

The Magic Flute

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Begin Section 1

Prince Tamino found himself in a strange, bleak spot surrounded by scrub and a few odd trees. He had never before been to this part of Egypt. A giant serpent had chased him here and he looked hastily at the rocks looming up around him. Should he hide in that round temple nearby, or would a clump of trees be safer? But it was too late. Before he could decide, the serpent's poisonous tongue flicked the back of his neck and he fell down in a dead faint.

As the serpent dropped its great, drooling jaws over Tamino, three mysterious women threw open the door of the temple and approached. The serpent reared up, its body outspread, its fangs bared, guarding its prey. But the women were not afraid. They held up their silver daggers and chanted magical words until he fell down dead beside the prince, a harmless pile of coils.

Slowly, the women drew close to Tamino.

"He's handsome," said the first.

"And he looks strong," said the second.

"Let's tell our queen," said the third. And they vanished through the temple doors.

Tamino opened his eyes and saw the dead serpent beside him. "Who killed it?" he wondered. Then he heard a sound. He jumped lithely to his feet and hid behind a tree just as a feathery man pranced into the clearing, pretending to be a bird.


"Who are you?" asked Tamino, in disbelief.

"Papageno, the bird-catcher," replied the man.

"You saved my life!" said Tamino. "Thank you."

"It was nothing," muttered Papageno.





Suddenly, the temple doors flew open. "You did not kill the serpent, you miserable specimen," the first woman called out. "We did."

"It's not very nice to lie," added the second, grabbing his cheeks.

"I'm afraid we must punish you," said the third, pushing a gag into his mouth.

"Now," they said, "you can't utter a word, until you've learned what a bad thing it is to lie and to take credit for the work of others."

With Tamino, though, the women were all smiles and charm. "Our mistress, the Queen of Night, welcomes you to her realm," they said showing him a portrait. "This is Pamina, our princess."

"I must meet her," said Tamino, his eyes drawn like magnets to the beautiful face in the **portrait**.

The women grew sad. "Pamina was kidnapped. . ."

"One May night. . ."

"When she was asleep under a tree."

Tamino was horrified. "Who took her?"

"An evil wizard called Sarastro. He has locked her up in his castle." As they spoke, the mountains drew apart before Tamino's eyes, revealing a deep, dark chamber hung with millions of twinkling stars. In the center, on her throne, was the Queen of Night, tall, regal and dressed all in black. "Bring my daughter back to me," she said, in a rich, haunting voice.

Tamino bowed low and promised to **rescue** Pamina. The Queen of Night thanked him and the mountains closed up again.

Poor Papageno! All he could do was squawk "hmm-hmm" and hop around in frustration, feathers flying in all directions.

Tamino looked at him pityingly. "I wish I could help," he said, "but I'm not sure how."

"The queen has told us to do as Prince Tamino wants," said one woman. "But do you promise never to lie again?"

Papageno let out an ear-splitting squawk that sent Tamino's hands flying to his ears.

"Don't do that!" said one woman, hastily removing the gag. "And go and help Tamino find the princess."

The women gave Tamino a magic flute to help him on his journey. And to Papageno they gave a box of silver **chimes**, which they called a glockenspiel. Then they summoned three small **genies** in a flying machine to guide them to Sarastro's castle in the land of pyramids. There, guarded by Monostatos, the Captain of the Guard, and his soldiers, lived Pamina. At every chance she got, she tried to run away to get back to her mother. End Section 1

Begin
Sec. 2 That day, Pamina was tired and very fed-up because she had, once again, tried unsuccessfully to escape and was now locked up once more. Monostatos's footsteps clanged down the corridor. As usual, he would try to bully her into marrying him. He flung open the door and Pamina braced herself. But Monostatos stood frozen in the doorway, his eyes bulging. Amazed, Pamina swung around and saw he had been frightened by a large, feathery creature teetering on the window-sill. Monostatos let out a howl of fear. The feathered thing screeched back in terror. That was enough for Monostatos! He ran down the corridor as if a pack of demons was chasing him.

The feathered creature calmed down a little. "Prince Tamino is coming to rescue you," he stuttered. "I'm Papageno. Your mother sent us. And here's your portrait to prove I am who I say I am and was sent by who I say sent me. Tamino loves you."

Pamina blushed. A prince was coming to her rescue. She was so thankful, she fell in love with him immediately!

"Well," grinned Papageno, guessing how she felt. "What are we waiting for? Let's go and find your prince."

Pamina's face lit up. With someone to help her, she had a better chance of escaping. Silently, she guided Papageno through tunnels and passages and soon they were on their way. But they had hardly left the castle grounds when Monostatos discovered Pamina was gone. At once, he summoned his soldiers and set out after her. End Section 2

Begin
Sec. 3 Some distance away, in the same kingdom, Tamino stood outside Sarastro's temples, confused and a little daunted. He squared his shoulders, stretched himself to his full height and tried the door to the Temple of Truth.

"Step back!" came an echoing command.



So Tamino tried the door to the Temple of Reason.

"Step back!" The voice was louder this time.

So he tried the door to the Temple of Wisdom.

This time, a priest welcomed him in. "What are you looking for?" he asked.

"I have come to rescue Pamina," began Tamino.

"But you've come with thoughts of anger and revenge," the priest reproached him gently.

"Yes, but only against the evil **wizard** Sarastro," argued Tamino.

The priest rubbed his chin thoughtfully. "Hmm. I see you've been misled. The Queen of Night lied to you."

"Then tell me the truth," Tamino challenged.

"If you truly want to know," replied the priest, "you'll find out soon enough." And with those words, he left Tamino confused, and still troubled about Pamina.

Longingly, Tamino began to play the magic flute, letting its music wash over him. As he grew peaceful, he saw the wild animals from the surrounding wilderness venture slowly out of their hiding places to sit beside him and listen. Now Tamino knew in his heart that Pamina was alive.

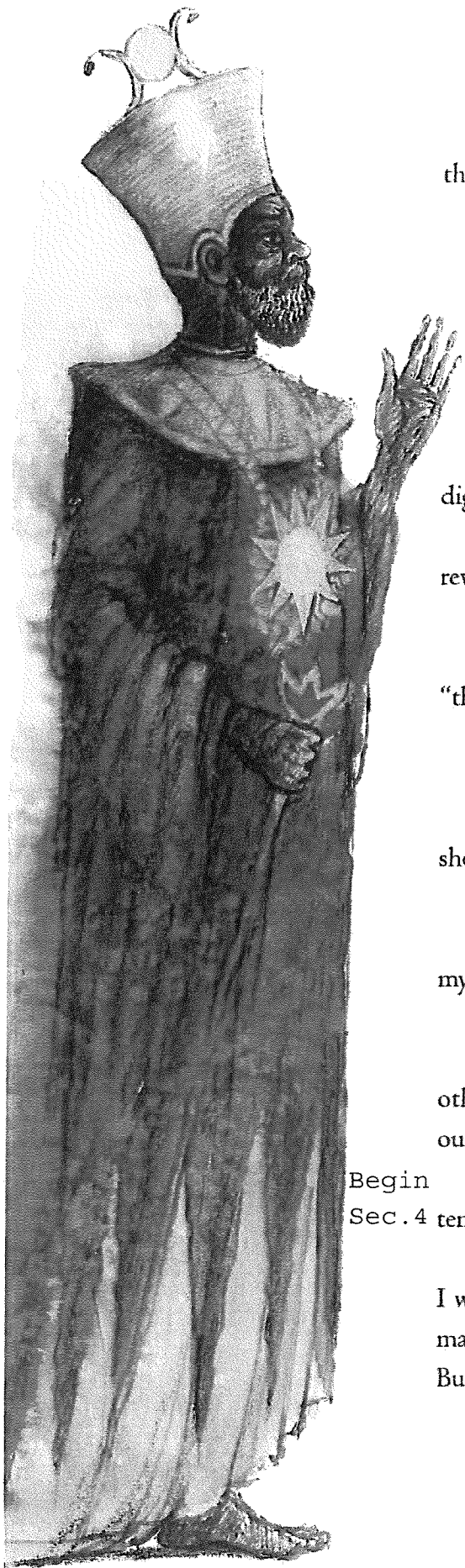
Not far away, Pamina and Papageno heard the plaintive call of Tamino's flute as they dodged and dived to stay safe from Monostatos and his pursuing **soldiers**. Papageno pulled out his chimes and answered Tamino.

"We're lost," whispered Pamina, as Monostatos's men surrounded them. "Now we'll both be prisoners."

"Maybe," replied Papageno, "but not before we've had some fun."

As he spoke, the soldiers closed in on them, grim and serious. Monostatos came nearer, baring his teeth and growling like a crazed animal. Gaily, Papageno struck the chimes. As the notes fell on their ears, the soldiers began to twitch and fidget. Their arms and legs jerked and their swords and daggers flew off their twirling bodies. What a sight! Papageno and Pamina laughed uncontrollably, watching the soldiers' expressions change from surprise to rage as their bodies danced on with a will of their own.





But listen! Over the light, bright chimes, came the deep, solemn music of the temple. It was the music of spirit and nature in all their beauty.

"Sarastro," breathed Pamina.

Papageno's hands fell from the chimes. Immediately the soldiers stopped dancing and scrabbled about in embarrassment, picking up their weapons, tidying their clothes and smoothing down their ruffled hair. Monostatos advanced threateningly towards Papageno and Pamina, then stopped in his tracks as Sarastro walked in, followed by a band of priests.

"What are we going to tell him?" stuttered Papageno, terrified by the tall, dignified man leading the procession.

"The truth, of course, my friend," said Pamina, surprised. "Sarastro always rewards the truth."

Pamina greeted Sarastro and explained why she had run away.

"You do understand, don't you," Sarastro said gently, when she had finished, "that you are here for your own safety?"

Sadly, Pamina bowed her head.

"But I know you have fallen in love, and things must change."

There was a sudden scuffle as Monostatos thrust his way out of the crowd, shoving and pushing a young man in shackles.

"Tamino!" chorused Pamina and Papageno.

"Indeed it is," said Monostatos, cockily, "and what, my Lord Sarastro, is my reward for capturing this villain?"

"A beating," replied Sarastro, sternly. "Now release this young man."

Prince Tamino and Princess Pamina could not take their eyes off each other and, as Monostatos loosened Tamino's chains, the entire group burst out cheering. End Section 3

Begin Sec. 4 Then Sarastro and his priests withdrew into an inner chamber of the temple to decide on an important matter.

"Pamina has fallen in love, my brothers," Sarastro said. "And as you know, I want to hand over the work of our brotherhood to her and the man she marries. Tamino is good and honest and we should admit him into our temple. But first we must make sure that he is worthy."

The others agreed and Sarastro assigned two of them to set tests for Tamino.

The priests found Tamino and Papageno and placed hoods over their heads before leading them to a secret garden. "If you want to free Pamina," they said, "you must be willing to die for the truth." Tamino agreed readily, but Papageno was not so sure.

The priests removed the hoods from their heads. "Your **ordeal** begins now," they said, leaving the two young men in pitch darkness.

Tamino was full of excitement. He did not care how hard his ordeal would be or what risks he had to take, as long as he could win Pamina's freedom. Suddenly the three ladies from the forest appeared out of nowhere, fluttering around Tamino.

"Forget about this ordeal nonsense," they wheedled. "Carry Pamina off home. Think of the power you'll have."

Tamino held firmly to his promise and tried to stop Papageno frolicking around the women, until at last they disappeared, defeated. End Section 4

Begin
Sec. 5

Furious that her assistants had not gotten their way, the Queen of Night flashed like lightning into Pamina's room. "This knife must pierce Sarastro's heart," she thundered, thrusting a dagger at Pamina, which glinted and flashed like a flame. "Your father gave him the Circle of the Sun before dying. Bring it to me, or you'll never see me again."

Pamina dropped the dagger in terror as her mother disappeared. "I won't kill anyone," she gasped. "Sarastro uses the Circle to do good things, that's why my father entrusted it to him."

Monostatos, who had been hiding behind the door, had heard everything. "Marry me, or I'll tell Sarastro you're going to kill him," he threatened, seizing his chance. But before Pamina could reply, Sarastro strode in and ordered him away. Monostatos lurched out of the chamber, furious. He was fed up with Sarastro. If he stole the Circle of the Sun and joined the queen, she would give him Pamina.

"Please don't punish my mother," Pamina begged Sarastro, telling him of the queen's visit.



"Revenge is not the way of our Holy Temple," Sarastro assured her. "Your father was our leader before me. Like him, we all believe the way to the True Path is love." End Section 5

Begin Section 6

In the temple garden, the priests congratulated Tamino and Papageno for not being tempted by the three women. Then they placed a delicious meal before them and left, warning them that their trial of silence would start at the sound of trumpets.

As they ate, an old **crone** came up to Papageno.

"I'm your sweetheart," she croaked, throwing her arms around him.

Papageno joked back but the crone was deadly serious.

Papageno was alarmed. "What am I going to do now?" he wondered, looking at Tamino who was helpless with laughter.

"Fat lot of help you are!" grumbled Papageno as the three genies arrived in their flying machine to deliver the magic flute and chimes to their owners, Tamino and Papageno. In the distance, the trumpets sounded.

Tamino put his flute to his lips and played. Pamina, recognizing its music, came to find him.

"Tamino!" she called. "Is all well with you?"

Tamino felt terrible. The last thing he wanted was to be unkind to Pamina but he was bound by his test, so he signaled her to leave.

"Don't you want to see me?" asked Pamina, hurt. Once more, Tamino had to wave her away. Pamina turned to Papageno. "You said Tamino loved me."

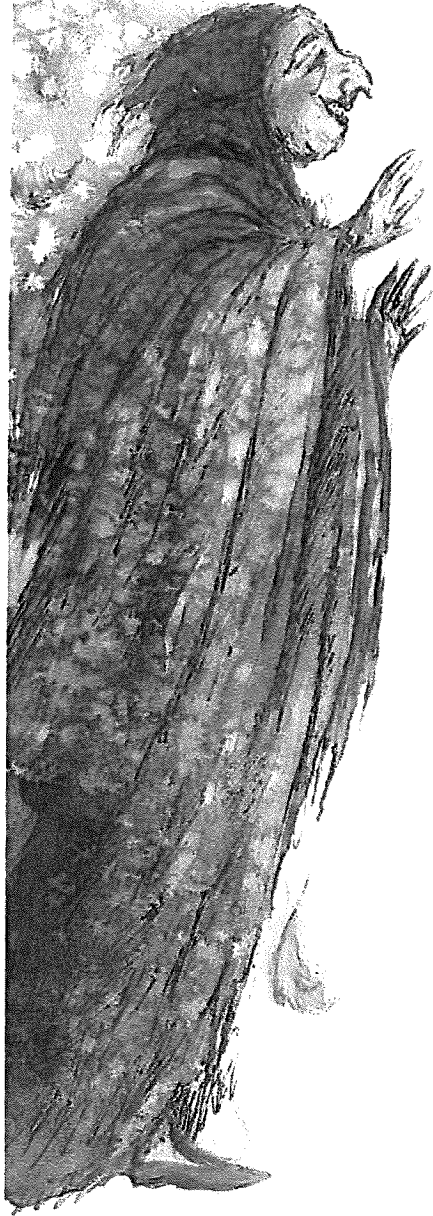
Papageno hung his head sadly. If he ever found someone to love, he would never send her away. But he and Tamino could only listen in miserable silence as Pamina sang, heartbroken, that her dream of love was gone forever.

"How sad!" cried Papageno, when she had left, "I wish I had someone to love, because it's love and only love that makes the world go round!"

Suddenly, the crone was standing behind Papageno. "I love you, Papageno," she said. "Swear you will be true to me forever."

"I will," said Papageno as the test of silence ended. "I really will."

The crone tugged at her face and Papageno watched in horror as it came off. Then she stood before him, pretty, feathered and young!



"I'm your Papagena!" she announced. "I was disguised."

Papageno held out his arms but a priest stopped him. "The three-fold pipe has sounded and you must go into the desert for the final test." End Section 6
 Begin Tamino had no time to explain to Pamina why he had not spoken to her.
 Sec So Pamina cried all night. At dawn, as the three genies watched the light
 7 spreading, they saw her huddled in a corner of the palace garden, planning to kill herself.

"That's not very clever," they said. "Come with us to see Tamino."

Pamina agreed and the three genies transported her to a spot at the foot of two towering mountains. The first was black and spouted a roaring, thundering waterfall. The second was red and spat blazing flames of fire. Tamino was alone. The priests had decided that Papageno was not suitable for their temple and they were right. At this very moment, he was with his Papagena, happily singing "papa-papa-papa" as they planned their future.

Pamina watched two men lead Tamino towards the roaring waters.

"Tamino!" she called. Tamino, no longer sworn to silence, called back.

"Play the flute, Tamino," she urged from beside him. "My father made that flute from the most secret heart of a great oak. Play it and we will be safe."

So Tamino played the flute and together the two of them walked, unharmed, through the gushing falls and fiery arches. Then, slowly, the ground beneath them began to sink until they found themselves in the most magnificent chamber of the Temple of Isis and Osiris. The air was filled with cheers and blessings.

Sarastro welcomed them. "Truth has succeeded," he said. "Now you are both in charge of the temple and I can rest."

Monostatos fled for protection to the Queen of Night and her three ladies, who shook with fear and anger.

"Wisdom and light have scared away ignorance and darkness," Sarastro said, as the evil group faded into shadow.

The prince and princess clasped hands firmly. Together, they were ready to face anything.

