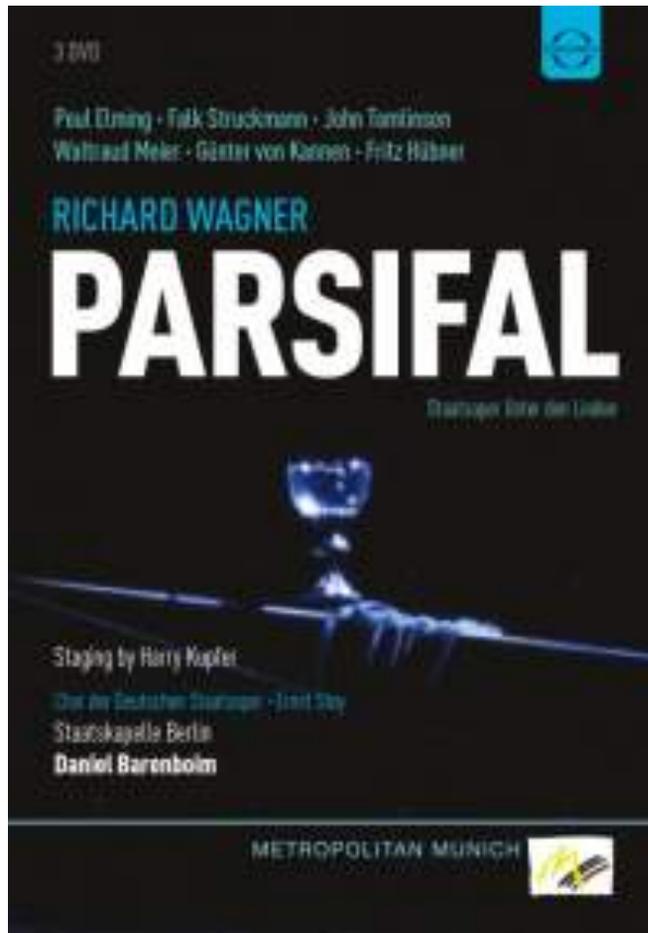


## **1992 MET Production**

<b>Parsifal</b>	<b>Siegfried Jerusalem</b>
<b>Kundry</b>	<b>Waltraud Meier</b>
<b>Gurnemanz</b>	<b>Kurt Moll</b>
<b>Amfortas</b>	<b>Bernd Weikl</b>
<b>Titirel</b>	<b>Jan-Hendrik Rootering</b>
<b>Klingsor</b>	<b>Franz Mazura</b>
<b>Conductor</b>	<b>James Levine</b>
<b>Staging</b>	<b>Otto Schenk</b>



## **1992 Staatskapelle Berlin Production**

**Parsifal**

**Poul Elming**

**Kundry**

**Waltraud Meier**

**Gurnemanz**

**John Tomlinson**

**Amfortas**

**Falk Struckmann**

**Titirel**

**Fritz Hubner**

**Klingsor**

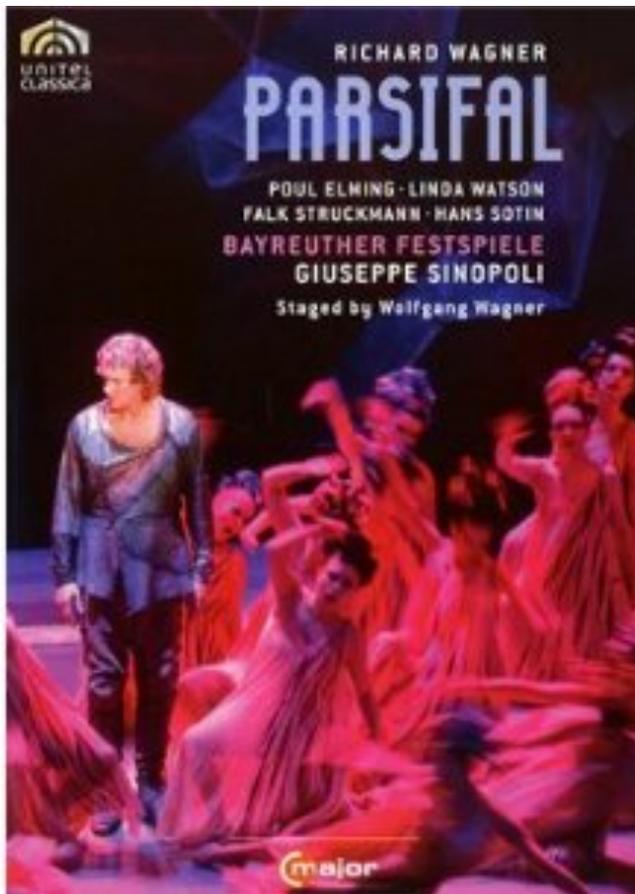
**Gunter von Kannen**

**Conductor**

**Daniel Barenboim**

**Staging**

**Harry Kupfer**



## **1998 Bayreuth Festival Production**

<b>Parsifal</b>	<b>Poul Elming</b>
<b>Kundry</b>	<b>Linda Watson</b>
<b>Gurnemanz</b>	<b>Hans Sotin</b>
<b>Amfortas</b>	<b>Falk Struckmann</b>
<b>Titirel</b>	<b>Matthias Holle</b>
<b>Klingsor</b>	<b>Ekkehard Wlaschiha</b>
<b>Conductor</b>	<b>Giuseppe Sinopoli</b>
<b>Staging</b>	<b>Wolfgang Wagner</b>

- **Ernest Newman – “The Wagner Operas, Volume II”. Harper 1949**
- **Raymond Mander & Joe Mitchenson – “The Wagner Companion”. W H Allen, London 1987**
- **“The Diary of Richard Wagner, 1865-1882”, translated by George Bird – Cambridge University Press 1980**
- **“The Diaries of Cosima Wagner, 1869-1883”, translated by Geoffrey Skelton – Harcourt Brace Jovanovich 1978.**
- **“The letters from Richard Wagner to Mathilde Wesendonck”, translated by William Ashton Ellis – London 1905**
- **“Parzival, a Romance of the Middle Ages” by Wolfram von Eschenbach, translated by Helen Mustard & Charles Passage – Vintage Books 1961**
- **“The Modern Reception of Wolfram’s Parzival” by Ulrich Muller, found in “A Companion to Wolfram’s Parzival”, edited by Will Hasty – Camden House 1999.**

# Parzival

Richard Wagner

Prose Draft written in four days for King Ludwig II and entered into his diary, which he called his “Brown Book”

August 27-30, 1865

27 Aug

## Parzival

Anforbas, der Hüter des Grales, sieht an einer un-  
heilbaren Speerwunde, die er in einem geheimnisvollen  
Lichtesabende empfangen. Titmuel, der ungarische  
Gewinner des Grales, der Vater, hat im Lorkalen Adel dem  
Vohne sein Amt, somit die Herrschaft über die Gralburg  
Monsalvat - übergeben. Es muss dem Amt vorstehen,  
trotz dem er sich durch den begangenen Fehler. Er kann  
unwirdig fühlt, bei ein Landherrscher erscheint, es ihm  
abzunehmen. Wer wird diese Landherrscher sein? Woher  
wird er kommen? Wovon wird man ihn erkennen?

Der Gral ist die kristallene Trinkhöhle, aus welcher  
einmal der Heiland beim letzten Abendmahl trank und  
seinen Jüngern zu trinken reichte: Joseph von Armathea  
ging in ihm das Blut auf, welches aus der Speerwunde  
des Erlösers am Kreuze herabfloß. Die Wunde als heilig  
Blutgetränk lange Zeit der Sündigen Welt geheimnisvoll  
enthielt. Als in Laubholz, für die Sündigen, die heilige Wunde  
unter der Bedeckung des Reiches der Ungläubigen, die heilige Wunde  
des Heiligtums am Lorkalen Hof, wird die Wunde  
des wunderbar stehende Blutgetränk, von dem alle Kunde  
vorhanden war, goldgegendliche, von heiligem  
verlangt ergriffene Heilung, zum Angenehm des Gefalles,  
in welchem das Blut des Heiligtums (Sangre deale)  
- woraus: San Grial - heiligt Grial - der heilige  
Gral entsandt. Heiligt und göttlich heiligt sich der  
Gral durch die Menschheit erhalten hatte. Titmuel und  
seinen Treuen ist das Blutgetränk wunderbar entdeckt  
und in Pflege übergeben worden. Er übersteht nun sich die  
heilige Pflichthaft zum Dienst des Grales, dankt die  
Pflicht Mandala, in welchem, unmerklich entlegene  
Gefühlswelt, die niemandem aufgefallen war, als nur  
zur Pflege des Grales sich wieder erwies. Seine Wunderkraft  
bewunderte das Blutgetränk zunächst dadurch, dass es  
sich über jedes irdischen Gesetz überhebt, indem es für  
Speise und Trank der Gemeine sorgte. Durch geheimnisvoll  
volle Schriftzeichen, welche beim Erlöschen des Kregals  
an dem Oberflache sich zeigen, sind die Wunder.

27 Aug 1865 (Act 1)

Anfortas, Keeper of the Grail, lies stricken of a spear-wound, received in some mysterious romantic adventure, which will not heal. His father, Titurel, original Winner of the Grail, in advanced old age has entrusted his office to his son, together with dominion over Monsalvat, the Grail Castle. This office, despite his feeling that he is not worthy in view of his error, he is obliged to discharge until one worthier shall appear to relieve him of it. Who will this be? Where will he come from? How will he be recognised? –

The Grail is the crystal cup from which the Redeemer and His disciples drank at the Last Supper: in it Joseph of Arimathea caught the blood that flowed from the spear-wound in His side when he hung on the Cross. For a long time it was mysteriously lost to the sinful world and preserved as the holiest of relics. Then, at a time when the world was most harsh and hostile, and when the faithful were hard pressed by the unbelievers and were in great distress, there sprang up in certain divinely inspired heroes, filled with holy charity, the desire to seek out the vessel - that mysteriously consoling relic of which there was ancient report - in which the Saviour's blood (Sang réale, whence San Gréal - Sanct Gral - The Holy Grail) had been preserved, living and divinely potent, for mankind in dire need of redemption.

This relic was supernaturally revealed to Titurel and his loyal followers, and given into their keeping. He gathered about him a body of holy knights to serve the Grail, and built, in wild, remote and inaccessible mountain forest, the Castle of Monsalvat, which none may find except those worthy to care for the Grail. The relic has proclaimed its miraculous power chiefly by freeing its custodians from earthly care by

supplying the community with food and drink; and by mysterious writing which, comprehensible only to the Keeper of the brotherhood, appears upon the glowing surface of the crystal, making known the worst afflictions suffered by the innocent of the world, and issuing instructions to those of the knights who shall be sent forth for their protection. Those who are sent forth, it endows with Divine power, rendering them everywhere victorious. From its votaries it banishes death: he who sets eyes on that vessel cannot die. But only he who preserves himself from the allurements of sensual pleasure retains the power of the Grail's blessing: only to the chaste is the blessed might of the relic revealed.-

Beyond the mountain height in whose hallowed, night-dark forest, at a place where charming valleys wind toward the south and its laughing lands, and Monsalvat lies accessible only to the votary, there lies another castle, as secret as it is sinister. It too can be reached only by magic paths. The godly take care not to approach it. But whoever does approach cannot withstand the anxious longing that lures him towards the gleaming battlements towering from the unprecedented splendour of a most wonderful forest of flowering trees, out of which magically sweet bird song and intoxicating perfumes pour upon all around This is Klingsor's magic castle. Concerning this sorcerer dark things are said. No one has seen him: he is known only by his power. That power is magic. The castle is his work, raised miraculously in what was previously a desolate place with only a hermit's hut upon it. Where now, in a most luxuriant and heady fashion, all blooms and stirs as if it were forever an evening in early summer, there was once only an isolated hut. Who is Klingsor? There are vague, incomprehensible rumours. Nothing else is known of him. Maybe he is known to old

Titirel? But nothing can be gathered from him: dulled by his great age, he is kept alive only by the wondrous power of the Grail. But there is Gurnemans, an old squire of Titirel's, still loyally serving Anfortas; he ought to know something of Klingsor: also he sometimes lets it be understood that he does; but not much can be got out of him: no sooner does he seem to be on the point of revealing something unbelievably strange, than he falls silent again, as if these are matters of which one should not speak. Perhaps Titirel has at some time forbidden him to speak. It is supposed that Klingsor is the same man who once so piously inhabited the place now so changed:- he is said to have mutilated himself in order to destroy that sensual longing which he never completely succeeded in overcoming through prayer and penance. Titirel refused to allow him to join the knights of the Grail, and for the reason that renunciation and chastity, flowing from the innermost soul, do not require to be forced by mutilation. No one knows the precise facts.

All that is certain is that it is only in the reign of Anfortas that people have begun to hear of the castle, also that the Knights of the Grail have often been warned against becoming ensnared in the assaults upon their chastity, originating in that place. In fact, concealed in that castle are the most beautiful women in all the world and of all times. They are held there under Klingsor's spell for the destruction of men, especially the Knights of the Grail, endowed by him with all powers of seduction. Men say that they are she-devils. Several Knights of the Grail have failed to return from their missions; it is feared that they have fallen into the clutches of Klingsor. What, unfortunately, is certain is that Anfortas himself, going forth to combat the sorcery threatening his knights, fell into a trap, decoyed by a strange, wondrously beautiful

woman and treacherously set upon by armed men who were to take him bound to Klingsor: with difficulty he fought them off, and turning to flee, received in his side the spear-wound from which he now suffers and for which no cure can be found.

The Knights, the whole Community of the Grail, are now most seriously concerned on their Keeper's behalf. Pilgrimages are made to all parts in quest of the right cure, of the merciful balm; from the ends of the earth they return: whatever the remedies found, none will heal the wound. Daily it reopens. The agony of the wounded man is unspeakable. Nothing can assuage it. But it is not only the pain of the wound that torments the soul of Anfortas: his suffering lies deeper. He is the Chosen One whose task is to care for the miraculous vessel. He, and he alone, has to work the sacred magic that refreshes, strengthens and directs the whole company of knights, whilst he alone has to suffer dreadful self-reproach at having betrayed his vow. He, most unworthy of all, must daily - to his fearful punishment - touch the sacred vessel: at his prayer, must the Divine contents of the cup flow bright purple, at his intercession must nourishing grace be dispensed to the votive knights.

Yes, suffering and beyond recovery, he is daily filled with warmth of new life by the wondrous power of the Grail: seeing death as his only deliverance, he is now, by the grace of the Grail, condemned to eternal life! If, to obtain death, he would go against his vow and forgo the delight of holding the Grail, he is compelled by the yearning of his soul to lose himself anew in blessed contemplation of it, to see once more the golden purple shine bright and let the Divine radiance penetrate again and again, blessing and bruising, into his innermost being. For as the heavenly blood of the Redeemer pours, full of grace into his own heart, ah, how his own wicked blood is forced to flee the touch of the

Divine! In timid desperation the sinful blood rushes from his heart, bursting the wound afresh and shedding itself in the world of sin,- and from the same wound as the Redeemer received upon the Cross and through which He poured out His blood in love and compassion for wretched, sinful humanity, he, sinful Keeper of the Divine Balm of Redemption, as an eternal reminder of his wickedness, bleeds hot, sinful blood that cannot be staunched!-

The knights approach, the hour is striking, he must work the magic: they grieve and lament over his wound, seek most eagerly to help him, procuring remedies and balm, not suspecting where it is his wound is bleeding, and where it is he is beyond cure. So, finally, the wretched man prays fervently to the Grail for a sign, asking whether he may hope for deliverance, and who may be called upon to deliver him. The sign shines forth: he reads the enigmatic words: ***Aware, suffering in compassion, a fool will redeem thee!*** - Who can it be who suffers only in compassion, and without knowing, is wiser than others? - ***Oh, that longed-for one! If he lives, let him find the way to this sanctuary: an end to agony, a scar for the wound, peace for the heart; when will you bring them, aware fool suffering in compassion?***

His loyal followers do everything to relieve the agony of their beloved Master; in the morning they bear him on a litter down to the holy lake in the forest, there to bathe and drink at the noble spring. There, in the sweet coolness, he seems to revive a little: messengers arrive with new remedies found far away: alas, to no avail.

28 Aug 1865

The most untiring in the worldwide quest for a cure to Anfortas' wound is the High Messenger of the Grail, Kundry. Who this woman is and where she comes from, no one knows; she must be extremely old, for she appeared here in the mountains in the reign of Titurel: although she is wild and dreadful to behold, one notices no signs of real age: she has a complexion which is pale one moment and sunburnt the next; her black hair hangs down long and wild; sometimes she plaits it strangely; she is only ever seen in her dark-red robe which she closes with a curious snake skin girdle: often her black eyes shoot out from their sockets like burning coals; one moment her gaze is unsteady and wandering, the next - staring again and fixed. The brotherhood of knights treats her more as a strange, magical animal than a human being. Also she keeps her distance, how she survives is not known, nor where she finds shelter: at times she vanishes completely; then nothing is seen or heard of her.

Then someone chances upon her in a cave, or in dense undergrowth, in a deathlike sleep, lifeless, numb, and bloodless, with all limbs rigid. Gurnemans, the old squire, usually takes care of her then: he has known her for so long! - carries her to his home, warms, chafes her and restores her to life; on waking, she believes she has dropped off to sleep for a while, curses herself for letting sleep overcome her, gazes at the sun, heaves a dreadfully deep sigh, darts away, and begins her activity anew. If there is something difficult to be accomplished, something to be done far, far away, a message or order from the Grail for a Knight of the Grail contending in foreign zones, then suddenly Kundry is at hand, eager to undertake the task which none can perform so speedily and reliably as she; one then sees her racing off in the storm

on a tiny horse with a long mane and tail flowing down to the ground, and before one knows it she is back. Never has anyone remarked the least disloyalty in her; her zeal, her care in the performance of her missions is boundless. Thus she is a true, indispensable servant to the company of knights: all her missions turn out well. Against which, she is greatly missed on the occasions of her mysterious absences: then some adversity, some mysterious danger usually befalls the knights, and there is alarm, and often the wish for Kundry to return. Because of that, many too are in doubt whether she should be considered good or evil: what is certain is that she must still be a heathen. Never is she seen at any religious ceremony: nor elsewhere either, unless there is some uncommonly difficult service to be performed. Gurnemans, who at other times is not gentle in his behavior toward the wild woman, takes her half grudgingly, half humorously under his protection. One must consider her good works, he says, and be glad if she returns. He supposes her to be a woman accursed and with great sins to atone for in her present life. The services she performs are as much for her own benefit as that of the Knights, who should not be afraid to accept them.-

For the rest, she shows great indifference, indeed scorn for the Knights, refusing to accept their thanks. Even Anfortas is not exempted. Now she is just returning on her panting horse from the fabled land of Arabia where she has found the most precious balm. Hastily she hands it to Gurnemans, refuses thanks and without a word throws herself down in a corner of the forest, while Gurnemans hastens to the King and the knights by the holy lake, bearing what might be a cure. Kundry smiles scornfully. 'You know who alone can help. Why drive me on a false track?' Nothing else will she reveal. She never gives advice or opinion:

but simply shows the swiftest zeal in at once carrying out what is commanded or desired. She is therefore considered completely stupid and senseless, as well as animal. Yet she seems to attach great, indeed passionately great, importance to delivering Anfortas from his suffering: she betrays violent uneasiness over it. But then again she laughs scornfully: one should not wish the end of this distress; who knows whether the resourceful knights might not in future have to perform their own missions; she too would like peace, etc.

While the King is bathing in the sacred lake, a wild swan circles over his head: suddenly it falls, wounded by an arrow; shouts from the lake: general indignation, who dares kill an animal on this sacred spot? The swan flutters nearer and drops bleeding to the ground. Parzival emerges from the forest, bow in hand: Gurnemans stops him. The young man confesses to the deed. To the violent reproaches of the old man he has no reply. Gurnemans, reproaching him with the wickedness of his act, reminds him of the sanctity of the forest stirring so silently around him, asks whether he has not found all the creatures tame, gentle and harmless. What had the swan, seeking its mate, done to him? Was he not sorry for the poor bird that now lay, with bloodstained feathers, dying at his feet? etc.,-

Parzival, who has been standing riveted to the spot, bursts into tears and stammers, "I don't know!" - "Who is your father?" - "I don't know!" etc. Gurnemans is amazed at this stupidity, which hitherto he has encountered only in Kundry, gives way to emotion. He prevails upon Parzival to stay awhile and tell Gurnemans something about himself. All that Gurnemans can get out of the shy boy, however, is that he knows only his mother, Schmerzeleide; she has brought him up in great seclusion, and so that he was ignorant of arms and knighthood. -

"Why?" As Parzival knows no reason, Kundry, recumbent in her corner, who all along has been staring hard at Parzival., quickly throws in, "His father was killed before his son was born; his mother wanted to protect her son from a similar violent death - the fool!" She laughs. Parzival's memory and understanding of his past are thus awakened. Armed men had passed their lonely farm: Parzival had followed but lost them. He has had many adventures: made himself a bow and with it, protected himself on his wild wanderings.-

Kundry confirms that he has made himself feared through his heroic deeds and incredibly bold strength. "Who fears me?" - "The wicked." - "Were those who barred my way wicked?" - Gurnemans laughs. "Who is good?" - Gurnemans.: "Your mother. You have run away from her; she will be grieving for you; there is no need to treat all from the start with hostility." - "Am I hostile?" - "Towards the swan you were, and towards your mother." -Kundry: "She is dead!" - Parzival: "Dead? My mother? Who says so?" - Kundry: "I saw her die! "Parziv. leaping up seizes Kundry by the throat. Gurnemans holds him back. "Will you do more wrong here? What has the woman done to you? She has surely spoken the truth, for Kundry never lies and knows much." Parziv. stands dazed, as if paralyzed. At length, "I die of thirst." He is on the verge of collapsing; Gurnemans holds him. Kundry goes swiftly to the spring and returns with a filled horn: she sprinkles Parz. with the water and gives him to drink. Gurnemans praises Kundry; so that what was done here, was evil repaid by good. Kundry laughs: she never does good, but she wants peace. As Parz. recovers and is tended in fatherly fashion by Gurnemans, Kundry retires, sad and seeming growing weary, to a corner of the forest: "Ah, I am tired. Where shall I find peace?" She drags herself off into the forest, unobserved.-

Gurnemans sees that the King, with his attendants, has long set off back to the castle. The sun is at its zenith; the time for the sacred meal approaches. Parz., supporting himself on the old man, asks where they are, for the forest seems steadily to be disappearing as they enter stone corridors. It looks as if they are on the right path, and the boy, he realizes, is still innocent, otherwise the way to the castle would not be opening up before them so readily. They climb stairs and again find themselves in vaulted corridors. Parzival, hardly feeling that he is walking, follows in a daze. He hears wonderful sounds. Trumpet notes, long-held and swelling, answered from the far distance by a gentle ringing, as of crystal bells. At last they arrive in a mighty hall which, cathedral-like, loses itself in a high dome. Light falls only from above: from the dome - an increasingly louder ringing of bells. Parzival stands enchanted. Gurnemans: " Now hold up: it is clear that you are a fool, let me see whether you are aware."

Muted trumpets seem to approach. Solemn chanting from bass voices; tenor voices respond from half way to the roof; from the highest part of the dome comes the chanting of boys' voices. Then, at the rear, to left and right, two great folding doors open. From the right the Knights of the Grail enter in grave and solemn procession; they take their places at the laid tables stretched in three groups from front to rear. From the left come the master-workmen and servants of the King. Anfortas is carried in on a litter: in front of him a knight bears a shrine covered by a purple velvet cloth: ~~carried upright behind Anfortas is a lance with a bloodstained tip~~ [deleted by RW]. At the rear, beneath a baldachin in the elevated centre, is the couch to which Anfortas is led: before it stands an altar-like table upon which the covered shrine is placed.

When all are in their places, the singing stops. Gurnemans takes his place at a table, staring the whole time at Parzival who stands still and speechless with amazement.

From a vaulted niche far to the rear is heard the funereal voice of old Titurel: "My son Anfortas, are you about your duty?" Silence - "Must I die without welcoming the Saviour?" Anfortas breaks out in profound complaint: he cannot any longer discharge his duties. He describes his sufferings. The knights complain and mutter. Titurel's voice: "Uncover the Grail!" The shrine is uncovered, the sacred crystal cup taken from within and solemnly set before Anfortas. - Anfortas covers his eyes. Titurel's voice: "Speak the blessing!" Anfortas, gazes at last towards the vessel, with increasing rapture. He expresses his inspired and, at the same time, contrite emotions. The devotion of all is at its height. From the dome, a blinding shaft of light descends to the cup, which begins to glow a fiery crimson. All sink to their knees: a ray of hope enters the soul of Anfortas. Never, since his fall, has the Grail glowed as purely as today: is it salvation, is the Redeemer here? With both hands he elevates the Grail, allowing it to shine in every direction. From Titurel - a sigh of well-being.-

From high up, voices sound. Titurel speaks the blessing: twilight descends on the hall: only the Grail gleams bright. When it becomes light again, the tables are provided with wine and bread; the Grail no longer gleams and is returned to its shrine. During the singing, which celebrates holy brotherly love, the knights eat. Anfortas alone feels worse than before: he has to be carried off in the litter; his wound has reopened; the Redeemer has remained silent. The procession forms up in the order of arrival. To sad, solemn music, all depart again: above them, the bells grow silent and the light fades. - Parzival has remained

motionless with amazement: but during Anfortas' complaint, he once put his hand hastily to his heart. As last to leave, Gurnemans turns to him ill-humoredly and shakes him: "Why are you still standing there? You are nothing but a fool! Out you go, do your thinking there!" He pushes him out of a side gate and bangs it after him, muttering.-

29 Aug. 1865 (Act 2)

Kundry has again vanished, fallen into a deathlike sleep. Klingsor has regained power over her soul: he needs the help of this the most wondrous of women to deliver his final blow. At his castle, in an inaccessible dungeon, he sits in his magician's workshop: he is the daemon of hidden sin, the raging of impotence against sin. Using his magician's powers, he conjures up Kundry's soul; her spirit appears in the depths of a dark cave. From the dialogue of these two, we learn something of their relationship.

Kundry is living an unending life of constantly alternating rebirths as the result of an ancient curse which, in a manner reminiscent of the Wandering Jew, condemns her, in ever-new shapes, to bring to men the suffering of seduction; redemption, death, complete annihilation is vouchsafed her only if her most powerful blandishments are withstood by the most chaste and virile of men. So far, they have not been. After each new and, in the end, profoundly hateful victory, after each new fall by man, she flies into a rage; she then flees into the wilderness, where by the most severe atonements and chastisements she is, for a while, able to escape from the power of the curse upon her; yet it is denied to her to find salvation by this route. Within her, again and again, arises a desire to be redeemed by a man, this being the only way

of redemption offered by the curse: thus does innermost necessity cause her repeatedly to fall victim anew to the power through which she is reborn as a seductress. The penitent then falls into a deathlike sleep: it is the seductress who wakes, and who, after her mad frenzy, becomes a penitent again.

As no one but a man can redeem her, she has taken refuge as a penitent with the knights of the Grail; here, among them, must the redeemer be found. She serves them with the most passionate self-sacrifice: never, when she is in this state, does she receive a loving look, being no more than a servant and despised slave. Klingsor's magic has found her out; he knows the curse and the power through which she can be forced into his service.

To avenge the dreadful disgrace he once suffered from Titurel, he traps and seduces the noblest knights of the Grail into breaking their vow of chastity. What, however, gives him power over Kundry, this most exquisite instrument of seduction, is not only the magic power through which he controls the curse upon Kundry, but also the most powerful assistance he finds in Kundry's own soul. -

Since only one man can redeem her and so she feels given to him in complete submission, her experience of the weakness of these men cannot but fill her with strange bitterness: feeling that only one man, who withstands the force of her feminine charms, can destroy and redeem her, she is repeatedly driven by something deep in her own soul to be tested again: but mixed with this is her scorn, her despair at being subjugated to this feeble breed, and a fearful blazing hatred which, while it disposes her for the destruction of men, at the same time repeatedly arouses her wild, loving desire in a consuming, fearfully

fiery manner to that fit of ecstasy by means of which she can work the magic, while remaining its' slave.

Her latest task, under Klingsor's guidance, has been the seduction of Anfortas. The sorcerer's only wish was to have Anfortas in his power: he planned for him the disgrace that, in raving blindness, he once inflicted upon himself: he managed to lure the Keeper of the Grail himself into the arms of Kundry, reborn as the wondrously seductive woman, and while he was lost in her embrace, the knights enslaved by Klingsor fell upon him; they were not allowed to kill him; the vigilant Gurnemans, calling upon the aid of the Grail, managed to free the already wounded Anfortas. Thus was Klingsor deprived of the prize of his venture: Kundry, to her distress, had fared better in proving her power anew! After violent ravings, she again woke penitent. From one state to the next, she retains no real memory of what has occurred: to her it is like a dream experienced in very deep sleep which, on waking, one cannot recall, although there is a vague, deep-seated feeling of impotence. Yet she gazes with both sadness and scorn at the wounded man, who she, penitent once more now, again serves with the most passionate devotion, but - without hope, without respect.

29 Aug. 1865

Now it is necessary for Klingsor to have Parzival in his power. He knows the prophecies about this wonder-child. He fears that he may have been summoned to deliver Anfortas and take his place with a power that cannot be overcome. It is against him that Kundry must now exert all her power. Summoned by Klingsor, Kundry's soul trembles. She resists. He threatens. She curses. Fearful secrets. Finally, discord

within Kundry's soul: hope for deliverance through defeat: - but then a mad desire to enjoy love for one last time. Klingsor's laugh. -

Sound of weapons. From outside, we hear the threatening voice of Parzival. Kundry disappears. "To work!" Klingsor springs up on to the wall: he watches the fight between Parzival and the bewitched knights. Klingsor laughs at their loutish jealousy as they defend the way to their beloved she-devils: he delights as they are defeated by Parzival and killed or forced to flee. His gaze follows Parzival, striding, childishly proud, through the open gate and then turning towards the garden. "Ah, childish offspring! Be summoned for what you will: you are still too stupid and you are forfeit to me. Here, eternal Lord of the Grail, you will come to a sweet end." - He vanishes.

Parzival has entered Klingsor's wonderful, magic garden: his astonishment at the unspeakable charm is mingled with an uneasy combination of alarm, hesitation and horror. But he is not to compose himself: from various directions, singly, beautiful women rush in, their hastily-donned clothing disordered, their hair disheveled, etc. They have heard sounds of fighting: waking, they have found themselves abandoned by their lovers: some have run to the battlements, seen the flight and reported to the other women that their lovers have been fought with, put to flight, even cut down by the bold stranger. Lamentation and imprecations: they rush at Parzival.

Their threats, reproaches, lamentations are pacified at the sight of the hero and the realization of how handsome, child-like and artless he is. Some mock him; others invite him to make reparations for their lost lovers: soon he is being flattered and petted. Amazed, but quite artless, Parzival abandons himself to what he takes to be a childish game

without any thought of there being something serious behind it. Soon jealousy and argument flare up among the women: some, having withdrawn into arbours, now return with hair charmingly adorned and in daintily ordered attire; they are scorned by the others, but imitated. The coquettish play for Parzival's favor degenerates into quarrelling and wrangling. Parzival still responds as if to childish play: refuses to understand anything and treats nothing seriously. Now they deride him: their scolding and mockery make him almost angry: he is about to flee.

Then he hears the loud, loving sound of a woman's voice calling him by his name. He stops, shaken, believing it to be his mother, and stands, greatly affected, and rooted to the spot. The voice admonishes Parzival to stay: here he will experience great happiness: she orders the women to leave the youth alone; he is for none of them: their lovers have been preserved: they would like to return; and urges them to be at peace. Hesitatingly, the women obey: dejectedly they leave Parzival, each secretly preferring him to her own lover: gently and flatteringly they leave him and go separate ways. Parzival, now sure that he is dreaming, gazes timidly to see where the voice has come from. Then, in a grotto, upon a couch of flowers, he sees a young woman of the greatest beauty; Kundry, in new, quite unrecognizable form. Still standing far off, he asks in amazement if it was she who called him.

Kundry: Did he not know that she had long awaited him here? What then brought him here, if not the wish to find her? Parzival, wondrously attracted, approaches the grotto. His emotions are mingled with vast unease; his earlier, cheerful artlessness deserts him and in its place a deep seriousness falls upon him, a vague feeling that a momentous decision will soon be required of him. The wonderful woman knows

how to play upon the tenderest chords of his emotion by touching intimately and solemnly upon his childhood memories: evening, morning, night - the complaints and fond embraces of his mother; the longing of that distant, forsaken woman for her son, her languishing despair and death. Parzival, overcome by fearful emotion and overwhelming melancholy, sinks weeping at the feet of this beautiful woman: he is tormented by dreadful remorse.

Bending over him, she puts her arms around his neck. Soothing and chiding of his immoderate grief. Not all that could make him happy was contained in his mother's love: the last breath of motherly longing is the benediction of the first kiss of love. Bending her head above his, she now presses her lips to his in a long kiss.

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Suddenly the youth springs up with an expression of utter terror. With this kiss a dreadful change has taken place in him: he puts his hand to his heart; all of a sudden, he feels burning there the wound of Anfortas; hears rising from deep within him, Anfortas' lamentation. "The wound! The wound is bleeding here! Miserable one and I could not help you!" To the horror and amazement of the beautiful woman, he gives her a cold stare: the mysterious events seen at the Grail Castle now claim him entirely; transferred wholly into the soul of Anfortas, he feels Anfortas' enormous suffering, his dreadful self-reproach; the unspeakable torments of yearning love, the unholy terrors of sinful desire, even

there, beholding the wondrous Grail, permeated by the gleam of its sublime ecstasy, annihilated by the Divinity of its world-redeeming balm. He invokes the Grail, the Pure Blood of the Redeemer: he hears the Saviour's cry for the relic to be freed from the custody of besmirched hands: and he himself has experienced this monstrous suffering, he himself has witnessed the agonies of the guilt-stricken man: to his innermost being there has been a loud appeal for deliverance and he has remained dumb, even fled, wandered, child-like, dissipating his soul in wild, foolish adventures! Where is there a man as sinful and wretched as he? How can he ever hope to find forgiveness for his monstrous neglect of duty? -

The woman, amazed and lost in passionate admiration, seeks vainly to silence him. He sees her every gaze, hears her every word, as if from Anfortas' soul; this is how the wretched woman looked, this is how she spoke, this is how she wrapped her arms around his neck; these are the fearful agonies he has had to bear away with him as his prize!

"Corrupter, depart from me!" Now the woman's soul blazes with insane desire. "Cruel one! If you feel the agonies of others, then feel also mine! In you I am to find deliverance, in you alone to die! For you I have waited through eternities of misery: to love you, to be yours for one hour, can alone repay me for torments such as no other being has ever suffered!" -

Parzival : "You will be damned, with me, for eternity if for a moment I forget my mission in your arms! I have been sent for your salvation also. Madwoman, do you not realize that your thirst is only increased by drinking: that your desire is extinguished only through its frustration?" All the torments of the human heart lie open to him: he feels them all and knows the only way of ending them. The woman: "So was it my kiss

that made you see clearly? Oh, you fool! Embrace me now with love, so shall you be God himself this very day. Take me for just one hour to your heart and let me be damned for eternity! - I want no deliverance: I want to love you!" Parz. "I shall love and deliver you if you will show me the way to Anfortas." She rages. "You will never find it. Let the fallen one perish." He persists. She demands as payment an hour of love. He repulses her. She beats her breast, calling madly for help. She is still powerful enough, she says, to lead him astray so that he will never find the Grail Castle: she curses the tracks and paths!

Klingsor appears on the tower of the Castle: armed men rush in: Parzival recognizes the spear with which Anfortas had been wounded, and wrests it from the knight: "With this sign I banish you all! As the wound that this spear once made shall close, let everything here perish, and its splendor fall in ruins!" He brandishes the spear: the castle collapses with a frightful crash; the garden withers to a desert. Parzival, from afar, gazing back at Kundry, who has collapsed screaming: "You know where you can find me again!" He hastens away through the ruins.

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At Monsalvat there is grief and confusion. Anfortas can no longer be persuaded to preside over the office of the Grail. Tormented beyond his limits, he wishes to obtain death by defiance: no longer does he wish to look upon the Grail, which seems to have wrapped even its miraculous power in mourning; since Parzival's visit, its gleam has steadily faded. For long now, the sacred vessel has remained locked away in its shrine. All are starving and demoralised. The knights are

obliged to seek profane food; their strength is waning; they are no longer sent out. Titurel, deprived of the sight of the life-giving relic, has died. Anfortas longs for his own death. The knights besiege his chamber, assail him, weeping and threatening. He obstinately refuses: he wants to die. –

Gurnemans, who under the circumstances has rapidly aged and become a childish old man, has retired to the sacred spring at the edge of the forest, there to die a hermit. Not long before, he had again discovered Kundry, lying as always in deathlike sleep: after waking her again, he notices a great change from previous awakenings: she is not amazed, does not curse, but on the contrary, is gently attentive to him. But no word can be obtained from her: she seems to have been struck completely dumb. –

One beautiful spring morning, Kundry is drawing water at the spring for Gurnemans, who is lying in prayer before his hut. In the distance, Parzival is seen, slowly approaching: he is in totally black armor: with head bowed and lance lowered, he approaches dreamily and sinks down on a grassy seat near the spring. His visor is closed. Gurnemans notices and addresses him. To all questions, Parziv. only shakes his head sadly. At last Gurnemans, put out, rebukes him for stopping here with helmet closed and armed with shield and spear. Doesn't he know what day it is? - "No" - Where does he come from, then? He can hardly have been living among Christians, without knowing that today is the most holy Good Friday? - Parz. is long silent. Then he opens his helmet, takes it off his head, drives the spear into the ground, ~~hangs helmet, shield and sword on it, then kneels and gives himself up to silent prayer~~ [Deleted by RW] lays shield and sword before it, sinks to his knees and

fixing his eyes fervently on the bloodstained point of the spear, prays earnestly. –

Gurnemans, gazing at him with emotion, believes he recognizes him and calls Kundry as witness. She, with a quiet nod, affirms him to be the same who once appeared by the lake and killed the swan. Parzival is questioned. Now he recognizes the old man and now tells how long he has wandered vainly searching for the Grail Castle, where he has to atone for a grave offence.

He had despaired of ever finding the way; by penances of every kind he had sought to be guided by grace: in vain: his works were not so powerful as the magic which condemned him to wander! Can the old man give him news? Gurnemans answers sadly that his answers will not comfort him, and reports all the wretched developments at Monsalvat. Parziv., tormented by remorse at not having alleviated this distress long before, chides his own blindness, his childish foolishness, and, overcome with grief, falls in a faint. Kundry leaps up: she fetches water in a large bowl. Gurnemans restrains her: there, by the spring itself, shall the pilgrim be bathed: he will, he suspects, have a high office to perform: to which he must be purified, and all the dust of his wanderings washed off him. Both gently escort the revived Parzival to the spring. Parzival asks whether the old man will escort him to Anfortas? Gurn: Certainly, we will go together to the Castle today: the funeral rites of Titurel, my dear master, are being celebrated. Anfortas has vowed to expose the Grail once more for the canonisation of his father, who has died through his fault.

Meanwhile Kundry has loosened his greaves and is now bathing his feet; he gazes at her in amazement and emotion, then asks Gurnemans to moisten his head also with the holy water: the latter consecrates him for his appointed task, sprinkling his head with water.

Then Parziv. sees Kundry produce a golden phial from her bosom and from it pour precious ointment over his feet, anoint them and then dry them with her hair. "If you anoint my feet, so let Gurnemans anoint my head also: for I am to be King!" Gurnemans takes and anoints his head and pronounces a blessing. Softly unseen, Parzival scoops water from the spring in the bowl and moistens Kundry's head with it: "My first duty I discharge thus: be baptised and believe in the Redeemer." - Kundry lowers her head and begins to weep. -

With gentle delight, Parzival gazes at wood and meadow. How wonderful that all is in bloom and speaking to him in soft colors, sweet shapes and gentle fragrances: never before has he seen the meadow so beautiful. Gurne. "It is the magic of Good Friday, lord." Parz. "The day of greatest grief? Ought not all creation rather to be mourning?" - Gurnem. "You see it is not so: today all animal creation is glad to gaze up at the Redeemer. Not being able to see Him on the Cross, it gazes up at Man Redeemed: who, through God's loving sacrifice, has a feeling of holiness and purity; the meadow flowers notice that man does not trample them today, but, as God took pity on mankind, spares them: now all that is blooming and soon to die, gives thanks; it is Nature's Day of Innocence." Kundry, slowly raising her head, gazes up at Parzival earnestly and calmly beseeching. Parz. "Today is the great Day of Innocence: rise up and be blissful." - He kisses her on the forehead.

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Ringling of bells, men's voices from afar. - Gurnemans: The hour is come: midday, as before. Follow me."Parzival, armed by them both, solemnly takes up the spear and, with Kundry, follows Gurnemans. - As the singing swells and the sound of the bells grows louder, the scene gradually changes as in Act 1. In the corridors - processions of knights dressed in mourning. Nearer at hand - lamentations for the dead. - A funeral procession. - Then, back in the Great Hall. Dirges sung by bass, tenor and soprano voices: in place of the table before the baldachin, the catafalque. Enter procession of knights: from the other side, Anfortas on his sick bed, behind Titurel's coffin: in front, the shrine containing the Grail. Dim twilight. With all in their places, the lid of the coffin is opened - a violent burst of lamentation: Anfortas raises himself from his sickbed under the baldachin. Such is his despair that he condemns the knights for wishing to force him to work the magic of the Grail, here, in the sight of the father he has killed! His wound, since the ending of reanimation by the Grail, has moved fatally close to his heart: another day, perhaps, and death will be certain. Why this fearful cruelty of forcing him to live? - Again he refuses. Attempts to compel him. Muttering and threats from the knights. Anfortas: "Madmen, with what will you threaten me, when death is my deliverer?" -

Then Parzival steps forward. "Live, Anfortas, live in repentance and atonement. Your wound I close thus:" He touches Anfortas' thigh with the spear. Parzival goes on to describe to him his suffering, his error, his inner agony: from all shall he now be delivered: the magic spell to which you succumbed is broken: strong is the magic of him who desires, but stronger it that of him who denies. "Thanks be to your

suffering: it has made me a fellow-sufferer; I can perform the Office, and shall, so that you may be delivered!" -

Anfortas, suddenly healed, has taken and elevated the Grail from its shrine: the Grail now gleams in full brightness; a halo is spread all around; Titurel rises from his coffin and gives his blessing. Anfortas leads Parzival to his place beneath the baldachin: - Kundry embraces Parzival's feet and silently, sinks lifeless before him. A white dove descends from the dome and circles above Parzival. - Anfortas on his knees before him in homage. -

Richard Wagner, 30 August [1865]