

### The Blue Bird

upon it, you may open it too. . . .  
But don't go in. . . . Be very cautious  
and let us get ready to push back the  
door, as we did with the Wars. . . .

TYLTYL (*half-opening the door; with un-  
paralleled precautions and passing his  
head fearsomely through the aper-  
ture*)

Oh! . . . How cold! . . . My eyes are  
smarting! . . . Shut it quickly! . . .  
Push, oh, push! They are pushing  
against us! . . . (NIGHT, the DOG,  
the CAT and SUGAR push back the  
door.) Oh, I saw! . . .

NIGHT

What? . . .

TYLTYL (*upset*)

I don't know, it was awful! . . . They  
were all seated like monsters with-  
out eyes. . . . Who was the giant  
who tried to seize me? . . .

NIGHT

It was probably Silence; he has charge of  
this door. . . . It appears to have

### The Blue Bird

been alarming? . . . You are quite  
pale still and trembling all over. . . .

TYLTYL

Yes, I would never have believed. . . . I  
had never seen. . . . And my hands  
are frozen. . . .

NIGHT

It will be worse presently if you  
go on. . . .

TYLTYL (*going to the next door*)

And this one? . . . Is this terrible  
also? . . .

NIGHT

No; there is a little of everything here.  
. . . . It is where I keep the unem-  
ployed Stars, my personal Perfumes,  
a few Glimmers that belong to me,  
such as Will-o'-the-Wisps, Glow-  
worms and Fireflies, also the Dew, the  
Song of the Nightingales and so  
on. . . .

TYLTYL

Just so, the Stars, the Song of the Nightin-  
gales. . . . This must be the door. . . .

## The Blue Bird

NIGHT

Open it, if you like; there is nothing very bad inside. . . .

(TYLTYL *throws the door wide open. The STARS, in the shape of beautiful young girls veiled in many-coloured radiancy, escape from their prison, disperse over the hall and form graceful groups on the steps and around the columns, bathed in a sort of luminous penumbra. The PERFUMES OF THE NIGHT, who are almost invisible, the WILL-O'-THE-WISPS, the FIREFLIES and the transparent DEW join them, while the SONG OF THE NIGHTINGALES streams from the cavern and floods the Palace of NIGHT.*)

108

## The Blue Bird

MYTYL (*clapping her hands with delight*)  
Oh, what pretty ladies! . . .

TYLTYL

And how well they dance! . . .

MYTYL

And how sweet they smell! . . .

TYLTYL

And how beautifully they sing! . . .

MYTYL

What are those, whom one can hardly see? . . .

NIGHT

Those are the Perfumes of my Shadow.

TYLTYL

And those others, over there, in spun glass? . . .

NIGHT

They are the Dew of the plains and forests. . . . But enough! . . . They would never have done. . . . It is the devil's own business to get them back, once they begin to dance. . . . (*Clapping her hands together.*) Now then, Stars, quick! . . . This is not the time

109

### The Blue Bird

for dancing. . . . The sky is overcast  
and heavily clouded. . . . Come,  
quick, in with you, or I will go and  
fetch a ray of sunlight! . . . (*The  
STARS, PERFUMES, etc., take to flight  
in dismay and rush back into the cav-  
ern; and the door is closed upon them.  
At the same time, the song of the  
NIGHTINGALE ceases.*)

TYLTYL (*going to the door at the back*)  
Here is the great middle door. . . .

NIGHT (*gravely*)

Do not open that one. . . .

TYLTYL

Why not? . . .

NIGHT

Because it's not allowed. . . .

TYLTYL

Then it's here that the Blue Bird is hidden;  
Light told me so. . . .

NIGHT (*maternally*)

Listen to me, child. . . . I have been kind  
and indulgent. . . . I have done for  
you what I have never done for any  
one before. . . . I have given up all

### The Blue Bird

my secrets to you. . . . I like you, I  
feel pity for your youth and innocence  
and I am speaking to you as a  
mother. . . . Listen to me, my child,  
and believe me; relinquish your quest,  
go no further, do not tempt fate, do  
not open that door. . . .

TYLTYL (*a little shaken*)

But why? . . .

NIGHT

Because I do not wish you to be lost. . . .

Because not one of those, do you hear,  
not one of those who have opened it,  
were it but by a hair's breadth, has  
ever returned alive to the light of  
day. . . . Because every awful thing  
imaginable, because all the terrors, all  
the horrors of which men speak on  
earth are as nothing compared with the  
most harmless of those which assail  
a man from the moment when his eye  
lights upon the first threats of the  
abyss to which no one dares give a  
name. . . . So much so that I myself,  
if you are bent, in spite of everything,

The Blue Bird

upon touching that door, will ask you to wait until I have sought safety in my windowless tower. . . . Now it is for you to know, for you to reflect. . . .

(MYTYL, *all in tears, utters cries of inarticulate terror and tries to drag TYLTYL away.*)

BREAD (*with chattering teeth*)

Don't do it, master dear! . . . (*Flinging himself on his knees*) Take pity on us! . . . I implore you on my knees. . . . You see that Night is right. . . .

THE CAT

You are sacrificing the lives of all of us. . . .

TYLTYL

I must open the door. . . .

MYTYL (*stamping her feet, amid her sobs*)

I won't! . . . I sha'n't! . . .

TYLTYL

Sugar and Bread, take Mytyl by the hand and run away with her. . . . I am going to open the door. . . .

The Blue Bird

NIGHT

Run for your lives! . . . Come quickly! . . . It is time! . . . (*She flees.*)

BREAD (*fleeing wildly*)

At least wait till we are at the end of the hall! . . .

THE CAT (*also fleeing*)

Wait! Wait! . . .

(*They hide behind the columns at the other end of the hall.*)

TYLTYL *remains alone with the DOG by the monumental door.*)

THE DOG (*panting and hiccoughing with suppressed fright*)

I shall stay, I shall stay! . . . I'm not afraid! . . . I shall stay! . . . I shall stay with my little god! . . . I shall stay! . . . I shall stay! . . .

TYLTYL (*patting the DOG*)

That's right, Tylô, that's right! . . . Kiss me. . . . You and I are two. . . . And now, steady! . . .

(*He places the key in the lock. A cry of alarm comes from*

## The Blue Bird

*the other end of the hall, where the runaways have taken refuge. The key has hardly touched the door before its tall and wide leaves open in the middle, glide apart and disappear on either side in the thickness of the walls, suddenly revealing the most unexpected of gardens, unreal, infinite and ineffable, a dream-garden bathed in nocturnal light, where, among stars and planets, illuminating all that they touch, flying ceaselessly from jewel to jewel and from moonbeam to moonbeam, fairy-like blue birds hover perpetually and harmoniously down to the confines of the horizon, birds innumerable to the point of appearing to be the breath, the azured*

## The Blue Bird

*atmosphere, the very substance of the wonderful garden.)*

**TYLTYL** (*dazzled, bewildered, standing in the light of the garden*)

Oh! . . . Heaven! . . . (Turning to those who have fled) Come quickly! . . . They are here! . . . It's they, it's they, it's they! . . . We have them at last! . . . Thousands of blue birds! . . . Millions! . . . Thousands of millions! . . . There will be too many! . . . Come, Mytyl! . . . Come, Tylô! . . . Come, all! . . . Help me! . . . (*Darting in among the birds.*) You can catch them by handfuls! . . . They are not shy! . . . They are not afraid of us! . . . Here! Here! . . . (MYTYL and the others run up. They all enter the dazzling garden, except NIGHT and the CAT.) You see! . . . There are too many of them! . . . They fly into my hands! . . . Look, they are eating the moonbeams! . . . Mytyl,

## The Blue Bird

where are you? . . . There are so many blue wings, so many feathers falling that one cannot see anything for them! . . . Don't bite them, Tylô! . . . Don't hurt them! . . . Take them very gently! . . .

MYTYL (*covered with blue birds*)

I have caught seven already! . . . Oh, how they flap their wings! . . . I can't hold them! . . .

TYLTYL

Nor can I! . . . I have too many of them! . . . They're escaping! . . . They're coming back! . . . Tylô has some, too! . . . They will drag us with them! . . . They will take us up to the sky! . . . Quick, let us go out this way! . . . Light is waiting for us! . . . How pleased she will be! . . .

This way, this way! . . .

*(They escape from the garden, with their hands full of struggling birds, and, crossing the whole hall amid the*

## The Blue Bird

*mad whirl of the azure wings, go out on the right, where they first entered, followed by BREAD and SUGAR, who have caught no birds. NIGHT and the CAT, left alone, return to the back of the stage and look anxiously into the garden.)*

NIGHT

Haven't they got him? . . .

THE CAT

No. . . . I see him there, on that moonbeam. . . . They could not reach him, he kept too high. . . .

*(The CURTAIN falls. Immediately after, before the dropped curtain, ENTER, at the same time, on the left, LIGHT and, on the right, TYLTYL, MYTYL and the DOG, who run up all covered by the birds which they have captured. But already the birds appear*

## The Blue Bird

*lifeless and, with hanging heads and drooping wings, are nothing more in their hands than inert remains.)*

LIGHT

Well, have you caught him? . . .

TYLTYL

Yes, yes! . . . As many as we wanted! . . . There are thousands of them! . . . Here they are! . . . Do you see them? . . . (*Looking at the birds, which he holds out to LIGHT, and perceiving that they are dead*) Why, they are dead! . . . What have they done to them? . . . Yours, too, Mytyl? . . . Tylô's also? . . . (*Angrily flinging down the dead bodies of the birds*) Oh, this is too bad? . . . Who killed them? . . . I am too unhappy! . . . (*He hides his head in his arms and his whole frame is shaken with sobs.*)

LIGHT (*pressing him maternally in her arms*)

## The Blue Bird

Do not cry, my child. . . . You did not catch the one that is able to live in broad daylight. . . . He has gone elsewhere. . . . We shall find him again. . . .

THE DOG (*looking at the dead birds*)

Are they good to eat? . . .

(*They all go out on the left.*)

### SCENE 2.—*The Forest*

*A forest. It is night. The moon is shining. Old trees of various kinds, notably an OAK, a BEECH, an ELM, a POPLAR, a FIR-TREE, a CYPRESS, a LIME-TREE, a CHESTNUT-TREE, etc.*

ENTER *the CAT.*

THE CAT (*bowing to the trees in turn*)  
To all the trees here present, greeting! . . .

THE TREES (*murmuring in their leaves*)  
Greeting! . . .

THE CAT

This is a great day, a day of days! . . .  
Our enemy is coming to set free your

### The Blue Bird

energies and to deliver himself into your hands. . . . It is Tytyl, the son of the wood-cutter, who has done you so much harm. . . . He is seeking the Blue Bird, whom you have kept hidden from Man since the beginning of the world and who alone knows our secret. . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves.*) What do you say? . . . Ah, it's the Poplar! . . . Yes, he possesses a diamond which has the virtue of setting free our spirits for a moment; he can compel us to hand over the Blue Bird and thenceforth we shall be definitely at Man's mercy. . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves.*) Who is speaking? . . . Ah, the Oak! . . . How are you? . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves of the OAK.*) Still got your cold? . . . Does the Liquorice no longer look after you? . . . Can't you throw off your rheumatism? . . . Believe me, that's because of the moss; you put too much of it on your feet. . . . Is the Blue

### The Blue Bird

Bird still with you? . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves of the OAK.*) I beg your pardon? . . . Yes, there is no room for hesitation; we must take the opportunity; he must be done away with. . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves.*) I didn't quite catch. . . . Oh, yes, he is with his little sister; she must die, too. . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves.*) Yes, they have the Dog with them; there is no keeping him away. . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves.*) What did you say? . . . Bribe him? . . . Impossible. . . . I have tried everything. . . . (*A murmuring in the leaves.*) Ah, is that you, Fir-Tree? . . . Yes, get four planks ready. . . . Yes, there are Fire, Sugar, Water and Bread besides. . . . They are all with us, except Bread, who is rather doubtful. . . . Light alone is on Man's side; but she won't come. . . . I made the children believe that they ought to steal away while she was asleep. . . . There



## The Blue Bird

never was such an opportunity. . . .  
(*A murmuring in the leaves.*) Ah,  
that's the Beech's voice! . . . Yes,  
you are right; we must inform the  
animals. . . . Has the Rabbit got his  
drum? . . . Is he with you? . . .  
Good, let him beat the troop at  
once. . . . Here they are! . . .

(*The roll of the RABBIT'S drum  
is heard, diminishing in the  
distance. Enter TYLTYL,  
MYTYL and the DOG.*)

TYLTYL

Is this the place? . . .

THE CAT (*obsequiously, eagerly, mealy-  
mouthed, rushing to meet the CHIL-  
DREN*)

Ah, there you are, my little master! . . .  
How well you look and how pretty,  
this evening! . . . I went before you  
to announce your arrival. . . . All is  
going well. We shall have the Blue  
Bird to-night, I am sure. . . . I have  
just sent the Rabbit to beat the troop  
in order to convoke the principal ani-

## The Blue Bird

mals of the country. . . . You can  
hear them already among the foli-  
age. . . . Listen! . . . They are a  
little shy and dare not come near. . . .  
(*The sounds are heard of different  
animals, such as cows, pigs, horses,  
donkeys, etc. The CAT, aside, to  
TYLTYL, taking him apart*) But why  
have you brought the Dog? . . . I  
have told you he is on the worst terms  
with everybody, even the trees. . . .  
I fear that his odious presence will  
spoil everything. . . .

TYLTYL .

I could not get rid of him. . . . (*To the  
DOG, threatening him*) Go away, you  
ugly thing! . . .

THE DOG

Who? . . . I? . . . Why? . . . What  
have I done? . . .

TYLTYL

I tell you, go away! . . . We don't want  
you here and there's an end of it. . . .  
You're a nuisance, there! . . .

The Blue Bird

THE DOG

I sha'n't say a word. . . . I shall follow  
you at a distance. . . . They sha'n't  
see me. . . . Shall I beg? . . .

THE CAT (*aside, to TYLTYL*)

Do you allow this disobedience? . . . Hit  
him on the nose with your stick; he is  
really unbearable! . . .

TYLTYL (*beating the DOG*)

There, that will teach you to be more  
obedient! . . .

THE DOG (*yelling*)

Ow! Ow! Ow! . . .

TYLTYL

What do you say? . . .

THE DOG

I must kiss you now you've beaten me!  
. . . . (*He covers TYLTYL with violent  
kisses and embraces.*)

TYLTYL

Come. . . . That will do. . . . That's  
enough. . . . Go away! . . .

MYTYL

No, no; I want him to stay. . . . I am

The Blue Bird

afraid of everything when he is not  
there. . . .

THE DOG (*leaping up and almost upsetting  
MYTYL, whom he overwhelms with  
hurried and enthusiastic kisses*)

Oh, the dear little girl! . . . How beauti-  
ful she is! . . . How good she is! . . .  
How beautiful she is, how sweet she  
is! . . . I must kiss her! . . . Once  
more, once more, once more! . . .

THE CAT

What an idiot! . . . Well, we shall  
see! . . . Let us lose no time. . . .  
Turn the diamond. . . .

TYLTYL

Where shall I stand? . . .

THE CAT

In this moonbeam; you will see better. . . .  
There, turn it gently! . . .

(*TYLTYL turns the Diamond.  
A long-drawn-out rustling  
shakes the leaves and  
branches. The oldest and  
most stately trunks open to  
make way for the soul which*