

# THE 13 CLOCKS

(Libretto by David Avshalomov, based on the story  
by James Thurber. Used by Permission)

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

<b>The Cold Duke of Coffin Castle</b>	Nasty Baritone, in his forties
<b>Prince Zorn of Zorna (Xingu* the Minstrel)</b>	Lyric Tenor, 21
<b>Princess Saralinda</b>	Lyric Soprano, almost 21
<b>The Golux* [also Listen, invisible]</b>	Lyric Baritone, old but ageless
<b>Hagga</b>	Contralto or Mezzo, 38
<b>Hark/Narrator, the Duke's henchman</b>	Bass, forties

## ENSEMBLE

**Taverner** (Baritone)

**Traveller / Jack-o'-Lent** (Soprano/Mezzo; pants)

(Traveller may be played by Hagga in pants)

(Jack-o'-Lent may be played by Saralinda in pants)

**Tale-Teller / Jackadandy** (Bass-Baritone)

**Troublemaker** (Tenor)

**Tossport** (Bass/Baritone)

**Castle Guards and Captain** (minimum 4, may be played by tavern frequenters)

AND

**Whisper**, the Duke's spy, non-singing walk-off

**The Todal**, non-singing (2 actors, 3-legged-walking in a large dark slimy-looking sack)

**Voice of the Todal** (all ensemble voices mixed, offstage)

**The Geese** (all ensemble voices mixed, offstage)

\*NOTES: **Golux** is pronounced as though it were spelled "Gollux," like Gollum, or mollusk.

**Xingu** is pronounced "Exingu" and written thus in the score.

**Todal** is pronounced "Toe-doll"

Prince Zorn, as Xingu the Minstrel, carries and mimes playing a lute. (May substitute a small guitar, ukulele, or mandolin.)

**ACCOMPANIMENT:** Piano, Flute(s), Percussion

**[IN BRACKETS: STAGING, LIGHTING, PROJECTIONS,  
PERSONAE, ACTION, SOUNDS]**

**OVERTURE**

**[REAR PROJECTION: EXTERIOR OF CASTLE ATOP HILL]**

**PROLOGUE**

[THE DUKE STANDS VISIBLE THROUGH A LARGE HIGH CASTLE WINDOW, [OR, ALTERNATIVELY, AT THE TOP OF THE STAGE L. STAIRS], AND ECHOES THE NARRATION WITH SUBTLE MOVEMENTS, LOOKING BEYOND THE AUDIENCE. EVEN IF NOT USING SUPERTITLES, PROJECT THIS PROLOGUE NARRATION IN A CRAWL.]

[NARRATOR (HARK), AT SIDE OF STAGE, IN HALF-LIGHT:]

“Once upon a time, in a gloomy castle on a lonely hill, where there were thirteen clocks that wouldn't go, there lived a cold, aggressive Duke, [SPOTLIGHT COMES UP ON DUKE] and his “niece” [AIR QUOTES], the Princess Saralinda. She was warm in every wind and weather, but he was always cold. So he wore velvet gloves, bright with rubies and diamonds. [DUKE: FINGER MOVEMENT] One eye wore a velvet patch [GESTURE]; the other a monocle. He had lost one eye when he was twelve, from peering into nests for birds to maul.

His nights were spent in evil dreams, and his days were given to wicked schemes. He would limp and cackle through the cold corridors of Coffin Castle, inventing new impossible feats for the suitors of Saralinda to perform. [DUKE RUBS HANDS TOGETHER.] He did not wish to give her hand in marriage, since it was the only warm hand in the castle. Even the hands of his thirteen clocks had all frozen on a snowy night, seven years before, so it was always ten minutes to five in the castle [PROJECTION: MONTAGE OF CLOCKS SET AT THAT TIME, OR LIGHT BRIEFLY UP ON CLOCKS IN THE GREAT HALL BACK WALL]. Travelers and mariners would look up at the lonely hill and say,

[NARRATOR PLUS ENSEMBLE, BACKSTAGE:] ‘Time lies frozen there. It's always Then. It's never Now.’

[NARRATOR:] The cold Duke was afraid of Now, for Now has warmth and urgency, Now might bring a certain knight of gay and shining courage, while Then is dead and buried. The Duke believed he had slain time with his sword, and wiped his bloody blade upon its beard and left it lying there, its springs uncoiled and sprawling, its pendulum disintegrating.

The Duke limped because his legs were different lengths. He would ask a suitor, "What is the difference between my legs?" and if the youth replied "Why, one is shorter than the other,"

the Duke would run him through with his sword and feed him to his geese. He was supposed to say, "*Longer.*"

Others were slain for trampling the Duke's camellias, failing to praise his wines, staring too long at his gloves, or *gazing too long at his niece*. Some were slain for using names that start with X, or dropping spoons, or wearing rings, or *speaking disrespectfully of sin*. The rest were given incredible labors to perform to win his niece's warm hand. They were told to cut a slice of moon, or change the ocean into wine. They were set to finding things that never were, and building things that could not be. All came, and tried, and failed . . . and disappeared.

The castle and the Duke grew a little colder, and Saralinda grew a little older. She was nearly twenty-one the day a prince, disguised as a minstrel, arrived. [DUKE VANISHES.]

He called himself EXingu, which was dangerous, since the name began with X. He was a thing of shreds and patches, singing for pennies. But EXingu was the son of a powerful king; he yearned to find in a far-off land the maiden of his dreams, so off he set, singing as he went, learning the life of the lowly. One night, he came to the town below the Duke's castle. . .

## **SCENE 1. THE SILVER SWAN, IN THE TOWN BELOW THE CASTLE. NIGHT.**

[REVELERS ARE SCATTERED AROUND TWO TABLES IN THE TOWN PLAZA UNDER AN AWNING. PRINCE ZORN STANDS NEXT TO A TABLE WITH HIS LUTE. ALL ARE ANIMATED, LAUGHING WITH THE INTRO MUSIC. **NOTE:** This crew meets regularly, and have often played the game of taunting strangers about the Duke and Saralinda. It is an almost rehearsed round-robin routine; they look expectantly at the next "performer," prod or prompt them.]

[ALL:] "Here we all are, at the Sign of the Silver Swan: townspeople, taverners, travelers, tale-tellers, tosspots, and troublemakers, all gathered to drink and make merry—or at least to forget our woes." [ALL MOVE IN PLACE TO THE INTERLUDE, WITH TANKARDS. ONE FAKES PLAYING A RECORDER OR PENNY WHISTLE. ZORN FAKES PLAYING ALONG.]

[TAVERNER, STANDING, TO PRINCE:] "And who may you be, pray tell? You are new here!"

[ZORN:] "I call myself EXingu, [STRUMS] a ragged minstrel, as you can see. I sing for pennies—or for drink."

[CROWD LAUGHS]

[TRAVELLER, GRINNING:] "Ha ha! Taverner, a drink for our "ragged minstrel" here!"

[TAVERNER SETS DOWN A STEIN. LEERING, TO PRINCE:] “Minstrel whose name begins with X [CROWD: “Feh!”], have you heard of Saralinda, loveliest princess on all the thousand islands of the ocean seas? [ZORN SHAKES HIS HEAD.] She is the niece of the cold Duke of Coffin Castle [POINTS IN GENERAL DIRECTION OF CASTLE ABOVE TOWN]. If you can turn the rain to silver, she is yours.”

[CROWD LAUGHS, JEERS]

[TALE-TELLER, BASS, GRINNING:] “If you can slay the thorny Boar of Borythorn, she is yours. But there is no thorny Boar of Borythorn, which makes it hard.”

[2<sup>ND</sup> TALE-TELLER, SOPRANO, GRINNING:] “What makes it even harder is her uncle's scorn and sword. You will fail, and the Duke will slit you from your *guggle* to your *zatch*, and feed you to his pet geese!”

[CROWD JEERS, “GUGGLE! ZATCH!” AND HONK LIKE HUNGRY GEESE, LAUGH]

[TOSSPOT, GURGLING:] “The Duke is seven feet, nine inches tall, and only twenty-eight years old, in his prime. His hand is cold enough to stop a clock, and strong enough to choke a bull. He breaks up minstrels in his soup–**like crackers**. Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh.”

[CROWD AGREES]

[TROUBLEMAKER, SIMPERING, STANDS AND MIMICS THE MINSTREL:] “Nay, our minstrel here will warm the old man’s heart with song, dazzle him with jewels and gold. He’ll trample on the Duke’s camellias, spill his wine, and blunt his sword, and say his name begins with X, and in the end the Duke will say, ‘Take Saralinda, with my blessing, O lordly Prince of Rags and Tags’ ” [BOWS, SITS]

[CROWD LAUGHS, APPLAUDS]

[ZORN QUICKLY YANKS HIM UP BY THE TUNIC, GRABS HIM WITH ONE HAND BY THE THROAT, PUSHES UP AND HOLDS HIM UP ON HIS TOES, LOOKS HIM SHARPLY IN THE EYE, THEN RELEASES HIM AND HE CRUMPLES TO THE GROUND. ZORN STRIDES AWAY INTO THE NIGHT. ALL WATCH, THEN TURN BACK TO THEIR DRINKS, MUTTERING.]

[TRAVELLER, MUSING, STARING AFTER XINGU:] “I’ve seen that youth before, but he was no minstrel then. Now, where was it?”

[TOSSPOT, INTO HIS MUG] “In his soup–like crackers.”

## SCENE 2. OUTSIDE THE SILVER SWAN. NIGHT.

[LIGHTING CHANGE, FOCUS OFF TAVERN, DARKER. OUTSIDE THE NIGHT IS LIGHTED BY A ROCKING YELLOW MOON THAT HOLDS A WHITE STAR IN ITS HORN. IN THE GLOOMY CASTLE HIGH ON THE HILL [PROJECTION, HIGH] A LANTERN GLEAMS AND DARKENS, COMES AND GOES; **NOISES:** THE DUKE STALKS FROM ROOM TO ROOM, STABBING BATS AND SPIDERS, KILLING MICE.]

**ARIOSO**

[ZORN, TAKES HIS LUTE FROM HIS SHOULDER AGAIN, STRUMS AND PLUCKS:] "Dazzle the Duke with jewels. There's something in it somewhere, but what it is I cannot think. I wonder if the Duke will order me to cause a fall of purple snow, or make a table out of sawdust, or merely slit me from my *guggle?* to my *zatch?*, and say to Saralinda, 'There he lies, your latest fool, a nameless minstrel. I'll have my varlets feed him to the geese.' [SHUDDERS] "(*Honk honk honk*) I wonder where my *zatch* and *guggle are* . I wonder how and when I could invade the castle. I'll think of some way." [HUMS "JEWELS" TUNE]

[THE HOUR IS LATE, (LOW LIGHT UP ON TAVERN), AND REVELERS BEGIN TO GET UP AND REEL AND STAGGER HOME FROM THE TAVERN. UNSEEN DOGS IN TOWN BARK BRIEFLY. THE MINSTREL PLAYS HIS LUTE AND IMPROVISES A SONG.]

[ZORN, FAKES PLAYING, SINGS:]

"Hark, hark, the dogs do bark,

But only one in three.

They bark at those in velvet gowns,

They never bark at me."

[TALE-TELLER, TOTTERING HOME TO BED, LAUGHS AT THE SONG, AND OTHERS BEGIN TO GATHER AND LISTEN.]

"The Duke is fond of velvet gowns,

He'll ask you all to tea.

But I'm in rags, and I'm in tags,

He'll never send for me."

[THE REVELERS AND TAVERNER CROWD AROUND THE MINSTREL, LAUGHING AND MURMURING. TROUBLEMAKER STANDS BEHIND THEM.]

[TAIL-TELLER:] "He's a bold one, Rags is, makin' songs about the Duke!"

[ZORN:]

"Hark, hark, the dogs do bark,  
 The Duke is fond of kittens.  
 He likes to pull their insides out,  
 And use their fur for mittens."

[THE CROWD GASPS, FALLS SILENT IN AWE AND WONDER. THEY SLINK OFF TO THEIR HOMES (murmurs of "I must tell my wife/husband".)]

[TRAVELER:] "I've *seen* you—shining in the lists, or topping knights in battle, or breaking men in two like crackers. You must be Tristram's son, or Lancelot's, or are you Tyne or Tora?"

[ZORN:] "A wandering minstrel, I, a thing of shreds and *zatches*."

[HE BITES HIS TONGUE IN CONSTERNATION AT THE SLIP IT MADE.]

[TRAVELER:] "Even if you were the mighty Zorn of Zorna, you could not escape the fury of the Duke. He'll slit you from your guggle to your zatch, from here to here." [TOUCHES THE MINSTREL'S THROAT AND STOMACH.]

[ZORN:] "Ah. I now know what to guard."

[A FIGURE IN BLACK VELVET MASK AND HOOD AND CLOAK DISAPPEARS BEHIND A TREE. BOTH NOTICE HIM.]

[TRAVELER:] "That's the cold Duke's spy-in-chief, a man named Whisper. Tomorrow he will die because, to name your sins, he'll have to mention mittens. I leave at once for other lands, since I too have mentioned mittens." [SIGHS] "You'll never live to wed his niece. You'll only die to feed his geese. Goodbye, good night, and sorry."

[THE TRAVELER BOWS AND VANISHES, AND THE PRINCE/MINSTREL IS LEFT ALONE IN THE DARK, DESERTED STREET. THE TOWN CLOCK DROPS A STONY CHIME INTO THE NIGHT [PROJECTION: TOWN CLOCK, 1:30] . THE MINSTREL BEGINS TO HUM AGAIN. GOLUX APPEARS BEHIND HIM AS THOUGH OUT OF NOWHERE. A SOFT FINGER TOUCHES HIS SHOULDER AND HE TURNS TO SEE A LITTLE OLD MAN SMILING IN THE MOONLIGHT. HE WEARS AN INDESCRIBABLE HAT, HIS EYES ARE WIDE AND ASTONISHED, AS IF EVERYTHING WERE HAPPENING FOR THE FIRST TIME, AND HE HAS A DARK, DESCRIBABLE BEARD.]

[GOLUX, SMILING:] "If you have nothing better than your song, you are somewhat less than much, and only a little more than anything."

[ZORN:] "I manage in my fashion." [SINGS:]

"Hark, hark, the dogs do bark,  
 The cravens are going to bed.  
 Some will rise and greet the sun,  
 But Whisper will be dead."

[THE OLD MAN LOSES HIS SMILE.]

[ZORN:] "Who are you?"

[GOLUX, BOWS.PROUDLY:] "I am the Golux, the only Golux in the world, and not a mere Device. I must always be on hand when people are in peril."

[ZORN:] "My peril is my own."

[GOLUX:] "Half of it is yours and half is Saralinda's."

[ZORN:] "I hadn't thought of that. I place my faith in you, and where you lead, I follow."

[GOLUX:] "Not so fast. Half the places I have been to, never were. I make things up. Half the things I say are there cannot be found. When I was young I told a tale of buried gold, and men from leagues around dug in the woods. I dug myself."

[ZORN:] "But why?"

[GOLUX:] "I thought the tale of treasure might be true."

[ZORN:] "You said you made it up."

[GOLUX:] "I know, but I didn't remember that I had. I forget things, too. I make mistakes, but I am on the side of Good, by accident and happenchance. [FROM HERE TO END OF SCENE PRINCE LOOKS INCREASINGLY WORRIED. A DEEP BELL SOUNDS IN THE CASTLE, LIGHTS APPEAR, AND VOICES SHOUT ORDERS. A LINE OF LANTERNS STARTS FLOWING DOWN THE DARKNESS. ]

[GOLUX:] "The Duke has heard your songs. The fat is in the fire, the die is cast, the jig is up, the goose is cooked, and the cat is out of the bag."

[ZORN:] "And . . . my hour has struck."

[A FAINT AND DISTANT RASPING SOUND, OF A BLADE OF STEEL BEING SHARPENED ON A STONE.]

[GOLUX:] "The Duke prepares to feed you to his geese. We must invent a tale to stay his hand."

[ZORN:] "What manner of tale?"

[GOLUX:] "A tale to make the Duke believe that slaying you would light a light in someone else's heart. He *hates* a light in people's hearts. So you must say a certain prince and princess can't be wed until the evening of the second day after the Duke has fed you to the geese."

[ZORN:] "I *wish* you would not keep mentioning geese."

[GOLUX:] "The tale sounds true, and very like a witch's spell. The Duke has awe of witches' spells. I'm certain he will stay his hand—I think."

[THE SOUND OF TRAMPING FEET COMES NEAR AND NEARER. THE IRON GUARDS OF THE DUKE CLOSE IN, THEIR LANTERNS GLEAMING AND THEIR SPEARS AND ARMOR. THERE IS A CLANG AND CLANKING.]

[GUARDS, IN TIME TO MARCHING:] "Oh-ay-oh! Oh-ay-oh!" etc.

[CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD:] "Halt!" [GUARDS HALT]

[GOLUX DISAPPEARS]

[ZORN, IMPLORING:] "Do not arrest my friend!"

[CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD, GROWLS:] "What friend?"

[THE MINSTREL LOOKS AROUND HIM AND ABOUT, BUT THERE IS NO ONE THERE.]

[GUARD, GUFFAWS:] "Maybe he's seen the Golux."

[CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD:] "There ain't no Golux. I been to school, and I know. Take him! Fall in! Dress up that line. March!"

[TWO GUARDS TAKE HIS ELBOWS. THEY MARCH THE PRINCE OFF STAGE LEFT. (LIGHTING: A STREAM OF LANTERN LIGHT FLOWS SLOWLY UP THE HILL.)]

[GUARDS, IN TIME TO MARCHING:] "Ay-oh-ay! Ay-oh-ay!" (etc., fading.)

### **SCENE 3. GREAT HALL OF THE CASTLE, THE NEXT MORNING**

[THE BLACK OAK ROOM, ON THE RAISED PLATFORM. CURVED STAIRCASES CURLING AROUND AND DOWN TO STAGE BELOW ON BOTH SIDES AND ANOTHER RUNNING STRAIGHT UP FROM THE STAGE LEFT SIDE TO SMALL LANDING AT THE SIDE. ZORN STANDS CENTER STAGE, HIS HANDS BOUND BEHIND HIM.]

[DUKE, STANDING, GAZES OUT A SIDE WINDOW THOUGHTFULLY. HE IS WATCHING HIS VARLETS FEEDING WHISPER TO THE GEESE. **ENSEMBLE, OFFSTAGE: SOUNDS OF GEESE HONKING HUNGRILY.**]



[DUKE: WHISPERS, TENDERLY:] "Farewell, Whisper. We shall miss you."

[TURNS AND STARES AT THE PRINCE. GEESE HONKING FADES.]

[DUKE:] "What manner of prince is this you speak of, and what manner of maiden does he *love*, to use a word that makes no sense?"

[ZORN:] "A noble prince, a noble lady. When they are wed a million people will be glad."

[DUKE PULLS HIS SWORD OUT OF HIS SWORD CANE AND STARES AT IT. HE LIMPS ACROSS AND FACES HIS CAPTIVE, AND TOUCHES HIS GUGGLE SOFTLY WITH THE POINT, AND TOUCHES HIS ZATCH, AND SIGHS AND FROWNS, AND THEN PUTS THE SWORD AWAY.]

[DUKE, GRINNING:] "I do not like your tricks and guile. I think that there is no prince or maiden who would wed if I should slay you, but I am neither sure nor certain. We'll think of some amusing task for you to do."

[ZORN:] "But I am not a prince, and only princes may aspire to Saralinda's hand."

[DUKE, GRINNING:] "Why, then, we'll make a prince of you, the prince of Rags and Jingles."

[CLAPS HIS GLOVES TOGETHER AND FOUR GUARDS STEP FORWARD.]

[DUKE:] "Take him to his cell. Feed him water without bread, and bread without water."

[THE GUARDS GET A FIRMER GRIP ON THE PRINCE'S ARMS, TURN THE PRINCE TO TAKE HIM OUT, WHEN DOWN THE IRON STAIRS THE PRINCESS SARALINDA FLOATS LIKE A CLOUD. THE PRINCESS IS TALL, WITH FREESIAS IN HER DARK HAIR.]

[THE PRINCE GAZES IN WONDER, FROZEN BY HER BEAUTY. THE DUKE'S EYE GLEAMS LIKE CRYSTAL. HE HOLDS UP THE PALMS OF HIS GLOVES, AS IF SHE WERE A FIRE AT WHICH TO WARM HIS HANDS.]

[DUKE:] "This thing of rags and tags and tatters will play our little game."

[SARALINDA, LOOKS OVER ZORN'S HEAD:] "I wish him well."

[THE PRINCE BREAKS HIS BONDS, LUNGES TO HER AND TAKES HER HAND IN HIS, BUT THE DUKE SLASHES HIS ARM AWAY WITH HIS CANE.]

[DUKE:] "Take him to the dungeon now." [STARES COLDLY AT THE PRINCE THROUGH HIS MONOCLE.] "You'll find the most amusing bats and spiders there."

[SARALINDA, NEUTRAL:] "I wish him well."

[4 GUARDS GET A BETTER GRIP ON THE PRINCE, WALK HIM DOWN THE STAGE LEFT CURVED STAIRS TO A SMALL CELL BELOW THE GREAT HALL PLATFORM WITH A GRATED DOOR, OPEN IT, PUSH HIM IN, AND CLOSE THE DOOR. THEY EXIT SILENTLY STAGE LEFT, NOT MARCHING.]

#### **SCENE 4. DUNGEON CELL. DARK.**

[**NOISE:** GREAT IRON DOOR OF THE DUNGEON CLANKS BEHIND THE PRINCE.] A SPIDER, HANGING FROM A STRAND OF WEB, SWINGS BACK AND FORTH. [**NOISE:** THE ZICKERING OF BATS IS ECHOED BY THE WALLS.] THROUGHOUT THIS SCENE OCCASIONALLY SMALL CREATURES LIKE TURTLES CRAWL/ARE DRAGGED ACROSS THE FLOOR, ONLY DIMLY SEEN. THE PRINCE TAKES A STEP, AVOIDING SNAKES, AND SOMETHING SQUIRMS.]

[GOLUX, APPEARING:] "Take care, you're on my foot."

[ZORN, STARTS:] "Why are you here?"

[GOLUX:] "I forgot about the task the Duke will set you."

[ZORN:] "Who knows? Swim lakes too wide to swim, turn liquids into stone, or find boneless creatures made of bone. How came you here? And can you leave?"

[GOLUX:] "I never know. My mother was a witch, but mediocre in her way. My father was a wizard who often cast his spells upon himself, when he was in his cups. (*they . . .*)"

[ZORN:] "The *task*. You came to tell me!"

[GOLUX:] "I did? Oh, yes. Listen. Tell the Duke that you will hunt the Boar, or travel thrice around the moon, or turn November into June. Implore him not to send you out to find a thousand jewels. He's fond of jewels. You've seen them on his gloves."

[ZORN:] "And then?"

[GOLUX:] "And then he'll send you out to find a thousand jewels."

[ZORN:] "But I am poor!"

[GOLUX:] "Come, come, you are Zorn of Zorna. I had it from a traveler I met. Your father's casks and coffers shine with rubies and sapphires"

[ZORN:] "In spells and labors a certain time is set. It would take me nine and ninety days: first, three and thirty days to go to Zorna, then it always takes my father three and thirty days to make decisions, and then three and thirty days to come back here. The Duke might give me only thirty days, or forty-two, to find a thousand jewels. Why should he give me ninety-nine?"

[GOLUX:] "The longer the labor lasts, the longer lasts his gloating. He loves to gloat, you know. The Duke knows not that you are Zorn of Zorna. He thinks you are a minstrel without a penny or a moonstone. "

[ZORN:] "The Duke has spies who may know who I am."

[GOLUX, SIGHS:] "I may be wrong, but we must risk and try it."

[ZORN, SIGHS:] "I wish you could be surer."

[GOLUX:] "I wish I could be, too."

[ZORN:] "My father may have lost his jewels, or given them away."

[GOLUX:] "I have other plans than one. Right now we have to rest."

[THEY FIND A CORNER WITHOUT CREATURES AND LIE DOWN. THE **TODAL** GLIDES SLOWLY ACROSS THE CELL, THEN DISAPPEARS. SHORTLY THE TOWN CLOCK STRIKES ONE. (**PROJECTION**: TOWN CLOCK, 1:00)]

[CHAINS CLANK AND RATTLE]

[GOLUX:] "One o'clock." [SITS UP, RUBS HIS EYES.] "The Duke has sent for you again. Be careful what you say and do."

[GUARDS WALK ONSTAGE, NOT MARCHING, START TO UNLOCK THE GREAT IRON DOOR. IT BEGINS TO OPEN SLOWLY. GOLUX DISAPPEARS]

[ZORN:] "Wait, where are you? When shall I see you next? "

[THE GREAT IRON DOOR IS OPEN WIDE NOW AND THE DUNGEON IS FILLED WITH THEIR LANTERN LIGHT.]

[CAPTAIN, GROWLING:] "The Duke commands your presence—[FAINT CHILDLIKE LAUGHTER OFF] What was *that*?"

[ZORN:] "What was *what*?"

[CAPTAIN:] "I know not. I thought I heard the sound of someone laughing."

[ZORN:] "Is the Duke afraid of laughter?"

[CAPTAIN:] "The Duke is not afraid of anything. Not even . . . the Todal."

[ZORN:] "The Todal?"

[ALL GUARDS AND CAPTAIN:] "The Todal."

[ZORN:] "What is the Todal?"

[(**OPTIONAL:** A LOCK OF THE CAPTAIN'S HAIR TURNS WHITE.) HIS TEETH BEGIN TO CHATTER.]

[ALL GUARDS AND CAPTAIN:] "The Todal looks like a blob of *glup*. It makes a sound like rabbits screaming, and smells of old, unopened rooms."

[CAPTAIN:] "It's waiting for the Duke to fail in some endeavor, such as setting you a task that you can *do*."

[ZORN:] "And if he sets me one, and I succeed?"

[ALL GUARDS AND CAPTAIN:] "The Blob will *glup* him."

[CAPTAIN:] "It's an agent of the Devil, sent to punish evildoers for having done less evil than they should. I have said too much. Come on. The Duke is waiting."

[2 GUARDS TAKE THE PRINCE'S ARMS. GUARDS WALK THE PRINCE OUT AND UP THE STAGE LEFT CURVED STAIRS TO THE GREAT HALL PLATFORM AGAIN.]

## **SCENE 5. GREAT HALL. NIGHT**

[GREAT HALL OF THE CASTLE, NOW LIGHTED BY FLAMING TORCHES THAT THROW RED GLEAMS ON SHIELDS AND LANCES. THE DUKE SITS AT ONE END OF A BLACK OAK TABLE. HIS GLOVES SPARKLE WHEN HE MOVES HIS HANDS. HE STARES MOODILY THROUGH HIS MONOCLE AT PRINCE ZORN.]

[ZORN:] "I am ready, Duke. Set me my task: Would you have me hunt the Boar, or travel thrice around the moon, or turn November into June?"

[DUKE, SNEERING, LAUGHS, AND A TORCH GOES OUT.] "Saralinda in November turns it into June. A *cow* can travel thrice around the moon, or even more. And anyone can merely *hunt* the Boar. I have another plan for you. I thought it up an hour ago, while I was killing mice. I'll send you out to find a thousand jewels and bring them back."

[ZORN, GASPS:] "But. . . A wandering minstrel, I, a thing of—"

[DUKE, SNEERING:] "Rubies and sapphires." [CHUCKLES LIKE ICE CRACKLING IN A CAULDRON. WHISPERS:] "For you are Zorn of Zorna. Your father's casks and coffers shine with jewels. In six and sixty days you could sail to Zorna and return."

[ZORN, CRIES OUT:] "It always takes my father three and thirty days to make decisions."

[DUKE, GRINNING:] "*That* is what I wanted to know, my naïve Prince. Then you would have me give you nine and ninety days?"

[ZORN:] "That would be fair. But how do you know that I am Zorn?"

[HARK ENTERS, WEARING A VELVET MASK, CLOAK AND HOOD. HE IS CARRYING THE PRINCE'S RAIMENT AND SWORD.]

[DUKE:] "This is my spy, Hark. He found your princely raiment in your quarters in the town and brought it here. Go put the raiment on." [HE POINTS AT A TALL FOLDING SCREEN ENCLOSING A CORNER, STAGE RIGHT. ZORN TAKES HIS RAIMENT FROM HARK AND STEPS BEHIND THE SCREEN TO CHANGE.] "I'll think of beetles while you're gone." [DUKE LIMPS TO HIS CHAIR AND SITS DOWN AGAIN.]

[ZORN, BEHIND SCREEN:] "You will not give me nine and ninety days? How many, then?"

[DUKE, SNEERING:] "I'll think of a lovely number. Come out."

[ZORN COMES OUT IN HIS PRINCELY ATTIRE. AT HIS FANFARE, SARALINDA PEEKS AROUND A CORNER AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS. ZORN TRIES TO PULL HIS SWORD, BUT IT IS SEALED SO HE CANNOT.]

[DUKE, SNEERING:] "Very princely! I give you nine and ninety *hours*, not nine and ninety days, to find a thousand jewels and bring them here. And, when you return, the clocks must all be striking five."

[ZORN:] "The clocks here in the castle? The thirteen clocks?"

[DUKE:] "The thirteen clocks, here in the castle."

[PRINCE LOOKS AT THE CLOCKS ON THE WALLS.]

[ZORN:] "The hands are frozen. The clocks are dead."

[DUKE:] "Precisely. And, even more charmingly, there are no jewels to be found within the space of nine and ninety hours, except those in my vaults, and these." [HOLDS HIS GLOVES UP AND THEY SPARKLE.]

[HARK:] "A pretty task."

[VOICE OF LISTEN (BEHIND THE SCREEN):] "Ingenious."

[DUKE:] "I thought you'd like it."

[ZORN, LOOKS AROUND:] "Who was that?"

[DUKE, GESTURES WITH HIS CANE AT NOTHING.] "That is Listen."

[ZORN:] "There's no one there," said Zorn.

[DUKE:] "Listen is invisible. Listen can be heard, but never seen.

[DUKE:] "Unseal his sword." [HARK DOES SO.]

[ZORN:] "And if I should succeed?"

[DUKE WAVES A GLOVED HAND AT THE IRON STAIRS, AND SARALINDA APPEARS STANDING AT THE TOP.]

[SARALINDA:] "I wish him well." [SHE FREEZES IN POSITION AT A SLIGHT HAND GESTURE FROM THE DUKE.]

[DUKE LAUGHS AND LOOKS AT ZORN.]

[DUKE:] "I hired a witch to cast a tiny spell upon her. When she is in my presence, all she can say is: 'I wish him well.' You like it?"

[HARK:] "A clever spell."

[VOICE OF LISTEN (BEHIND THE SCREEN):] "An awful spell."

[SARALINDA:] "I wish him well." (repeats) [THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS SPEAK A DEEP PRIVATE LANGUAGE WITH THEIR EYES; SHE RELAXES HER ARMS. AFTER A FEW PHRASES, GUARDS AND CAPTAIN SEVERALLY TAKE A KNEE, THUMP ONE FIST TO THEIR BREAST, THEN JOIN IN. HARK AND LISTEN ARE ALSO CAUGHT UP IN THE MAGIC, OPENING THEIR ARMS, AND EVEN THE DUKE FORGETS HIMSELF AT FIRST AND JUST WATCHES AND LISTENS, RAPT, AS THEY GO ON. SARALINDA GRADUALLY WORKS HER WAY DOWN THE STAIRS, ZORN GOES TO HER, KNEELS, THEY CLASP HANDS. DUKE CLENCHES HIS FISTS AND STARTS TO SHAKE IN FURY.]

[DUKE, SLAMS THE BUTT OF HIS CANE ON THE FLOOR:] "Enough! Go!" [CAPTAIN GLARES AT GUARDS; THEY RISE QUICKLY AND SHEEPISHLY, STAMP-STAMP INTO FORMATION AND FREEZE, POKER FACE. ZORN AND THE PRINCESS SEPARATE RELUCTANTLY. ZORN STANDS AND RECOVERS HIMSELF. SARALINDA SCURRIES UP THE STAIRS.]

[ZORN:] "And if I fail?"

[DUKE PULLS HIS SWORD FROM HIS SWORDCANE AND RUNS HIS GLOVE ALONG THE BLADE.]

[DUKE:] "I'll slit you from your guggle to your zatch, and feed you to the Todal."

[GUARDS AND CAPTAIN:] "The Todal."

[ZORN:] "I've heard of it."

[DUKE, SMILES:] "You've only heard the half of it. The other half is worse. It's made of *lip*."

[GUARDS:] "Of *lip*."

[DUKE, GLARES AT THEM FOR A MOMENT:] "It feels as if it has been dead at least a dozen days, but it moves about like monkeys and like shadows."

[GUARDS:] "Like *shadows*."

[PRINCE PUTS HIS HAND ON THE HILT OF HIS SWORD.]

[DUKE:] "The Todal can't be killed."

[HARK:] "It gleeps."

[ZORN:] "What's gleeping?"

[DUKE AND HARK LOOK AT EACH OTHER AND, WITH LISTEN, LAUGH GRIMLY.]

[DUKE:] "Time is wasting, Prince. Already you have only eight and ninety hours. I wish you every strangest kind of luck. One last word of warning. I would not trust the Golux overfar. He cannot tell what can be from what can't. He seldom knows what should be from what is."

[DUKE POINTS TO A WIDE OAKEN DOOR AT THE END OF THE ROOM; IT OPENS AND THE PRINCE SEES LIGHTNING AND MIDNIGHT AND FALLING RAIN (**PERCUSSION: NOISE: THUNDER AND LIGHT RAIN**). THE PRINCE GLANCES AT HARK AND AT THE DUKE, AND AT A SPOT WHERE HE THINKS LISTEN STANDS.]

[ZORN:] "When all the clocks are striking five." [WALKS OUT AND DOWN THE CURVING STAIRS STAGE R. TO CENTER BELOW]

[THE LAUGHTER OF THE DUKE AND HARK AND LISTEN INSIDE THE BLACK OAK ROOM FOLLOWS HIM; IT INCREASES AS THE GUARDS AND CAPTAIN ARE CAUGHT UP IN IT, THEN DIES AWAY. ZORN LOOKS UP AT A HIGH LIGHTED WINDOW (ABOVE MAIN HALL) AND SEES SARALINDA THERE. A ROSE FALLS AT HIS FEET; HE PICKS IT UP.]

## **SCENE 6. OUTSIDE/BELOW THE CASTLE**

[GOLUX APPEARS BESIDE THE PRINCE, TOUCHES HIM GENTLY ON THE ELBOW.]

[GOLUX, PROUDLY:] "It is I, the Golux, the only Golux in the world."

[ZORN, SOURLY:] "Ah. Yes. The Duke thinks you are not so wise as he thinks you think you are."

[GOLUX, SMILING:] "I think he is not so wise as he thinks I think *he* is. "The Duke is lamer than I am old, and I am shorter than he is cold, but you will hear with some surprise that I *am* wiser than he is wise. **I was there. I know the terms.**"

[ZORN, SURPRISED:] "How were you there?"

[GOLUX, PROUDLY] "I am Listen, or at any rate, he thinks I am. *Never trust a spy you cannot see.* [THINKS, SCOWLS:] "We now have only *eight* and ninety hours to find a thousand gems."

[ZORN:] "You said you had other plans than one."

[GOLUX CLOSSES HIS EYES AND CLASPS HIS HANDS.]

[GOLUX:] "There was a treasure ship that sank, not more than forty hours from here. But, come to think of it, the Duke ransacked the ship and stole the jewels."

[ZORN, SIGHS:] "So much for that."

[GOLUX, THINKS:] "If there were hail, and we could stain the hail with blood, it might turn into rubies."

[ZORN:] "There is no hail."

[GOLUX, SIGHS:] "So much for that."

[ZORN:] "The task is hard and can't be done."

[GOLUX, SNAPS HIS FINGERS, LEAPS AND. ANIMATED WITH MIMING LIKE A VAUDEVILLE MAGICIAN:] "I can do a score of things that can't be done: I can find a thing I cannot see, and see a thing I cannot find. [LOOKS AT ZORN TO SEE IF HE CAN GUESS.] The first is time, the second is a spot before my eyes. I can feel a thing I cannot touch, and touch a thing I cannot feel. [LOOKS AT ZORN.] The first is sad and sorry, the second is your heart. What would you do without me? Say 'nothing.' "

[ZORN:] "Nothing."

[GOLUX:] "Good. Then you're helpless and I'll help you. I said I had another plan, and I do. There is a woman on this isle, who'd have some eight and eighty years, and she is gifted with the strangest gift of all. For when Hagga weeps, what do you think she weeps?"

[ZORN:] "Tears?"

[GOLUX:] "Jewels!"

[ZORN, STARES AT HIM:] "But that is too remarkable to be."

[GOLUX:] "I don't see why. Even the lowly oyster makes his pearls without the use of eyes or hands or any tools, and pearls are jewels. The oyster is a blob of glup, but a woman is . . . a woman."

[ZORN:] "Where does this wondrous woman dwell?"

[GOLUX, GROANS:] "Over mountain, over stream, by the way of storm and thunder, in a hut so high or deep—I can never remember which—the naked eye can't see it." [STANDS



UP.] "We must be on our way. It will take us ninety hours, or more, or less, to go and come. It's this way, or it's that way. Make up my mind."

[ZORN:] "How can I?"

[GOLUX:] "You have a rose. Hold it in your hand."

[PRINCE HOLDS OUT THE ROSE ON HIS PALM AND ITS STEM SLOWLY TURNS AND STOPS POINTING STAGE RIGHT.]

[GOLUX:] "It's this way!"

[THEY START OFF IN THAT DIRECTION. (OPTION: SUGGEST THEIR START BY WALKING AN ELLIPSE FROM SIDE TO SIDE OF THE STAGE.) DURING THE GOLUX'S BALLAD, GRADUALLY TREES APPEAR SUGGESTING THEY HAVE WALKED INTO THE FOREST.]

[GOLUX:] "I will tell you **the Tale of Hagga.**"

### **BALLAD**

[GOLUX:] "When Hagga was eleven and picking cherries in the woods one day, she came upon the good King Gwain of Yarrow with his foot caught in a wolf trap. "Weep for me, maiden," said the King. "I cannot get my foot loose from this thing."

"I have no time for tears," the maiden said. She set about to free his fettered foot.

"Lo, the maid has freed my foot," the King exulted.

And for her kindness he gave her the power to weep jewels instead of tears.

People came from leagues around, by night and day, in warm or winter weather, to make her sad and sorry so she would weep jewels. They came with heavy hearts and left with pearls and rubies. Children played with sapphires in the streets, and dogs chewed opals. Every peacock had at least nine diamonds in its gizzard. The price of plain stones and pebbles rose, the price of gems declined, until, for making Hagga weep, you could be hanged *and* fined. In the end, the jewels were melted, in a frightful fire, by order of the King.

Finally, the maid could weep no more at any tale of tragedy or tribulation. She grew to be sixteen, and twenty-six, and thirty-four, and now she waits, at eighty-eight, for me and you."

[GOLUX:] "I hope that this is true. I make things up, you know."

[ZORN, SIGHS:] "I know you do. If Hagga weeps no more, why should she weep for you?"

[GOLUX, THINKS:] "I feel that she is frail and fragile. I trust that she is sad and sorry. I hope that she is neither dead nor dying. I'll think of something very sad to tell her. Very sad—and lonely. Take out your rose, I think we're lost."

[THEY ARE IN FOREST OF TALL THICK TREES, TANGLED IN BRAMBLES. LIGHTNING FLASHES AND THUNDER ROLLS, AND ALL PATHS VANISH. PRINCE TAKES OUT THE ROSE AND HOLDS IT IN HIS HAND. THE STEM BEGINS TO TURN AND TWIST, AND POINTS.]

[GOLUX:] "Around this way, it's lighter here." [THEY FIND THE PATH, AND VANISH INTO THE BRAMBLES.( SUGGEST THEIR FOREST WALKING BY A LOOPED SLALOM BACK AND FORTH AROUND A FEW TREES IN A LINE RUNNING STAGE LEFT-RIGHT.) AS THEY EMERGE IN A SMALL HOLLOW, A JACKADANDY APPEARS FROM THE OTHER DIRECTION, HIS DANDY CLOTHES TORN AND TATTERED.]

[ZORN, TO HIM:] "Did you see Hagga?"

[JACKADANDY, NODS SADLY, SHAKES HEAD SADLY:] "Hagga weeps no more. Hagga weeps no more. I told her tales of lovers lost in April. I told her tales of maidens dead in June. I told her tales of princes fed to geese. [ZORN BLANCHES.] I even told her how I lost my youngest niece. She wept not. "

[GOLUX:] "This is sad, and getting sadder."

[JACKADANDY:] "The way is long, and getting longer. The road goes uphill all the way, and even farther. I wish you luck. You'll need it." [AS HE TURNS TO GO, THE JACK-O'-LENT APPEARS FROM THE SAME DIRECTION, HER CLOTHES ALSO TORN AND TATTERED.]

[GOLUX, TO HER:] "Did you see Hagga?"

[THE TWO "JACKS" LOOK AT EACH OTHER, THEN NOD SADLY, SHAKE HEADS SADLY. DUET:] "Hagga weeps no more. Hagga weeps no more. I told her tales of lovers lost at sea, and babies drowned in fountains. I told her tales of children lost in woods and shepherds lost on mountains. She wept not."

[ZORN:] "This is grim, and getting grimmer."

[JACKADANDY:] "The way is dark, and getting darker. [BOTH:] The hut is high and even higher. I wish you luck. There is none." [THEY BOW, THEN VANISH IN THE BRIARS, IN THE OTHER DIRECTION.]

[GOLUX AND PRINCE SHRUG THEIR SHOULDERS TO EACH OTHER, THEN STEP INTO THE BRAMBLES ON THEIR ORIGINAL DIRECTION AND VANISH INTO THE TREES.]

[TEXT PROJECTED ON SCREEN, CUED TO THE NARRATION, PLUS CRICKET SOUNDS. FROG SOUNDS. FLIES BUZZING. BLEATING SHEEP. SNAKES SLITHERING.]

[CHORUS/ENSEMBLE. HEADS POKING OUT BETWEEN TREES OF THE FOREST. POSSIBLY HOLDING UP CREATURE DOLLS ON STICKS, CRICKETS, FROGS, FLIES, SHEEP, SNAKES. OR MASKS OR SIMPLE COSTUMES OF SAME.] “The brambles and thorns grew thick and thicker in a ticking thicket of bickering crickets (NOISES). Farther along and stronger, bonged the gongs of a throng of frogs (NOISES). From the sky came the crying of flies (NOISES), and the pilgrims leaped over bleating sheep (NOISES) creeping knee-deep in a sleepy creek, where swift and slippery snakes slid and slithered silkily, whispering sinful secrets (NOISES).” “*On the second day* they came to the bottom of a hill.”

[THEY STOP IN THE OPEN.]

[GOLUX, SITTING DOWN:] “I am so weary. Let us rest just a little while.”

[ZORN:] “A little, then. But we must go up that hill soon. Shall I sing you a song?”

[GOLUX:] “A song? What song?”

[ZORN, **SPOKEN**:] “My Wandering Minstrel Ballad. Every time I start to sing it, someone cuts me off. Besides, until I met the Princess Saralinda, I really could not finish it. But I have been working on it in my head as we walked, and now it is done. May I?” [GOLUX NODS WEARILY. ZORN TAKES HIS LUTE, PLAYS AND SINGS:]

### **BALLAD**

[ZORN:] “ A Wand’ring Minstrel, I, a thing of shreds and patches,  
of ballads, airs, and catches—and lullabies.

I wander through the world in search of Princesses who made me sigh.

But I was born a prince, everything was mine,

Riches, raiment, armor, swords and steeds,

And servants who attended all my needs.

Trained to win in combat, vanquish ev’ry foe,

But also taught to sing and play the lute—and make up verses.

Restless I became, bored with tourneys, dragons and dow’ries,

No Princess of the realm could touch my heart.

So I threw off royal garb, put on some humble garments,

Took my lute and set off wandering

To find and woo the Princess of my dreams.

And new that I have found her, the lovely Saralinda,

I'll wander on until I find a thousand jewels,  
 Then snatch her from the clutches of that cold and cruel Duke!  
 Yes, I must wander on, attended by a wizard,  
 Searching for a hut high on a hill.  
 Yes I must wander on so I may win my Saralinda's hand."

[ZORN BOWS TO THE GOLUX/AUDIENCE, LOOKS AT HIM EXPECTANTLY.]

[GOLUX, APPLAUDS POLITELY:] "Well, it is more than nothing, and a good bit better than your pretty little ditty about the Dogs Do Bark."

[A COMET WHISTLES THROUGH THE SKY, AND FOR SEVERAL SECONDS, BY ITS LIGHT THEY SEE THE HUT OF HAGGA HIGH ON HAGGA'S HILL.]

[GOLUX:] "Up there is Hagga's hut."

[ZORN:] "How many hours do we have left?"

[GOLUX:] "If we can make her weep within the hour we'll barely make it."

[ZORN:] "I hope that she's alive and sad."

[GOLUX, SIGHS:] "I fear that she has died. I feel it in my stomach. You better carry me. I'm weary."

[PRINCE PUTS DOWN HIS LUTE, PICKS UP THE GOLUX (PIGGY-BACK OR "FIREMAN'S CARRY"), HANDS HIS LUTE TO THE GOLUX, AND CARRIES HIM OFF STAGE LEFT. ]

## **INTERLUDE**

### **SCENE 7. TOP OF HAGGA'S HILL**

[HAGGA'S HUT, CENTER STAGE. PRINCE, CARRYING THE GOLUX, ENTERS FROM STAGE RIGHT, SLIDES THE GOLUX DOWN AND ONTO HIS FEET. THEY APPROACH THE HUT AND STAND AT EITHER SIDE OF THE DOOR.]

[GOLUX:] "There is no light in her window, and it is dark and getting darker."

[ZORN:] "There is no smoke in her chimney, and it is cold and getting colder."

[GOLUX, BARELY BREATHING:] "What worries me the most is that spider's web on the door, that stretches from the hinges to the latch." [VOICE SO HIGH IT QUAVERS:] "Knock on her door." [CROSSES HIS FINGERS. PRINCE KNOCKS ON THE DOOR. PAUSE. FOOTSTEPS. HAGGA OPENS THE DOOR AND STARES AT THEM. HER EYES

ARE DRY AS DESERTS, HER MOUTH SEEMS MADE OF STONE. AND SHE IS CLEARLY ONLY THIRTY-EIGHT OR THIRTY-NINE.]

[GOLUX AND ZORN, KNEEL, TOGETHER:] "Weep for us, or else this Prince will never wed his Princess."

**ARIA**

[HAGGA, STANDING IN THE DOORWAY SHAKING HER HEAD:]

"I have no tears. I weep no more.

I have turned a thousand persons gemless from my door.

Once I wept when ships were overdue, or brooks ran dry,

Or tangerines were overripe, or sheep all got pink-eye.

Once I wept when maids were married underneath the April moon.

Now I weep no more when maids are buried, even in the month of June.

Damsels killed by dragons leave me cold, and broken hearts,

And also love denied, and even stolen tarts.

I do not weep for lovers lost at sea or babies drowned in fountains,

Nor children lost in woods, or shepherds lost on mountains.

I do not weep for lambs who grow no fleece, nor even for young princes fed to geese.

[ZORN WINCES]

I have no tears. I weep no more.

I have turned a thousand gemless from my door.

Once I wept for any little thing, but now I'm dry.

I have no tears. I weep no more."

"Come in, come in."

[THEY FOLLOW HER IN. THE ROOM IS DARK AND HOLDS A TABLE AND A CHAIR, A COT, AND IN ONE CORNER A CHEST OF OAK BOUND WITH BRASS.]

[GOLUX ASSUMES A SAD LOOK :] "I have tales to make a hangman weep, and tales to bring a tear to a monster's eye. I have tales that would disturb a dragon's sleep, and even make the Todal sigh."

[**OPTIONAL:** AT THE MENTION OF THE TODAL, A LOCK OF HAGGA'S HAIR TURNS GRAY.]

[GOLUX:] "I will tell you of the death of kings, and little babies choked by rings."  
[STAGE WHISPERS IN HER EAR.]

[HAGGA:] "I have no tears."

[GOLUX:] "I will tell you of the children locked up forever in the Duke's tower in Coffin Castle." [STAGE WHISPERS IN HER EAR.]

[HAGGA:] "I weep no more."

[GOLUX:] "Look, and listen! The Princess Saralinda will never wed this youth unless he lays a thousand jewels upon the Duke's table."

[HAGGA, SIGHS:] "I would weep for Saralinda if I were able."

[THE PRINCE HAS WANDERED TO THE OAKEN CHEST. HE LIFTS ITS COVER AND THROWS IT OPEN. A MULTICOLORED RADIANCE FILLS THE ROOM AND LIGHTS THE DARKEST CORNERS. INSIDE THE CHEST IS A HEAP OF JEWELS: DIAMONDS, RUBIES, SAPPHIRES AND EMERALDS. PRINCE AND GOLUX LOOK AT HAGGA.]

[ZORN AND GOLUX, TOGETHER:] "*What is this?*"

[HAGGA:] "Oh, those are the jewels of laughter. I woke fourteen days ago to find them on my bed. In my sleep I had laughed at something 'til I wept. But I thought it was only a dream." [THE GOLUX GRABS A GLEAMING HANDFUL OF THE GEMS, AND THEN ANOTHER; HE AND THE PRINCE CROW WITH DELIGHT.]

[ZORN AND GOLUX, TOGETHER:] "Yes! Yes! Yes! Ha ha ha ha hah !"

[HAGGA:] "Put them back. [ZORN AND GOLUX, STARTLED, DROP THE GEMS BACK IN THE CHEST.] For you must know this concerning jewels of laughter: Per Good King Gwain's spell, they always turn again to tears a fortnight after. It has been a fortnight, to the day and minute, since I took the pretties to this chest and put them in it."

[AS THEY WATCH, THE LIGHT AND COLOR DIE, AND THE JEWELS OF HAGGA'S LAUGHTER TURN TO TEARS, WITH A LITTLE **SOUND** LIKE SIGHING (ENSEMBLE, BACKSTAGE, MULTI-PITCHED GROUP SIGH).]

[ZORN:] "Now there is nothing in the chest but limpid liquid, winking."

[HAGGA CLOSES THE LID AND SITS DOWN ON IT.]

[GOLUX:] "You must think! You must think of what you laughed at in your sleep!"

[HAGGA, EYES BLANK:] "I do not know, for this was fourteen days ago."

[GOLUX:] "Think!"

[ZORN:] "Think!"

[BOTH TOGETHER:] "Think!"

[HAGGA, FROWNS:] "I never can remember dreams."

[GOLUX: HIS EYES TURN BRIGHT AND BRIGHTER, AND HE CLAPS HIS HANDS.] "I will make her laugh until she weeps. I will tell you funny tales of ridiculous things that were and have been!"

[HAGGA, EYES BLANK:] "I laugh at nothing that has been, or is, or was."

[GOLUX, SMILES. WITH MODERATE GESTURES:] "Then I will tell you of things that will be, and are not now, or never were.

I will tell you of the ridiculous picnic of the Gorgon, the Unicorn, and the Manticore! I will tell you of the frogs in the forum, and the toads in the rice. [WITH INCREASINGLY MANIC GESTURES, BOUNCING OR DANCING A LITTLE.] I will tell you of the poppycockalorum and the cockahoopatrice! The frogs in the forum, the poppycockalorum, the toads in the rice, the cockahoopatrice!"

[LOOKS AT HAGGA, SHE GIVES HIM A LOOK BACK. SPOKEN:] "That's just . . . not . . . funny."

[GOLUX:] "Then I'll think of something else [THINKS; WHEELS ON HER] . . . I know! **Limericks!**"

[CLEARS HIS THROAT, SHOOTS HIS CUFFS. GESTURES TO PRINCE TO ACCOMPANY HIM ON HIS LUTE (MUTED RHYTHM STRUMS). DANCES GENTLY FROM FOOT TO FOOT, IN PLACE, WITH RAISED JAZZ HANDS AND SHOW GESTURES. OCCASIONAL QUICK THOUGHT PAUSES, AS THOUGH MAKING IT UP ON THE SPOT.]

"A dehoj who was terribly hobble,

Cast only the stones that were cobble

And bats that were ding,

With a shot that was sling,

But he never hit links that were bobble.

[GESTURES TO PRINCE TO JOIN HIM ON THE REFRAIN, ALSO DANCING LIGHTLY:] Hobble! Cobble! Bobble! Wobble! He never hit links that were bobble!"

[(PERCUSSION: BA-DUMP-CHINK!) BOTH GLARE AT PERCUSSIONIST; THEN TURN TO HAGGA, WAIT.]

[HAGGA SUPPRESSES A LITTLE SNORT, THEN CHUCKLES, THEN LAUGHS UNTIL SHE WEEPS A LITTLE AND WIPES HER EYES, AND SEVEN MOONSTONES TRICKLE DOWN HER CHEEK AND CLATTER ON THE FLOOR.]

[GOLUX, PICKS ONE UP, WAILS (SPOKEN):] "Moonstones! She's weeping *semiprecious* stones! Well then, how about *this*?" [DANCES LIGHTLY. MORE THOUGHT PAUSES.]

Now there was an old coddle so molly,  
 That he talked in a glot that was poly,  
 His gaws were so gew  
 That his laps became dew  
 And he ate only pops that were lolly.

[GESTURES TO PRINCE, REPEATS LAST LINE WITH HIM, BOTH ENDING WITH A TA-DAH! POSE.] Molly! Polly! He ate only pops that were lolly!" [PERCUSSION: BA-DUM! BUT THEY CUT THE PLAYER OFF WITH A QUICK GLARE, THEN TURN BACK TO HAGGA.]

[HAGGA READILY LAUGHS AGAIN AND WEEPS A LITTLE MORE, RUBS HER EYES, AND SEVEN CUT GLASS BRILLIANTS TRICKLE DOWN HER CHEEK AND CLATTER ON THE FLOOR.]

[GOLUX, PICKS ONE UP, GROANS. (SPOKEN):] "Rhinestones! Now she's weeping *costume jewelry*!"

[ZORN, SUDDENLY. SUNG:] "Let me try something!"

[PRINCE KNEELS BEFORE HER, CATCHES HER EYE, AND MAKES A SERIES OF 4 INCREASINGLY SILLY FACES AT HER THAT ASTONISH EVEN THE GOLUX, EVEN PULLING AT HIS FACE WITH HIS FINGERS UNTIL SHE LAUGHS AND WEEPS AGAIN, THIS TIME PRODUCING A FLUX OF PEARLS. ZORNA BEAMS PROUDLY.]

[GOLUX, PICKS ONE UP, GROANS. (SPOKEN):] "Pearls! The Duke hates pearls. He thinks they're made by fish."

[IT GROWS DARKER IN THE ROOM. THE MOON IS GONE. GLOOM. THE PRINCE AND THE GOLUX STAND THERE, STILL AS STATUES. THE GOLUX CLEARS HIS THROAT. THE PRINCE UNCROSSES HIS ARMS AND CROSSES THEM. (OFFSTAGE **VOCAL NOISE**: AN OWL HOOTS TWICE.) AND THEN, SUDDENLY, BUBBLING UP, HAGGA HOOTS SEVERAL TIMES, THEN LAUGHS AND KEEPS ON LAUGHING AND ROCKING AND RUBBING HER EYES, AND PRECIOUS JEWELS TWINKLE DOWN HER CHEEKS AND SPARKLE ON THE FLOOR, UNTIL THE SPACE



AROUND HER FEET IS ANKLE-DEEP IN DIAMONDS AND RUBIES AND EMERALDS AND SAPPHIRES.]

[GOLUX, DROPS TO HIS KNEES, PICKS SEVERAL UP AND LOOKS AT THEM:]  
“Diamonds! Rubies! Emeralds! *Sapphires!*”

[GOLUX WHIPS OUT A VELVET SACK FROM UNDER HIS CAPE AND STARTS COUNTING THEM AND PUTTING THEM IN THE SACK. “TWO, FOUR SIX EIGHT, . . . “ WHILE HAGGA CONTINUES TO DRAW BREATH AND LAUGH DOWN THE SCALE, OVER AND OVER, THROWING HER HEAD BACK, ROCKING BACK AND FORTH AND WIPING HER EYES.

[ZORN, PICKS UP SEVERAL HANDFULS AND LETS THEM TRICKLE DOWN BETWEEN HIS FINGERS, THEN STARTS TO GATHER THEM AND BRING THEM TO THE GOLUX.] “Dazzle the Duke with jewels, dazzle the Duke with Jewels, there’s something to it somewhere, and now we know it’s Hagga’s tears!”

[GOLUX:] "Nine hundred ninety-eight, nine hundred ninety-*nine*, ONE THOUSAND!  
[SIGHS] I only wish that she had laughed and wept these jewels for something *I* said."

[ZORN, TAKES HER HAND:] "God keep you warm in winter, and cool in summer."

[GOLUX, GOLUX TIES OFF THE SACK AND SLINGS IT OVER HIS SHOULDER.:] "Farewell, and thank you."

[HAGGA LAUGHS AND KEEPS ON LAUGHING, AND JEWELS KEEP FALLING TO THE FLOOR. PRINCE AND GOLUX GO OUT QUICKLY INTO THE MOONLESS NIGHT.]

[ZORN, IMPLORING:] "How many hours are left us now?"

[HAGGA KEEPS ON ROCKING AND LAUGHING, NOW AT BACKGROUND DYNAMIC LEVEL.]

[GOLUX:] "I should say that we have only forty left, but it is downhill all the way."

[ZORN:] "What about the clocks?"

[GOLUX, SIGNS:] "That's another problem for another hour.[THEY PEER ABOUT THEM IN THE DARK.] I think it's this way. We must hurry." [POINTS. THEY START OFF IN THAT DIRECTION.]

[AS THEY WALK OFF, ONE GEM, TWINKLING, POPS OUT OF THE VELVET SACK THE GOLUX IS CARRYING AND FALLS TO THE GROUND . . . HE DOES NOT NOTICE. INSIDE THE HUT ABOVE THEM, HAGGA’S LAUGHTER SLOWS. SHE SEES SARALINDA’S ROSE ON THE FLOOR AMONG THE JEWELS, STOPS LAUGHING, DRAWS BREATH, AND PICKS IT UP. SHE GETS UP AND GOES QUICKLY TO HER

DOOR AND STANDS THERE, HOLDING IT OUT, BUT THEY ARE GONE. SNIFFS IT, SMILES, STARTS UP CHUCKLING SOME MORE, NOW MORE GENTLY, AND GOES BACK INSIDE. LAUGHTER FADES UNDER WALKING MUSIC, TRANSITION BACK TO CASTLE.]

## **TRAVEL INTERLUDE**

### **SCENE 8. CASTLE EXTERIOR, HIGH WINDOW.**

[SARALINDA AT HER HIGH WINDOW, GENTLY SPOTLIT.]

#### **“WHY MUST I WED THIS DUKE?”**

##### INTRODUCTION/RECITATIVE

I have been a prisoner in this place so many years.

I begged for freedom, was denied; I shed a thousand tears.

No mother, father, sister, brother, cousin, aunt, or playmate.s

The only one I’ve known is this cold duke so filled with his hate.

I know each Prince who comes here wants meet his task and marry me.

But no nurse taught me what to do when to his home he’d carry me.

And all have failed and died and the Duke fed them to his geese.

And now this cruel man intends to marry me—his niece?

##### ARIA

Ah, why must I wed this Duke?

Who claims he is my uncle.

He says he is fond of me

And he tries to be kind, but it’s a struggle.

Since he’s so full of rage.

And he keeps me in a cage,

And under a spell of speech

So that I must say to each: “I wish him well,”

to so many hapless princes.

Oh, why is the Duke so cruel?

He kills them all for sport.

What father did he have?

What mother? No report.

So why must I wed this Duke?

I swear he is not my Uncle.

He has a musty smell

And often cracks his knuckles.

He's twice my age, and gimpy,

And under the Todal's eye.

If some Prince meets the task he sets

This Duke will surely die.

So I pray that this last Prince,

The noble Zorn of Zorna,

Will succeed where all have failed,

And not leave me a mourner.

Will rescue me and carry me

To the Land of Ever After.

Then I can escape this Duke

Who makes me want to – flee.

For no one could love a man such as he.”

[GOLUX, APPEARS OUTSIDE BELOW THE CASTLE AND STAGE WHISPERS UP TO HER THROUGH CUPPED HANDS:] "Pssst! Saralinda!"

[SARALINDA, PEERS DOWN INTO THE DARK:] "Who is it?"

[GOLUX; RUSHED] "It is I the Golux, the only Golux, etcetera!"

[SARALINDA:] "How could you find the castle in the dark without my rose? *He* would not let me burn a torch."

[GOLUX:] "You lighted up your window like a star, and we could see the castle from afar. Come down to the Great Hall by the secret passage, and quickly! We must start the clocks!"

[SARALINDA:] "*But did you get the jewels?*"

[GOLUX:] "Yes, yes! Hurry!" [EXITS QUICKLY.]

[SARALINDA:] "Now there is really hope!" [VANISHES FROM HER WINDOW]

## **SCENE 9. CASTLE, GREAT HALL.**

[BLACK OAK ROOM, YELLOW TORCHES FLARE AND CRACKLE ON THE WALLS, AND THEIR FIRE BURNS ON THE LANCES AND SHIELDS. THE DUKE'S GLOVES GLITTER.]

[DUKE, GNARLS:] "How goes the night?"

[HARK:] "The moon is down. I have not heard the clocks."

[DUKE, SCREAMS:] "You'll never hear them! I slew time in this castle many a cold and snowy year ago."

[HARK STARES AT HIM EMPTILY:] "Sure, Time froze here. But that was just because someone left the windows open."

[DUKE:] "Bah!" [SITS DOWN AT THE FAR END OF THE TABLE. STANDS UP AGAIN, AND LIMPS ABOUT.] "It bled hours and minutes on the floor. I saw it with my eye."

[OUTSIDE THE GOTHIC WINDOWS FAR THUNDER GROWLS. AN OWL HOOTS (VOCAL SOUND).]

[DUKE, ROARS:] "There are no jewels! They'll have to bring me pebbles from the sea or mica from the meadows." [AWFUL LAUGH] "How much time is left?"

[HARK:] "I should say they have some forty minutes left."

[DUKE, SCREAMS:] "They'll never make it! I hope they drowned, or broke their legs, or lost their way." [HE COMES SO CLOSE TO HARK THEIR NOSES ALMOST TOUCH.] [WHISPERS HARSHLY:] "Where were they going?"

[HARK, STEPS BACKWARD:] "I met a Jackadandy, some seven hours ago. He passed them on their way to Hagga's hill. You do remember Hagga?"

[DUKE, SNEERS:] "Hagga weeps no more. Hagga has no tears. She did not even weep when she was told about the children locked up in my tower."

[HARK:] "I hated that."

[DUKE:] "I liked it. No child can sleep in *my* camellias." [LIMPS AROUND SOME MORE AND STARES OUT AT THE NIGHT.] "Where is Listen?"

[HARK:] "He followed them, the Golux and the Prince."

[DUKE, GROWLS:] "I do not trust him. I like a spy that I can *see*." [SHOUTS UP THE STAIRS:] "Listen!" [AND OUT THE WINDOW] "*Listen!*" [RASPS] "I'm cold."

[HARK:] "You always are."

[DUKE, SNARLS:] "I'm colder now—and never tell me what I always am!" [TAKES HIS SWORD OUT AND SLASHES AT NOTHING.] "I miss Whisper."

[HARK:] "You fed him to the geese. They seemed to enjoy him."

[NOISES OFF]

[DUKE, SNARLS:] "Silence! What was that?"

[HARK:] "What did it sound like?"

[DUKE:] "Like a prince stealing up the stairs, like Saralinda leaving." [THE DUKE LIMPS TO THE IRON STAIRS AND SLASHES AGAIN AT SILENCE.] "What does Listen feel like? Have you felt him?"

[HARK:] "Listen? He's five feet high. He has a beard, and something on his head I can't describe."

[DUKE, SHRIEKS:] "The Golux! You felt the Golux! I hired him as a spy and did not know it."

[A LARGE PURPLE BALL WITH GOLD STARS ON IT COMES SLOWLY BOUNCING DOWN THE IRON STAIRS AND WINKS AND TWINKLES.]

[DUKE:] "What insolence is this? What is that thing?"

[HARK:] "A ball." [PICKS IT UP AND BOUNCES IT IN HIS HAND.]

[DUKE, SCREAMS:] "I know that! But why? What does its ghastly presence signify?"

[HARK:] "It looks to me very like a ball the Golux and those children used to play with."

[DUKE, KNOCKS THE BALL OUT OF HARK'S HAND. APOPLECTIC:] "They're on his side! [HUSHED, SHUDDERING:] "Their ghosts are on his side."

[HARK:] "He has a lot of friends."

[DUKE, ROARS:] "Silence!"

[THE DUKE'S GLOVED HANDS SHAKE AND SHIMMER:] "I'll lock them in the dungeon with the thing that has no head! I'll slay them both! This Golux *and* her suitor, this cross-eyed Clown Prince! I'll throw them up for grabs betwixt the Todal and the geese!  
[ROLLING HIS EYE UPWARD:] You hear me?"

[**OPTIONAL: AT THE MENTION OF THE TODAL, HARK'S VELVET MASK TURNS GRAY.**]

[HARK:] "Yes. But there are rules and rites and rituals, older than the sound of bells and snow on mountains."

[DUKE, SOFTLY:] "Go on." [LOOKS UP THE STAIRS.]

[HARK:] "You must let them have their time and turn to make the castle clocks strike five."

[DUKE:] "The castle clocks were murdered. I killed time here myself one snowy morning. You can still see the old brown stains, where seconds bled to death, here on my sleeve." [LAUGHS] "What else?"

[HARK:] "You know as well as I. The Prince must have his turn and time to lay a thousand jewels there on the table."

[DUKE:] "And if he does?"

[HARK:] "You know. He wins the hand of Princess Saralinda."

**ARIETTA–The Hand of Saralinda:**

[DUKE:]

"The hand of Saralinda,

The only warm hand in the castle.

Who loses Saralinda loses fire.

I mean the fire of the setting sun,

And not the cold and cheerless flame of jewels.

Her eyes are candles burning in a shrine on a tranquil night.

She wears serenity like the rainbow.

She moves across the room like wind in violets.

And she wears freesias in her dark, dark hair.

Her voice is faraway music,

And her laughter sparkles on the air.

It is not easy to tell her mouth from the rose

Or her brow from the white lilac.

Her feet appear to me as doves.

Her fingers bloom upon her breast, like flowers.

The hand of Saralinda,

The lovely Saralinda,

Who loses Saralinda . . . loses fire.”

[HARK:] "This is scarcely the way to speak of one's own niece."

[DUKE, CRIES OUT:] "She's not my niece! I stole her! I stole her from the castle of a king! I snatched her from the bosom of a sleeping queen. I still bear on my hands the marks where she bit me."

[HARK:] "The Queen?"

[DUKE, ROARS:] "The Princess.”

[HARK:] "Who was the King?"

[DUKE, SCOWLS:] "I never knew. My ship was beached upon an island in a storm. There was no moon or any star. No lights were in the castle."

[HARK:] "How could you find the Princess then?"

[DUKE:] **ECHO ARIETTA** "She had a radiance. She shone there like a star upon her mother's breast. I knew I had to have that splendor in my castle. I decided to keep her here until she was grown, and then marry her.”

[HARK:] "Why haven't you before? This castle is your kingdom."

[DUKE, SMILES, SHOWING HIS UPPER TEETH:] "Because her nurse was a witch who cast a spell upon me."

[HARK:] "What were its terms?"

[DUKE:] "I cannot wed her till the day she's twenty-one, and that day is tomorrow. And I must keep her in a chamber where she is safe from me. I've done that."

[HARK:] "I like that part."

[DUKE, SNARLS:] "I hate it. Last, I must grant the right to any prince to seek her hand in marriage. I've done that, too." [SITS DOWN AT THE TABLE.]

[HARK, AGAIN:] "In spells of this sort, one always finds a chink or loophole, by means of which the right and perfect prince can win her hand in spite of any task you set him. How did the witch announce that part?"

[DUKE:] "Like this: 'She can be saved, and you destroyed, only by a prince whose name begins with X and doesn't.' Ha! There *is* no prince whose name begins with X and doesn't."

[HARK'S MASK SLIPS OFF AND HE PUTS IT BACK AGAIN, BUT NOT BEFORE THE DUKE SEES LAUGHTER IN HIS EYES. HARK COVERS HIS MOUTH TO CONCEAL A WRY SMILE.]

[HARK:] "Ah. This prince is Zorn of Zorna, but he once posed as a minstrel. His name was EXingu then—and wasn't. This is the prince whose name begins with X—and doesn't."

[THE DUKE'S SWORD BEGINS TO SHAKE; WHISPERS:] "Nobody ever tells me anything."

[A SMALLER BLACK BALL STAMPED WITH SCARLET OWLS COMES BOUNCING DOWN THE STAIRS.]

[DUKE, WATCHES IT ROLL ACROSS THE FLOOR, CRIES OUT:] "What impudence is this?"

[HARK WALKS TO THE STAIRS AND LISTENS, (NOISES OFF: SKITTERING ABOVE.) HE TURNS:] "There's someone up there."

[DUKE, CROAKS:] "It's the children!"

[HARK:] "The children are dead, and the sound I heard was made by living feet."

[DUKE, CRIES OUT:] "How much time is left them?"

[HARK:] "Half an hour, I think."



[DUKE:] "I'll have their guggles on my sword for playing games with me!" [STARTS UP THE STAIRS AND STOPS.] "They're up there, all of them. [BARKS:] Call out the guards."

[DUKE:] "The guards are guarding the other clocks. You and I are guarding these." [POINTS AT THE TWO CLOCKS ON THE WALLS.] "You wanted it that way."

[DUKE:] "Call out the guards."

[HARK:] "Guards! Report to the Great Hall, on the double!"

[GUARDS TROOP INTO THE ROOM LIKE ENGINES. DUKE LIMPS UP THE STAIRS, HIS DRAWN SWORD SHINING.]

[DUKE:] "Follow me! Another game's afoot! I'll slay the Golux and the Prince, and marry Saralinda yet!" [LEADS THE WAY. THE GUARDS RAMP UP THE STAIRS; AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS THE DUKE WHIRLS AND FACES THEM, THEN THEY AND DUKE EXIT. HARK SMILES AT THE AUDIENCE AND FOLLOWS QUIETLY.]

## SCENE 10. GREAT HALL

[THE BLACK OAK ROOM IS SILENT. THEN A SECRET DOOR SWINGS OPEN IN A WALL. THE GOLUX SLIPS INTO THE ROOM, LEAVE THE DOOR AJAR; BECKONS. THE PRINCESS FOLLOWS.]

[GOLUX:] "Our time is marked in minutes. Start the clocks!"

[SARALINDA:] "I cannot start the clocks."

[SOUNDS OF PURSUIT FAR ABOVE.]

[SARALINDA:] "He faces thirteen men, and that is hard."

[GOLUX:] "We face thirteen clocks, and that is harder. Start the clocks!"

[SARALINDA, WAILS:] "How can I start the clocks?"

[GOLUX:] "Your hand is warmer than the snow is cold. Touch the first clock with your hand."

[THE PRINCESS HOLDS HER HAND AGAINST THE FACE OF THE FIRST CLOCK, BUT NOTHING HAPPENS.]

[GOLUX:] "We are ruined."

[SARALINDA:] "You make my heart stand still! Use magic!"

[GOLUX, GROANS:] "I have no magic for a task like this. Try the other clock."

[THE PRINCESS TRIES THE OTHER CLOCK, AND NOTHING HAPPENS.]

[SARALINDA:] "Use . . . use . . . *logic*, then!"

[SOUNDS OF THE IRON GUARD POUNDING AFTER ZORN, AND COMING CLOSE. SNARLING PIRATE NOISES FROM THE GUARDS, "ARRR, YARR!"]

[GOLUX, SMILES WRYLY:] "Logic . . . well . . . if you can touch the clocks and never start them, then you can start the clocks and never touch them. That's logic, as I know and use it. Hold your hand this far away. [SHE DOES.] Now that far. [SHE ADJUSTS.] Closer! [SHE ADJUSTS.] Now a little farther back. [SHE ADJUSTS.] A little farther. [SHE ADJUSTS.] There! I think you have it! Start the rest!"

[THE CLOGGED AND RIGID WORKS OF THE CLOCK BEGIN TO WHIR. THEY HEAR A TICK AND THEN A TICKING. SARALINDA QUICKLY STARTS THE SECOND CLOCK, THEN RUNS THROUGH THE SECRET DOOR TO THE OTHER ROOMS; SOUNDS OF 11 MORE CLOCKS STARTING UP IN CLOSE SEQUENCE. (UNSYNCHRONIZED TICKING NOISES OFF, BUILDING UP 13 TRACKS, IN PERCUSSION AND OFF-STAGE MANUAL PERCUSSION, CHOPSTICKS CLICKING, ETC.) SHE RETURNS QUICKLY.]

[GOLUX AND SARALINDA:] "It's Now!"

[A COCK THAT NEVER CROWED, BEGINS TO CROW. THE LIGHT OF MORNING ILLUMINATES THE WINDOWS. THE GOLUX STARTS TO CAREFULLY POUR THE JEWELS OUT OF THE SACK ONTO THE TABLE.]

[DUKE, SEEN IN AN UPPER WINDOW, MOANS:] "I hear the sound of Time! And yet I slew it, and wiped my bloody sword upon its beard! [SLASHES BEHIND HIM WITH HIS SWORD.] Come out, you crooning knave! Step forward, Zorn of Zorna!"

[HARK:] "He's not here."

[SAVAGE CLASH OF SWORDS OFF, MORE PIRATE NOISES OFF.]

[DUKE AND HARK APPEAR AT THE TOP OF THE STAIRS.]

[DUKE:] "They've got him! Eleven men to one!"

[HARK:] "You may have heard of Galahad, whose strength was as the strength of ten."

[DUKE:] "That leaves one man to get him. I count on Krang, the strongest guard I have, the finest fencer in the world . . ."

[HARK, INTERRUPTS:] ". . . save one. An unknown prince in armor vanquished him a year ago, somewhere on an island. No one else could beat Krang. The unknown prince . . . was Zorn of Zorna!"

[FIGHTING NOISES STOP. ONE BIG GUARD VOICE: "Ow! Ow! OWW-YYYY". DOOR SLAMS ABOVE.]

[DUKE:] "I'll slay him then myself! I slew time, and time is greater far than Zorn of Zorna!"

[HARK:] "No mortal man can murder time, and even if he could, there's something else: a clockwork in a maiden's heart, that strikes the hours of youth and love, and knows the southward swan from winter snow, and summer afternoons from tulip time."

[DUKE, SNARLS:] "You sicken me with your chocolate chatter. Your tongue is made of candy. I'll slay this ragged prince, if Krang has missed him. I'll show you on my sleeves the old brown stains of seconds, where they bled and died. I slew time in these gloomy halls, and wiped my bloody blade—"

[HARK:] "*Ah, shut up!* You are the Most Aggressive Villain In the World! I always meant to tell you that. I said it, and I'm glad."

[LIGHTS UP ON THE GREAT HALL; SARALINDA AND GOLUX ARE STANDING BEHIND THE GREAT TABLE. THE PRINCE, DISHEVELED, SWORD IN HAND, ENTERS BY THE SECRET DOOR AND TAKES SARALINDA'S HAND.]

## SCENE 11. GREAT HALL

[THE DUKE IS DAZZLED BY THE GLEAMING OF A THOUSAND JEWELS THAT SPARKLE ON THE TABLE. THE CLOCKS, SCATTERED, BEGIN TO STRIKE SLOWLY, GRADUALLY CHIMING CLOSER AND CLOSER TOGETHER, WITH "5" AS A CLOSE CLUSTER. (NOISES: PIT PERCUSSION AND OFFSTAGE HAND PERCUSSION OF VARIOUS TYPES PLAYED BY ENSEMBLE. ALTERNATE AND FOR REHEARSALS: PIANO).]

[HARK:] "One!"

[ZORN:] "Two!"

[DUKE, ALMOST WHISPERS:] "Three!"

[GOLUX:] "Four!"

[SARALINDA:] "Five!"

[GOLUX POINTS AT THE TABLE; TRIO—SARALINDA, ZORN, GOLUX—SINGS.]  
"The task is done, the terms are met."

[DUKE, LOOKING SLOWLY AROUND THE ROOM, CROAKS:] "Where are my guards? Where is Krang, the greatest of them all?"

[ZORN:] "I lured them to the tower and locked them in. The one that's tied in knots is Krang."

[DUKE, HOBBLING OVER AND GLARES AT THE JEWELS ON THE TABLE:]  
 "They're false! They must be colored pebbles!" [HE PICKS ONE UP AS HE PULLS A SMALL  
 10X FOLDING HAND LOUPE FROM A POCKET, LOOKS AT THE JEWEL THROUGH  
 HIS MONOCLE AND THE LOUPE, SEES THAT IT IS REAL, AND PUTS IT DOWN AGAIN  
 AND PUTS AWAY THE LOUPE.]

[HARK, SPOKEN:] "The task is done, the terms are met."

[DUKE:] "Not until I count them. If there be only one that isn't here, I wed the Princess  
 Saralinda on the morrow." [SARALINDA BLANCHES.]

[GOLUX:] "What a gruesome way to treat one's niece!"

[DUKE, SNEERS:] "*She's not my niece!*. I stole her from a king." [SHOWS HIS  
 LOWER TEETH.] "We all have flaws, and mine is being wicked." [SITS DOWN AT THE  
 TABLE AND BEGINS TO COUNT THE GEMS QUICKLY AND MOVE THEM TO A  
 SECOND PILE,, MUTTERING QUIETLY.] "Two, four, six, eight, . . . "

[SARALINDA, CRIES:] "Who is my father then?"

[HARK, RAISING HIS EYEBROWS:] "I thought the Golux told you, but then, of  
 course, he never could remember things."

[GOLUX:] "Especially the names of kings."

[DUKE, MUTTERING IN BACKGROUND:] ("Two hundred fifty-two . . .")

[HARK:] "Your father is good King Gwain of Yarrow."

[GOLUX, TURNS TO SARALINDA:] "So the gift your father gave to Hagga has  
 worked in the end to make you happy."

[DUKE, LOOKS UP AND BARES HIS TEETH, SNARLS:] "Three-hundred seventy-  
 six . . . The tale is much too tidy for my taste. I hate it. Three-hundred seventy-eight . . . "  
 [GOES ON COUNTING.]

[HARK:] "It's neat, and, to my taste, refreshing." [REMOVES HIS MASK AND  
 SMILES BROADLY. HIS EYES ARE BRIGHT AND JOLLY.] "If I may introduce myself, I  
 am a servant of the good King Gwain of Yarrow."

[GOLUX:] "That *I* didn't know. You could have saved the Princess many years ago!"

[HARK, LOOKS SAD:] "This part I always hate to tell, but I too was under a witch's  
 spell."

[DUKE, SMILE SHOWS HIS UPPER TEETH, MUTTERS.] "Seven hundred ninety-six  
 . . . I cannot even trust the spies I *can* see." [TURNS TO LOOK AT THE GOLUX] "You mere  
 Device! You platitude! You . . . *Golux ex machina!*"

[GOLUX:] "Quiet, please, you gleaming kidnapper."

[DUKE, FINISHES COUNTING:] ". . . Nine hundred ninety-eight, nine hundred ninety-nine!" [THERE ARE NONE LEFT ON THE TABLE. GIVES THEM ALL A LOOK OF HORRID GLEE AND A LOUD CACKLING LAUGH, AND CREEPY-WIGGLES HIS FINGERS.] "You all like Now so much: The Princess *now* belongs to me."

[DEATHLY SILENCE. GOLUX, TURNS PALE AND HIS HANDS BEGIN TO SHAKE. TO HIMSELF:] "Oh dear. I just now remembered something in the dark, coming down from Hagga's hill, that struck against my ankle; it must have fallen from the sack." [ALoud, TO ALL, SPOKEN:] "We . . . we demand—a *recount!*" [AS ALL LOOK TO HIM, THE GOLUX ALONE SEES A DIAMOND FALL FROM THE DUKE'S LEFT GLOVE TO THE TABLE.]

[DUKE, SEEING IT, GROANS IN VAST SURPRISE:] "Aaargh! One *thousand!*" [STANDS UP AND SHOWS ALL HIS TEETH. SHRIEKS:] "What are you waiting for? Depart! If you be gone forever, it will not be long enough! If you return no more, then it will be too soon! Begone!" [BATHES HIS HANDS IN JEWELS. CROAKS:] "My jewels will last forever."

[THE GOLUX, WHO HAS NEVER TITTERED, COVERS HIS MOUTH WITH HIS FINGERS AND TITTERS.] "Tee-hee-hee-hee-hee!" [THEY ALL LOOK AT HIM; HE RECOVERS HIMSELF.]

[DUKE, POINTS TO THE DOORS:] "Go . . ."

[THE GREAT DOORS OF THE OAK ROOM OPEN. ZORN RAISES HIS HAND, PALM DOWN, AND SARALINDA RESTS HERS ON TOP FOR A "BRIDE-LEAD". THEY LEAVE THE COLD DUKE STANDING THERE, UP TO HIS WRISTS IN JEWELS. THE LIGHT ON HIM FADES AND THE TICKING OF THE TWO CLOCKS IN THE HALL FADES OUT, AS THE PRINCE, SARALINDA, THE GOLUX, AND HARK, IN SLOW PROCESSIONAL, DESCEND THE STAGE-RIGHT STAIRS AROUND TO BRIGHT DAYLIGHT OUTDOORS BELOW THE CASTLE, WHICH THEN SHOWS IN PROJECTION ABOVE.]

[ZORN:] "Yarrow is halfway on our journey to Zorna."

[GOLUX, POINTING:] "You'll need the white horses you see saddled and bridled yonder. Your ship lies in the harbor. It sails within the hour."

[PRINCE PUTS HIS ARM AROUND SARALINDA'S WAIST. SHE TURNS AND GAZES A LAST TIME BACK UP AT THE CASTLE AND SHIVERS. HE TURNS HER BACK FORWARD.]

[GOLUX, GAZES A LAST TIME AT THE PRINCESS:] "Keep warm. Ride close together. Remember laughter. You'll need it even in the blessed isles of Ever After."

[ZORN AND SARALINDA, TO HARK:] "You sail for Yarrow with us?" [GOLUX VANISHES.]

[HARK:] "I must stay a fortnight longer. So runs my witch's spell. It will give me time to tidy up, and untie Krang as well."

[SARALINDA:] "Where has the Golux gone?"

[THEY LOOK AROUND FOR THE GOLUX.]

[HARK:] "Oh, he knows a lot of places."

[SARALINDA:] "Give him my love, and this." [HANDS HARK THE ROSE.]

[ZORN:] "A fair wind stands for Yarrow. It is a clear and cloudless day."

**DUET WITH ENSEMBLE**

[DURING FIRST PART OF DUET, FULL ENSEMBLE, INCLUDING GUARDS/CAPTAIN WITH HELMETS OFF, GRINNING, A HAPPY HAGGA, AND THE GOLUX WITH NO HAT IN THE VERY BACK, ENTER A FEW AT A TIME AND GATHER ONSTAGE IN A WIDE CIRCLE BEHIND THE 4 PRINCIPALS, SMILING, LAUGHING, CARRYING FLOWERS.]

[SARALINDA, BECKONING HIM:] "O, my Prince, O my Prince, come stand by me."

[HE STEPS BESIDE HER, SHE POINTS; THEY CLASP BOTH HANDS AND LOOK OUT OVER THE HEADS OF THE AUDIENCE.]

"Look, my Prince, look, my Prince, look far to sea.

I tell you true, I think I see, as people often think they see,

on such a clear and cloudless day, on such a clear and cloudless day,

I see a distant shining land of happy laughter."

[PROJECTION OF THE HARBOR AND SHIP AND, FADING IN, FAR SHORES.]

[SARALINDA, TO ZORN:] "I always hoped a handsome Prince would rescue me."

[ZORN, TO SARALINDA:] "It was my destiny to come and set you free."

[ZORN AND SARALINDA TOGETHER:] "The Clocks struck Five, we're still alive, and now we're free, free as the breeze!"

[FULL ENSEMBLE IS NOW ONSTAGE.]

[ZORN AND SARALINDA TOGETHER, BACKED BY ENSEMBLE:]

"O my love, O my love, I'll stand by thee.

Look, my love, Look, my love, look far to sea.

[A WOMAN (OR GIRL) SHYLY HANDS SARALINDA A BRIDAL BOUQUET.]

Your guess is quite as good as mine

(since there are many things that shine)

but I believe, I do believe, I really truly do believe,

I see the distant shores,

I see the shining shores,

I see the distant, shining shores \_\_\_\_\_ . . . of Ever After.”

[SARALINDA TOSSES THE BOUQUET BEHIND HER TO THE CROWD; THE GUARDS, CAPTAIN, AND HARK FORM AN ARCH WITH SWORDS; ZORN AND SARALINDA PASS UNDER IT CAREFULLY AND THEN EXIT STAGE R., SKIPPING, HAND IN HAND. ENSEMBLE CHEER, TOSS FLOWERS AT THEM, WAVE; HAGGA HAS LAUGHED AND WEPT FOR JOY AND THROWS A HANDFUL OF JEWELS AFTER THEM. HARK SHEATHES HIS SWORD AND, HOLDING THE ROSE, STARTS TO CLIMB STAIRS BACK UP TOWARDS THE GREAT HALL. ENSEMBLE STRAGGLE OFF, TALKING HAPPILY TO ONE ANOTHER. (**NOISES OFF:** TWO HORSES SNORT, WHINNY, THE TWO RIDERS GALLOP OFF DOWN THE HILLS), HARK TURNS TO WATCH THEM GO, SMILES, SHAKES HIS HEAD. THE SOUND FADES. ORCHESTRA TAG. START FADE TO BLACK. HOLD FOR APPLAUSE TO SLOW.]

### EPILOGUE

[**SUPERTITLE:** A FORTNIGHT LATER.]

[GREAT HALL OF COFFIN CASTLE, NIGHT. LOW LIGHT, ONLY 2 TORCHES. ONLY 2 CLOCKS TICKING SOFTLY IN HALL. DUKE, SEATED, IS GLOATING OVER HIS JEWELS, RUNNING THEM THROUGH HIS FINGERS AND LETTING THEM TRICKLE TO THE GREAT TABLE.]

[DUKE] “Heh heh heh. Lovely jewels. Lovely. Heh heh.”

[THEY SUDDENLY TURN TO TEARS, WITH A LITTLE SOUND LIKE SIGHING. (**SOUND:** ENSEMBLE SIGH BACKSTAGE)]

[DUKE, LOOKS AT THE MELTED POOL, AND THEN AT HIS GLOVES:] "What slish is this?"

[HE STAGGERS TO HIS FEET AND DRAWS HIS SWORD:]

[DUKE, WHISPERS:] "Whisper? . . . Hark?"

