



The Story of Siegfried

adventure 10: Kriemhild's Dream

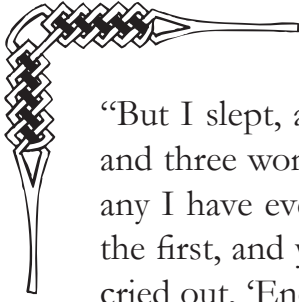
by James Baldwin

Early on the morrow morning, ere the sun had risen high, the peerless Kriemhild walked alone amid the sweet-scented bowers of her rose-garden. The dewdrops still hung thick on flower and thorn, and the wild birds carolled their songs of merry welcome to the new-born day. Every thing seemed to have put on its handsomest colors, and to be using its sweetest voice, on purpose to gladden the heart of the maiden. But Kriemhild was not happy. There was a shadow on her face and a sadness in her eye that the beauty and the music of that morning could not drive away. "What ails thee, my child?" asked her mother, Queen Ute, who met her. "Why so sad, as if thy heart were heavy with care? Has any one spoken unkindly, or has aught grievous happened to thee?"

"Oh, no, dearest mother!" said Kriemhild. "It is nothing that saddens me,—nothing but a foolish dream. I cannot forget it."

"Tell me the dream," said her mother: "mayhap it betokens something that the Norns have written for thee." Then Kriemhild answered, "I dreamed that I sat at my window, high up in the eastern tower; and the sun shone bright in the heavens, and the air was mild and warm, and I thought of nought but the beauty and the gladness of the hour. Then in the far north I saw a falcon flying. At first he seemed but a black speck in the sky; but swiftly he drew nearer and nearer, until at last he flew in at the open window, and I caught him in my arms. Oh, how strong and beautiful he was! His wings were purple and gold, and his eyes were as bright as the sun. Oh, a glorious prize I thought him! and I held him on my wrist, and spoke kind words to him. Then suddenly, from out of the sky above, two eagles dashed in at the window, and snatched my darling from me, and they tore him in pieces before my eyes, and laughed at my distress." "Thy dream," said Queen Ute, "is easy to explain. A king shall come from the north-land, and a mighty king shall he be. And he shall seek thee, and love thee, and wed thee, and thy heart shall overflow with bliss. The two eagles are the foes who shall slay him; but who they may be, or whence they may come, is known only to the Norns."





“But I slept, and I dreamed again,” said Kriemhild. “This time I sat in the meadow, and three women came to me. And they span, and they wove a woof more fair than any I have ever seen. And methought that another woof was woven, which crossed the first, and yet it was no whit less beautiful. Then the women who wove the woofs cried out, ‘Enough!’ And a fair white arm reached out and seized the rare fabrics, and tore them into shreds. And then the sky was overcast, and the thunder began to roll and the lightning to flash, and red fires gleamed, and fierce wolves howled around me, and I awoke.”

“This dream,” said Queen Ute, “is more than I can understand. Only this I can see and explain, that in the dim future the woof of another’s fate shall cross thy own. But trouble not thyself because of that which shall be. While yet the sun shines for thee, and the birds sing, and the flowers shed their sweet perfume, it is for thee to rejoice and be light-hearted. What the Norns have woven is woven, and it cannot be undone.”

