

# **Der Ring Des Nibelungen**

## **THE CHARACTERS**

### ***Das Rheingold***

**Alberich.** Nibelung dwarf. He lives in Nibelheim, in the center of the earth. Mime is his brother and Hagen, whose mother is Grimhild, is his son. He steals the gold from the Rhinemaidens and forges a ring to rule the world, which is taken from him by Wotan.

**Donner.** God of thunder. Fricka, Freia and Froh are his siblings.

**Erda.** Goddess, first woman, earth mother. She harbors all the wisdom of the world. The Three Norns are her daughters. She and Wotan conceive Brünnhilde.

**Fafner and Fasolt.** The last two brothers of the race of giants that live in Riesenheim, on the earth's surface. They built Valhalla for Wotan. Fafner kills Fasolt and then, with the Tarnhelm, he transforms himself into a dragon to guard the treasure.

**Freia.** Goddess of youth; also known as Holda. She is the guardian of the tree which bears the golden apples. The gods keep their youth by eating of the apples daily. Froh, Donner and Fricka are her siblings.

**Fricka.** Goddess of love and marriage, Wotan's wife. Donner, Froh and Freia are her siblings.

**Froh.** God of fruitfulness and prosperity. Fricka, Freia and Donner are his siblings.

**Loge.** Demi-god of fire, Loge is also known as the trickster god, the mischief maker, the father of lies and deceit. Considered a demi-god, Loge is counted among the gods, but he is not one of them.

**Mime.** Nibelung dwarf. Brother of Alberich, for whom he forges the magic Tarnhelm. He leaves Nibelheim to live in a cave in the forest. After Sieglinde dies in childbirth, Mime raises Siegfried in hopes of getting the ring for himself.

**The Three Rhinemaidens.** Sea nymphs of the Rhine, playful seductresses and guardians of the Rhinegold. Wellgunde, Woglinde and Flosshilde are their names.

**Wotan.** Supreme god. He lives in Valhalla with his wife, Fricka. Their marriage is childless. Erda bears him Brünnhilde, and he is also the father of the other eight Valkyries, whose mothers remain unnamed. A she-wolf bears him twins, Siegmund and Sieglinde. He travels the surface of the world disguised as the Wanderer.

### ***Die Walküre***

**Brünnhilde.** Valkyrie warrior and Wotan's favorite daughter. Her mother is Erda. She is punished by Wotan and marries Siegfried.

**Hunding.** Husband of Sieglinde. Enemy of Siegmund. He kills Siegmund in a duel.

**Siegmund and Sieglinde.** Twin children of Wotan. The first of the Walsung race. Their mother was a mortal. Sieglinde is forced to marry Hunding. She falls in love with her twin brother, Siegmund. Parents of Siegfried.

**The Valkyries.** Wotan's nine warrior daughters who, on their winged horses, collect the dead heroes in battle to join Wotan in Valhalla. Their names are Brünnhilde, Waltraute, Gerhilde, Ortlinde, Schwertleite, Helmwige, Siegrune, Grimgerde, Rossweise.

### ***Siegfried***

**Siegfried.** Son of Siegmund and Sieglinde. He is raised by Mime, the Nibelung dwarf. Siegfried kills the dragon, Fafner, and takes the Ring and Tarnhelm. He finds Brünnhilde on the emblazoned rock, marries her and gives her the ring. Through Hagen's sinister plot he is given a potion to forget Brünnhilde. He falls in love with Gutrune and then marries her, betraying Brünnhilde. He is eventually killed by Hagen.

### ***Götterdämmerung***

**Gunther.** First-born of the Gibichungs, a race of heroes of divine descent. He lives in the Hall of the Gibichungs beside the Rhine River. Gutrune is his sister, Hagen his half-brother. Their mother is Grimhild. Gunther marries Brünnhilde through Hagen's plot.

**Gutrune.** Gunther's sister. She marries Siegfried through Hagen's plot.

**Hagen.** Half-brother of Gunther and Gutrune. Alberich, his father, paid Grimhild to conceive a son to get him back the ring.

**The Three Norns.** The divine daughters of Erda who determine the fate of every being in the world. They are the tenders of the World Ash Tree and spin Erda's wisdom into the golden rope of destiny. They represent the past, present and future (similar to the Greek fates). They are not individually named.