

SCENES

- ACT I.—The Wood-cutter's Cottage.
ACT II., Scene 1—At the Fairy's.
 Scene 2—The Land of Memory.
ACT III., Scene 1—The Palace of Night.
 Scene 2—The Forest.
ACT IV., Scene 1—Before the Curtain.
 Scene 2—The Graveyard.
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 Future.
ACT V., Scene 1—The Leave-taking.
 Scene 2—The Awakening.

The Blue Bird

ACT I

The Wood-cutter's Cottage

The stage represents the interior of a wood-cutter's cottage, simple and rustic in appearance, but in no way poverty-stricken. A recessed fireplace containing the dying embers of a wood-fire. Kitchen utensils, a cupboard, a bread-pan, a grandfather's clock, a spinning-wheel, a water-tap, etc. On a table, a lighted lamp. At the foot of the cupboard, on either side, a DOG and a CAT lie sleeping, rolled up, each with his nose in his tail. Between them stands a large blue-and-white sugar-loaf. On the wall hangs a round cage containing a turtle-dove. At the back, two windows, with closed inside shutters. Under one of the windows, a stool. On the left is the front door, with a

The Blue Bird

big latch to it. On the right, another door. A ladder leads up to a loft. On the right also are two little children's cots, at the head of which are two chairs, with clothes carefully folded on them. When the curtain rises, TYLTYL and MYTYL are sound asleep in their cots. MUMMY TYL tucks them in, leans over them, watches them for a moment as they sleep and beckons to DADDY TYL, who thrusts his head through the half-open door. MUMMY TYL lays a finger on her lips, to impose silence upon him, and then goes out to the right, on tip-toe, after first putting out the lamp. The scene remains in darkness for a moment. Then a light, gradually increasing in intensity, filters in through the shutters. The lamp on the table lights again of itself, but its light is of a different colour than when MUMMY TYL extinguished it. The two CHILDREN appear to wake and sit up in bed.

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

Mytyl?

MYTYL

Tyltyl?

TYLTYL

Are you asleep?

MYTYL

Are you? . . .

TYLTYL

No; how can I be asleep when I'm talking to you?

MYTYL

Say, is this Christmas Day? . . .

TYLTYL

Not yet; not till to-morrow. But Father Christmas won't bring us anything this year. . . .

MYTYL

Why not?

TYLTYL

I heard mummy say that she couldn't go to town to tell him. . . . But he will come next year. . . .

MYTYL

Is next year far off? . . .

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

A good long while. . . . But he will come
to the rich children to-night. . . .

MYTYL

Really? . . .

TYLTYL

Hullo! . . . Mummy's forgotten to
put out the lamp! . . . I've an
idea! . . .

MYTYL

What? . . .

TYLTYL

Let's get up. . . .

MYTYL

But we mustn't. . . .

TYLTYL

Why, there's no one about. . . . Do you
see the shutters? . . .

MYTYL

Oh, how bright they are! . . .

TYLTYL

It's the lights of the party.

MYTYL

What party? . . .

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

The rich children opposite. It's the Christ-
mas-tree. Let's open the shut-
ters. . . .

MYTYL

Can we? . . .

TYLTYL

Of course; there's no one to stop us. . . .
Do you hear the music? . . . Let us
get up. . . .

*(The two CHILDREN get up, run
to one of the windows,
climb on to the stool and
throw back the shutters. A
bright light fills the room.
The CHILDREN look out
greedily.)*

TYLTYL

We can see everything! . . .

MYTYL *(who can hardly find room on the
stool)*

I can't. . . .

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

It's snowing! There's two carriages,
with six horses each!

MYTYL

There are twelve little boys getting
out!

TYLTYL

How silly you are! They're little
girls.

MYTYL

They've got knickerbockers.

TYLTYL

What do you know? Don't push
so!

MYTYL

I never touched you.

TYLTYL (*who is taking up the whole stool*),
You're taking up all the room.

MYTYL

Why, I have no room at all!

TYLTYL

Do be quiet! I see the tree!

MYTYL

What tree?

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

Why, the Christmas-tree! You're
looking at the wall!

MYTYL

I'm looking at the wall because I've got no
room.

TYLTYL (*giving her a miserly little place
on the stool*)

There! Will that do? Now
you're better off than I! I say,
what lots and lots of lights!

MYTYL

What are those people doing who are mak-
such a noise?

TYLTYL

They're the musicians.

MYTYL

Are they angry?

TYLTYL

No; but it's hard work.

MYTYL

Another carriage with white horses!

TYLTYL

Be quiet! And look!

The Blue Bird

MYTYL

What are those gold things there, hanging
from the branches?

TYLTYL

Why, toys, to be sure! . . . Swords, guns,
soldiers, cannons. . . .

MYTYL

And dolls; say, are there any dolls?

TYLTYL

Dolls? . . . That's too silly; there's no fun
in dolls. . . .

MYTYL

And what's that all round the table?

TYLTYL

Cakes and fruit and tarts. . . .

MYTYL

I had some once when I was little. . . .

TYLTYL

So did I; it's nicer than bread, but they
don't give you enough. . . .

MYTYL

They've got plenty over there. . . . The
whole table's full. . . . Are they go-
ing to eat them?

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

Of course; what else would they do with
them?

MYTYL

Why don't they eat them at once?

TYLTYL

Because they're not hungry. . . .

MYTYL (*stupefied with astonishment*)
Not hungry? . . . Why not?

TYLTYL

Well, they eat whenever they want
to. . . .

MYTYL (*incredulously*)

Every day?

TYLTYL

They say so. . . .

MYTYL

Will they eat them all? . . . Will they give
any away?

TYLTYL

To whom?

MYTYL

To us. . . .

TYLTYL

They don't know us. . . .

The Blue Bird

MYTYL
Suppose we asked them. . . .
TYLTYL
We mustn't.
MYTYL
Why not? . . .
TYLTYL
Because it's not right.
MYTYL (*clapping her hands*)
Oh, how pretty they are! . . .
TYLTYL (*rapturously*)
And how they're laughing and laughing! . . .
MYTYL
And the little ones dancing! . . .
TYLTYL
Yes, yes; let's dance too! . . . (*They stamp their feet for joy on the stool.*)
MYTYL
Oh, what fun! . . .
TYLTYL
They're getting the cakes! . . . They can touch them! . . . They're eating, they're eating, they're eating! . . .

The Blue Bird

MYTYL
The tiny ones, too! . . . They've got two, three, four apiece! . . .
TYLTYL (*drunk with delight*)
Oh, how lovely! . . . Oh, how lovely, how lovely! . . .
MYTYL (*counting imaginary cakes*)
I've got twelve! . . .
TYLTYL
And I four times twelve! . . . But I'll give you some. . . .
(*A knock at the door of the cottage.*)
TYLTYL (*suddenly quieted and frightened*)
What's that? . . .
MYTYL (*scared*)
It's Daddy! . . .
(*As they hesitate before opening the door, the big latch is seen to rise of itself, with a grating noise; the door half opens to admit a little old woman dressed in green with a red hood on her*

The Blue Bird

*head. She is humpbacked
and lame and near-sighted;
her nose and chin meet; and
she walks bent on a stick.
She is obviously a fairy.)*

THE FAIRY

Have you the grass here that sings or the
bird that is blue? . . .

TYLTYL

We have some grass, but it can't sing. . . .

MYTYL

Tyltyl has a bird.

TYLTYL

But I can't give it away. . . .

THE FAIRY

Why not? . . .

TYLTYL

Because it's mine.

THE FAIRY

That's a reason, no doubt. Where is the
bird? . . .

TYLTYL (*pointing to the cage*)

In the cage. . . .

THE FAIRY (*putting on her glasses to ex-
amine the bird*)

The Blue Bird

I don't want it; it's not blue enough. You
will have to go and find me the one I
want.

TYLTYL

But I don't know where it is. . . .

THE FAIRY

No more do I. That's why you must look
for it. I can do without the grass that
sings, at a pinch; but I must absolutely
have the blue bird. It's for my little
girl, who is very ill.

TYLTYL

What's the matter with her? . . .

THE FAIRY

We don't quite know; she wants to be
happy. . . .

TYLTYL

Really? . . .

THE FAIRY

Do you know who I am? . . .

TYLTYL

You're rather like our neighbour, Madame
Berlingot. . . .

THE FAIRY (*growing suddenly angry*)
Not a bit! . . . There's not the least like-

The Blue Bird

ness! . . . This is intolerable! . . .
I am the Fairy Berylune. . . .

TYLTYL

Oh! Very well. . . .

THE FAIRY

You will have to start at once.

TYLTYL

Are you coming with us?

THE FAIRY

I can't, because I put on the soup this morn-
ing and it always boils over if I leave
it for more than hour. . . . (*Point-
ing successively to the ceiling, the
chimney and the window*) Will you
go out this way, or that way, or that
way? . . .

TYLTYL (*pointing timidly to the door*)

I would rather go out that way. . . .

THE FAIRY (*growing suddenly angry
again*)

That's quite impossible; and it's a shocking
habit! . . . (*Pointing to the window*)

We'll go out this way. . . . Well?

. . . What are you waiting for? . . .

Get dressed at once. . . . (*The CHIL-*

The Blue Bird

DREN *do as they are told and dress
quickly.*) I'll help Mytyl. . . .

TYLTYL

We have no shoes. . . .

THE FAIRY

That doesn't matter. I will give you a little
magic hat. Where are your father
and mother? . . .

TYLTYL (*pointing to the door on the
right*)

They're asleep in there. . . .

THE FAIRY

And your grandpapa and grand-
mamma? . . .

TYLTYL

They're dead. . . .

THE FAIRY

And your little brothers and sisters. . . .

Have you any? . . .

TYLTYL

Oh, yes; three little brothers. . . .

MYTYL

And four little sisters. . . .

THE FAIRY

Where are they? . . .

The Blue Bird

TYLTYL

They are dead, too. . . .

THE FAIRY

Would you like to see them again? . . .

TYLTYL

Oh, yes! . . . At once! . . . Show them to us! . . .

THE FAIRY

I haven't got them in my pocket. . . . But this is very lucky; you will see them when you go through the Land of Memory. . . . It's on the way to the Blue Bird, just on the left, past the third turning. . . . What were you doing when I knocked? . . .

TYLTYL

We were playing at eating cakes? . . .

THE FAIRY

Have you any cakes? . . . Where are they? . . .

TYLTYL

In the house of the rich children. . . .

Come and look, it's so lovely. (*He drags the FAIRY to the window.*)

THE FAIRY (*at the window*)

The Blue Bird

But it's the others who are eating them! . . .

TYLTYL

Yes; but we can see them eat. . . .

THE FAIRY

Aren't you cross with them? . . .

TYLTYL

What for? . . .

THE FAIRY

For eating all the cakes. . . . I think it's very wrong of them not to give you some. . . .

TYLTYL

Not at all; they're rich. . . . I say, isn't it beautiful over there? . . .

THE FAIRY

It's no more beautiful there than here.

TYLTYL

Ugh! . . . It's darker here and smaller and there are no cakes. . . .

THE FAIRY

It's exactly the same, only you can't see. . . .

TYLTYL

Yes, I can; and I have very good eyes. I can see the time on the church clock and daddy can't . . .

The Blue Bird

THE FAIRY (*suddenly angry*)
I tell you that you can't see! . . . How do
you see me? . . . What do I look
like? . . . (*An awkward silence from*
TYLTYL.) Well, answer me, will
you? I want to know if you can see!
. . . Am I pretty or ugly? . . .
(*The silence grows more and more*
uncomfortable.) Won't you answer?
. . . Am I young or old? . . . Are
my cheeks pink or yellow? . . .
Perhaps you'll say I have a hump? . . .
TYLTYL (*in a conciliatory tone*)

No, no; it's not a big one. . . .

THE FAIRY

Oh, yes, to look at you, any one would think
it enormous. . . . Have I a hook nose
and have I lost one of my eyes? . . .

TYLTYL

Oh, no, I don't say that. . . . Who put it
out? . . .

THE FAIRY (*growing more and more*
irritated).

But it's not out! . . . You wretched, impu-
dent boy! . . . It's much finer than

The Blue Bird

the other; it's bigger and brighter and
blue as the sky. . . . And my hair, do
you see that? . . . It's fair as the corn
in the fields, it's like virgin gold! . . .
And I've such heaps and heaps of it
that it weighs my head down. . . .
It escapes on every side. . . . Do you
see it on my hands? (*She holds out two*
lean wisps of grey hair.)

TYLTYL

Yes, I see a little. . . .

THE FAIRY (*indignantly*)

A little! . . . Sheaves! Armfuls! Clus-
ters! Waves of gold! . . . I know
there are people who say that they
don't see any; but you're not one of
those wicked, blind people, I should
hope? . . .

TYLTYL

Oh, no; I can see all that isn't hidden. . . .

THE FAIRY

But you ought to see the rest with as little
doubt! . . . Human beings are very
odd! . . . Since the death of the
fairies, they see nothing at all and they