defends herself. In trying to protect Siegmund, was she not carrying out her father’s innermost desire? She begs him to soften her punishment: let him at least surround the rock with flames so that only a fearless hero will be able to penetrate the wall of fire. Wotan relents and grants her request. He kisses her on both eyes, which close at once.

Striking the rock three times, he invokes Loge, the god of fire. Flames spring up around the rock, and the “magic fire” leitmotif is heard, followed by the “magic sleep” and “slumber” motives. “Whosoever fears the tip of my spear shall never pass through the fire,” he sings, as the orchestra announces the theme of Siegfried, the fearless hero who in the next music drama will force his way through the flames and awaken Brünnhilde with a kiss. (See Listening Guide 59 for text.) The curtain falls on a version of the Sleeping Beauty legend as poetic as any artist ever created.

---

**Listening Guide**

**Wagner: Die Walküre (The Valkyrie), Act III, opening and Finale**

**DATE OF WORK:** 1856; first performed 1870, Munich

**GENRE:** Music drama: second in cycle of 4 (The Ring of the Nibelung)

**CHARACTERS:**
- Wotan, father of the gods (bass-baritone)
- Valkyries, the 9 daughters of Wotan: Brünnhilde, favorite daughter (soprano), Ottlind (soprano), Gerhilde (soprano), Helmwige (soprano), Schwertleite (alto), Waltraute (alto), Siegrune (alto), Rosweisse (alto), Grimgerde (alto)

**ORCHESTRA:** Huge orchestra including:
- Strings (32 violins, 12 violas, 12 cellos, 8 double basses, 6 harps)
- Woodwinds (2 piccolos, 3 flutes, 3 oboes, 1 English horn, 1 bass clarinet, 3 bassoons)
- Brass (8 French horns, 3 trumpets, 1 bass trumpet, 3 tenor trombones, 1 bass trombone, 1 contrabass trombone, 4 Wagner tubas, 1 contrabass tuba)
- Percussion (timpani, cymbals, triangle, tenor drum, glockenspiel, gong)

**WHAT TO LISTEN FOR:**
- Orchestra sets excited mood and image of flying warriors.
- Dotted figure gives way to famous “Ride” theme, heard in minor and major throughout scene.
- Focus on huge brass sound: alternation of high and low instruments.
- Chilling battle cries from Valkyries.
- Continuous fabric of orchestral music and singing.

**Act III, Scene 1: Ride of the Valkyries**

Orchestral prelude, marked Lively (Lebhaft), in 9/8 meter.
- Rushing string figure alternates with fast waverings in woodwinds, then insistent dotted figure [in brackets] begins in horns and low strings:
Swirling string and woodwind lines, accompanied by dotted figure.

Famous “Ride” motive, heard first in minor key in horns:

“Ride” motive, now heard in major key in trumpets:

4-note dotted motive exchanged between low and high brass instruments, heard above swirling idea.

“Ride” motive heard *fortissimo*, as curtain opens.

(Four Valkyries, in full armor, have settled on the highest peak above the cave.)

**TEXT**

**GERHILDE** (calling from the highest peak)

Hojo-toho! Hojo-toho! Hei-a-ha! Hei-a-ha! Hojo-toho! Hojo-toho! Hei-a-ha! Hei-a-ha!

Helmwige! Her! Hieher mit dem Ross! Helmwige, here! Bring your horse here!

Gerhilde’s disjunct battle cry which is echoed by her sisters:

**TEXT**

**HELMWIGE** (answering in the distance)

Hojo-toho! Hojo-toho! Hei-a-ha! Hojo-toho! Hojo-toho! Hei-a-ha! Hei-a-ha!

“Ride” motive heard in low brass, first in minor, then major; ideas exchanged between brass instruments.

Climax with timpani and cymbals on following cry, then decrescendo.

**TEXT**

GERHILDE, WALTRAUTE, SCHWERTLEITE

(calling out to Brunehilde, who approaches)

Hei-a-ha! Hei-a-ha!

Hei-a-ha! Hei-a-ha!

**ORTLINDE**

Zu Ortlinde’s Stute stell’ deinen Hengst.
Put your stallion next to Ortlinde’s mare.

Mit meiner Grau en gern dein Brauner! Your bay will like grazing with my grey.

**WALTRAUTE**

Wer hängt dir am Sattel?
Who hangs from your saddle?

Listening Guide continues
HELMWIGE
Sintolt, der Hegeling!
Sintolt the Hegeling!

SCHWERTLEITE
Führ deinen Braunen fort von der Grauen:
Ortlinde’s mare carries Wittig the Irming.

ORTLINDE
Ab Feinde nur sah ich Sintolt und Wittig:
I only saw them as enemies, Sintolt and Wittig.

HELMWIGE
Ruhig, Brauner! Brich nicht den Frieden.
Do not disturb the peace!

SCHWERTLEITE
(Abbreviated)
Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!
The warriors’ dispute upsets even the steeds!

HELMWIGE
Heiaha! Der Recken Zwist entzweit noch die Rosse!
The warriors’ dispute upsets even the steeds!

SCHWERTLEITE, ORTLINDE
Heiaha! Siegrune, hier!
Wo säumst du so lang?
Where were you dallying so long?

SIEGRUNE
Arbeit gab’s!
There was work to be done!

SCHWERTLEITE
Sind die and’ren schon da?
Are the others already here?

HELMWIGE, ORTLINDE, SIEGRUNE
Gegrüsst, ihr Reisige!
Gegrüsst!

ROSSWEISSE, GRIMGERDE
(Hoistho! Hoistho! Hoistho! Hoistho! Hoistho! Hoistho!)

ERLINDE, THE OTHER 6 VALKYRIE
Hojotoho! Hoyotoho! Hoyotoho! Hoyotoho! Hoyotoho! Hoyotoho! Hoyotoho!
Gradual decrescendo in orchestra.
GERHILDE
In’ Wald mit den Rossen zu Rast und Weid’! Into the woods with the steeds to rest and graze.

ORTLINDE
Führet die Mähren fern von einander, Place the mares far from each other,
Bis unser Helden Hass sich gelegt! Until our heroes’ hatred is abated!

VALKYRIES (laughing)
Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

HELMWIGE
Der Helden Grimm büste schon die Graue! The heroes’ anger made even the grey suffer!

VALKYRIES (laughing)
Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha! Ha ha ha ha ha ha ha ha!

ROSSWIESE, GRIMGERDE
Hojotoho! Hojotoho! Hoyotoho! Hoyotoho!

THE OTHER 6 VALKYRIES
Willkommen! Welcome!
(Shorter recording ends here.)

Act III, closing of Scene 3: Wotan and Brünnhilde

WHAT TO LISTEN FOR:
Sense of endless melody and continuous orchestral sound.
Richly chromatic harmony for heightened emotional effect.
Use of 4 recurring themes (leitmotifs)—magic fire, magic sleep, slumber, Siegfried

(Wotan clasps Brünnhilde’s head in his hands. He kisses her long on the eyes. She sinks back with closed eyes, unconscious in his arms. He gently bears her to a low mossy mound. . . . and lays her upon it. He looks upon her and doves her helmet: his eyes rest on the form of the sleeper, which he covers with the great shield of the Valkyrie. He turns slowly away, then again turns around with a sorrowful look.)

A forceful trombone passage precedes Wotan’s invocation of Loge:

Wotan’s evocation of Loge, god of fire:

Listening Guide continues
WOTAN

Loge, höre! Lausche hier! Loge, listen! Harken here!
Wie zuerst ich dich fand, als feurige Gluth, As I found you first, a fiery blaze,
wie dan einst du mir schwandest, as once you vanished from me,
as schweifende Lohne; as a random fire;
wie ich dich band, bann’ ich dich heut’! as I allied with you, so today I conjure you!

Herauf, wabernde Lohne, Arise, magic flame,
umlod’re mir feurig den Fels! girdle the rock with fire for me!

(He strikes the rock thrice with his spear.)

Loge! Loge! Hieher! Loge! Loge! Loge! Come here!

(A flash of flames issue from the rock, which swell to an ever-brightening fiery glow. Bright shooting flames surround Wotan. With his spear he directs the sea of fire to encircle the rock; it presently spreads toward the background, where it encloses the mountain in flames.)

“Magic fire” music heard in full orchestra:

“Magic sleep” motive evoked in descending chromatic line in woodwinds:

“Slumber” motive, heard in woodwinds:

WOTAN (singing text to “Siegfried” motive)

Wer meines Speeres Spitze fürchtet, Whosoever fears the tip of my spear
durchreite das Feuer nie! shall never pass through the fire!

(He stretches out the spear as a spell. He gazes sorrowfully on Brünnhilde. Slowly he turns to depart. He turns his head again and looks back. He disappears through the fire.)

Brass in fortissimo announcement of “Siegfried” motive; long orchestral closing: