by wishing for outer deeds
I had spoiled my spirit-sight.

STRADER:

Thus speaks Capesius, who treads the path
Far in advance of me.
And yet, for me, spiritual vision only arises
When I devote myself to thoughts
Of what can be achieved through deeds.
And then I find myself alive with hope
That I may build up places

Where the spirit can enkindle light—
Light which warmly streams through worlds of spirit
And seeks through human activity in the senses' world
A new home on the earth.

- - - - -

Am I a child of error, then—not your child—
You wisdom-filled worlds of the spirit - - - -!

Strader turns away just for a moment from the others. He has the following spirit-vision—Benedictus, Ahriman and Maria appear as Strader's thought-forms—but he is nonetheless in genuine spiritual communication with them. At first Benedictus with Ahriman, then Maria.

BENEDICTUS:

In wisdom-filled worlds of the spirit
You seek relief from the pain your question brings.
A pain that makes the deepest riddle of your inner life
Weigh heavily on your earthly thinking.
You shall hear the answer—from the depths of your soul,
As the wide worlds of the spirit wish to reveal through my voice.

But learn to grasp what you believe that you know,
What you very often have the courage to speak out,
But which you do but dream,
Within your own soul.
Give to your dream the life I am called on

Ahriman appears.

To reach out to you from the spirit.
What your thinking, though,
Can draw out from the realm of the senses,

This must be transformed into dream-existence.

Capesius and Father Felix
Are banishing you from the spirit-light that they behold.
They open up an abyss between themselves and you.
Do not regret that they have done this—
But gaze into your own abyss.

AHRIMAN:

Just do it!

You will behold what of the human spirit

You find valuable in the world's wide course.

It would be better if other spirits showed this to you

While you were in a dull soul-sleep.

But Benedictus shows it to you while you're awake,

So you'll kill the answer you receive, by seeing it.

Yes. Just do it!

STRADER:

I will do it. But how?

Confused forms... Shifting and changing...

Tearing... Tearing at one another... A war!

Spectres hurling themselves on one another...

Destruction reigns... generating darkness all around;

From the darkness other shadows.

Around them an etheric radiance... reddish... weaving;

One of the forms—quite clearly—frees itself;

Approaches me—sent to me by the abyss.

Maria appears out of the abyss.

MARIA:

You are seeing demons;

Take hold of your strength—and they will change.

They appear to you as they are not.

If you can hold them fast,

Until their spectral beings shine before your soul,

You'll see the value they can have within the world's evolving.

Your vision fades away, though,

Before they find the strength to shine.

Illumine them with your own light.

Where is your light?

You radiate darkness.

Recognize your own darkness around you—

You're creating wild confusing darkness in the light.

You experience it, as it arises,

But never experience yourself creating it.
You want to forget your craving to create.
But it rules, unconsciously, within your being,
Because you are too cowardly to radiate your light.
You want to enjoy this light of yours.
You want to enjoy yourself alone within it.
You are seeking for yourself—and are seeking through forgetting.
You are letting yourself sink, dreaming, into yourself.

AHRIMAN:

Yes, hear her—she can solve your riddles.
But her solution will be no solution for you!
She gives you wisdom—
So you can make your way with it to folly!
It could be good for you—in future—
In the bright light of spirit-day;
But when Maria speaks to you like this within your dreams,
She kills the solution, even as she gives it.
Hear her!

STRADER:

What do these words want, Maria?

Have they been born from the light? From my light?

Or do they sound out From my darkness? Benedictus, speak:

Who was it who rose up out of the abyss

To give me counsel?

BENEDICTUS:

She came to find you at your own abyss.

Thus do spirits seek out human beings, to protect them

From beings who fashion spectres before their souls.

These spread such confusing darkness

Over the ruling of the world spirit

That human beings only have knowledge of themselves

Within the web of their own being.

Gaze deeper into your own abyss!

STRADER:

What is it I see living now, in the depths of the abyss?

BENEDICTUS:

Behold the shadow-beings:

to the right, the bluish-red ones, tempting Felix.

And the others, to the left—red, gently brightening into yellow—

Pressing in upon Capesius.

They both feel the power of these shadows - - - -;

And in their loneliness, each creates for himself

The light that lames the shadows of deceit.

AHRIMAN:

He would do better if he showed you

Your shadows.

But he's not capable of it.

It's not that he's lacking in good will.
He just doesn't notice where to look for them.
They're standing right behind you, perilously near.
But you yourself are hiding them from him!

STRADER:

So here at the abyss I hear the same words
I found so foolish
When Hilary's Manager spoke them.

MARIA:

Father Felix tempers the weapons he needs
To ward off his dangers.
But other weapons are needed
By one who has to walk your soul-paths.
And the sword Capesius is forging for himself—
To bravely fight against his soul's opponents—
For you would become a shadow-sword,

If you would use it in that spiritual battle

Souls cannot avoid

Who have to powerfully transform their spirit-being

To make them ripe for earthly deeds.

Their weapons are of no use to you.

But you must know them,

In order to forge, in the right way,

From soul-substance, your own.

The forms of Benedictus, Ahriman and Maria disappear. Outwardly speaking, in other words, Strader returns from his spiritual vision; he looks around for Capesius, Felix and Felicia; they come over to him again; he has meanwhile sat down on a rock.

FELIX BALDE:

My dear Strader. Weren't you transported

Far away from us just now in spirit...

That's how it seemed.

He pauses. When Strader does not reply, he continues.

I had no wish to heartlessly
Drive you away from us
Onto other paths of life.
But only to prevent you yielding even more
To the power of delusion muddling you.
What is perceived in the spirit should only spiritually
Be experienced and received.
Think of the beings of Felicia's fairy tales.
They are living in her soul
And only in people's souls do they wish to be experienced.
How foolish it would be if she wanted to
Let them dance about on puppet-stages!
All their magic would be gone.

FELICIA BALDE:

I really have been silent long enough!
But I must speak, when you even want to make my fairy-folk
Happy—with your 'mystic mood'.

How thankful they would be,
When after sucking from them all their power
You then with mysticism puff them back to life.
All respect to mysticism, of course; but please—
Keep it far away from my fairy-tale realms!

CAPESIUS:

Felicia, was it not your fairy tales
That first set me on the spirit-path?
The air and water spirits
You so often summoned up before my thirsting soul—
Were the first messengers to me from that world
Which now, upon the mystic path, I seek to enter.

FELICIA BALDE:

But since you've been coming to our house
With your new 'mystic ways'—
You ask but little

Of what my beautiful magic beings want.
The ones with a solemn and worthy look
You'll still let pass
But those who, full of joy, love dancing wildly,
Appear to disturb your mystic feelings.

CAPESIUS:

No doubt, Felicia, the deeper meaning of those wonderful beings,
Who display their earnestness in such playful masks
Will also one day be revealed to me.
For now, though, it is beyond my strength.

FELIX BALDE:

Felicia, you know how I love them,
Your fairy-folk, that appear to you;
But to imagine them mechanically embodied
As puppets—I find repulsive.

FELICIA BALDE:

I haven't presented them yet to you in this way.

I know that you are above such things!

But I was happy when I heard of what Strader is planning

And learned that Johannes, too,

Was striving to clothe the spirit in sense-perceptible form.

I could see in the spirit my fairy-tale princes—my fire-souls too—

Joyfully dancing, with such beauty in their art,

In thousands of plays for puppets.

So I've already let them—

With delight at the thought of it—

Seek out the playrooms

Of many, many children.

Curtain.

SCENE FOUR

The same landscape as in the two preceding scenes. The Manager and Romanus are speaking with one another during a walk. (Later: Johannes, Johannes's Double, the Spirit of Johannes's Youth; the Guardian of the Threshold, Ahriman; Benedictus, Maria; Strader, the soul of Theodora.)

MANAGER:

You are someone who knows well Hilary's mystic friends
And I see in you an intelligent man—
Who always keeps watch over his power of judgement,
Both with regard to working life and to concerns of the spirit.
I therefore value your opinion.
But how am I to understand what you've just said?
It seems right to you that Strader's friends
Should keep themselves within the realm of the spirit,
And not yet use their powers of seership
To work in practical life.
But isn't this just as dangerous for Strader?

His whole spiritual approach seems to me to prove
That nature-demons constantly delude him,
When he acts upon his strong desire
To work, through deeds, in outer life.
The wise pupil of the spirit knows
That he must first strengthen himself inwardly
Before he can resist such demons.
But Strader, on his spirit-path, seems completely unaware
Of such opponents.

ROMANUS:

But those good spirit-beings, who guide people
Still outside the spirit, have not yet left his side.
These good spirits turn away from mystics, though,
When they link themselves to beings that serve
Their special mystic mood.
In Strader's bearing, I can quite clearly feel
How nature-demons are still blessing him
With the fruits of their good forces.

MANAGER:

So nothing except your own feelings convince you

Of the good spirits in Strader!

You offer so little—and demand so much!

I suppose I too should consult these spirits

If I'm to continue working here!—

Where for so long I've been allowed

To serve the work and its true spirit,

Which was so dear to Hilary's father.

It still speaks to me from the old man's grave,

Even if his son no longer cares to listen to it.

What would the spirit of that virtuous man say

If he could see the muddle-headed minds

His son is trying to bring into the firm?

I know this spirit, that for ninety years

Maintained itself within his body.

It taught me the true mysteries of work,

In the days when it was still actively involved within the business,

While the son would creep away to the mystics' temple.

ROMANUS:

My friend, surely you must know

How highly I esteem that spirit.

That old man, who you have rightly made your example,

So clearly served it.

And from my childhood to the present

I too have striven to serve it.

Yet, I also crept off to the mystics' temple.

I faithfully planted into the depths of my soul

All that they wished to bestow on me.

But my reasoning mind, when it then stepped back into life,

Left the mood of the temple behind.

I knew that this was the best way

To let the power of this mood work into earthly life.

For you see, I did bring my soul

Out of the temple into my work.

And the soul is best left

Undisturbed by earthly reason.

MANAGER:

And do you think that Strader's way of working
Is even remotely similar to yours?
With you, I always know myself completely free
Of the spirit-beings Strader brings with him.
When he speaks—even when he's in error,
I feel how elemental spirits, burgeoning with life,
Pour themselves through his words and his whole being,
Revealing things inaccessible to our senses.
And it's precisely this I feel so repelled by.

ROMANUS:

What you are saying strikes a deep chord in me.
Since I've drawn nearer to Strader,
I've had to feel how the thoughts I receive from him
Are endowed with quite extraordinary power.

They take living hold of me as if they were my own.

Then one day I had to ask myself:

What if you owe to him—and not yourself—

The force that has made you who you are?

This feeling was soon followed by another:

Do I owe everything that makes me useful in working life

And in the service of humanity

To a former life on earth?

MANAGER:

He makes me feel exactly the same way.

As one draws nearer to him,

The spirit working through him

Powerfully draws in one's soul.

If a soul as strong as yours could succumb to him,

How should I protect my own

If I unite with him in work?

ROMANUS:

It will depend entirely on you, whether you can find
The right way to relate to him.
For myself, I believe that Strader's power
Is not able to harm me,
Since I have formed thoughts
About how he may have attained that power.

MANAGER:

Attained power—him—over you?
The dreamer—over you, the master of the arts of life?

ROMANUS:

One might, perhaps, dare to imagine
That in Strader a spirit is living
Who in an earlier life on earth
Could raise himself to extraordinary heights of soul; - - - -
Who knew much that other people

Could as yet have no inkling of.
Were this the case, it would then be quite possible
That thoughts, that originated in his spirit,
Then found their way
Into the general life of humanity,
Enabling people like myself
To acquire their capacities in life.
The thoughts I seized on in my youth
In my environment, and made my own,
Might well have sprung from this same spirit.

MANAGER:

Does it really seem justified to you
To attribute thoughts—of such tremendous value in life—
Quite specifically to Strader?

ROMANUS:

You know I am not a dreamer.

I am not blindly spinning
Some web of dreams
About what influences our lives.
Nor has it ever been my way
To sleepily follow obscure thoughts.
I look at Strader quite objectively;
How he bears himself as an individual—
With all his qualities—and how he acts;
Even at what doesn't bear fruit in him.
And it's quite clear to me
That I had to form
Exactly that judgement
Of his extraordinary gifts
That I have just described to you.
I feel him standing before me now in the spirit,
Just as if he'd already stood like this before me,
Many centuries ago.
In saying this—I know with certainty that I'm awake.
I will remain by Hilary's side.
What must happen, will happen.

Please think over his plans more deeply.

MANAGER:

It's more important for me now

To think over what you've just confided in me.

*Manager and Romanus walk on further into the landscape—they exit.
Johannes enters from another direction, deep in thought, and sits on a rock.*

JOHANNES:

I was astonished when Capesius disclosed

How my inner life of soul revealed itself to his spirit-sight.

What had been shown to me many years ago in a clear light

Had therefore become dark in me:

That all that lives in human souls

Continues working in the outer realms of the spirit—

I have known this for years already ... and yet I could forget it.

When Benedictus opened the path for me

To my first powers of spirit-sight,
I beheld in clear spirit-images
Capesius and Strader at other ages of their lives.
I saw how the strong forms created by their thinking
Caused rippling waves that spread through world-existence.
I know this very well—but didn't know it
When shown me by Capesius.
The 'knowing' part of me was fast asleep.
I've even known for years
How closely bound up I was
With Capesius in a long-past life on earth.
But in that moment I had no knowledge of this.
How can I guard within me what I know?

**A VOICE FROM THE DISTANCE—THAT OF JOHANNES'S
DOUBLE:**

*Enchantment that's weaving
Throughout their own being.*

JOHANNES:

For now waking dreaming
To souls is revealing
Enchantment that's weaving
Throughout their own being.

While Johannes is speaking, his Double approaches him.

Johannes does not recognize him, believing him to be the Other Philia.

JOHANNES:

You're there again—mysterious spirit.
You—who brought me true advice.

DOUBLE:

Your awakening, Johannes, will be nothing but illusion,

Till you yourself redeem that shade
Given, by your guilt, a trapped, enchanted life.

JOHANNES:

For the second time you speak these words
Which I will follow. Show me how to do so.

DOUBLE:

Johannes, what is lost now within yourself—
Let it live—in the realm of the shades.
But so that it must not suffer pain—
Give it light from your own spirit-light.

JOHANNES:

I may have dazed this shadow-being
But have not conquered him. Among the shades

He therefore must remain a trapped, enchanted being,
Until I re-unite myself with him.

DOUBLE:

Then give to me all that you owe this being:
The power of love that draws your soul towards him,
The hope that he engendered in your heart,
The fresh new springs of life concealed within him,
The ripened fruits of long-past lives on earth
Which have been lost to you—by losing him—
Oh give them all to me—and I'll be sure—to bring them all to him.

JOHANNES:

You know the way to him? Then show it to me!

DOUBLE:

I once could reach him in the realm of shades
Each time you raised yourself to spirit-spheres;
But since you have been lured—by powers that work in wishes—
My strength fails, whenever I try to reach him.
But if you now will follow my advice
This strength may grow and recreate itself.

JOHANNES:

I've given you my oath—that I would follow you.
I give it once again, you riddling spirit—
With the whole force of my soul.
But if indeed you can find the way to him,
Then show it to me too—in this fateful hour.

DOUBLE:

I find it in this moment, but cannot guide you.
All I can do is bring before your eyes of soul
The being that your longing seeks.

The Spirit of Johannes's Youth appears.

SPIRIT OF JOHANNES'S YOUTH:

I will be always bounden to that spirit

Who could open your eyes of soul,

So that when, in future, I show myself to you, by spirit-law,

Your vision may find me.

But you must know who this spirit truly is

By whose side you now do see me.

The Spirit of Johannes's Youth disappears. Only now does the Double become recognizable to Johannes.

JOHANNES:

Not that mysterious spirit? ... My other self!

DOUBLE:

Follow me... follow.... as you gave me your oath;

I now must lead you to my sovereign Lord.

The Guardian of the Threshold appears and stands beside the Double.

GUARDIAN:

Johannes, if you would free this spirit-shadow
From worlds of soul where it's enchanted,
Then kill the wishes leading you astray.
The trail that you are following disappears
As long as you keep searching with wishes and desire.
The trail, it leads you by my threshold,
But here, as is decreed by higher beings,
I must confuse the eyes of soul,
When wishes mingle with the spirit-glances,
Which only when they have met me
Can reach the pure light of truth.

Ahriman enters.

I'll find you out yourself, within your glance
And hold you fast
If you approach with wishes and desire.
The image you have of me as well
Can only be delusion
While the deluding power of wishes
Informs your gaze
And before spirit-peacefulness, as a soul-body,
Has won mastery of your whole being.
Make strong the words of power that you know
So that their spirit-force
Can conquer your delusion.
Recognize me then—free of your own wishes;
And you will see the true form of my being.
No longer will I need to check your vision
Which you may then turn freely to the spirit-realms.

JOHANNES:

Even you then, I'm only seeing as an illusory image?

Even you—who I must see truly
Before I can see other beings within the spirit-world.
How can I hope to know the truth
If with each further step, I only ever find one truth:
That the web of delusion I spin grows ever thicker.

AHRIMAN:

Then do not let him utterly confuse you!
He guards his threshold faithfully enough,
Even if he wears the clothes
That you yourself patched together in your mind
From bits and pieces of old melodramas.
You, an artist, should never have created him
In such a dreadful style.
Later on, you'll surely do it better.
But even this distorted caricature can help.
It does not need much altering
For you to see now what it is.
Just notice how the Guardian speaks—

His mournful tone—has too much pathos!

You must not let him speak like this.

And then he'll show you who it is

He's borrowed all this from.

JOHANNES:

Could even the very content of his words

Have been deception?

DOUBLE:

Don't ask this to Ahriman—

Who always must delight in contradiction.

JOHANNES:

Then who shall I ask?

DOUBLE:

Just ask yourself.

And I will arm you, richly, with my strength,

So you may find that place in you,

In full wakefulness,

For which no wishes burn,

From where you may truly see.

Make yourself strong!

JOHANNES:

Enchantment that's weaving

Throughout their own being.

Enchantment that's weaving throughout my own being,

Tell me the place—for which no wishes burn.

The Guardian disappears. In his place, Benedictus and Maria appear.

Ahriman also disappears.

MARIA:

The image you have of me as well

Can only be delusion

For the deluding power of wishes

Informs your gaze.

BENEDICTUS:

And spirit-peacefulness, as a soul-body,

Has not yet won mastery of your whole being.

The Double, Benedictus and Maria disappear.

JOHANNES (alone):

Benedictus and Maria, they ... the Guardian!

How can they appear before me as the Guardian?

Though I have been with you both for many years...

It's you I must seek for...

This is the strong command

Of the enchantment weaving

Throughout my own being.

Exit Johannes, stage-right. Strader, Benedictus and Maria enter from the other side.

STRADER:

When I met you both in spiritual communion

At the deep abyss of my own being,

You gave, to my inner vision, wise counsel.

Though, as yet, I cannot fully understand it,

It works on within my soul and will, I know,

Unlock for me the answers to those riddles

That block me in my further striving.

I feel the inner strength that your work gives

To pupils on the spirit-path.

And so I will be well able to give you all the help you need,

To bring about what Hilary has planned,

In service of humanity.

We have, it's true, to do without Capesius.

The hard work of the others

Will not, of course, replace

The part he played within the whole.

Yet, whatever should happen... will happen.

BENEDICTUS:

Whatever should happen, will happen.

These words are in accordance

With the level of your maturity.

They find no echo, though,

In the souls of our other friends.

Johannes is not yet prepared

To bring true spirit-power

Into the world of sense.

And so he too is now withdrawing from the work.

In him, a sign of destiny is shown to us:

We all must seek now for other paths...

STRADER:

But Maria? ... Will you not be there, either?

BENEDICTUS:

Maria is obliged to bring Johannes with her—

If in truth she is to find the way back

From life in the spirit to the world of sense.

This is what the solemn Guardian wills

Who strictly guards the border where both worlds meet.

For now, she cannot be there at your side.

This should be taken as a clear sign

That at the present time you cannot find

Your way, in truth, into the world of matter.

STRADER:

So then ... with all my plans... I stand alone.

O solitude— was it you that sought me out,

As I stood at Felix's side?

BENEDICTUS:

What has now unfolded within our circle

Has enabled me to read, within the spirit-light,

A word, from the course of your destiny,

Which always had eluded me till now.

I saw you closely joined to types of beings,

Which, if they were creatively involved,

Already now, in human life,

Would bring about evil.

They live, though, in some souls, a seed-like life,

Which will, in future, ripen for the earth.

Such seeds as these I saw within your soul.

That you are not aware of them is for your good.

Through you, they'll first become aware of themselves.

The way that leads into the world of matter

Must stay for now, though, firmly closed to them.

STRADER:

Whatever else your words might mean,

They show me solitude will seek me out.

Solitude itself will have to forge my sword—

Of which Maria spoke at my abyss.

Benedictus and Maria draw back a little.

To Strader, remaining alone, the Soul of Theodora appears.

THEODORA'S SOUL:

And Theodora will create warmth for you in realms of light,

So that your spirit-sword may forcefully confront

The opponents of your soul.

She disappears. Exit Strader. Benedictus and Maria step forward.

MARIA:

My wise teacher, I have never heard you speak
Words of destiny of such a kind as this
To pupils at Strader's stage upon the path.
Will his soul progress so quickly
That the power of these words can be healing for him?

BENEDICTUS:

Destiny indicated them to me. So it was done.

MARIA:

And if this power does not prove healing,
Won't the evil it brings about
Affect you as well?

BENEDICTUS:

It will not bring about evil;

And yet I do not know

How it will manifest in him.

My vision can indeed attain the realms

Where counsel such as this lights up in me;

But I can see no image of what its effect will be.

Each time I try and do this... my seeing dies.

MARIA:

Your seeing dies? You, my wise teacher?

Who is it who can kill your certain spirit-sight?

BENEDICTUS:

Johannes—he flees away with it to far-off worlds;

We must follow him. I hear him calling.

MARIA:

He's calling. His call sounds out from wide spirit-spaces.

And raying out within it, distant fear.

BENEDICTUS:

Thus sounds from endless empty fields of ice,

The calling of our friend in far-off worlds.

MARIA:

The icy cold is burning in my being.

And fiery flames are kindled deep within me.

Flames that swallow up my thinking.

BENEDICTUS:

Deep down within you, the fire is blazing

That Johannes kindles for himself in cosmic ice and frost.

MARIA:

The flames are fleeing ... fleeing with my thinking.

- - - - -

And on the distant cosmic shoreline of the soul

A wild battle rages—the battle of my own thinking—

By the stream of nothingness—with cold spirit-light.

My thinking reels, wavering;—cold light strikes

Hot waves of darkness from my thinking. - - - -

What is it that rises up now from the dark heat? - - - -

It is my own self in red flames—storming up—

Into the light—the cold light—of the cosmic fields of ice. - - - -

Curtain.

SCENE FIVE

The Spiritual World. [The Sun-sphere.] The scene is set in floods of colour: above, reddish going into fiery-red; below, blue going into a dark-blue and violet. At the bottom, a symbolic- seeming earth-sphere. The figures appear to blend in with the colours of the whole scene, thus forming together a complete whole. On the right—the group of gnomes from Scene Two. In front of them—Hilary. At the very front—the soul-forces. Behind Hilary, somewhat raised—Ahriman. Lucifer at the back—raised and to the left; in the foreground, Felix Balde's soul. Strader's and Capesius's souls, Benedictus, Maria, Felicia Balde, The Guardian of the Threshold.

FELIX BALDE'S SOUL (In the form of a penitent, but wearing a light-violet robe with a gold belt.):

I deeply thank you, Spirit who guides these worlds.

You have released me from the darkness of loneliness.

Your word awakens all to life and work.

I shall use what you bestow upon these worlds—

And when you let my own world sink down into dullness,

I'll muse upon these worlds.

You then will bear to them on streaming rays

What gives to my imagining new power.

LUCIFER (Bluish-green, shining under-garment; brightly-shining reddish outer-garment in the form of a cloak that extends into wing-like shapes. Above him, instead of an aura, a dark-red headdress in the form of a mitre with wings. On his right wing is a blue, sword-like shape; his left wing supports a yellow, planet-like sphere.):

My servant, your way of working

Needs time within the Sun-sphere, which we've entered.

The Earth-Star now receives its dullest light.

This is the time when souls like yours

Most fruitfully can work upon themselves.

From my great source of light, I let there shine on you

The growing seeds of self-awareness.

Gather them up to make your ego strong.

They'll blossom then in earth-existence—

There your soul will seek these flowers;

And feel delight in its own being,

Passionately musing on its longings.

FELIX BALDE'S SOUL (looking at the group of gnomes):

There far away a shining life is fading;
In a hazy cloud of images it floats towards the depths;
It wishes, as it floats, to gather weight.

HILARY'S SOUL (Similar in form to a human being, but modified from one of the steel-blue grey elemental beings—the head less bowed and the limbs more human.):

This hazy cloud of wishes is the Earth-Star
Thrown in mirrored image into spirit-realms;
That star for which in this world you fashion
For yourself, out of substances of soul, a thinking life.
To you it's but a hazy passing cloud
But in itself, they're beings, who feel compact of soul.
They labour on the earth with cosmic intellect
In ancient fiery depths which thirst for form.

FELIX BALDE'S SOUL:

I do not want their weight to be a burden to me.
It stands in opposition to my will to float.

AHRIMAN:

Your words are good! I'll quickly hold them tight—

To keep them for myself unspoiled;

They are not yours to care for any more.

On earth, though, you would hate them.

STRADER'S SOUL (Only his head is visible, having a yellow-green aura with red and orange stars. At quite a distance from Felix's soul.):

Words can be heard that sound and then re-echo.

Words full of meaning, but the sound fades away.

Desire for life takes hold of the re-echo.

Which direction will it choose to go in?

OTHER PHILIA (Like a copy of Lucifer, but lacking the radiance of his garments. Instead of the sword, a kind of dagger. And instead of the sphere, a red ball like a fruit.):

Longing to have weight, it wends its way

To there where that bright shining life fades away
And, as a cloud of images, dives into the depths.
If you can guard, within your realm, that echo's meaning,
I'll bear its strength for you into that hazy cloud;
And then you'll find it once again upon the earth.

PHILIA (Angelic form, yellow going into white with bright violet wings, of a lighter shade than those which Maria has later. All three are close to Strader's soul.): I'll take good care for you of that whole cloud of beings,

So that, unknowingly, they guide your will;
Your will I shall entrust unto the cosmic light,
In which those beings create
The warmth your being needs.

ASTRID (Angelic form, light-violet robe with blue wings.): I shall shine out joyfully to those beings

Radiant starry life, that they condense this
Into form. For they are far from knowledge, but near
What stirs the heart. They'll give your earthly body strength.

LUNA (Slender angelic form, blue-red robe with orange wings.):

And I shall hide within your future body

The being of weight they heavily create;

That thinking it, you turn it not to evil

And so unleash a tempest on the earth.

STRADER'S SOUL:

All three, they spoke in radiant, sun-filled words.

They work and weave within the sphere around me,

Creating numerous forms and figures.

The urge arises in me, filled with soul-strength,

To meaningfully transform them into one.

Awaken in me, O royal power of the Sun,

That I may dim you down through the resistance

My wishes bring here from the lunar sphere.

A golden glow is rising up already, warming feeling,

And a cold, shimmering light, showering thoughts.

Mercury, ever glimmer, with your passionate life-urges,
Marry together for me the separated being of the world.

- - - - -

I clearly feel: part of that picture
I here am called to work upon, from cosmic spirit-forces,
Has now been recreated for me.

Exit Ahriman.

CAPESIUS'S SOUL (Appearing at Strader's first lines; only his head is visible, which has a blue aura with red and yellow stars.):

An image rises up, on the far shoreline
Of my soul, that, since wrestling myself free
From earthly life has never touched my being.
It radiates a gentle, healing grace.
The warm and gentle glow of wisdom streams from it;
And it bestows upon me clarifying light.
If I could make this one with me
I would obtain all that for which I thirst.
I do not know the power, though,

That could make the image
Come to life within my sphere.

LUNA:

What two earth-lives have given you
You must feel - - - - .
One of them was passed, in ancient times,
With solemn power of transformation.
A later life you lived through,
Greatly darkened by ambition.
Let the later life be nourished
By the active powers of grace within the first.
Then fire-souls from Jupiter will rise and be revealed
Within the sphere around you.
You'll know yourself made strong by wisdom.
That image then, so far away,
On which you gaze,
May then move near you.

CAPESIUS'S SOUL:

To this soul, preparing now for earthly life,
I must then owe a debt,
So that, within my soul-sphere,
It reflects itself as warning-image?

ASTRID:

You do indeed. It is not asking, though,
To be repaid in your next earthly life.
The image wants to give you powers of thought
So you, as man, may recognize the man
Who in this image shows you
His future life on earth.

OTHER PHILIA:

The image may indeed draw nearer to you,
But cannot enter into your own sphere.

Hold back therefore its longing for your sphere
That you can find your way again to earth
Before it flows completely through your being.

CAPESIUS'S SOUL:

My thankfulness towards this image,
I feel already, if I can bring
It near me, and yet, in freedom from it,
Still remain myself. From Philia's realm
I now behold, in thought-like images,
The powers I will gain when it draws near.

PHILIA:

When soon the light of Saturn, many-coloured,
Shines upon you—use the hour well!
The image of the one akin to you in spirit
Will plant, through Saturn's power, in your soul,
Deep roots of thinking, which may uncover for you

The meaning of the course of life on earth,
When this star carries you once more.

CAPESIUS'S SOUL:

The counsel that you give will be my guide,
When Saturn shines upon me.

LUCIFER:

Before they earn the right to leave the Sun-sphere,
Empowered for their later lives on earth,
I still intend to waken in these souls
The sight of worlds whose light will cause them pain.
For sorrow must impregnate them with doubt.
So I will summon up those spheres of soul
They do not have the power to look upon.

Benedictus's and Maria's souls appear in the middle of this domain. The former as a figure whose dress represents in microcosm the entire visual scene. Around his head, an aura of red, yellow and blue. The blue blends

into the blue-green of his robe, which widens at the bottom. Maria as an angelic figure—yellow blending into gold, without feet and with light-violet wings.

BENEDICTUS'S SOUL:

You forcefully impinge upon my world's horizon—

Your dense spheres so laden with the weight of earth.

If you allow your sense of self

To grow too strong,

My sunlit being,

Within this life of spirit,

Will not be able to illumine you.

MARIA'S SOUL:

None of you did know him, last time

You wore an earthly body;

But even now there ripens in your souls

The radiant power of the Sun-filled Word,

With which in ancient times he nurtured you.

Feel the deepest impulse in your beings

And then you will experience him near.

FELIX BALDE'S SOUL:

Words resound from spheres I do not know
But as their tones create no light-filled life
They are not full reality for me.

STRADER'S SOUL:

A light-filled being is active there, on spirit-shores;
It is silent for me, though, however hard I try
And listen to what that light may mean.

FELICIA BALDE'S SOUL (The figure of a female penitent—yellow-orange robe, silver belt—appearing near to Maria.) [She speaks to Benedictus and Maria.]:

You souls, summoned here by Lucifer—
The penitent can hear your words resound,
But only the word of the Sun shines out for him;
Its overpowering brilliance kills your voices.

The other one, [Strader] beholds your starry light,
The starry script, though, is unknown to him.

CAPESIUS'S SOUL:

The starry script!—these words awaken thoughts—

Borne to me on inner tides of soul.

Thoughts that in a long-past life on earth

Did wondrously reveal themselves to me.

They shine out—but fade away the moment they appear;

Forgetfulness spreads all around its sombre gloom.

GUARDIAN (Symbolically represented in the form of an angel, stepping towards and speaking to the souls of Benedictus and Maria.):

You two souls, that at Lucifer's command,

Approached the spheres of these other souls—

You are, within this place, under my power.

The souls you seek are seeking you.

In this cosmic hour, within their spheres,

None of them, in thought, must touch you

With their beings. Take heed

You do not enter in their circle.

For if you dare to do so,

It would greatly harm both you and them.

The starry light that shines in you

I'd have to weaken

And banish you from them

To other realms for long cosmic ages.

Slow curtain.

SCENE SIX

The Spiritual World, as in the preceding scene. [The Saturn-sphere.] The lighting warm and many-shaded, but not too bright. On the left—the group of sylphs. In front—Philia, Astrid and Luna. Capesius's soul, Romanus's soul, Felix Balde's soul, then the souls of Torquatus and Bellicosus; the Other Philia with the souls of Theodora and Felicia Balde. (Later: Benedictus's and Maria's souls; the Guardian of the Threshold; Lucifer with Johannes's soul; finally the Spirit of Johannes's Youth.)

CAPESIUS'S SOUL (on the right, towards the middle):

The image I beheld within the Sun-sphere
That radiated grace and gentle healing,—
Works powerfully within me even now,
When the light of a different wisdom
Bathes this present spirit-realm
In shining rays of many colours.
But now the image works with even greater power.
It wants me to draw out of it,
For future earthly ages,

What the soul inhabiting this image
Of such great meaning for my sphere
Once gave to me, in a life on earth together.
And yet, no stream of feeling
Strongly leads me towards this soul.

ROMANUS'S SOUL (A figure visible from the hips up, with mighty red wings that extend around his head into a red aura, blending to blue at its rim. Near Capesius's Soul. The souls of Bellicosus and Torquatus are also nearby.):

Arouse in you the
The image of the Jew, who from all sides
Heard only hate and mockery, and yet
Gave loyal service to that brotherhood
To which in former times you once belonged.

CAPESIUS'S SOUL:

Thought-images now begin to dawn in me,
Wishing to seize hold of me with all their strength.

Rising up from welling tides of soul

The image of Simon appears.

But now there comes towards him—another soul—

A penitent—

I'd like to keep him far away from me!

Felix Balde's soul appears.

ROMANUS'S SOUL:

He can only carry out his work

At the cosmic hour of Sun;

When Saturn shines its light upon this realm

He is a lonely wanderer, shrouded in darkness.

CAPESIUS'S SOUL:

How this penitent throws me into confusion!

His soul rays

Boring deep into my own soul sheaths

Are burning me.

Thus it is, when souls behold

Another's inmost depths.

FELIX BALDE'S SOUL (in a dull, almost veiled voice):

‘Dear Kean, you have always been a loyal friend...’

CAPESIUS'S SOUL:

I myself! My own words! Spoken by him—

Resounding—in echo—in the spirit realm!!

I must seek this soul.

He knows me well. Through him I must find myself.

Capesius's soul disappears. From stage-right the Other Philia and Theodora's soul appear, followed by Felicia Balde's soul.

ROMANUS'S SOUL:

Over there, two souls approach the penitent.

Ahead of them that spirit, souls,

Through love, will always choose to be their guide.

From one of these two souls there streams A gentle light; it flows towards

The other, who in the image

Of a penitent woman shows herself.

This image shines with the glow of beauty,

Here alive as wisdom.

**TORQUATUS'S SOUL (A figure visible down to the breast,
with blue aura and green wings.):**

You gaze on the reflection of my own heart's longing,

Which I stream out to you in true spirit-brotherhood.

For I am given to you, by primal

Powers of destiny, to waken gentleness.

Thus do souls serve other souls in spirit.

On your own, with your rigid mind,

You'd never find the way to gain

The living gold of compassion.

BELLICOSUS'S SOUL (A figure, like Torquatus, visible down to the breast, but with a blue-violet aura and blue-green wings.):

Strengthen your spirit-hearing;—

The soul that shines within that gentle light

Is speaking. Saturn's light now draws from these souls

The glory of spirit-blessedness.

THEODORA'S SOUL (Angelic form, white with yellow wings and blue-yellow aura.):

My true spirit-companion—the burning flames

Of loneliness threaten to consume the penitent.

Stream out to him, in gently glowing light,

Your soul's pure love; this will lessen

Their power and mitigate their heat.

And guide to him the rays of thought

From all those shadow-beings in motion there. [The Sylphs.]

They gather here the forces that they need

To make their soul-like bodies gleam
With glimmering life; so that their quick, creative glimmering
Make strong in human souls on earth
The lively sense for growing and becoming.

FELICIA BALDE'S SOUL:

You spirit
In the form of a penitent,
Feel my presence.
You sun-filled soul
Receive the strength of the stars.
Until your spirit-garment
Wrests itself free
From Lucifer's domain—
I shall accompany you, throughout your loneliness,
And bear to you those forces
I will gather for you,
As I make my cosmic way
From star to star.

THEODORA'S SOUL:

Previous earthly thoughts arise and glimmer

There on my soul-shore... The image of a human form...

That I did see on earth... has followed here;

It echoes out what once I heard it say:

‘The human soul arose from God’s own ground;

In dying, it descends to depths of being;

From death, in future, it will free in spirit’.

During the last speech, Lucifer and Johannes’s soul have appeared.

OTHER PHILIA:

The sounding image bears to you

The power of noblest brotherly love

That you unfolded on the earth.

I shall transform it for you to living power of soul.

Those shadow beings’ [the sylphs’] shimmering light

Now receives these words of mine.

Those beings will inspire in you, in earthly life,

All that they may muse on in eternity.

And you, penitent-woman in the land of spirit,

Guide your steps of soul towards the stars;

For spirit-demons long to use your work

To kindle fantasy in human souls,

And thus to give their earth-existence wings.

FELICIA BALDE'S SOUL:

I'll follow you, dear sister of my soul,

My Philia, who quickens love,

From star to star,

From one spirit to another.

I'll follow you to starry worlds afar

And bear your words to many a circling sphere,

Forming too myself, through all these spirit-workings,

For my next earthly journey.

Felix Balde's soul, led by Felicia Balde's soul, disappears slowly. Theodora remains for a while motionless, gazing at Johannes's soul; then she too disappears, as does Johannes's soul with Lucifer.

ROMANUS'S SOUL (to Torquatus):

That we have seen, within this spirit place
The word of love and the word of action
Join in union—will give strength
To seeds within us, that we'll need
In later lives on earth.

The souls of Romanus, Torquatus and Bellicosus disappear. The souls of Benedictus and Maria appear beside the Guardian of the Threshold.

GUARDIAN:

Recognize your hour of cosmic midnight!
I hold you here beneath the spell of Saturn's ancient, ripened light
Until your sheaths,
Illumining yourselves with its light,

Can live its many colours,
With greater power of waking.

MARIA'S SOUL:

The hour of cosmic midnight with wakefulness of soul? - - - -

The Sun spoke to us, at the time of the Moon

These solemn words of destiny:

‘Human souls who live the cosmic midnight hour

In wakefulness, behold how lightnings

Dazzlingly illumine necessities

With such swift flashes that

The spirit-visions die as they're perceived,

And as they die, form

Signs of destiny

That are engraved forever in the soul.’

Such souls hear words of thunder

Rolling deep through world-foundations,

And in their rolling threatening

Every soul-delusion.

Lucifer and Johannes's soul appear again.

BENEDICTUS'S SOUL:

From endless, empty fields of ice
Sounds out the urgent calling of our friend.
If we can recognize the hour of cosmic midnight
We'll reach the spirit-circle of his soul.

MARIA'S SOUL:

The red flames come nearer... with my thinking—
There, from the cosmic shoreline of my soul;
A fiery battle nears;—the battle of my own thinking
With the thoughts of Lucifer;
My own thinking battles in another soul, - - - - -
From dark cold is drawn a fiery light.
It flames like lightning!—the fiery light of soul - - - - -
The light of soul—in the cosmic fields of ice - - - - -.

LUCIFER:

Recognize this light—my fiery cosmic light,—
And look upon those flashes of lightning,
That your own thinking strikes
From Lucifer's domains of power.
The soul you have so long been bound to
Here I bring into your sphere of vision,
As you experience now the hour of cosmic midnight.
You'll have to seek, though, in a new direction,
Before you may draw truly near this soul.

To Johannes

And you—the soul that I have brought here—
Use well the powers of the light
Shining out from Saturn
Into her cosmic midnight hour.

JOHANNES'S SOUL (Like an angel in form, rose-red, without feet and with blue-red wings.):

I feel the presence of souls, but lack the power

So to strengthen their light in me

That it become real being.

However near they may be,

Only in the far distance

Do I see their thinking shine.

How can I raise them up into my spirit-sight?

PHILIA:

You will behold them

If you can quickly grasp

What they themselves illumine

In the cosmic light.

But when you see them—

Use the moment's flash;

For what will be illumined

Will swiftly fade away.

JOHANNES'S SOUL:

The words the teacher's speaking to his pupil—

The pupil, who's so near to me in soul—

Shall now illumine my own soul-sphere.

BENEDICTUS'S SOUL:

At this spirit-midnight-hour

Bring forth the powers of will

You then will want to feel again,

When earthly strength

Flows through your form.

Your words, they will illumine your friend's soul.

MARIA'S SOUL:

Then let my words grow strong,
That I, at cosmic midnight,
Offer to the soul that Lucifer has brought me.
What is most dear to me in depths of soul
I shall behold and let it sound,
So that it form into a tone,
A tone his soul on earth may feel,
And lovingly let live within his being.
What is it I behold in depths of soul?
I see shine out a sacred, fiery script.
A noble, fiery script is shining there.
Love for the soul of my teacher flames out.
He, who on earth and in the spirit,
Has accompanied me through long ages;
Who, when my ardent prayer sought him
At times of danger, always found me,
Even when he dwelt in heights of spirit;
Radiantly bright this love appears to me—
Let this word of love sound out from me to that other soul. - - - - -

- - - - -

But now...

What flames are these, the word of love awakens?

They shine so gently—and from their gentleness

Streams a deep solemnity;

Wisdom's lightning flashes through the ether,

Bestowing grace. And blessedness,

Pouring forth, joyfully weaves

Through all the wide horizons of my soul.

Everlasting Time—I do entreat you—

Pour yourself out into this blessedness,

And together with me,

Let the teacher, and the other soul as well,

Linger now within you, full of peace.

GUARDIAN:

Then let the lightning flashes fade now into nothingness—

Flashes that dazzlingly illumine necessities

When wakeful souls experience world-north.

Let the deep-resounding thunder, rolling

With warning at the hour of cosmic midnight,
Also now grow quiet. And now, to you,
Astrid, a strict command is given.
Safely guard this tempest of the soul
Until her next cosmic midnight finds her soul
Awakening in the stream of time.
She then will have to stand
Quite differently before herself, - - - -
She'll see an image of herself from ancient times,
And come to know
How even in the falling of the soul
Its wings gain greater strength
For the ascent to spirit-heights.
The soul must never wish to fall;
But every time it falls must gain new wisdom.

ASTRID:

The thunder and the lightning's power
I'll safely hold,

And thus they may be kept in world-existence,
Till Saturn once again turns to her soul.

MARIA'S SOUL:

Abiding here, I feel the blessedness of stars,
Which I'm allowed to enter
In the stream of time.
Carried by its grace,
I'll live a life creating
Together with the soul
So closely bound to mine.

LUNA:

I'll guard all your creating
Here in spirit
So that its fruits
Shall ripen for you
On the earth.

JOHANNES'S SOUL:

Into the sphere of my soul—this star!

It shines with blessing—rays out grace—

A soul-star—floating—through the ether—

- - - - -

But there—in the dull light—another star—

Sounding quietly; but I wish to hear it.

With these last words, the Spirit of Johannes's Youth appears— like an angel with a silvery light.

SPIRIT OF JOHANNES'S YOUTH:

I feed with my life your wishes and desires;

When worlds lure you,

Into which I may joyfully lead you,

My breath will shine strength

Into your youthful goals.

But when you lose me in yourself,
Then, a being without being,
I must offer up my life to the shades.
Blossom of my life—do not abandon me.

LUCIFER:

He will not abandon you—I see desires
For light within his being's depths
Which cannot follow in the footsteps of the other soul.
When these desires, with all the glory they give rise to,
Take root as being deep within his soul,
He will not wish to see their precious fruits
Be squandered in that realm
Where love alone holds sway, without beauty.

Slow curtain.

SCENE SEVEN

A temple in a somewhat Egyptian style—a place of initiation in the third cultural epoch of the earth. On stage—the Hierophant (of the Sacrifice), the Threshold Guardian and the Mystic. [In this and in the following scene, the name of the individuality in his or her modern incarnation is given on their first appearance—RR.]

HIEROPHANT (Capesius):

Has everything been worthily prepared, my Threshold Guardian,
In order that our holy rite may be of service
Both to humankind and the gods?

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN (Felix):

As far as human beings can foresee,
All has been well prepared; the space of the temple
Has been filled for many days with sacred incense.

HIEROPHANT:

My Mystic, the priest who undergoes these rites today,
To whom the hallowed secrets of wisdom will be revealed,
Will become the counsellor to the King.
Did you structure his trials in such a way
That he does not solely devote himself
To a spirit-wisdom that has no care for earthly life?
For such a counsellor would be damaging for us.

MYSTIC (Felicia):

His trials were carried out correctly,
And the masters have approved of them.
It seems to me, however, that this mystic
Has little care for earthly matters;
His soul is entirely focussed
On spirit-striving and his own development.
He could well be seen
As enraptured by the spirit.

It would not be too much to say
That he positively indulges himself
In the feeling of being wholly at one
With the spirit.

HIEROPHANT:

Have you often seen him in such a state?

MYSTIC:

Yes. He really does appear like this quite frequently.
He surely would be better suited
To serve in the inner temple,
Rather than as your counsellor.

HIEROPHANT:

That's Enough. Return to your duties.

And see to it that our sacred rite
Is carried out correctly.

Exit Mystic.

But with you, my Threshold Guardian,
I must speak further.
I greatly value, as you know, your mystic gifts.
For me you stand much higher with your wisdom
Than your role within the temple indicates—
And I have often checked my own spirit-sight
Against what you are able to see.
So tell me: How great is your trust
In the neophyte's spiritual maturity?

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN:

Who wants to hear my view?
My voice is never considered.

HIEROPHANT:

I always consider it.

Today once again you will stand at my side.

We must follow this sacred rite with exact

Soul-vision; and if what the neophyte experiences in spirit

Is in the slightest way unfitting to the high purposes of this ritual

I shall prevent him becoming a counsellor.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN:

What is it within the neophyte

That the ritual might reveal?

HIEROPHANT:

I know he does not merit the high honour

Which those who serve the temple

Seek to confer on him.

I know his human nature well.
For him, mysticism is not
What wakens in the human heart
When, from above,
The grace-filled light of spirit
Draws souls unto itself.
Passions surge through his being.
The clamorous urges of the senses
have not yet grown silent for him.
Of course I do not wish to counter the will of the gods,
Which, in world-becoming,
Even shines its wise light
Through passion and the senses' urges.
But when such urges hide themselves
Behind a mask of mystical devotion
It only leads to self-deception
And to an impure will.
Into such souls the light that weaves as being
Through spirit-worlds cannot enter.
Passion darkens it to a mystic fog.

THRESHOLD GUARDIAN:

My hierophant, you pass strict judgement
On one who is young and inexperienced,
So cannot know himself.
All he can do is follow
What the leaders of the temple
Describe as the correct soul-path.

HIEROPHANT:

I do not wish to pass judgement on the man
But only on the deed
That will occur
Within this solemn, holy place.
The sacrificial work that we perform
Is not just of significance here;
Events of world-destiny
Stream through all the words and deeds

Of these most sacred rites.

What here takes place in image-form

Has ever-active power of being in spirit-worlds.

But now, my Threshold Guardian—to your work.

You will yourself discover

How you best may help me

During the ritual.

Exit Threshold Guardian.

HIEROPHANT (alone):

It will not be the fault of this young mystic,

Who offers himself today to wisdom,

If in the next few hours feelings that have no place here,

But might well stream from his heart,

Shine out into our sacrificial rite—

Feelings that, within the image of this ritual,

Would mystically rise up into spirit-spheres,

From where destructive forces, later,

Would then flow back into earthly life—

It will be those who lead and guide these rites

Who will be guilty.

Do even they—I have to ask—still recognize the mystic power

That spiritually pours through

Every word and every sign

Within this place—that never ceases working,

Even if soul-substance

Pours into these Words and Signs

That is not beneficial

To the development of the world?

For rather than this young mystic

Offering himself, consciously, to the spirit,

He is dragged by his teachers,

As a sacrifice,

To the place of initiation;

Where, in unconsciousness,

He will commit to the spirit

His life of soul,

Which, if he could live it out consciously, within himself,

He would in fact direct along other paths.
Within the community of our mystic priests
Only the Highest Hierophant of the sacred rite
Is fully aware
Of what lives, as hidden power,
Within the forms of the ritual.
But he is as silent as solitude itself;
As his inner nobility
Strictly commands.
The others gaze
With blank incomprehension
When I try and talk
About the earnestness of the ritual.

- - - - -

Thus I am completely alone with my concerns—
Which, when I sense the profundity of this place of sacrifice—
So often weigh me down within.
I certainly have come to know here deeply:

Solitude—at the most solemn site of the spirit.

Why am I alone within this place?

The soul cannot but ask this;—but when will the spirit

Give this soul an answer!

Slow curtain.

SCENE EIGHT

The same temple setting as in Scene Seven; at first it is covered by an intermediate curtain, in front of which an Egyptian woman speaks the following. The Egyptian woman is to be thought of as a previous incarnation of Johannes Thomasius.

EGYPTIAN WOMAN (Johannes):

In this very hour he is offering himself up
In service of the age-old, holy Mysteries,—
And must tear himself away from me for ever.
From those same light-filled heights,
To which his soul now turns,
Must mine receive the ray of death;—for without him—
All I can hope to find on earth is
Sorrow, loss, suffering—and death - - - - .

- - - - -

Even if he is leaving me, though,
I will remain very near this place

Where he gives himself in trust to the spirit.
Even if I am not permitted to see with my eyes
How he wins his way free from the earth - - - -,
Through some revelation
While dreaming
Perhaps I may still now
Linger with him
A while
In the spirit.

The curtain opens revealing everything made ready for the initiation of the Neophyte, who is to be thought of as an earlier incarnation of Maria; on one side of the sacrificial altar stands the Highest Hierophant, who is to be thought of as an earlier incarnation of Benedictus; on the other side of the altar, the Keeper of the Word, an earlier incarnation of Hilary; somewhat in front of the altar, the Keeper of the Seals, an earlier incarnation of Theodora; then on one side of the altar towards the front: the Representative of the Earth Element, an earlier incarnation of Romanus; the Representative of the Air Element, an earlier incarnation of Magnus Bellicosus; very close to the Highest Hierophant stands the Hierophant, an earlier incarnation of Capesius; on the other side: the Representative of the Fire Element, an earlier incarnation of Dr Strader; the Representative of the Water Element, an earlier incarnation of Torquatus. In front: Philia, Astrid, Luna and the Other Philia. At the very front in the form of the Sphinxes—Lucifer and Ahriman; Lucifer in such a way that the Angel (the Cherub) is more emphasized, Ahriman in such a way that the Bull is more emphasized. Four other priests stand at the front. After the Temple hall has become visible, there is a soundless stillness. Then the Neophyte is led in

through the gates on the left by the Threshold Guardian, an earlier incarnation of Felix Balde, and the Mystic, an earlier incarnation of Felicia Balde. They position him in the inner circle close to the altar. They both remain standing near him.

THE THRESHOLD GUARDIAN (Felix):

The Mystic has brought you here
From that woven web of semblance
That you, in the darkness of your error,
Did name 'the world'.
From being and from nothingness
Was the world woven,
Which for you did weave itself
Into a semblance.
Semblance is good, when beheld
In the light of being.
But you have but dreamed it
In your life of semblance.
And semblance
Known only by semblance

Falls from the wholeness of the world.

You semblance of a semblance—

Learn to know yourself!

THE MYSTIC (Felicia):

Thus speaks the one,

Who guards the threshold of this temple.

Experience in yourself

The heavy weight of his word.

THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ELEMENT OF EARTH (Romanus):

In the heavy weight of earth-existence

Grasp, without fear, the semblance of who you are,

That you may sink into the depths of the world—

There in the darkness, seek for being;

Unite what you may find with your own semblance;

In ever weighing down it will grant you being.

THE KEEPER OF THE WORD (THE RECORDER) (Hilary):

Sinking down into the depths

You will not understand

Where we are leading you

Until you have obeyed his word.

Here we forge your being's very form;

Recognize our work, for otherwise,

You would dissolve completely

As a semblance,

In universal nothingness.

THE MYSTIC:

Thus speaks the one

Who guards the words of this temple.

Experience in yourself

What lives within the words

As down-bearing weight.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ELEMENT OF AIR (Magnus Bellicosus):

Flee the heavy weight of earth-existence;
In making you sink down
It kills your selfhood's being.
With lightness of the air fly fast away.
In the world's wide distances, in shining light,
Seek for being.
Unite what you find with your own semblance;
In high uplifting flight it will grant you being.

THE KEEPER OF THE WORD:

Rising up in flight
You will not understand
Where we are leading you
Until you have obeyed his word.
We shine into your being's very life;

Recognize our work; for otherwise

You would dissolve completely

As a semblance,

In universal weight.

THE MYSTIC:

Thus speaks the one

Who guards the words of this temple.

Experience in yourself

What lives within his words

As wingéd power of flight.

THE HIGHEST HIEROPHANT (Benedictus):

My son, upon the noble paths of wisdom,

You rightly will obey these mystics' words.

Within yourself you cannot see the answer.

For darkness of error still does weigh you down.

And foolishness within you strives for distant worlds.

Gaze therefore—into this flame—

*Upon the altar, standing in the middle, the sacred fire flares up in bright
and leaping tongues of flame.*

Which is much nearer to you

Than the life of your own being.

And read within the fire your answer.

THE MYSTIC:

Thus speaks the one

Who leads the sacrificial rites of this temple.

Experience in yourself

The hallowed, consecrating power

Within these rites.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ELEMENT OF FIRE (Strader):

Let the error of your sense of self

Be burned up within the fire,
Lit for you within this sacrifice.
Burn up yourself—with all the substance of your error.—
Within the cosmic fire now seek your being as flame—
Unite what you find with your own semblance.
In fierily burning it will grant you being.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE SEALS (Theodora):

Burning,
You will not understand
Why we now forge you into flame,
Until you have obeyed his word.
We purify your being's very form.
Recognize our work, for otherwise
You'll lose yourself, in formlessness, amidst the cosmic water.

THE MYSTIC:

Thus speaks the one

Who guards the seal of this temple.

Experience in yourself

The radiant, light-filled power of wisdom.

REPRESENTATIVE OF THE ELEMENT OF WATER (Torquatus):

The flaming power within the worlds of fire

Withstand—for it would sap the strength of your own being.

The only way—for you—that semblance may arise to being

Is if the lapping, beating waves of cosmic water

Can fill you with the echoing tones that sound throughout the spheres.

In cosmic water, as a wave, now seek for being.

Unite what you find with your own semblance.

In flowing and in surging it will grant you being.

THE GUARDIAN OF THE SEALS:

Surging,

You will not understand

Why we now mould you as a wave

Until you have obeyed his word.

We mould your very being's form.

Recognize our work, for otherwise

You'll lose yourself, in formlessness, within the cosmic fire.

THE HIGHEST HIEROPHANT:

My son, employing all your powers of will,

You also will obey these mystics' words.

Within yourself you cannot see the answer.

In coward fear your power freezes still.

You are too weak to form yourself as wave,

That could ring out amidst the sounding spheres.

So hear then now the forces of your soul;

And recognize they speak with your own voice.

PHILIA:

In fire purify yourself— as cosmic wave

Then lose yourself

Amidst the tones of spirit-spheres.

ASTRID:

Amidst the tones of spirit-spheres now form yourself;

Take flight, with all the lightness of the air,

To distant worlds.

LUNA:

In cosmic depths sink down with weight of earth;

And in the heavy weight

Take courage—as yourself.

OTHER PHILIA:

Leave far behind all trace of your own being;

Unite yourself with all the powers that live and move

Throughout the elemental world.

THE MYSTIC:

Thus speaks within the temple your own soul,
Experience in it now the guiding power of its forces.

THE HIGHEST HIEROPHANT:

You, my companion—Hierophant—

Fathom in its very depths

This soul we are to lead onto the path of wisdom—
Proclaim to us your vision
Of its present state.

THE HIEROPHANT (Capesius):

All that our rites should bring about has happened.

The soul has now forgotten what it was.

The contradictory powers within the elements have quite erased

Its woven web of semblance, spun by error;

This lives on now in elemental strife.

The soul has only saved its being.

What lives within its being it must read

Within the cosmic Word

That speaks from out the fiery flame.

HIGHEST HIEROPHANT:

Then read to us, you human soul, what the flame

Proclaims to you as cosmic word

Within your inmost being.

There is a long pause, during which it becomes completely dark—only the flame and the indefinite outlines of the people can be seen; the Highest Hierophant then continues.

From out your cosmic vision now awake!

Proclaim what in the World-Word can be read—

The Neophyte says nothing.. The Highest Hierophant continues with alarm.

Nothing!—Is it gone? Your vision?—Speak!

THE NEOPHYTE (Maria):

Obeying your strict and sacrificial word,
I wholly sank into the being of the flame,
Expecting sounds of high, exalted cosmic words.

The mystics present, with the exception of the Hierophant, show an ever-increasing horror during the speech of the Neophyte.

I then began to feel how I, light as air,
Could free myself from earthly weight. - - - - -
So lovingly received by cosmic fire
I felt myself in ever-flowing streams of spirit-waves.
I saw, how as another being,
My earthly form remained, outside myself.

Though wholly wrapped around with bliss,
Feeling myself within the spirit-light,
I could not help but look upon the earthly covering there
With sympathy and feelings full of longing.
Spirits from the higher worlds
Rayed down their light upon it.
And then, like butterflies, glittering and bright,
There suddenly drew near
The lively beings who cared and tended for its life.
The shimmering light of these beings
Was reflected by the body
In a dazzling display of colours
That first shone gloriously near,
Then glimmered far away
Then finally, scattering,
Was lost in space.
And then, within my spirit-soul existence,
The wish sprang up in me
That weight of earth
Might sink me down

Into my body's covering
So I might let the feeling grow
Of joy in life's warmth.
Happily plunging down into my body,
I heard your strict loud summons to awake.

THE HIGHEST HIEROPHANT (speaking with alarm to the alarmed mystics):

This is not spirit-vision;—but earthly feeling—
It freed itself from the mystic—and rose up
Into the light-filled spirit-heights
As sacrifice.
Oh sacrilege!
Sacrilege - - - -!

THE KEEPER OF THE WORD (furiously, to the Hierophant):

This could never have been possible
Had you performed

According to all its ancient sacred duties

Your office as Hierophant.

THE HIEROPHANT:

I did what in this sacrificial hour

Was laid upon me

As duty

From higher realms.

I did

Hold back

From thinking on the words

That I am bidden to, by custom,

Which from my thinking

Then should spiritually have passed across

To the neophyte.

The young man

Has not proclaimed, therefore,

The thinking of another—

He has proclaimed here

His own being.

Truth has conquered. - - - - -

You may well punish me;

I had to do

What you experienced with so much fear.

I feel the times approach already

Which will set free

The individual I

From out the spirit of the group

And grant it thinking of its own.

The youth may now perhaps escape

Your mystic path.

But later lives on earth

Will show to him without doubt the mystic ways

That have been foreordained for him by destiny.

**THE MYSTICS [first in individual voices and small groups—
RR]:**

Oh sacrilege!

It cries out for atonement—

For punishment—

The deed must be atoned—

Yes—punishment!

He has to pay the price!

It is an outrage to the gods.

(in chorus): O sacrilege!!!

The Sphinxes, that were immobile as statues, begin to speak—as Ahriman and Lucifer. The Hierophant, the Highest Hierophant and the Neophyte are the only ones to hear them;—the others remain in a state of great agitation because of what has happened.

AHRIMAN AS SPHINX:

I have to seize and capture for my realm

What here, unjustly, wills to come to light.

I then will have to foster it in darkness.

And thus, in spirit, it should form the power

In future times, befitting world-evolving,

To interweave itself in human life,

In ways that rightly benefit mankind.
But till it has obtained this power, then all
That here has proved itself an earthly burden on
This sacrificial rite will serve my work.

LUCIFER AS SPHINX:

I will lead away to my domain
What here, as spirit-wishing, joys in semblance.
As semblance, it will radiantly shine
Within the light, and thus in spirit-realms
Will wholly consecrate itself to beauty.
To beauty, which the burden of the weight
Of earth still keeps it from in present times—
In beauty semblance turns itself to being—
In future it will be the light of earth;
Descending down as light, which flees from here.

THE HIGHEST HIEROPHANT:

The Sphinxes speak,—

They, who ever since these rites were first performed here—

Have been but image.

The spirit—it has taken hold of lifeless form.

O destiny—you sound out as Word of worlds.

The other Mystics, except for the Hierophant and the Neophyte, are astonished by the words of the Highest Hierophant.

THE HIEROPHANT (to the Highest Hierophant):

The sacrificial work that we perform

Is not just of significance here;

Events of world-destiny

Stream through all the words and deeds Of these most sacred rites.

Over the mood created by all that has happened, the curtain falls.

SCENE NINE

A small room—like a study—with a serious mood—in Hilary's house. At first, Maria—alone in meditation—then there appear: Astrid, Luna, The Guardian of the Threshold and Benedictus.

MARIA:

There—upon the shoreline of the spirit—a soul-star,—
Coming near,—radiant in spirit—drawing near me—
Draws near to me—with my own self,—and nearing—
Its light grows ever stronger—and more peaceful.
O star that has appeared within my spirit-sphere,
What is it that your nearing shines
Into the inner seeing of my soul?

Astrid appears.

ASTRID:

Recognize what I may now bestow on you;
For from the battle of the light
With darknesses
I wrested free your thinking's power;
And from the mighty moment of awakening
Within the cosmic midnight hour
I now do faithfully bring it back
Into your earthly form.

MARIA:

You, my Astrid, you always have appeared till now,
But as a shining shadow of the soul;
What is it that transforms you
Into a bright spirit-star?

ASTRID:

The thunder and the lightning's power I kept for you,

And thus it was held safe for you in world-existence—

And now you may behold it knowingly

Remembering the hour of cosmic midnight.

MARIA:

The hour of cosmic midnight!

Before the body's covering

For this life on earth

Enclosed my Self—

Through which I stayed awake

Amidst the richly coloured light of Saturn!

Till now my earthly thinking

Covered this experience in spirit

In dimness of the soul; - - - -

It rises now to full-lit clarity of soul within me.

ASTRID:

Within the cosmic light you spoke these words yourself:

‘Everlasting time—I do entreat you—
Pour yourself into this blessedness,
And together with me,
Let the teacher and the other soul as well
Linger now within you, full of peace.’

MARIA:

May you also linger for me
You—this present moment—now—
Who found the way
To fashion into strength of self
This happening in the spirit. Arm my soul,
So that you do not vanish like a dream.
Within the light illumining the hour of cosmic midnight,
Which Astrid makes to shine from dimness of the soul,
My I unites itself unto that I
That did create me
So that I could be of service to it
Within the being of the world.

But how may I keep hold of you
You present moment,
So I don't lose you
When the senses feel once more
The brightness of the earth around me?
For the senses' power is very great;
And if they kill what has been seen in spirit
Very often this cannot revive
When one refinds oneself again in spirit.

On the last words, as if called up by them, Luna appears.

LUNA:

Before the world of sense-existence
Leads you once again to dreaming
Safely guard your strength of will
Which could create this moment for you.
Recall the words I spoke
When at the hour of cosmic midnight

You beheld me.

MARIA:

My Luna, you have brought me here,
From cosmic midnight,
The strength of will
Which shall uphold me
In my earth-existence.

LUNA:

My words were followed by the Guardian's warning:
'You now will have to stand
Quite differently before yourself;
You'll see an image of yourself from ancient times
And come to know
How even in the falling of the soul
Its wings gain greater strength
For the ascent to spirit-heights.

The soul must never wish to fall;

But every time it falls must gain new wisdom.' - - - - -

MARIA:

The power of your words

Carries me away.

Where is it taking me?

There—upon the shoreline of my soul—a spirit-star!—

It's shining—drawing near—as spirit-form;

Draws near to me—with my own self,—and nearing

Its light condenses—more and more.—Forms

Within the light are growing darker—

Reveal themselves as living beings!

A young neophyte, a sacrificial flame,

The Highest Hierophant's

Most strict command

To rightly read and to make known

The content of the flame!

- - - - -

The horror and complete confusion of the mystics,
At that young mystic's declaration
About himself!

The Guardian of the Threshold appears during these last words.

GUARDIAN:

In spirit-hearing too
Fathom for yourself once more
The Highest Hierophant's
Most strict command.

MARIA:

'Then read to us, you human soul, what the flame proclaims to you
As cosmic Word within your inmost being.'
Who spoke this Word that my own thinking
Bears to me, remembering,
From flowing tides of soul?

Benedictus appears during Maria's words.

BENEDICTUS:

You call me here to you with my own words.

When with these words, in ages past, I once commanded you,

They did not find you ready yet to follow me.

They rested—deeply held

Within the happening of the world;

In lengthy course of time they gathered strength

That flowed towards them from your life of soul.

And thus they worked, unconsciously, in you,

In deepest soul-foundations,

Within your later lives on earth—

And let you find me, once again, as teacher.

They now transform themselves within you, consciously, through thinking,

To living strength-filled content for your life:

‘The sacrificial work that we perform

Is not just of significance here;
Events of world-destiny
Stream through all the words and deeds
Of these most sacred rites.'

MARIA:

It was not you who spoke those words.
It was the hierophant, he who in
That ancient temple brotherhood
Was your companion.
That powers of destiny
Had already foreseen
The ending of that brotherhood
Was known to him.
He beheld, unconsciously,
The beautiful appearance of the dawn
That heralded already, over Greece,
A new sun rising
In the spiritual stream of Earth.

And therefore he suppressed the thoughts
That he should have directed to my soul.
He made himself an instrument of the cosmic spirit
At that initiation and sacred rite,
Through which he heard the evolving stream of world-events
Whispering within him.

He spoke these words as well, from inmost depths of soul: 'I certainly have
come to know here deeply:

Solitude—at the most solemn site of the spirit.

Why am I alone within this place?'

BENEDICTUS:

Thus there sprang up in his soul the urge
For solitude; in the womb of time
This seed within his soul has ripened into fruit.
Capesius—as a mystic—now experiences this fruit;
And this it is that makes him wish to follow
Felix's example.

MARIA:

But that woman,
Who stayed so near the temple;
I see her well in ancient time—
My vision, though, cannot yet reach her
In her present form; how may I find her
When sense-existence leads me once again
To dreaming?

THE GUARDIAN:

When you behold the being, within the realm of soul,
That she can feel as shadow among shadows
Then you will find her.
She seeks this being with all her strength of soul.
She will only redeem it from the realm of shades
When in her present form, through you,
She can behold her long-past life on earth.

The Guardian of the Threshold and Benedictus disappear.

MARIA:

The solemn Guardian glides away, as shining soul-star,

Towards the shoreline of my soul—;

A holy power sublime rays forth from him;—

His great solemnity

Pours strength throughout my deepest being;

I will immerse myself within this peace - - - -;

I feel already how, through this,

I'll lead myself to full awakening in the spirit.

And you, my messengers of soul - - - -

I'll keep alive within my being

As stars that light the way - - - -.

On you, Astrid, will I call, when thoughts

Would separate from soul's true brightness.

And you, O Luna, may my word then always find you

When power of will is sleeping in soul-depths.

Curtain while Maria, Astrid and Luna are still in the room.

SCENE TEN

*The same room as in Scene Nine. At first, Johannes alone, in meditation.
Later there appear: the Other Philia, Maria, the Spirit of Johannes's Youth,
Lucifer, Benedictus.)*

JOHANNES:

'In this very hour he is offering himself up

In service of the age-old, holy mysteries—;

Through some revelation

While dreaming

Perhaps I may still now

Linger with him

A while

In the spirit.'

This was how, in times long past, quite near the temple,

The woman spoke, whom I behold in spirit-image,

And thinking of her, I feel new strength is given to me.

What does this image do to me? What is it

That transfixes me, almost spellbound, when I see it?

It is not sympathy, that from the very image itself

Forces itself on me; for should this image

Appear before me in sense-existence,

It would seem quite meaningless.

What is it that from this image

Speaks to me?

THE OTHER PHILIA:

Enchantment that's weaving

Throughout their own being.

JOHANNES:

For now waking dreaming

To souls is revealing

Enchantment that's weaving

Throughout their own being.

While Johannes is speaking these words, the 'Other Philia' comes towards him.

Who are you, mysterious and magical spirit?

You brought my soul your good and true advice

And yet, about yourself, you all the time deceived me.

THE OTHER PHILIA:

It's you who have created, from yourself,

This double form of your being.

Like a shade, I too am forced to hover round you

Till you yourself redeem that shade

Given, by your guilt, a trapped, enchanted life.

JOHANNES:

For the third time—you speak these words

Which I will follow.—Show me how to do so.

THE OTHER PHILIA:

Seek for what has been preserved within yourself, Johannes,
That goes on living in the spirit-light.
It will give light to you from its own light.
And then you will be able to behold, within you,
How in your future life
You may erase your guilt.

JOHANNES:

How can I seek for what has been preserved within myself,
That goes on living in the spirit-light?

THE OTHER PHILIA:

Give me all you are yourself in thinking;
Only for a little while, lose yourself in me;
Do it, though, in such a way, that you do not become another.

JOHANNES:

How can I give myself to you
Before I have been able to behold you
In your true being?

THE OTHER PHILIA:

I am within you—part of your own soul.
The power of love itself—am I in you;
The hope that fills the heart, that stirs in you,
The fruits of long-past lives on earth, that have
Been kept for you, within your being—O
Behold these now through me—my presence feel—
And through my strength in you, behold yourself.
Unveil within yourself the being in that image
Created with no trace of sympathy by your vision.

The Other Philia disappears.

JOHANNES:

O mysterious spirit—

I feel your presence within me—

Yet cannot see you anymore.

Where is it

That you live for me?

The Other Philia calls, as if from far away.

THE OTHER PHILIA:

Enchantment that's weaving

Throughout their own being.

JOHANNES:

Enchantment that's weaving

Throughout their own being.

Enchantment that's weaving throughout my own being,

Unveil for me the being in that image

Created with no trace of sympathy by my vision.

The power of these words

Carries me away.

Where is it taking me?

There upon the shoreline of the soul—a spirit-star!

It's shining, drawing near—as spirit-form,

And as it nears, growing brighter;—figures take on form;—

And now begin to live and move like beings;—

A young neophyte,—a sacrificial flame,

The Highest Hierophant's

Most strict command

To rightly read and to make known

The content of the flame.

The woman—(the image created without sympathy by my vision)—

Is searching for the young neophyte.

Maria appears as a thought-form of Johannes.

MARIA:

Who thought of you before the sacrificial flame?

Who felt you there so near the sacred place?

Johannes, if you would free your spirit-shadow

From worlds of soul where it's enchanted,

Then live the goals that shine from it towards you;

The trail that you are following—it will guide you;

But first you have to rightly find it once again.

The woman standing near the temple,

When she is living strongly in your thoughts,

Will show it to you.

Enchanted in the realm of shadow-spirits,

She strives towards that other shadow,

Who now, through you, must serve cruel shades,

And do their dreadful work.

The Spirit of Johannes's Youth appears.

THE SPIRIT OF JOHANNES'S YOUTH:

I will be always bound to you in future
If you will nurture lovingly those powers
Which in the womb of time were kept for me
So faithfully by that young neophyte
For whom your soul once searched within the temple.
But you must also see the spirit truly
By whose side I now appear to you.

MARIA:

Maria, as you wish to see her,
Does not exist in worlds where truth prevails.
My solemn holy vow rays out its strength,
Which shall preserve for you what you've achieved.
You find me in the glorious fields of light

Where radiant beauty brings to birth the powers of life;
Seek for me in depths of worlds,
Where souls are willing to attain the feeling of the gods,
Through love, which always sees the self within the All.

Lucifer appears, while Maria is speaking the last line.

LUCIFER:

Then work, compelling powers
And elemental spirits, feel
The power of your master.
Make straight the path
Along which can be led
Away from bounds of earth
Into bright Lucifer's domain
All that my wishes crave
And that must be obedient to my will.

Benedictus appears.

BENEDICTUS:

Maria's holy solemn vow now works
And pours into his soul its healing radiance.
He will admire you,
But will not succumb to you.

LUCIFER:

Then I will fight.

BENEDICTUS:

And fighting serve the gods!

Curtain.

SCENE ELEVEN

The same room as in the two previous scenes.

Benedictus and Strader enter the room.

STRADER:

You spoke serious words to me

And Maria very harsh ones

When you both showed yourselves to me

At my life's abyss.

BENEDICTUS:

The images, you know, are not essential;

But the content,

That wishes to get through to the soul

And to reveal itself within the image.

STRADER:

Yet what spoke from these images was harsh:

‘Where is your light? You radiate darkness,

You’re creating wild, confusing darkness in the light.’

The spirit—in Maria’s image—really spoke like this.

BENEDICTUS:

As you have climbed up one step higher,

On the spiritual path,

The spirit who has led you up, towards itself,

Revealed what you have previously achieved

As darkness.

That spirit chose Maria’s image

For this was how your own soul pictured it.

My dear Strader,

Powerfully the spirit

Now holds sway within you—

It leads you on
In swift-winged flight
To ever higher stages of your soul.

STRADER:

And yet the words ring out quite dreadfully within me:
'Because you are too cowardly to radiate your light.'
The Spirit in that image said this too.

BENEDICTUS:

The spirit had to name you cowardly,
As what for lesser souls is bravery
For yours indeed is only cowardice.
As we develop, what was once courageous
Turns to cowardice
That must be overcome.

STRADER:

Your words... they touch me deeply!

Romanus spoke with me, a while ago,

About his plan.

I should, he said, no longer carry out the project

In unity with you, but on my own, without your help.

And he would then commit himself to stand by Hilary,

With everything he owns.

When I objected, saying I would never

Contemplate the work

In separation from your circle

He declared that in that case

All further efforts were in vain.

Romanus now supports the opposition

Hilary's manager is putting up against

The project, without which my life, indeed,

Must seem completely worthless.

As these two men now rob from me

My very field of action, I see before me

Nothing—other than a life that lacks
The very air we need to live.
So that my spirit is not
Lamed now, in its flight,
I need that courage
You just spoke about.
Though whether I will prove strong enough for this,
I cannot say,
For I can feel
How that same power I'm seeking to unchain
Is also turning now, destructively,
Against me.

BENEDICTUS:

Maria and Johannes have recently
Progressed in spiritual vision.
What hindered them before,
From stepping from the mystic life
Into the world of sense-existence,

Is gone; in the further course of time
There will be found new goals
Which will bring you and them together.
The mystic words do not just guide
They do themselves create new forces—
Whatever must happen... will happen.
We therefore will await, in watchfulness,
To see the way the spirit shows its signs.

STRADER:

What I can only see to be a sign of destiny
Formed recently for me into an image.
I was on a ship; you were in charge;
I was the one operating the rudder;
We were taking Maria and Johannes
To where they could start their work;
There then appeared, very near to us,
Another ship; in it was Romanus
And Hilary's friend, the Manager.

They blocked our path, confronting us as enemies.

I started battling against them—but suddenly

Into the battle stepped Ahriman,

Fighting on their side.

I saw myself in bitter combat with him.

Coming to my help, there then stepped in beside me, Theodora.

And then the image vanished from my inner sphere.

I once dared say to Felix and Capesius:

‘It would be easy for me to bear the opposition

Now threatening my work from outside;

Even if my whole will would be shattered,—

I would be able to endure.’

What if this image is trying to tell me

That outer opposition is but the expression

Of an inner battle—a battle with Ahriman?

Am I ready then for this battle as well?

BENEDICTUS:

My friend, this image, as I see within your soul,

Has not yet fully ripened for you.

You can, I feel, make stronger in yourself,
The power that showed it to your spirit-eye.

I now can sense that if you rightly strive

To bring about that strengthening,

You will create new forces, for yourself,

And also for your friends.

I feel all this;

But how it all will happen

Is hidden from my sight.

Curtain.

SCENE TWELVE

The Earth's interior. Mighty crystalline forms, broken through everywhere by streams of lava. The whole is dimly lit, partly transparent, partly translucent. Red flames towards the top appear to be compressed downwards by the roof.

AHRIMAN (alone at first):

Essential matter rains down from above.

I'll put it to my purpose.

Here, demonic stuff seeps

Into the form-realm.

A human being is striving

To eradicate completely from himself

The spirit-substance that he owes to me.

Until this point, I could inspire him quite well;

But now he's much too close to that swarm of mystics

Who, through Benedictus's

Light-filled wisdom

Could achieve wakefulness
At the hour of cosmic midnight.
Lucifer has lost his hold on them;
Enabling Maria and Johannes
To escape his realm of light.
So now, with all my power,
I must take hold of Strader.
Once I have him, I'll win the others too.
Johannes already has hideously blunted himself
Upon my shadow;—he knows me well.
I cannot get to him—without Strader,
And neither to Maria.
And yet, perhaps, Strader will not yet be able to recognize
The web of tangled spirit men regard as nature
As my spiritual baggage—
And there—where I—denying all spirit
Am spiritually creating—
He will suppose
There to be nothing
But a blind, woven fabric

Of energy and matter.

The others have, I know, not ceased

To prattle on to him about my being and my realm—

But even so—

I do not think him yet completely lost.

He will quite forget that Benedictus

Sent him once half-conscious, to my realm,

To rid him of the false belief

That I am but a product of the brain

In human heads.

The only thing I'll need

If I'm to snatch him away into my realm, at the right moment,

Is a little bit of earthly help.

I will now summon here to me a soul

Who thinks himself so clever

That I, for him,

Am nothing more

Than a daft deception wrought by fools.

He serves me now and then, when I make use of him.

Ahriman leaves and returns with the soul of Ferdinand Reinecke. In its form, it is a kind of copy of Ahriman; when he comes in, he removes a blindfold from the person representing the soul.

His earthly intelligence

He must leave at the door.

He must not understand

What he is to experience here, with me.

For he's still honest;

And if he understood

Just what it is to which I will inspire him now,

He would wish to do nothing for me.

And later on—he must be able to forget it too.

Do you know—that Dr Strader—who serves me?

THE SOUL OF FERDINAND REINECKE:

He idly drifts about up on the earth-star.

He tries to make his scholarly, sophisticated bunkum spring to life,

But each new puff of wind life blows just knocks it down again.

He listens greedily to all the mystic swaggerers;
He's half-asphyxiated already in all their mists and fog.
And now he wants to surround Hilary in the same cloud;
Fortunately, Hilary is kept in check by his friend, the Manager,
For otherwise that fantasizing bunch
Would wholly wreck his family firm
With all their spirit-blabbering.

AHRIMAN:

Such prattling talk as this
Serves me not at all.
Right now—I just need Strader.
As long as this one man
Continues to believe so firmly in himself
It will be far too easy for Benedictus
To impart his wisdom to mankind.
The friend of Hilary might very well help
Lucifer; but I must strive quite differently.
Through Strader I must damage Benedictus.

For if he's robbed of Strader, he will then
Accomplish nothing with his other pupils.
My adversaries, it's true, still have their power;
For after Strader's death he will be theirs.
However, if while he is still alive on earth,
I can confuse his soul and make it lose conviction in itself,
The result would be that Benedictus
Could not ever again
Place him at the forefront of his work.
I have, you see, already read, within the book of destiny
That Strader's natural days of life—will very soon be done.
And Benedictus does not have the power to see this.
My loyal, trusty servant—you're almost too clever;
And you believe that I am but
A daft, unreal image in the minds of fools.
You're so expert in your reasoning that people listen to you.
So go—to Strader—very soon—
Explain to him that his machinery is wrong;
That it can never do what it has promised;
Not just because 'the times are not yet favourable',

But because it has been thought out wrongly.

THE SOUL OF FERDINAND REINECKE:

For this particular task I'm well prepared.

For a long time already all my thoughts

Have only focussed on this question:

How to prove, successfully, to Strader

That he has lost his way down paths of error?

When a man has cleverly invented stuff like this,

Through many nights, at first just in his thought,

He easily believes that should it fail

The cause does not lie in the thought itself

But something from outside.

In Strader's case the situation's truly pitiful.

If he could only have kept free from all that mystic fog

And had relied but on his senses and the brilliance of his mind,

Humanity undoubtedly would have acquired

The greatest benefits from his outstanding gifts.

AHRIMAN:

Then now—take up your weapons—
Of craft and cleverness.
Your work is to ensure
That Strader cannot ever find again
His rightful faith and confidence
In what he does and in himself.
When this is done, he will no longer
Wish to follow Benedictus—
Who then will be alone,
Reliant only on himself
And on the reasons he himself proclaims.
But these are found unpleasing by mankind
And all the more that they reveal themselves as true,
All the more they will be hated on the earth.

THE SOUL OF FERDINAND REINECKE:

I see already, very clearly,

How to demonstrate to Strader

The error in his thinking.

His machinery is based upon an error

Which he himself cannot become aware of.

The dark cloud of the mystics hinders him.

I, with all my clear and sober powers of reasoning

Can offer him, in truth, much better service.

I have been wanting this for many years

But could not see the way to do it.

Now suddenly the way lights up in me.

I feel inspired!

I must now go and contemplate just what I have to do

To unmistakably convince this Strader of the truth.

Ahriman leads Reinecke's soul out of his realm and, before the person representing the soul leaves, replaces the blindfold over his eyes.

AHRIMAN (alone):

This one can offer me, in truth, good service.

The mystic light on earth—it burns me badly;
I must continue working there, undisturbed,
Without the mystics revealing what I do.

Theodora's soul appears.

THEODORA'S SOUL:

Though you may find your way to Strader, I
Am at his side; for since he found me on
The bright-illuminated paths of soul, he is
United with me—whether he must lead
His life in spirit-land or on the earth.

AHRIMAN:

If she really does not leave him
All the while that he's on earth
Well then—my battle—will be lost.
This cannot stop me hoping, though,

That in the end he nonetheless

Might still forget her.

Curtain.

SCENE THIRTEEN

A larger reception room in Hilary's house. As the curtain opens Hilary and Romanus are in conversation together. (Later: Capesius, Felix Balde, the Secretary; Philia.)

HILARY:

With greatest pain, dear friend,

I must confess

That the knot of destiny

That forms here in our circle

Is almost crushing me.

What can one build on

When all around one shakes and trembles?

Benedictus's friends, through you,

Are kept from what we do.

Bitter agonies of doubt

Now weigh on Strader.

A man who often has opposed the strivings of the mystics

With cleverness and also—yes—with hatred—
Has now been able to prove to him
That he is badly wrong with his machinery—
That this is not just blocked by outer hindrances
But that within itself it is impossible.
My life has yielded me no fruit.
I longed for deeds
But always lacked the thoughts
That could have made these deeds
Mature to ripeness.
Barrenness of soul has caused me bitter grief.
It was my spirit-vision alone
Which always has sustained me.
And yet—with Strader—even this could now deceive me.

ROMANUS:

I've often felt as though a nightmare haunted me
That harshly robbed my soul of any peace
When in the course of time events have shown

Your words to have been gravely wrong
And thus have made your spirit-vision
Just appear delusion.
That nightmare grew in me
Until it could become
An inner mystic teacher.
It has set free a feeling deep within me
Which now lights up my judgement. - - - -
You have trusted spirit-vision far too blindly;
Because of this it easily appears as error
Where it in fact was surely leading you to truth.
You have seen Strader rightly,
In spite of everything
That over-clever man has proved.

HILARY:

So does your faith not waver—even now?
Do you still keep, unshaken, the opinion
You have had before, of Strader?

ROMANUS:

I formed that opinion for reasons
Which have nothing to do with Strader's friends.
Those reasons still hold,
Regardless of whether his machinery
Turns out to be correct or faulty.
Even if he was mistaken over it—so what?
The human being has to pass through error
To find the truth.

HILARY:

You're not put off by failure? You—
The one whose life has only ever brought success?

ROMANUS:

Those people have success who have no fear of failure.

All one has to do

Is apply one's understanding of mysticism

To this particular case.

It shows quite clearly

What one has to think of Strader.

In the battle, that opens up the portals of the spirit,

He will be able to prove himself victorious;

Courageously, he will step past the Guardian

Who stands before the threshold of the spirit-world.

Within my soul I have felt deeply, through and through,

The words the strict and solemn Guardian speaks.

I sense him now right here at Strader's side.

Whether he's able to behold him

Or but draws near to him unconsciously,

I cannot apprehend.

I believe I know Strader, though, well enough.

With his great courage, he'll attain the insight

That self-knowledge must give rise to pain.

That Will will then be his companion

Which offers itself bravely to the future,
And drawing up new strength
From powerful springs of hope
Is able to withstand the pains of knowledge.

HILARY:

My friend, I deeply thank you for these occult words.
I have so often heard them;
Yet only now, for the first time
I feel what's hidden secretly within them.
The cosmic ways are strange and hard to grasp.
I see, dear friend, that now I have to wait
Till higher powers reveal to me the way
That's in accordance with my spirit-sight.

Hilary and Romanus leave towards the right. Capesius and Felix Balde enter from the left. The Secretary leads them into the room.

SECRETARY:

I'd thought that Benedictus
Would be back today from his travels,
But he is not yet here.
If you return tomorrow
You'll be sure to meet him.

FELIX BALDE:

Well, can we speak with our friend Hilary?

SECRETARY:

I'll go and look for him
And ask him to come over and see you.

Secretary leaves.

FELIX BALDE:

The experience you have had is,
Without a doubt, of deep significance.
Please—could you not describe it for me once again?
It's only possible to judge these things correctly
When they are grasped, quite clearly, in the spirit.

CAPESIUS:

It was this morning, when I believed
That I was very near the mystic mood;
The senses—were silent; even memory—was silent.
I felt but utter openness
To what would happen in the spirit.
First there came what I well know already.
But then—the soul of Strader
Stood there, very clearly, before my spirit-sight.
He did not speak at first.
I had time to be aware of how awake I was.
But soon, completely clear, I heard his words as well.

‘Do not leave the true mystic mood.’

This sounded out—as if from deep within him.

Then he said—emphasizing strongly every word:

‘To strive for nothing; only to be still and at peace;

The inner being of the soul wide open—;

That is the mystic mood. It awakens

Of itself—quite unsought for in life’s stream—

When the human soul does rightly grow in strength,

When, empowered in thinking, it rightly seeks the spirit.

The mood may well descend in quiet hours,

But also ‘midst the storm of action; it then

Wants only that the soul

Does not, in thoughtlessness,

Evade the fragile, tender vision

Of what is happening in spirit.’

FELIX BALDE:

This almost sounds just like an echo

Of my words—though not exactly as I meant them.

CAPESIUS:

When one thinks about it carefully

One can also find it means

The opposite of your words.

This is even more the case

When one considers

What he then went on to say.

‘If someone, though, awakens artificially

The mystic mood,

They lead their inner being

Only into themselves.

Indeed, over the realm of light

They weave a web of darkness,

The darkness of what works in their own souls.

Whoever seeks for this, through mysticism,

Destroys their spirit-sight

With mystical delusion.’

FELIX BALDE:

This can be nothing else than my own words,
Reversed and twisted by the character of Strader,
Resounding then in you as an appalling mystic error.

CAPESIUS:

Then Strader, in the end, spoke these words too:
‘Human beings cannot find the spirit world
If they attempt to enter it by seeking.
Within that soul who over many years
Seeks for a mood—and nothing else—
The truth cannot resound.’

Philia appears, who can only be seen by Capesius. Felix Balde reveals by his attitude that he does not understand the words that follow.

PHILIA:

Capesius, if you pay heed
To what now shows itself to you, unsought,
Within your seeking,
You soon will be empowered
By all that weaves within the many-coloured light;
In living images, like very beings,
It wholly will pervade you now,
Because it is revealed to you by forces of your soul.
What shines from your own self's most sunlit being
Will be dimmed down by Saturn's ripened wisdom.
Then to your vision there will be unveiled
What you, as earthly human being, can understand.
And I will guide you then, myself,
To that great Guardian who keeps watch
Upon the mighty threshold of the spirit.

FELIX BALDE:

Words resound from spheres I do not know

But as their tones create no light-filled life

They are not full reality for me.

CAPESIUS:

The counsel Philia gives will be my guide

So that in future

There will also be revealed to me in spirit

What is already understandable to me

Within my sphere of life on earth.

Curtain.

SCENE FOURTEEN

The same room as in the previous scene. When the scene begins, Hilary's wife is in conversation with the Manager of the firm.

HILARY'S WIFE:

It almost seems the deed
My husband still considers so essential
Is not desired by destiny itself—
When one considers
Just how tangled are the threads
That power has spun into the knot of life
That binds us here so tightly.

MANAGER:

A woven knot of destiny,
Which, to human minds,

Can certainly appear

Impossible to solve or to undo.—

- - - - -

Well, then—it must be cut!

- - - - -

I see no other possibility

Than that there has to be a cut

Between your husband

And my whole sphere of life. - - - - -

HILARY'S WIFE:

To separate from you.—No—

That is something my husband could never do.

For it would contradict in every way

The spirit of the firm,

Which has been handed down by his dear father

And which his son continues to be loyal to.

MANAGER:

Has this loyalty
Not long ago already
Been betrayed?
The goals that Hilary is seeking now
Live in a wholly opposite direction
From the one that spirit
Always wished to go in.

HILARY'S WIFE:

All my husband's happiness in life
Now hinges on the realization of this goal.
Since, like a lightning-flash of thought,
It sprang to sudden life within him,
I have seen how he has utterly transformed.
Life, before, had only brought about in him
A bleak and desperate barrenness of soul,
Which he kept carefully hidden
Even from his closest friends,

And which thus all the more
Would eat away at him within.
He felt himself to be quite insignificant,
For no thoughts ever sprouted in his soul
Which could have seemed to him worthy of life.
When then the plan rose up before him—
The project—of bringing mystic life
Into activity—he was made young again—
He was a different man—and always happy.
With this goal he felt himself for the first time worthy of life. - - - -
That you could have stood against him—
He couldn't have imagined—until he saw it.
And when he did—it struck him harder
Than almost any blow
That life has ever dealt him.
If you knew how much he suffers because of you
I am sure that you would soften the harshness of your stance.

MANAGER:

If I were to go against my own conviction
It would seem to me that I had lost
All human dignity.
It will be very difficult
To see myself
With Strader working next to me;
But I have decided to take on this burden
Because Romanus supports it,
Who I understand,
Now that he's spoken to me about Strader.
What he said to me
I know to be the beginning of my own spirit-schooling.
From his words flamed forth a power
Which passed across immediately into my soul;
Never in my life had I experienced
Such inner power as this.
The advice he gives must be of great importance to me
Even if, as yet, I cannot fully follow it with understanding.
Romanus only gives support to Strader;
The contributions of the other mystics, in his eyes,

Would not just be a hindrance to the work,
But would, he holds, be even dangerous for themselves.
I value Romanus's opinion so highly
That I must now believe that if Strader
Cannot find his way to act without his friends,
Then this would have to be for him a sign of destiny.
It would clearly show to him
He should, for now, remain beside his friends
And only later bring about
From his interior mystic striving
Impulses for actual deeds in outer life.
The fact that he has been standing in these recent days
Much closer to these friends than ever before,
After they had been more distant for a while,
Leads me to believe that this indeed
Will be his situation,
Even if it means, for now,
He'll have to see his goals as wholly lost.

HILARY'S WIFE:

You look at Strader only through those eyes
That have been opened for you by Romanus.
Try and see him quite impartially.
He can so wholly give himself to spirit-life
That he appears transported from the realm of earth.
He stands completely in the presence of the spirit—
And in the living presence of Theodora.
When one speaks with him, it's just as if
She too were there before one.
Many are the mystics
Quite well able to imprint
The spirit-message into words,
So that, when they are thought about,
They bring conviction.
What Strader speaks
Works within his very speech itself.
One sees he very little values
Experience of the spirit which is merely inward,
And knows itself quite satisfied within the realm of feeling—

That as a Mystic

He will place before all else

The impulse for research.

And therefore he does not confuse, through mysticism,

The sense for science,

Which shows itself so practically

Of such great service in our lives.

Please try and see this in him—

And through him understand as well

That one will have to value far more highly

His own judgement of his friends

Than the one arrived at by Romanus.

MANAGER:

In this situation,

So far from my accustomed sphere of thought,

Romanus's judgement is for me

The solid ground

Upon which I can stand.

If I must go into a realm

Which brings me very near to mysticism,

Then I will absolutely need such guidance

Someone can only give me who has won my trust

Through that within them

I can fully comprehend.

The Secretary enters.

You seem quite shaken and distraught, my friend.

What's happened?

SECRETARY (hesitant):

Dr Strader... died... a few hours ago.

MANAGER:

He's died? Strader?

HILARY'S WIFE:

Strader—dead—- Where's Hilary?

SECRETARY:

He's in his room...

As if paralysed by the news

Just brought to him from Strader's house.

Hilary's wife leaves. The Secretary follows her.

MANAGER (alone):

He's died. Strader! Is this reality?

Is that deep spirit-sleep

Of which I've heard so much

Already touching me?

A serious, sombre face is shown

By that great power of destiny

Who here is pulling on the threads.

O, my little soul,

What power so seized your thread of destiny

Within his hand

That now it's inter-woven in this knot?

Whatever must happen, will happen!

Why have these words never left me

Since the moment Strader spoke them

In front of Hilary and myself?

They sounded out

As if they'd come to him

From quite another world;—

Spoken by one as if transported

Into spirit-realms!—

Oh what then is it that should happen?—

I feel indeed that in that moment

In those very words

I was seized hold of by the spirit-world—

Its language sounds out to me—;

Sounds out in serious tones;—

How may I learn to understand it?

Curtain.

SCENE FIFTEEN

The same room as in the previous scene. The nurse of Dr Strader is sitting there, waiting. After the curtain opens, the Secretary enters the room. Later Benedictus. Ahriman.

SECRETARY:

Benedictus will soon be here

To receive your message from you himself.

He's been away, but has just returned.

What a great, extraordinary man was Dr Strader!

I didn't really have faith, you know, at the beginning,

In Hilary's colossal, far-reaching project;

But as I was often present, when Strader

Showed him what was necessary for the work,

All of my objections swiftly fell away.

He was always so alert in spirit, so intelligent,

And had the strongest sense

For what was possible

And what was fitting to the purpose.

And yet, he always strove as well

To find the final goal

Solely from the matter in hand—

As it revealed itself—

And to presuppose nothing, in thought,

Beforehand.

The man behaved exactly as a mystic should—

Like somebody who climbs a mountain peak

Because they wish to see the heavenly view.

They wait till they have reached the top—and do

Not first think up some image of it in their minds.

NURSE:

In the busy, active stream of life

You have known a man

With mighty gifts and noble strength of spirit;

In the brief while

When I could carry out for him
His last services on earth
I have been able to marvel
At his lofty soul. This dear soul
Which, apart from seven years of rare happiness,
Always walked through earthly life alone.
The mystics offered him their wisdom.
He, though, needed love.
His great desire for deeds—
This was also love—
For love, in order to reveal itself
Will show itself in many different forms.
All that this soul sought for, in his spirit-striving,
Was just as needed by the noble fire
That burned within his being
As the healing balm of restful sleep
Is needed by the body
After many hours of arduous, creative work.

SECRETARY:

And the source of all his creative work
Was in the mystic wisdom;
Every single thing he did was always filled by this,
And in the most beautiful of ways.

NURSE:

Because by his very nature
He always had to love
And to unite his soul completely
With all that wished to make itself
The mission of his life.
Even the very final thoughts he had were for the work
To which he'd given himself—with so much love. - - - - -
Just the way that other people part from those they love
So the soul of Strader
Left behind the earthly work
Into which he selflessly had poured his love.

SECRETARY:

He lived, within the kernel of his being, in spirit,
And Theodora always stood before his gaze
Just like a living soul—; that is the way true mystics feel.

NURSE:

Yes. For solitude had joined them both together.
Even in death she stood before him.
It seemed to him
That she was calling him away
To spirit-worlds
For the completion of his work.
A few hours before he died
He wrote these words for Benedictus
That now I will deliver to the mystics' guide and teacher.

And thus must life go on
In these our present days on earth,

Mysterious and full of riddles;—
Illumined, though, by Sun-like beings, like Strader,
From whom, revolving round like planets,
The others all receive the light
That wakens them and brings new life to birth.

Benedictus enters; the Secretary leaves.

Before he grew too weak
Strader managed still
To write these few last lines.
I now deliver them to you, the mystics' friend.

BENEDICTUS:

And once he'd written down these words,
Where then was he, in his soul, until the end?

NURSE:

At first his final plans in life
Were living in his thoughts. Theodora then
Was wholly there for him in spirit.
Feeling this, his soul did delicately free itself
And left his body's covering behind.

BENEDICTUS:

You loyal, faithful being
I deeply thank you for the service
You were able to perform for him on earth.

The Nurse leaves. Benedictus reads Strader's final words.

'My friend, (dear Benedictus),
When I felt myself almost completely shattered,
Recognizing that the opposition to my own creations
Was not caused merely from outside,
But that inner failings in the fundamental thought itself
Were hindering the further progress of the work,

I saw that image once again
Which I described to you
A little while ago.
This time, though, the image ended in a different way.
It was not Ahriman, this time,
Who fought against me in the battle;
A messenger from spirit-realms appeared in his place,
Whose very form, I clearly felt,
Was that of my own thought,
So badly filled with error.
And then I had to make myself remember
Your words about the need for strengthening
The power of the forces of my soul.
And as I did so, then that messenger from spirit-realms
Immediately disappeared.’
There follow after this a few more words—
I cannot read them, though—a chaos
Weaving a veil of cloudéd thought—
Hides them from me.

Ahriman appears; Benedictus sees him.

Who are you, who appears within my soul's horizon—

Emerging like a shadow from my chaos?

AHRIMAN (to himself):

He sees me very well, but does not know yet who I am.

And so he will not bring to me that agonizing pain

If I attempt to work now at his side.

To Benedictus.

I can give your further news about what Strader now

Is wishing to confide in you—

Both for the help and service it may be to you—

And for your pupils' onward mystic path.

BENEDICTUS:

The mystic group around me

Will always know itself united

With the soul of Strader,

Although there is no further bridge to him

In sense-existence.

But if a messenger from spirit-worlds is wishing to approach us,

And to bring revelations from the realms where Strader now abides,

Then he has first of all to win our confidence.

This he can only do

If he appears in such a way

Before our spirit-sight

That he may be completely known.

AHRIMAN:

But you are only striving for self-knowledge;

So if a spirit-being, different from you,

That wants to prove itself of service,

Can only be permitted by your side if able to be known,

It first of all will need to show itself to you

As part of your own self.

BENEDICTUS:

Whoever you may be, you only serve the good,
If you do not desire to strive within yourself, alone,
But willingly, will lose yourself in human thinking,
And through this rise, renewed, within the world's evolving.

AHRIMAN:

So now it's time for me to leave
His spirit-sphere
As fast as possible;
For from the moment that his spirit-sight
Can also think me, as in truth I am,
There will create itself, quite soon, within his thinking,
A portion of that power, which will, eventually, annihilate me.

Ahriman disappears.

BENEDICTUS:

Only now do I recognize and know him—Ahriman—

Who flees from here, himself,

And yet creates within me

Knowledge of his being, in thought.

He strives forever to confuse all human thinking

For through an error handed down from ancient days

He wants to see in it the source of all his sufferings.

He does not know as yet

Redemption will be only his in future,

When, in the mirror of this thinking,

He can then refind himself anew.

And so, although he shows himself indeed to human beings,

He does not do so as in truth he feels himself to be.

And thus, with Strader,

He revealed himself—and yet concealed himself as well,

And sought to make that moment,

With the opportunities it brings,

Serve his own advantage.

He hoped, through this
To damage Strader's friends as well;
But in the future
He will not be able to disguise his being
From my spirit-pupils;
Whenever he is holding sway within their inner world and vision,
They then should find the power, in wakefulness, to think him too.
My pupils now
Should rightly recognize and understand
The many different forms he takes,
All seeking to conceal him from us,
When he has to reveal himself to human souls.
But you, O soul of Strader,
Sun-imbued and ripened now,
Who, through strengthening your spirit-powers,
Compelled the messenger of error to disappear,
You will shine upon your friends—
And be for them
A radiant spirit-star;
Your light in future

Always will irradiate
The being of Maria and of Johannes;
They'll find their way, therefore, through you,
To arm themselves, with ever greater strength,
For all their spirit-tasks in future—
And they will prove themselves
Revealers of the light within the soul,
Through mighty, inner strength of thought,
Even then
When over-bright and fully-wakened spirit-vision,
Grey, bleak Ahriman, dulling down wisdom,
Attempts to spread the darkening night of chaos.

Curtain.

RUDOLF STEINER'S COLLECTED WORKS

THE German Edition of Rudolf Steiner's Collected Works (the Gesamtausgabe [GA] published by Rudolf Steiner Verlag, Dornach, Switzerland) presently runs to 354 titles, organized either by type of work (written or spoken), chronology, audience (public or other), or subject (education, art, etc.). For ease of comparison, the Collected Works in English [CW] follows the German organization exactly. A complete listing of the CWs follows with literal translations of the German titles. Other than in the case of the books published in his lifetime, titles were rarely given by Rudolf Steiner himself, and were often provided by the editors of the German editions. The titles in English are not necessarily the same as the German; and, indeed, over the past 75 years have frequently been different, with the same book sometimes appearing under different titles.

For ease of identification and to avoid confusion, we suggest that readers looking for a title should do so by CW number. Because the work of creating the Collected Works of Rudolf Steiner is an ongoing process, with new titles being published every year, we have not indicated in this listing which books are presently available. To find out what titles in the Collected Works are currently in print, please check our website at www.rudolfsteinerpress.com (or www.steinerbooks.org for US readers).

Written Work

- CW 1 Goethe: Natural-Scientific Writings, Introduction, with Footnotes and Explanations in the text by Rudolf Steiner
- CW 2 Outlines of an Epistemology of the Goethean World View, with Special Consideration of Schiller
- CW 3 Truth and Science
- CW 4 The Philosophy of Freedom
- CW 4a Documents to 'The Philosophy of Freedom'
- CW 5 Friedrich Nietzsche, A Fighter against His Time
- CW 6 Goethe's Worldview
- CW 6a Now in CW 30
- CW 7 Mysticism at the Dawn of Modern Spiritual Life and Its Relationship with Modern Worldviews
- CW 8 Christianity as Mystical Fact and the Mysteries of Antiquity
- CW 9 Theosophy: An Introduction into Supersensible World Knowledge and Human Purpose
- CW 10 How Does One Attain Knowledge of Higher Worlds?
- CW 11 From the Akasha-Chronicle
- CW 12 Levels of Higher Knowledge
- CW 13 Occult Science in Outline
- CW 14 Four Mystery Dramas
- CW 15 The Spiritual Guidance of the Individual and Humanity
- CW 16 A Way to Human Self-Knowledge: Eight Meditations
- CW 17 The Threshold of the Spiritual World. Aphoristic Comments
- CW 18 The Riddles of Philosophy in Their History, Presented as an Outline
- CW 19 Contained in CW 24
- CW 20 The Riddles of the Human Being: Articulated and Unarticulated in the Thinking, Views and Opinions of a Soul
- CW 21 The Riddles of the Soul
- CW 22 Goethe's Spiritual Nature and its Revelation in 'Faust' and through the 'Fairy Tale of the Snake and the Lily'
- CW 23 The Central Points of the Social Question in the Necessities of Life in the Present and the Future
- CW 24 Essays Concerning the Threefold Division of the Social Organism and the Period 1915-1921
- CW 25 Cosmology, Religion and Philosophy
- CW 26 Anthroposophical Leading Thoughts
- CW 27 Fundamentals for Expansion of the Art of Healing according to Spiritual-Scientific Insights
- CW28 The Course of My Life

CW 29 Collected Essays on Dramaturgy, 1889-1900
CW 30 Methodical Foundations of Anthroposophy: Collected Essays on Philosophy, Natural Science, Aesthetics and
CW 31 Collected Essays on Culture and Current Events, 1887-1901
CW 32 Collected Essays on Literature, 1884-1902
CW 33 Biographies and Biographical Sketches, 1894-1905
CW 34 Lucifer-Gnosis: Foundational Essays on Anthroposophy and Reports from the Periodicals 'Lucifer' and 'Luz'
CW 35 Philosophy and Anthroposophy: Collected Essays, 1904-1923
CW 36 The Goetheanum-Idea in the Middle of the Cultural Crisis of the Present: Collected Essays from the Periodicals
CW 37 Now in CWs 260a and 251
CW 38 Letters, Vol. 1: 1881-1890
CW 39 Letters, Vol. 2: 1890-1925
CW 40 Truth-Wrought Words
CW 40a Sayings, Poems and Mantras; Supplementary Volume
CW 42 Now in CWs 264-266
CW 43 Stage Adaptations
CW 44 On the Four Mystery Dramas. Sketches, Fragments and Paralipomena on the Four Mystery Dramas
CW 45 Anthroposophy: A Fragment from the Year 1910

Public Lectures

CW 51	On Philosophy, History and Literature
CW 52	Spiritual Teachings Concerning the Soul and Observation of the World
CW 53	The Origin and Goal of the Human Being
CW 54	The Riddles of the World and Anthroposophy
CW 55	Knowledge of the Supersensible in Our Times and Its Meaning for Life Today
CW 56	Knowledge of the Soul and of the Spirit
CW 57	Where and How Does One Find the Spirit?
CW 58	The Metamorphoses of the Soul Life. Paths of Soul Experiences: Part One
CW 59	The Metamorphoses of the Soul Life. Paths of Soul Experiences: Part Two
CW 60	The Answers of Spiritual Science to the Biggest Questions of Existence
CW 61	Human History in the Light of Spiritual Research
CW 62	Results of Spiritual Research
CW 63	Spiritual Science as a Treasure for Life
CW 64	Out of Destiny-Burdened Times
CW 65	Out of Central European Spiritual Life
CW 66	Spirit and Matter, Life and Death
CW 67	The Eternal in the Human Soul. Immortality and Freedom
CW 68	Public lectures in various cities, 1906-1918
CW 69	Public lectures in various cities, 1906-1918
CW 70	Public lectures in various cities, 1906-1918
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CW 73	The Supplementing of the Modern Sciences through Anthroposophy
CW 73a	Specialized Fields of Knowledge and Anthroposophy
CW 74	The Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas
CW 75	Public lectures in various cities, 1906-1918
CW 76	The Fructifying Effect of Anthroposophy on Specialized Fields
CW 77a	The Task of Anthroposophy in Relation to Science and Life: The Darmstadt College Course
CW 77b	Art and Anthroposophy. The Goetheanum-Impulse
CW 78	Anthroposophy, Its Roots of Knowledge and Fruits for Life
CW 79	The Reality of the Higher Worlds
CW 80	Public lectures in various cities, 1922
CW 81	Renewal-Impulses for Culture and Science—Berlin College Course
CW 82	So that the Human Being Can Become a Complete Human Being
CW 83	Western and Eastern World-Contrast. Paths to Understanding It through Anthroposophy
CW 84	What Did the Goetheanum Intend and What Should Anthroposophy Do?

Lectures to the Members of the Anthroposophical Society

CW 88	Concerning the Astral World and Devachan
CW 89	Consciousness—Life—Form. Fundamental Principles of a Spiritual- Scientific Cosmology
CW 90	Participant Notes from the Lectures during the Years 1903-1905
CW 91	Participant Notes from the Lectures during the Years 1903-1905
CW 92	The Occult Truths of Ancient Myths and Sagas
CW 93	The Temple Legend and the Golden Legend
CW 93a	Fundamentals of Esotericism
CW 94	Cosmogony. Popular Occultism. The Gospel of John. The Theosophy in the Gospel of John
CW 95	At the Gates of Theosophy
CW 96	Origin-Impulses of Spiritual Science. Christian Esotericism in the Light of New Spirit-Knowledge
CW 97	The Christian Mystery
CW 98	Nature Beings and Spirit Beings—Their Effects in Our Visible World
CW 99	The Theosophy of the Rosicrucians
CW 100	Human Development and Christ-Knowledge
CW 101	Myths and Legends. Occult Signs and Symbols
CW 102	The Working into Human Beings by Spiritual Beings
CW 103	The Gospel of John
CW 104	The Apocalypse of John
CW 104a	From the Picture-Script of the Apocalypse of John
CW 105	Universe, Earth, the Human Being: Their Being and Development, as well as Their Reflection in the Cc
CW 106	Egyptian Myths and Mysteries in Relation to the Active Spiritual Forces of the Present
CW 107	Spiritual-Scientific Knowledge of the Human Being
CW 108	Answering the Questions of Life and the World through Anthroposophy
CW 109	The Principle of Spiritual Economy in Connection with the Question of Reincarnation. An Aspect of th
CW 110	The Spiritual Hierarchies and Their Reflection in the Physical World. Zodiac, Planets and Cosmos
CW 111	Contained in CW 109
CW 112	The Gospel of John in Relation to the Three Other Gospels, Especially the Gospel of Luke
CW 113	The Orient in the Light of the Occident. The Children of Lucifer and the Brothers of Christ
CW 114	The Gospel of Luke
CW 115	Anthroposophy—Psychosophy—Pneumatosophy
CW 116	The Christ-Impulse and the Development of I-Consciousness
CW 117	The Deeper Secrets of the Development of Humanity in Light of the Gospels
CW 118	The Event of the Christ-Appearance in the Etheric World
CW 119	Macrocosm and Microcosm. The Large World and the Small World. Soul-Questions, Life-Questions, S
CW 120	The Revelation of Karma
CW 121	The Mission of Individual Folk-Souls in Connection with Germanic-Nordic Mythology
CW 122	The Secrets of the Biblical Creation-Story. The Six-Day Work in the First Book of Moses
CW 123	The Gospel of Matthew
CW 124	Excursus in the Area of the Gospel of Mark
CW 125	Paths and Goals of the Spiritual Human Being. Life Questions in the Light of Spiritual Science
CW 126	Occult History. Esoteric Observations of the Karmic Relationships of Personalities and Events of Worl
CW 127	The Mission of the New Spiritual Revelation. The Christ-Event as the Middle-Point of Earth Evolution
CW 128	An Occult Physiology
CW 129	Wonders of the World, Trials of the Soul, and Revelations of the Spirit
CW 130	Esoteric Christianity and the Spiritual Guidance of Humanity
CW 131	From Jesus to Christ
CW 132	Evolution from the View Point of the Truth
CW 133	The Earthly and the Cosmic Human Being
CW 134	The World of the Senses and the World of the Spirit
CW 135	Reincarnation and Karma and their Meaning for the Culture of the Present
CW 136	The Spiritual Beings in Celestial Bodies and the Realms of Nature

CW 137	The Human Being in the Light of Occultism, Theosophy and Philosophy
CW 138	On Initiation. On Eternity and the Passing Moment. On the Light of the Spirit and the Darkness of Life
CW 139	The Gospel of Mark
CW 140	Occult Investigation into the Life between Death and New Birth. The Living Interaction between Life a
CW 141	Life between Death and New Birth in Relationship to Cosmic Facts
CW 142	The Bhagavad Gita and the Letters of Paul
CW 143	Experiences of the Supersensible. Three Paths of the Soul to Christ
CW 144	The Mysteries of the East and of Christianity
CW 145	What Significance Does Occult Development of the Human Being Have for the Sheaths—Physical Bo
CW 146	The Occult Foundations of the Bhagavad Gita
CW 147	The Secrets of the Threshold
CW 148	Out of Research in the Akasha: The Fifth Gospel
CW 149	Christ and the Spiritual World. Concerning the Search for the Holy Grail
CW 150	The World of the Spirit and Its Extension into Physical Existence; The Influence of the Dead in the Wor
CW 151	Human Thought and Cosmic Thought
CW 152	Preliminary Stages to the Mystery of Golgotha
CW 153	The Inner Being of the Human Being and Life Between Death and New Birth
CW 154	How Does One Gain an Understanding of the Spiritual World? The Flowing in of Spiritual Impulses fr
CW 155	Christ and the Human Soul. Concerning the Meaning of Life. Theosophical Morality. Anthroposophy a
CW 156	Occult Reading and Occult Hearing
CW 157	Human Destinies and the Destiny of Peoples
CW 157a	The Formation of Destiny and the Life after Death
CW 158	The Connection Between the Human Being and the Elemental World. Kalevala—Olaf Åsteson—The R
CW 159	The Mystery of Death. The Nature and Significance of Middle Europe and the European Folk Spirits
CW 160	In CW 159
CW 161	Paths of Spiritual Knowledge and the Renewal of the Artistic Worldview
CW 162	Questions of Art and Life in Light of Spiritual Science
CW 163	Coincidence, Necessity and Providence. Imaginative Knowledge and the Processes after Death
CW 164	The Value of Thinking for a Knowledge That Satisfies the Human Being. The Relationship of Spiritual
CW 165	The Spiritual Unification of Humanity through the Christ-Impulse
CW 166	Necessity and Freedom in the Events of the World and in Human Action
CW 167	The Present and the Past in the Human Spirit
CW 168	The Connection between the Living and the Dead
CW 169	World-being and Selfhood
CW 170	The Riddle of the Human Being. The Spiritual Background of Human History. Cosmic and Human His
CW 171	Inner Development-Impulses of Humanity. Goethe and the Crisis of the 19th Century. Cosmic and Hun
CW 172	The Karma of the Vocation of the Human Being in Connection with Goethe's Life. Cosmic and Human
CW 173	Contemporary-Historical Considerations: The Karma of Untruthfulness, Part One. Cosmic and Human
CW 174	Contemporary-Historical Considerations: The Karma of Untruthfulness, Part Two. Cosmic and Human
CW 174a	Middle Europe between East and West. Cosmic and Human History, Vol. 6
CW 174b	The Spiritual Background of the First World War. Cosmic and Human History, Vol. 7
CW 175	Building Stones for an Understanding of the Mystery of Golgotha. Cosmic and Human Metamorphoses
CW 176	Truths of Evolution of the Individual and Humanity. The Karma of Materialism
CW 177	The Spiritual Background of the Outer World. The Fall of the Spirits of Darkness. Spiritual Beings and
CW 178	Individual Spiritual Beings and their Influence in the Soul of the Human Being. Spiritual Beings and th
CW 179	Spiritual Beings and Their Effects. Historical Necessity and Freedom. The Influences on Destiny from c
CW 180	Mystery Truths and Christmas Impulses. Ancient Myths and their Meaning. Spiritual Beings and Their
CW 181	Earthly Death and Cosmic Life. Anthroposophical Gifts for Life. Necessities of Consciousness for the I
CW 182	Death as Transformation of Life
CW 183	The Science of the Development of the Human Being
CW 184	The Polarity of Duration and Development in Human Life. The Cosmic Pre-History of Humanity
CW 185	Historical Symptomology
CW 185a	Historical-Developmental Foundations for Forming a Social Judgement
CW 186	The Fundamental Social Demands of Our Time—In Changed Situations
CW 187	How Can Humanity Find the Christ Again? The Threefold Shadow-Existence of our Time and the New
CW 188	Goetheanism, a Transformation-Impulse and Resurrection-Thought. Science of the Human Being and S

CW 189	The Social Question as a Question of Consciousness. The Spiritual Background of the Social Question,
CW 190	Impulses of the Past and the Future in Social Occurrences. The Spiritual Background of the Social Que
CW 191	Social Understanding from Spiritual-Scientific Cognition. The Spiritual Background of the Social Ques
CW 192	Spiritual-Scientific Treatment of Social and Pedagogical Questions
CW 193	The Inner Aspect of the Social Riddle. Luciferic Past and Ahrimanic Future
CW 194	The Mission of Michael. The Revelation of the Actual Mysteries of the Human Being
CW 195	Cosmic New Year and the New Year Idea
CW 196	Spiritual and Social Transformations in the Development of Humanity
CW 197	Polarities in the Development of Humanity: West and East Materialism and Mysticism Knowledge and
CW 198	Healing Factors for the Social Organism
CW 199	Spiritual Science as Knowledge of the Foundational Impulses of Social Formation
CW 200	The New Spirituality and the Christ-Experience of the 20th Century
CW 201	The Correspondences Between Microcosm and Macrocosm. The Human Being—A Hieroglyph of the U
CW 202	The Bridge between the World-Spirituality and the Physical Aspect of the Human Being. The Search fo
CW 203	The Responsibility of Human Beings for the Development of the World through their Spiritual Connect
CW 204	Perspectives of the Development of Humanity. The Materialistic Knowledge-Impulse and the Task of A
CW 205	Human Development, World-Soul, and World-Spirit. Part One: The Human Being as a Being of Body a
CW 206	Human Development, World-Soul, and World-Spirit. Part Two: The Human Being as a Spiritual Being
CW 207	Anthroposophy as Cosmosophy. Part One: Characteristic Features of the Human Being in the Earthly an
CW 208	Anthroposophy as Cosmosophy. Part Two: The Forming of the Human Being as the Result of Cosmic I
CW 209	Nordic and Central European Spiritual Impulses. The Festival of the Appearance of Christ. The Human
CW 210	Old and New Methods of Initiation. Drama and Poetry in the Change of Consciousness in the Modern A
CW 211	The Sun Mystery and the Mystery of Death and Resurrection. Exoteric and Esoteric Christianity
CW 212	Human Soul Life and Spiritual Striving in Connection with World and Earth Development
CW 213	Human Questions and World Answers
CW 214	The Mystery of the Trinity: The Human Being in Relationship with the Spiritual World in the Course of
CW 215	Philosophy, Cosmology, and Religion in Anthroposophy
CW 216	The Fundamental Impulses of the World-Historical Development of Humanity
CW 217	Spiritually Active Forces in the Coexistence of the Older and Younger Generations. Pedagogical Course
CW 217a	Youth's Cognitive Task
CW 218	Spiritual Connections in the Forming of the Human Organism
CW 219	The Relationship of the World of the Stars to the Human Being, and of the Human Being to the World c
CW 220	Living Knowledge of Nature. Intellectual Fall and Spiritual Redemption
CW 221	Earth-Knowing and Heaven-Insight
CW 222	The Imparting of Impulses to World-Historical Events through Spiritual Powers
CW 223	The Cycle of the Year as Breathing Process of the Earth and the Four Great Festival-Seasons. Anthro
CW 224	The Human Soul and its Connection with Divine-Spiritual Individualities. The Internalization of the Fe
CW 225	Three Perspectives of Anthroposophy. Cultural Phenomena observed from a Spiritual-Scientific Perspec
CW 226	Human Being, Human Destiny, and World Development
CW 227	Initiation-Knowledge
CW 228	Science of Initiation and Knowledge of the Stars. The Human Being in the Past, the Present, and the Fu
CW 229	The Experiencing of the Course of the Year in Four Cosmic Imaginations
CW 230	The Human Being as Harmony of the Creative, Building, and Formative World-Word
CW 231	The Supersensible Human Being, Understood Anthroposophically
CW 232	The Forming of the Mysteries
CW 233	World History Illuminated by Anthroposophy and as the Foundation for Knowledge of the Human Spiri
CW 233a	Mystery Sites of the Middle Ages: Rosicrucianism and the Modern Initiation-Principle. The Festival of
CW 234	Anthroposophy. A Summary after 21 Years
CW 235	Esoteric Observations of Karmic Relationships in 6 Volumes, Vol. 1
CW 236	Esoteric Observations of Karmic Relationships in 6 Volumes, Vol. 2
CW 237	Esoteric Observations of Karmic Relationships in 6 Volumes, Vol. 3: The Karmic Relationships of the A
CW 238	Esoteric Observations of Karmic Relationships in 6 Volumes, Vol. 4: The Spiritual Life of the Present in
CW 239	Esoteric Observations of Karmic Relationships in 6 Volumes, Vol. 5
CW 240	Esoteric Observations of Karmic Relationships in 6 Volumes, Vol. 6
CW 243	The Consciousness of the Initiate
CW 245	Instructions for an Esoteric Schooling

CW 250	The Building-Up of the Anthroposophical Society. From the Beginning to the Outbreak of the First World War
CW 251	The History of the Goetheanum Building-Association
CW 252	Life in the Anthroposophical Society from the First World War to the Burning of the First Goetheanum
CW 253	The Problems of Living Together in the Anthroposophical Society. On the Dornach Crisis of 1915. With
CW 254	The Occult Movement in the 19th Century and Its Relationship to World Culture. Significant Points from
CW 255	Rudolf Steiner during the First World War
CW 255a	Anthroposophy and the Reformation of Society. On the History of the Threefold Movement
CW 255b	Anthroposophy and Its Opponents, 1919–1921
CW 256	How Can the Anthroposophical Movement Be Financed?
CW 256a	Futurum, Inc. / International Laboratories, Inc.
CW 256b	The Coming Day, Inc.
CW 257	Anthroposophical Community-Building
CW 258	The History of and Conditions for the Anthroposophical Movement in Relationship to the Anthroposophical
CW 259	The Year of Destiny 1923 in the History of the Anthroposophical Society. From the Burning of the Goetheanum
CW 260	The Christmas Conference for the Founding of the General Anthroposophical Society
CW 260a	The Constitution of the General Anthroposophical Society and the School for Spiritual Science. The Reformation
CW 261	Our Dead. Addresses, Words of Remembrance, and Meditative Verses, 1906–1924
CW 262	Rudolf Steiner and Marie Steiner-von Sivers: Correspondence and Documents, 1901–1925
CW 263/1	Rudolf Steiner and Edith Maryon: Correspondence: Letters, Verses, Sketches, 1912–1924
CW 264	On the History and the Contents of the First Section of the Esoteric School from 1904 to 1914. Letters,
CW 265	On the History and from the Contents of the Ritual-Knowledge Section of the Esoteric School from 1904 to 1914.
CW 266/1	From the Contents of the Esoteric Lessons. Volume 1: 1904–1909. Notes from Memory of Participants.
CW 266/2	From the Contents of the Esoteric Lessons. Volume 2: 1910–1912. Notes from Memory of Participants
CW 266/3	From the Contents of the Esoteric Lessons. Volume 3: 1913, 1914 and 1920–1923. Notes from Memory
CW 267	Soul-Exercises: Vol. 1: Exercises with Word and Image Meditations for the Methodological Development
CW 268	Soul-Exercises: Vol. 2: Mantric Verses, 1903–1925
CW 269	Ritual Texts for the Celebration of the Free Christian Religious Instruction. The Collected Verses for Teachers
CW 270	Esoteric Instructions for the First Class of the School for Spiritual Science at the Goetheanum 1924, 4 Volumes
CW 271	Art and Knowledge of Art. Foundations of a New Aesthetic
CW 272	Spiritual-Scientific Commentary on Goethe's 'Faust' in Two Volumes. Vol. 1: Faust, the Striving Human
CW 273	Spiritual-Scientific Commentary on Goethe's 'Faust' in Two Volumes. Vol. 2: The Faust-Problem
CW 274	Addresses for the Christmas Plays from the Old Folk Traditions
CW 275	Art in the Light of Mystery-Wisdom
CW 276	The Artistic in Its Mission in the World. The Genius of Language. The World of Self-Revealing Rhythms
CW 277	Eurythmy. The Revelation of the Speaking Soul
CW 277a	The Origin and Development of Eurythmy
CW 278	Eurythmy as Visible Song
CW 279	Eurythmy as Visible Speech
CW 280	The Method and Nature of Speech Formation
CW 281	The Art of Recitation and Declamation
CW 282	Speech Formation and Dramatic Art
CW 283	The Nature of Things Musical and the Experience of Tone in the Human Being
CW 284/285	Images of Occult Seals and Pillars. The Munich Congress of Whit-sun 1907 and Its Consequences
CW 286	Paths to a New Style of Architecture. 'And the Building Becomes Human'
CW 287	The Building at Dornach as a Symbol of Historical Becoming and an Artistic Transformation Impulse
CW 288	Style-Forms in the Living Organic
CW 289	The Building-Idea of the Goetheanum: Lectures with Slides from the Years 1920–1921
CW 290	The Building-Idea of the Goetheanum: Lectures with Slides from the Years 1920–1921
CW 291	The Nature of Colours
CW 291a	Knowledge of Colours. Supplementary Volume to 'The Nature of Colours'
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CW 293	General Knowledge of the Human Being as the Foundation of Pedagogy
CW 294	The Art of Education, Methodology and Didactics
CW 295	The Art of Education: Seminar Discussions and Lectures on Lesson Planning
CW 296	The Question of Education as a Social Question
CW 297	The Idea and Practice of the Waldorf School

CW 297a Education for Life: Self-Education and the Practice of Pedagogy
 CW 298 Rudolf Steiner in the Waldorf School
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 CW 300a Conferences with the Teachers of the Free Waldorf School in Stuttgart, 1919 to 1924, in 3 Volumes, Vol
 CW 300b Conferences with the Teachers of the Free Waldorf School in Stuttgart, 1919 to 1924, in 3 Volumes, Vol
 CW 300c Conferences with the Teachers of the Free Waldorf School in Stuttgart, 1919 to 1924, in 3 Volumes, Vol
 CW 301 The Renewal of Pedagogical-Didactical Art through Spiritual Science
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 CW 302a Education and Teaching from a Knowledge of the Human Being
 CW 303 The Healthy Development of the Human Being
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 CW 305 The Soul-Spiritual Foundational Forces of the Art of Education. Spiritual Values in Education and Soci
 CW 306 Pedagogical Praxis from the Viewpoint of a Spiritual-Scientific Knowledge of the Human Being. The E
 CW 307 The Spiritual Life of the Present and Education
 CW 308 The Method of Teaching and the Life-Requirements for Teaching
 CW 309 Anthroposophical Pedagogy and Its Prerequisites
 CW 310 The Pedagogical Value of a Knowledge of the Human Being and the Cultural Value of Pedagogy
 CW 311 The Art of Education from an Understanding of the Being of Humanity
 CW 312 Spiritual Science and Medicine
 CW 313 Spiritual-Scientific Viewpoints on Therapy
 CW 314 Physiology and Therapy Based on Spiritual Science
 CW 315 Curative Eurythmy
 CW 316 Meditative Observations and Instructions for a Deepening of the Art of Healing
 CW 317 The Curative Education Course
 CW 318 The Working Together of Doctors and Pastors
 CW 319 Anthroposophical Knowledge of the Human Being and Medicine
 CW 320 Spiritual-Scientific Impulses for the Development of Physics 1: The First Natural-Scientific Course: Li
 CW 321 Spiritual-Scientific Impulses for the Development of Physics 2: The Second Natural-Scientific Course:
 CW 322 The Borders of the Knowledge of Nature
 CW 323 The Relationship of the various Natural-Scientific Fields to Astronomy
 CW 324 Nature Observation, Mathematics, and Scientific Experimentation and Results from the Viewpoint of A
 CW 324a The Fourth Dimension in Mathematics and Reality
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 CW 326 The Moment of the Coming Into Being of Natural Science in World History and Its Development Since
 CW 327 Spiritual-Scientific Foundations for Success in Farming. The Agricultural Course
 CW 328 The Social Question
 CW 329 The Liberation of the Human Being as the Foundation for a New Social Form
 CW 330 The Renewal of the Social Organism
 CW 331 Work-Council and Socialization
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 CW 332a The Social Future
 CW 333 Freedom of Thought and Social Forces
 CW 334 From the Unified State to the Threefold Social Organism
 CW 335 The Crisis of the Present and the Path to Healthy Thinking
 CW 336 The Great Questions of the Times and Anthroposophical Spiritual Knowledge
 CW 337a Social Ideas, Social Reality, Social Practice, Vol. 1: Question-and- Answer Evenings and Study Evening
 CW 337b Social Ideas, Social Realities, Social Practice, Vol. 2: Discussion Evenings of the Swiss Alliance for the
 CW 338 How Does One Work on Behalf of the Impulse for the Threefold Social Organism?
 CW 339 Anthroposophy, Threefold Social Organism, and the Art of Public Speaking
 CW 340 The National-Economics Course. The Tasks of a New Science of Economics, Volume 1
 CW 341 The National-Economics Seminar. The Tasks of a New Science of Economics, Volume 2
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 CW 343 Lectures and Courses on Christian Religious Work, Vol. 2: Spiritual Knowledge—Religious Feeling—C
 CW 344 Lectures and Courses on Christian Religious Work, Vol. 3: Lectures at the Founding of the Christian Cc
 CW 345 Lectures and Courses on Christian Religious Work, Vol. 4: Concerning the Nature of the Working Word

- CW 346 Lectures and Courses on Christian Religious Work, Vol. 5: The Apocalypse and the Work of the Priest
- CW 347 The Knowledge of the Nature of the Human Being According to Body, Soul and Spirit. On Earlier Con
- CW 348 On Health and Illness. Foundations of a Spiritual-Scientific Doctrine of the Senses
- CW 349 On the Life of the Human Being and of the Earth. On the Nature of Christianity
- CW 350 Rhythms in the Cosmos and in the Human Being. How Does One Come To See the Spiritual World?
- CW 351 The Human Being and the World. The Influence of the Spirit in Nature. On the Nature of Bees
- CW 352 Nature and the Human Being Observed Spiritual-Scientifically
- CW 353 The History of Humanity and the World-Views of the Folk Cultures
- CW 354 The Creation of the World and the Human Being. Life on Earth and the Influence of the Stars

SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF
RUDOLF STEINER

- 1829: June 23: birth of Johann Steiner (1829–1910)—Rudolf Steiner’s father—in Geras, Lower Austria.
- 1834: May 8: birth of Franciska Blie (1834–1918)—Rudolf Steiner’s mother—in Horn, Lower Austria. ‘My father
- 1860: May 16: marriage of Johann Steiner and Franciska Blie.
- 1861: February 25: birth of Rudolf Joseph Lorenz Steiner in Kraljevec, Croatia, near the border with Hungary, w
- 1862: Summer: the family moves to Modling, Lower Austria.
- 1863: The family moves to Pottschach, Lower Austria, near the Styrian border, where Johann Steiner becomes st
- 1864: November 15: birth of Rudolf Steiner’s sister, Leopoldine (d. November 1, 1927). She will become a seam
- 1866: July 28: birth of Rudolf Steiner’s deaf-mute brother, Gustav (d. May 1, 1941).
- 1867: Rudolf Steiner enters the village school. Following a disagreement between his father and the schoolmaster
- 1868: A critical experience. Unknown to the family, an aunt dies in a distant town. Sitting in the station waiting r
- 1869: The family moves to the peaceful, rural village of Neudorf, near Wiener Neustadt in present-day Austria. I
- 1870: Through a book lent to him by his tutor, he discovers geometry: ‘To grasp something purely in the spirit br
- 1871: Though his parents are not religious, Rudolf Steiner becomes a ‘church child’, a favourite of the priest, wh
- 1872: Rudolf Steiner transfers to grammar school in Wiener-Neustadt, a five-mile walk from home, which must b
- 1873–75: Through his teachers and on his own, Rudolf Steiner has many wonderful experiences with science and ma
- 1876: Rudolf Steiner begins tutoring other students. He learns book-binding from his father. He also teaches him:
- 1877: Rudolf Steiner discovers Kant’s Critique of Pure Reason, which he reads and rereads. He also discovers an
- 1878: He studies extensively in contemporary psychology and philosophy.
- 1879: Rudolf Steiner graduates from high school with honours. His father is transferred to Inzersdorf, near Vienn

October

1879–1883: Rudolf Steiner attends the Technical College in Vienna—to study mathematics, chemistry, physics, mine
1880: Rudolf Steiner attends lectures on Schiller and Goethe by Karl Julius Schröer, who becomes his mentor.
1881: January: ‘... I didn’t sleep a wink. I was busy with philosophical problems until about 12:30 a.m. Then, f
July: ‘I am not one of those who dives into the day like an animal in human form. I pursue a quite specific go
August: Steiner puts down on paper for the first time thoughts for a ‘Philosophy of Freedom’. ‘The striving for tl
1881–1882: Felix Koguzki, the herb gatherer, reveals himself to be the envoy of another, higher initiatory personality
1882: Through the offices of Karl Julius Schröer, Rudolf Steiner is asked by Joseph Kürschner to edit Goethe’s
1883: Rudolf Steiner completes his college studies and begins work on the Goethe project.
1884: First volume of Goethe’s Scientific Writings (CW 1) appears (March). He lectures on Goethe and Lessin
1885: While continuing to edit Goethe’s writings, Rudolf Steiner reads deeply in contemporary philosophy (Ec
1886: May: Rudolf Steiner sends Kürschner the manuscript of Outlines of Goethe’s Theory of Knowledge (CV
1887: At the beginning of the year, Rudolf Steiner is very sick. As the year progresses and his health improves.
1888: January–July: Rudolf Steiner assumes editorship of the ‘German Weekly’ (Deutsche Wochenschrift). He
1889: Rudolf Steiner first reads Nietzsche (Beyond Good and Evil). He encounters Theosophy again and learn
1890: Rudolf Steiner finishes Volume 3 of Goethe’s scientific writings. He begins his doctoral dissertation, wh
1891: Volume 3 of the Kürschner edition of Goethe appears. Meanwhile, Rudolf Steiner edits Goethe’s studies
1892: Rudolf Steiner continues work at the Goethe-Schiller Archive and on his Philosophy of Freedom. Truth
1893: Rudolf Steiner begins his habit of producing many reviews and articles. In March, he gives a lecture title
1894: Rudolf Steiner meets Elisabeth Fürster Nietzsche, the philosopher’s sister, and begins to read Nietzsche
1895: May, Nietzsche, A Fighter against His Time appears.
1896: January 22: Rudolf Steiner sees Friedrich Nietzsche for the first and only time. Moves between the Nietz
1897: Rudolf Steiner finishes the manuscript of Goethe’s Worldview (CW 6). He moves to Berlin with Anna E
1898: Rudolf Steiner is very active as an editor in the political, artistic, and theatrical life of Berlin. He become
1898–99: ‘This was a trying time for my soul as I looked at Christianity. . . . I was able to progress only by contem
1899: Rudolf Steiner begins teaching and giving lectures and lecture cycles at the Workers’ College, founded b
1900: ‘I thought that the turn of the century must bring humanity a new light. It seemed to me that the separati
1901: In continual financial straits, Rudolf Steiner’s early friends Moritz Zitter and Rosa Mayreder help suppo
1902: Beginning in January, Rudolf Steiner attends the opening of the Workers’ School in Spandau with Rosa
1903: Rudolf Steiner holds about 300 lectures and seminars. In May, the first issue of the periodical Luzifer ap
1904: Rudolf Steiner continues lecturing at the Workers’ College and elsewhere (about 90 lectures), while lect
1905: This year, Steiner ends his non-theosophical lecturing activity. Supported by Marie von Sivers, his theos
1906: Expansion of theosophical work. Rudolf Steiner gives about 245 lectures, only 44 of which take place in
1907: Further expansion of the German Theosophical Movement according to the Rosicrucian directive to ‘int
1908: The movement grows (membership: 1,150). Lecturing expands. Steiner makes his first extended lecture
1909: An Outline of Esoteric Science appears. Lecturing and travel continues. Rudolf Steiner’s spiritual resear
1910: New themes: The Reappearance of Christ in the Etheric (CW 118); The Fifth Gospel; The Mission of Fo
1911: The crisis in the Theosophical Society deepens. In January, ‘The Order of the Rising Sun,’ which will so
1912: Despite the ongoing, now increasing crisis in the Theosophical Society, much is accomplished: Calendar
1913: Expulsion of the German section from the Theosophical Society. February 2–3: Foundation meeting of t
1914: Building continues on the Johannes Bau (Goetheanum) in Dornach, with artists and co-workers from sev
1915: Building continues. Life after death becomes a major theme, also art. Writes: Thoughts during a Time of
1916: Rudolf Steiner begins work with Edith Maryon (1872–1924) on the sculpture ‘The Representative of Hu
1917: Russian Revolution. The U.S. enters the war. Building continues. Rudolf Steiner delineates the idea of th
1918: March 18: peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk—‘Now everything will truly enter chaos! What is needed is cul
1919: Focus on the threefold social organism: tireless travel, countless lectures, meetings, and publications. At
1920: The Waldorf School flourishes. New threefold initiatives. Founding of limited companies Der Kommenc
1921: Rudolf Steiner continues his intensive work on cultural renewal, including the uphill battle for the threef
1922: The first half of the year involves very active public lecturing (thousands attend); in the second half, Ruc
1923: Despite the fire, Rudolf Steiner continues his work unabated. A very hard year. Internal dispersion, disse
1924: January 1: having founded the Anthroposophical Society and taken over its leadership, Rudolf Steiner ha
1925: Rudolf Steiner, while continuing to work, continues to weaken. He finishes Extending Practical Medicin