

This being
most proudly and simply
the

FOURTH ACT

or

“The Hand-fasting of All That Was Foretold”

On the hillock just recently left, ALLIACEAE, or the Witch, transforms and resumes her post as the NARRATOR, finishes her peering away and fixes her gaze intently upon that which is seated ahead of her or more rightly the AUDIENCE.

NARRATOR:

And now, we find ourselves almost at the Finish of that which we started, brief it has been, yet just enough time to tell that which we needed to. For hopefully have you all gotten and stretched when you have been given a choice. But fear not...tying this story in a bright pink ribbon and a bow is such the purpose and subject of what we will now tell.

And if bright as a candle thou art, a glimmer of what is to happen should now be laid before you...and if not...then rejoice in that you have been told a tale both simple and simply done.

But two garbs must I wear in this course. For I am as I have been your Narrator, but since connected am I, also must I be The Witch Alliaceae, for if joy is to be found in our endeavor, and I have the Pilot been mostly, then I should give myself proper measure.

So goodbye for now, and if you wonder when it is that I will appear, I am the second to make their appearance and have their say.

The NARRATOR or ALLIACEAE the Witch makes her way back into her CABIN.

EXTERIOR- ROOMING HOUSE

JANE, most forlorn in her demeanor and somewhat unkempt in her appearance, is sitting on the small expanse of steps before the ROOMING HOUSE. At the upper door is PATIENCE, keeping her respectful distance.

From around the corner comes a damp SEA GENTLEMAN and her eyes brighten and she makes a move to get up and rush and perhaps even attempt to un-right him but he holds his hands for a moment out to stop her.

SEA GENTLEMAN: A moment, if you please.

He takes out a cloth and wipes the grime off of his glasses and puts the glasses back on his head and looks at a now positively beaming from ear to ear JANE. Who now rushes him, and he puts his bag down and she almost catches him at the right angle to send him earthwards such is the force of her joy at his arrival. She buries herself in his arms, and looks up, crying, yet crying now for joy instead of sadness. She looks around and sees none around but PATIENCE and madly kisses the SEA GENTLEMAN fully upon his lips, and after sufficient osculation lets go.

JANE: You came back?

SEA GENTLEMAN: As I somewhat fondly recall with respect to your particular circumstance, I did not say I wouldn't. But pray thee Jane, do not tire yourself out too soon...for tonight and to the limit that proper modesty and decorum should allow us both, perhaps indeed we could take a peek at our troth.

The SEA GENTLEMAN looks up at PATIENCE

SEA GENTLEMAN: Am I to be correct that my room is still there?

PATIENCE walks down the steps and to before the two.

PATIENCE: Yes it is, and just as you left it. Well except to be cleaned, and...

PATIENCE rolls her eyes heavenward and fans herself.

PATIENCE: given a most thorough airing out.

SEA GENTLEMAN: Then let me gain its entry and rest for a moment. Jane return to your home. I will call upon you properly later.

JANE gives him a much smaller peck, and practically tears off in a dead run back to her HOUSE.

The SEA GENTLEMAN shakes his head and laughs and he and PATIENCE enter the house.

EXTERIOR-MEADOW

MEROPE in an isolated part of the MEADOW that she and her SISTERS frequent, is in her proper dance clothes, moving alone to her own special tune of HOPE and WONDER.

From the rough TRAIL comes the LAND GENTLEMAN, who manages to creep almost within touching distance before she opens her eyes and looks at him and smiles and buries her head in his chest and her slender arms around him, and when she has done so, she reaches up on tip toes and kisses him in a way befitting lovers and most definitely not ones close family and he looks at her.

LAND GENTLEMAN: Missed me have you then.

MEROPE: In this form yes. But I have kept watch on your doings from above, following you everywhere.

LAND GENTLEMAN: Everywhere?

MEROPE: Yes, everywhere. And I have shone and shone until I was in danger of bursting, and caused my sisters much concern, for they did not wish to see my fires in danger of flaming out. But their folly, for I am a Star, and would require much more before I turn cold and grey.

Still where have you been, and what have you done.

LAND GENTLEMAN: You did say that you were with me all the time.

MEROPE leans up and kisses all the more with exuberance and with her fires no longer in need of quenching.

MEROPE: Yes but I do so earnestly wish it to hear it from your own lips. For I can tell you of your wanderings. Yet I cannot embellish it with what my Cousin Faire Terpsichore would be want to do.

LAND GENTLEMAN: Then tell you I shall.

HE sweeps her up in his arms and carries her.

LAND GENTLEMAN: And perhaps when my mouth would be suited for other pursuits, I shall give to you in full and beyond measure, that which as Lovers do, I cannot but give you when Sun its shade doth draw and call upon the Moon to light the stage.

MEROPE: And I faire and Young Merope, would spread those two appendages which I, this Humble Mortal form have expressed, and allow you to enter in, and speculate as to that which when one is in that circumstance, as a Star should produce in season.

The LAND GENTLEMAN carries MEROPE off to the CAVE which we had visited earlier.

EXTERIOR-CABIN

ALLIACEAE is hanging things out on the line when from around the corner comes AEROS, the AIR GENTLEMAN. She looks at him and smooths her apron and walks up to him slowly and kisses him teasingly on the neck and forehead and chest.

ALLIACEAE: Where is our crashing friend?

AIR GENTLEMAN: You mean my contrivance. I landed it most expertly by the wharf without dunking. For I sensed a need that it be there at some opportune point.

ALLIACEAE: More stirring then?

AIR GENTLEMAN: You tell me.

ALLIACEAE: You simply will not tell me what is to be.

AIR GENTLEMAN: Miss, you strike me as being of the most learned and intelligent in nature, even as you are also most crafty, and quite beautiful, not of the type that would peek at the last page in a volume before getting to it honestly.

No, this play must take our course, especially if we are to wed.

ALLIACEAE: You seem to be most confident in that outcome.

The AIR GENTLEMAN makes a stirring gesture in the air, then makes as if a spoon was drawn in and puts it to his lips and tastes.

AIR GENTLEMAN: Tell me that such is not between your ears, or has been at some point, and I will put the book away, never to pick it up again.

ALLIACEAE: No Sir, you may keep the book its spine spread open. For I must confess, priding myself on being independent and free spirited.

AIR GENTLEMAN: Confession is after all good for the soul.

ALLIACEAE: That if I was to surrender some of this, that I would do so under your employ.

AIR GENTLEMAN: Someplace quiet then, so that we may get our...reading done.

ALLIACEAE: I know of such a place then.
Nit!

NIT (off stage): Yes Mistress!

ALLIACEAE: I will be off with the gentleman. I do not know when I will return or if I will return alone, make ready such as you should.

NIT (off stage): I and the frog will be waiting most patiently.

ALLIACEAE sighs and rolls her eyes and takes the man by the hand and goes off in search of the deeper wood.

EXTERIOR-MEADOW-SHIRONA

The LAND GENTLEMAN and MEROPE are stretched bereft of clothing out on a rock, a sheet from a silent benefactor stretched and draped to cover those parts which modesty dictates should not normally be out in the open air. The two of them are just cooing softly and looking up at the sky and of the clouds merrily puffing away above them in the just past mid-day sky.

Into this scene, comes a cough and the sound of somebody clearing their throat, and MEROPE startles and grabs the sheet tighter, and the LAND GENTLEMAN lifts his head enough to see a small boy at a respectful distance holding unto an envelope, the other hand is covering as much of his eyes as he would need to, so as to walk without stumbling.

LAND GENTLEMAN: And you might be?

The boy gives a small bow, expertly keeping his hands as they are.

TIM: I am Tim, the Lord Mayor's Boy.

LAND GENTLEMAN: His son?

TIM: No his Boy, and I am to give you this.
And I do not have to wait for your reply.

He shakily moves closer and hands the LAND GENTLEMAN the folded paper.

LAND GENTLEMAN: May I ask how you managed to find me?

TIM: You are not the only one with secrets Sir.

LAND GENTLEMAN: Duly noted. Now if you would excuse us, we have a private matter to discuss.

The boy takes his hand away from his eyes and stiffly bows and then exits down the path.

MEROPE: What is it?

LAND GENTLEMAN It seems we have been invited to a pre-wedding dinner tonight at Harmonia Gardens.

MEROPE: Pre wedding?

She sits up and grabs the sheet a little tighter, but not tight enough as to expose her Gentlemen's baggage.

MEROPE: But that would mean that we are?

LAND GENTLEMAN: To be married yes.

MEROPE: Forgive me for being a bit dense.

The girl giggles at her own joke.

MEROPE: But shouldn't one be properly asked first?

She turns to face the LAND GENTLEMAN, who is looking at her.

LAND GENTLEMAN; Merope, would you Marry me?

MEROPE hugs the man, letting the top part of the sheet drop somewhat, but still, at least from the side being covered.

MEROPE: Oh most earnestly and completely yes!

LAND GENTLEMAN: Of course you do realize-

MEROPE: That it will by necessity mean I shall have to ask Sister Electra again.

She appears crestfallen for a moment then brightens.

MEROPE: Surely Sister Electra can see the way of this!

And then wisely so, it seems as if her dance things knit from the very air and substance and she gives a quick kiss to the LAND GENTLEMAN and sets off to find her Sister ELECTRA.

EXTERIOR-ANOTHER PART OF THE MEADOW-SHIRONA

MEROPE hurries through the meadow soon to find her Sister ELECTRA. She finds her dancing alone in the meadow.

ELECTRA looks up and sees her sister and frowns a bit.

MEROPE: Um.

ELECTRA: What is it child?

MEROPE: Can we talk...alone?

ELECTRA moves her hands in the air and the scene goes dark, the two Sisters being the only illumined in the scene.

ELECTRA: What is it Merope?

MEROPE: I know what you told me about asking to stay again.

ELECTRA: That you would be forbidden to do so, and if you did-

MEROPE: Yes that.

ELECTRA sighs heavily and shakes her head.

ELECTRA: Go on.

MEROPE: It's just that the people are having a Party at the Harmonia Gardens, and I do so dearly Love, the Gentleman, and we are to get married and-

ELECTRA: STOP! You are to marry the Mortal?

MEROPE: Well, I do believe he is not exactly and precisely a Mortal...and it is for Love Sister. And by that which commanded and created us, is that not the Highest Calling of All?

ELECTRA: And he is aware of the circumstances?

MEROPE: Yes.

ELECTRA: And YOU are aware of the circumstances?

It is MEROPE's turn to sigh deeply.

MEROPE: Yes.

ELECTRA: Well I suppose if it is for Love....

ELECTRA's voice trails off as if some part of her does not wish to take this discourse to its obvious¹ conclusion. MEROPE practically bursts into a Star as she is standing there.

MEROPE: Then I can?

ELECTRA (sighing): You can go. But please, do try not to make this an all too frequent occurrence. There is a reason why we are heaven bound at Night, and that which doth make it so, would not appreciate our tinkering with Their Grand Design.

MEROPE: Oh thank you....thank you...thank you...

MEROPE rushes over and kisses her Sister full on the lips and ELECTRA laughs and the scene resumes as normal and ELECTRA returns to the dance, and MEROPE presumably to find something to wear...OH THE HUMANITY...OH THE FOOTWEAR...

¹ Well obvious to us that is.

INTERIOR-HARMONIA GARDENS-SHIRONA

We enter the scene as the Party is in full swing, and all of the cast are in attendance, and our couples; SEA GENTLEMAN and JANE, LAND GENTLEMAN and MEROPE, and AIR GENTLEMAN and ALLIACEAE, are each to their private tables and private moments. The women in a bid to seemingly outdo the other with the manner and finery of their dress. But the contest seems to be won by MEROPE, who is not quite as plain as JANE, or as ponderous and beautiful as ALLIACEAE, but in her celestial glory and purity outshines them all. And the LORD MAYOR is in his sputtering glory as being the ever so gracious host. And TIM. The LORD MAYOR'S Boy, and ALLY are in a quiet corner beaming away. As if perhaps this story and tale may be made and have been created by far too many cooks and spoons, and the pot stirs ever onward.

Into this and she brakes away, is our ALLIACEAE, who for almost the last, puts on her mantle as NARRATOR, and clearing her throat loudly steps out and speaks.

NARRATOR:

And so the party wound on and on...past the point where duty honor and discretion being bed mates and partners in crime, would have dictated to put our valiant couple in bed...albeit separately, so that they would arise refreshed on the next, their nuptial day. But parties tend to do that, and Love is the Master of All. So our friends and myself can be forgiven if this is where we have bent our Tale and your ears.

But even as the clock struck but either 13 or 1 depending on how thou counts aloud and silent, the Party took to its rest finally and all bedded away. And as I must end this speech and yawn with the others, and bid you till the morning...Let us take our rest, but pray not you oh Great, Patient, and Kind Audience take yours, for The End is within sight, except maybe those several wise gentleman, and that one Lady who have decided to compete with Our Orchestra as the rattling of the shades.

So then goodbye for now...

EXTERIOR-HARBOR PARK & QUEEN'S STATUE

The day dawned as all proper days should, with the sun beaming, and the sky filled not with ominous rollings, but with coy and billowy clouds, the like of which you look upwards at on a sunny day and try to figure out if they look like unicorns, or bunnies, or dragons, or yes even a bullfrog or two.

Onto the scene in the harbor was the finished and painted Leviathan to which we saw uncompleted earlier, now complete and resting comfortably in Mother Sea, and the grand inflated balloon, also seemingly a new skin made for it.

The QUEEN now revealed to in fact be facing the Sea proud and grand, and not the town, so her sternness not in fact directed towards SHIRONA.

The TOWN and all of our Characters being in attendance on a grassy knoll and the PREACHER being foremost and our three couples around him and the remaining SISTERS being now in dual duties as the Bride's Maid's for all, and the LORD MAYOR droned on with his sputtering, until it came time for the PREACHER who faced our couples, each their hands tied together in pretty pink ribbon. Rings found seemingly by accident or on purpose, so that all could in metal, show their married bliss adorned the pretty fingers of the three; JANE, MEROPE, and ALLIACEAE, and the bold fingers of the GENTLEMEN.

The clock struck NOON and one past, and all exchange their vows before that which made everything and to which OUR QUEEN VICTORIA owes her employ, and they kissed with great joy and abandon, no longer limited by that restraint which is longed upon the couple waiting. And then ALLIACEAE broke for her last, and became our dulcet NARRATOR in her Mrs.

NARRATOR:

And so, we soon conclude and to all in our fashion and measure leave Our Dear Shirona; all of us having changed our look, garb and wear into that which seems more comfortable somehow. And even I could be used to this couple thing. But worry not, I have not given up a square inch of that which made me Witch and Woman, and thus more powerful than any Man conceived by Our Creator. Merely consigned to let another hand stir the pot on occasion.

And so before Our Curtain. We look at each of the three's bliss and of their parting ways. And say goodbye to our friend and domicile. To each in our way continue life's journey, separate yet joined in this most complete and unusual of plays.

And so we look at SEA GENTLEMAN and JANE, who make their way to their new vessel, stopping before, CIRDAN the SHIPWRIGHT and his Daughter PATIENCE.

JANE: You have done her proud Shipwright.

SHIPWRIGHT: No I merely put the wood and nail as it wished to be laid. Ships

SHIPWRIGHT: are like life, we do the building, but someone else always guides our hands and hearts in our tasks.

JANE: Still thank you Sir.

JANE and the SEA GENTLEMAN, who somewhat absent mindedly cleans his spectacles and finds the LORD MAYOR and the PREACHER, and yes even the sharply dressed CONSTABLE in the crowd, and nods to each in turn. And joined in hands JANE and the SEA GENTLEMAN climb up the gang way and we look at the proud stern and see freshly carved and painted on it...

FORBEARANCE **Shirona**

EXTERIOR-RAIL-FORBEARANCE

And JANE and the SEA GENTLEMAN gain the rail as the sails are unfurled and the crew makes ready, and the lines are cast away, and if you look, on the QUEEN'S visage is a tear shed today, or maybe it is still a leftover and forgotten bit of dew in the morning. Holding hands they look at each other.

JANE: Do you ride on ships this large often?

SEA GENTLEMAN: Actually usually not at all.

JANE: Not at all? But then by what means do you travel then?

SEA GENTLEMAN: When we are far enough away from shore, I will show you.

JANE: You will not leave me?

SEA GENTLEMAN: Oh no kind and gentle and not so plain Jane...for we have said the words, and been tied thusly...

He lifts up his arm to betray a still stowed away piece of pink ribbon firmly attached.

SEA GENTLEMAN: But now we shall swim together, and not and never apart.

JANE: Swim Sir?

SEA GENTLEMAN: Aye?

EXTERIOR-HARBOR PARK & QUEEN'S STATUE

And now, the AIR GENTLEMAN and ALLIACEAE are looking at each other near the great balloon and next to them are ALLY and the LORD MAYOR'S Boy TIME, as well as NIT.

The two of them are quite and unabashedly entwined in each others arms, but soon they break and ALLIACEAE looks at the two ALLY and TIM, and then at her precious NIT, and she reaches down at NIT and tosses his hair, and NIT quite ceremoniously blows his nose and honks in a handkerchief and bawls away.

NIT: You will leave and never come back and it will be nothing but poor old Nit and well of course the frog. I've actually taken a liking to him.

ALLIACEAE laughs and tosses her feminine mane and tweaks NIT on the nose.

ALLIACEAE: And what makes you think that Sir Frog is not in fact Lady Frog! I will leave you the means to find if that be the case.

She hastily scribbles a note and hands it to NIT.

ALLIACEAE: In which case you would make a very good couple indeed. But on to the matter most previous, I will not be gone forever, so make sure you mind my pot and its proper uses!

ALLIACEAE looks at the AIR GENTLEMAN.

ALLIACEAE: To Our Exit then kind and noble Sir and Mr. To my Mrs.

The two climb aboard the basket, and NIT loosens the lines and the basket slowly lifts away.

ALLIACEAE: To where are we going then?

AIR GENTLEMAN: That is up to Our Friend The Wind to decide. For in truth and reality kind Mrs., and owner of my troth plighted so and completely, as much as we endeavor, no matter how much in Wisdom we do try to stir our pots, or to make that which is the measure of a man stir thou delicate vessel below, it is but The Wind, the Spirit, which holds the compass true.

ALLIACEAE: Am I to have no say in this?

AIR GENTLEMAN: In my ups and downs always dear Lady.

The balloon and its occupants float away in the clear sky of afternoon.

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And so, our couple MEROPE and LAND GENTLEMAN have the last of our play, and the most in their finery and the day lost in each others company, and in such behavior that being in public would allow. Darkness began to fall and at the waters edge MEROPE crushed the LAND GENTLEMAN to her, the only distance between them being the fabric of that which they both wear and put her quavering lips upon his and closed her eyes, breaking only to breathe when she needed and speak when necessary. And she looked at him again, a lone tear falls.

MEROPE: I must go, as is my Duty then. But every morning will I return to you, and you may fill me such as you are want and able, and couple such as we can without exhaustion or need otherwise, and we shall dance and walk, and share in that which is our celestial symphony. For I do dearly Love you, and Love conquers all, even that which is circumstance.

LAND GENTLEMAN: And I as well.

MEROPE fastens her lips upon him for the last this evening and breathes and sighs, her bosom although not as ponderous as The Witch, still noticeable in its travels, and she glows from within and ascends, her Day concluded and the LAND GENTLEMAN stays on the wharf, and tarries but a few moments more, and then heads back to his place of rest.

And we end our scene as Darkness continues to fall, and if by reality thus conceived or manufactured, or but by a trick of fading light, as it escapes its earthly bound to find its home, we lastly look upon OUR QUEEN, and can that be a smile for this our concluded tasks, plastered firmly upon her bronzed visage.

End of Act Four

And also being

THE END.

The CURTAIN falls for the last, and the Orchestra begins the END SONG.