

Muse of the Underworld

A Virtual Reality Opera



The script length is not indicative of the final length of the work (15 min.) since the musical score isn't included.

EXT. ANCIENT AMPHITHEATER ON THE SEA COAST - DAY

Musicians and conductor are classically dressed in black and arranged in their positions. The music begins.

EXT. CLIFF OVERLOOKING THE SEA - DAY

THELXIOPE, a siren, with a human head and a bird body, sits gloomily amongst the rocks of the cliff. She begins to sing.

(Lyrics are written in CAPS. Dialogue is written normally.)

THELXIOPE

**UPON THE BRINY CLIFFS, YOU'LL FIND ME NESTLED THERE,
WITH MAIDEN FACE AND AMPLE BREAST, AND WINGS TO TEAR THE AIR.
AFFLICTED WITH THIS LOATHSOME PLIGHT, NO MORTAL HELD ME FAIR,
BUT I POSSESS THE GIFT OF SONG THAT ALL MEN MUST BEWARE.**

VOCALISE (A CAPELLA)

Thelxiope sings her "siren song," a song without words, and then continues with lyrics.

THELXIOPE

**THERE WAS A TIME, LONG AGO, I HAD A LIFE OF WORTH,
BEFORE THESE WINGS, I DID SERVE, A MAID OF ROYAL BIRTH,
SHE WAS SEIZED, FROM MY KEEP, AND SO I WAS ACCURSED,
TO LURE ALL MEN, TO THEIR DEATH, WHO SAIL UPON THE EARTH**

In the distance we hear men singing.

SAILORS (O.S.)

**FAREWELL AND ADIEU TO YOU SPANISH LADIES.
FAREWELL AND ADIEU TO YOU LADIES OF SPAIN.**

THELXIOPE

**HEED THEIR GLEE, IF THEY BE MEN, THEY'LL PAY THE FEE,
I AM AS THE GODS HAVE MADE ME,
'TIS NOT MY JOY, TO SHARE MY PSALM, WITH THOSE WHO PLOW THE SEA,
BUT I MUST REPLY OR I WILL DIE AND EVER CEASE TO BE.**

EXT. ROW BOAT AT SEA - DAY

Two sailors, SEAN and IAN, sing as they pull the on the oars of their boat. Ian's voice trails off at the end.

SEAN AND IAN

**WE'LL DRINK AND BE JOLLY AND DROWN MELANCHOLY.
AND HERE'S TO THE HEALTH OF EACH TRUE-HEARTED LASS...**

SEAN: Cheer has left thee...

IAN: We have no number to sound it full.

SEAN: Nor lines to haul. Nay 'tis not a faulty tune. Thoughts of thine own sweet lass and youngling, take mirth away.

They hear Thelxiope sing her "siren song". Sean and Ian stop rowing as she sings. Ian is intrigued. Sean, frightened.

SEAN: Plug thine ears to that wicked song!

Sean quickly rips some strips of cloth.

IAN: Who sings that fine tune?

SEAN: A thing to take ye in the darkly deep. Plug thine ears boy.

He hands a strip of cloth to Ian. Ian ignores him, drawn towards the Thelxiope's voice.

THELXIOPE

**COME TO ME, IF IT'S BLISS YOU DESIRE, A PARADISE FOUND,
WHERE ALL IS FORGOTTEN, NO SORROWS WILL PLAGUE YOU, EVER AGAIN.**

IAN

**A FINER LAND HAS NE'ER EXISTED,
MY TRUE LOVE CALLS TO ME.**

SEAN: Hold fast! That vile voice will lead thee to thy death!

THELXIOPE

COME TO ME IF ITS BLISS YOU DESIRE, NO SORROWS WILL PLAGUE YOU EVER AGAIN.

IAN

IT IS! MY DESIRE, MY ONLY DESIRE.

Ian jumps into the sea and swims towards Thelxiope's voice.

SEAN: Cease! A deceit, this rapture will be!

IAN

I WILL NOT! I CANNOT...

Thelxiope flies towards them.

SEAN: Please, foul siren, defy thy nature and release this worthy man!

THELXIOPE

I WILL NOT! I CANNOT...

SEAN

**OH, YOU EVIL, HALF-CASTE QUEEN,
YOU'VE LURED A MAN, WITH BABE- BORN ANEW,
HIS CHILD NEEDS HIM, MUCH MORE THAN DO YOU.**

THELXIOPE

A CHILD HE HAS...

SEAN

**AN INNOCENT.
CAN YOU NOT FIND THE BEAUTY IN THEE,
AND SET THIS MAN FREE?**

THELXIOPE

**IS IT TRUE? IS THERE BEAUTY IN ME?
UNDER THE BLACK OF WICKED DEEDS...
CAN I NOT MAKE CLEAN THAT WHICH BELONGS TO ME?**

SEAN

RESIST THY NATURE, THAT ANCIENT CURSE.

THELXIOPE

**FOR THIS MAN, GIVE MY LIFE, WITH NO BITTERNESS...
WILL NOT THIS DEATH SWEETEN LIFE, IN THESE LAST BREATHS?**

She sings in her siren song, and is joined by Sean, and then Ian as she considers their fate.

THELXIOPE

**STAR-CROSS'D THIS LIFE MAY BE, BUT 'TIS MY NATURE FIXED?
CAN I NOT MAKE CLEAN, THAT WHICH BELONGS TO ME?
THIS NEW FOUND LIBERTY, INVITES DELIGHT AND TERROR MIXED,
ETERNAL GRAVE OR WICKED DAYS, OF THESE I AM BETWIXT,
AND SO I CHOOSE THE FATAL TOLL, TO SEE MY SINS ECLIPSED.**

I RELEASE THEE.