

# THE SNOW QUEEN

Adaptation by Kira Newman  
from the 1913 play by Leonora Loveman  
and the story by Hans Christian Andersen

## CAST OF CHARACTERS

GERDA  
KAI  
GRAN  
ANNI  
CLARA  
MARIE  
NORMA  
BRIGIT  
SNOW QUEEN  
MOTHER KINDIKEN  
FIRST ROSE  
SECOND ROSE  
THIRD ROSE  
FOURTH ROSE  
FIFTH ROSE  
WILD CRANE  
SWEETHEART  
PRINCE  
PRINCESS  
LACKEY  
ROBBER GIRL  
ROBBER WOMAN  
FLIGHTY JIM  
FIRST ROBBER  
SECOND ROBBER  
THIRD ROBBER  
FOURTH ROBBER  
BAH, a reindeer

# THE SNOW QUEEN

## SCENE 1

### GRANDMOTHER'S LIVING ROOM

Grandmother's Living Room. There is a window located USL. A sheet-covered Christmas tree is USR, which sits on a trunk with presents. There is a Grandfather clock DSR by the wing. A wood stove is located DSL. Gran's chair is to the UR of the stove and the bench/bed is DL of it.

When the Scene opens, Grandmother is seated in the arm-chair. Gerda and Kai are seated on the floor before her. Both children have bowls containing popcorn and are making chains as they talk.

**Gran.** And so, the Snow Queen came, and took the little girl to her great ice palace. Poor little girl, she shivered with cold! You see, some of the enchanted mirror had flown into her eyes and heart.

**Gerda.** From the mirror that the wicked goblin made?

**Gran.** Yes, the mirror that made all the good people look bad and the beautiful things ugly.

**Gerda.** Like our roses grandmother, would they look ugly?

**Gran.** Quite worm-eaten.

**Gerda.** I'm glad the mirror was smashed when the goblin tried to see the beautiful angel!

**Kai.** But where did the millions and millions of splinters go?

**Gran.** They are still flying about. Big people see everything wrong when it goes into their eyes; and when those splinters fly into the eyes and hearts of children, their hearts turn to ice like the Snow Queen's.

**Gerda.** [*Looking up at GRAN.*] Grandmother, why did the Snow Queen want the little girl?

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**Gran.** Because she wanted children.

**Gerda.** *[Dropping her chain.]* Oh grandmother, is there really a Snow-queen?

**Gran.** *[Nods impressively.]*

**Kai.** Does she always stay in her ice palace?

**Gran.** No, she flies all over the world, up to the dark clouds and down again. Sometimes you can see her where the snow is thickest.

**Kai.** I wouldn't be afraid of her! *[Proudly, like a rooster.]* If she came here, I'd put her on the stove where she'd melt!

**Gerda.** *[Laughing.]* Kai!

*[SOUND: Grandfather Clock Chimes.]*

**Gran.** *[She looks at the clock.]* Come now, quick! Give me the chains. *[Going to tree.]* The other children will be here soon.

**Gerda.** *[Winding her chain about her neck as they move to the tree.]* See, Kai, see! It's a necklace now!

**Kai.** *[Holding up his chain.]* Mine is longer.

**Gerda.** *[Unwinding hers and holding it up gleefully.]* No, mine is! *[KAI snatches GERDA'S chain and runs.]*

**Gerda.** *[Chasing him.]* Kai!

**Gran.** Children! Let me have them. Now, close your eyes while I put them on the tree.

*[GERDA and KAI hold their hands over their eyes, GRAN unwraps the tree, and puts on the chains. KAI tries to peek.]*

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**Gerda.** *[Teasing.]* You're peeking.

**Kai.** Am not. You are, or you wouldn't have seen me.

**Gran.** *[Covering the tree.]* Come help clean up the mess.

*[GERDA and GRAN clean during the next dialogue. KAI, does not.]*

**Kai.** My! the church is all white. *[Running his fingers over the frosted window pane.]* Grandmother, does the Snow Queen make the ice flowers, too?

**Gran.** She paints them as she passes.

*[KAI takes a coin from his pocket, warms it at the fire, then runs back to window, pressing it against the pane.]*

**Kai.** Gerda, look! It makes a hole. I can look out. *[Gasps as he sees the Snow Queen.]* I can see her! I can see the Snow Queen!

**Gerda.** *[Running to the window.]* Let's me see!

**Kai.** *[Excited.]* Look there, Gerda! Look! All spangled and shining!

**Gerda.** *[Looking.]* Kai, it's just snow.

**Kai.** No! *[Pushing her.]* There! See her beckon! Look! My! but she's pretty! *[He puts his eye against pane.]* Ow! *[Draws back, holding a hand over his eye.]*

**Gerda.** *[Frightened.]* What is it?

**Kai.** *[Turning.]* There's something in my eye. *[Rubs his eye.]*

**Gerda.** *[Taking his head in her hands.]* Let me see! I don't see anything. *[KAI pushes her aside and looks out window.]*

**Kai.** There! Gerda, there! *[Pointing.]* See how she shines!

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**Gerda.** Where?

**Kai.** *[Pointing.]* There. Look!

*[KAI presses closer, then turns again, this time with his hand over his heart. He rubs his eye again.]*

**Gerda.** What is it, Kai?

**Gran.** *[Terrified, coming forward.]* Is Kai hurt?

**Kai.** Here, it hurts here. *[Rubs his eye.]* and here. *[Rubs a hand over his heart.]*

**Gran.** *[Looking in his eye.]* I can't see anything.

**Gerda.** Oh! Kai, does it hurt much?

**Kai.** No. *[His face stiffens, looks at GERDA angrily.]* No more. What're you crying for? You're ugly when you cry.

*[GERDA steps back terrified, holding her hand over her face.]*

**Gran.** Kai!

**Kai.** *[Following Gerda.]* Cry baby!

*[He struts about, kicking the tub of roses as he passes. He pulls a rose, holding it out to GERDA, who smiles and reaches for it. As she does, Kai throws it on the ground and crushes the rose with his foot.]*

**Gerda.** Kai, don't! *[Picking up the rose.]* It was so pretty, too!

**Kai.** No it wasn't. It was all worm-eaten.

*[HE kicks the tub again, still holding one hand over his heart and rubbing his eye, and goes back to staring out the window.]*

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**Gerda.** *[Crossing to GRAN.]* Oh, grandmother, is it the mirror glass Kai has in his eye and in his heart? Will his heart turn cold and hard? Will the Snow Queen take him

**Gran.** No, no. *[She goes to KAI, looks in his eye.]*

**Kai.** *[Wriggling.]* Don't. It's stopped hurting.

**Gran.** *[Still looking, more cheerfully.]* I can't see it.

*[GRAN goes back to setting up the party.]*

**Kai.** *[Turning to window, disappointed.]* She's gone now. I hope she'll come back! Grandmother, where is the Snow Queen's palace?

*[KAI follows GRAN as she moves about the stage during this next set of dialogue.]*

**Gran.** Far, far, to the north, where it's bitter, icy cold.

**Kai.** How does she get there?

**Gran.** She flies in her gleaming sled.

**Kai.** I wish she'd take me!

**Gerda.** Kai!

**Kai.** And I could ride the white bears!

**Gerda.** But you couldn't get back!

**Kai.** So?! I'd hitch my sled to her's. And we'd fly away.

*[SOUND: Loud Wind. THEY all jump a little. GERDA runs to GRAN. KAI backs away from window.]*

**Gerda.** *[Frightened.]* Oh grandmother, is she coming?

**Gran.** *[Laughing nervously.]* No, no. It's just the wind and the snow. *[SOUND: Bells.]* Listen! The Christmas bells!

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*[SOUND: Bells and Wind continue.]*

*[Children enter through the audience singing "We Wish you a Merry Christmas" ANNI and CLARA should be in the front of the line and the first to enter..]*

**Gerda.** They're here, grandmother!

*[GRAN, KAI and GERDA move to DSR stairs. The CHILDREN come down center aisle to the stairs DSR. All are wearing winter coats, scarves, hats. Some carry presents. At the head of the line are CLARA and ANNI. GERDA runs to them, leading them to the bench, where she takes off their coats. All CHILDREN greet GRAN as they enter and then go to the bench to take off their coats, etc. All action is accompanied by ad lib greetings of "Hello, Clara" "Hello, Gran", "Hello, Kai", etc. It should be loud and lively.]*

**Gran.** *[From near the tree.]* Come now, children.

*[The children rush towards the tree, rapidly forming a cluster in front and around it. GERDA leads the very little girls, holding the hand of each.]*

*[GRAN claps her hands. As she claps, the children take hands and dance near the tree, singing "The Fir and Pine." As the children sing, GRAN takes off the sheet. Underneath the tree there must be: a large doll (Gerda); two smaller dolls (Anni & Marie); red shoes (Gerda); a sled (Kai). There should be gifts for all the Children.]*

**Children:** The Fir and Pine, the Fir and Pine,  
I love them always dearly.  
How oft to me on Christmas night,  
The Fir and Pine have brought delight

*[The children stop singing as tree is uncovered. GRAN begins taking off the gifts. The children nudge each other, point, and exclaim.]*

**Anni.** How pretty!

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*[GRAN smiles and rapidly distributes the gifts; As they receive the gifts, the children are seen bobbing, exclaiming and thanking.]*

**Gerda.** Oh! Look at my red shoes! And a doll!

**Kai.** *[Running up and down with sled.]* Ho! look at my sled!

**Anni.** *[Running to GERDA.]* Look at my dolly!

**Marie.** See mine!

*[The girls crowd about GERDA, admiring.]*

**Norma.** Let me see.

**Brigit.** Real hair, Gerda! My!

**Clara.** May I hold her, Gerda?

*[GERDA gives the doll to CLARA, who pass it about; SHE seats herself in the chair trying on the red shoes. KAI has continued running up and down with his sled. The boys crowd about him, front.]*

**Thom.** My, a coaster!

**Kai.** *[Excited.]* Yes, wouldn't she slide down the snow mountains!

**Lars.** She's a fine one!

**Sven.** I've skates, see!

*[After distributing presents, GRAN passes a plate of cookies, which the CHILDREN eat. GERDA brings cookies to ANNI and CLARA, right front. KAI eat his quickly and runs to GRAN. Not everyone has gotten a cookie yet.]*

**Kai.** *[Demanding.]* More!

**Gran.** No, wait.

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*[KAI makes a face and stomps to the window, dragging his sled with him. The party continues. Out of boredom, KAI begins to imitate GRAN in a mean-spirited way.]*

**Gerda.** Kai!

*[GERDA goes back to playing with ANNI and CLARA. KAI goes back to looking out the window. The other CHILDREN are sharing and playing.]*

**Gerda.** *[Admiring ANNI's doll.]* What shall you call her, Anni?

**Anni.** Gerda.

**Marie.** I shall call my Bunny, Gerda.

**Anni.** Our Bunny died. Mother planted him. Now little bunnies will come up.

*[GERDA laughs and puts her arm about Anni. KAI takes Anni's doll and begins running around the room. GERDA chases him. As he passes the window, he sees something.]*

**Kai.** Look! Look!

**Gerda.** What do you see?

**Kai.** *[Pointing eagerly.]* Don't you see? there! there!

**Gran.** What is it, Kai?

**Kai.** *[More and more excited.]* Can't you see, Gerda, there! My! All white and shining!

**Gerda.** Yes, *[pointing.]* Look!

**Kai.** Oh! Gerda! Right in the thick snow!

**Gerda.** Grandmother! It's the Snow Queen!

*[The following is said simultaneously]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Girls.** *[In frightened awe.]* The Snow Queen!

**Boys.** The Snow Queen!

**Thom.** The Snow Queen?

**Clara.** Who is the Snow Queen?

*[SOUND: Bells, again. It makes everyone jump.]*

**Gran.** *[Laughing.]* It's just the evening bells. Time for all good little children to be in bed. Come, let's put on your coats.

*[She goes towards the bench and the children follow, hastily putting on their wraps, looking subdued and somewhat frightened. GRAN helps them. KAI stays at the window, looking out. GERDA helps Anni and CLARA wrap up.]*

**Kai.** I can't see her any more. She must be gone.

**Gran.** Come, Kai, say good-night.

*[KAI stays by window. The children say goodnight to GRAN and GERDA, giving KAI a look as they leave.]*

**Gerda.** Good-night, Anni. Good-night, Clara.

**Gran.** *[Opening the door.]* Good-night, children. Merry Christmas.

**Children.** *[Marching towards the door.]* Good-night.

*[As they leave, we hear the children singing, their voices growing less distinct.]*

Children. The Fir and Pine, the Fir and Pine,  
Are fresh and green for ever,  
Not only in the summer time,  
But mid the winter's frost and rime.  
Not only in the summer time,  
But mid the winter's frost and rime."

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**Gran.** *[Bustling about, blowing out lights.]* Gerda, Kai, that means bed time for you as well.

*[GERDA begin to straighten the room.]*

**Kai.** *[From the door. Gleeefully.]* My! How wet they're getting!

**Gran.** *[Putting her hand on KAI'S shoulder.]* Time for bed, Kai. *[KAI wriggles, still looking out.]*

**Kai.** *[Crossing to window.]* Can we stay up to watch for the Sno... Santa Claus!

**Gran.** No, no. To bed. *[He tries to stay by window. Leading GERDA.]* Come on, Gerda. *[Looks back at KAI, sternly.]* Now, Kai! *[HE jumps slightly, and goes off SL to change into his nightshirt.]* Gerda.

**Gerda.** Grandmother, can the Snow Queen come in our house?

**Gran.** No. *[Kisses Gerda on the forehead.]*

*[As GERDA leaves the room, KAI enters in his night-gown, and goes towards the bed.]*

**Gran.** Good-night, Kai. *[She tries to kiss him, but KAI wriggles past.]*

**Gerda.** *[Running up.]* Good-night, Kai. *[She stoops to kiss him and he pushes her away.]*

**Gran.** For shame, Kai, to be so naughty, and on Christmas Eve.

**Gerda.** *[Whispering loudly to KAI.]* I shall lie awake to watch for Santa Claus.

**Kai.** I'd rather see the Snow Queen. *[He climbs into bed.]*

**Gerda.** *[Shivering.]* I'd be afraid she'd take me away!

**Gran.** Come Gerda. *[They exit SL. The wind blows heavily.]*

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*[KAI gets in his bed, tosses and turns, looks towards the window. We hear the winds blowing. LIGHTS: Snow Effect. KAI goes to the window and looks out.]*

**Queen.** *[Offstage.]* Gallop, Gallop!

*[KAI slowly backs away from the window, frightened.]*

**Queen.** *[Offstage.]* On! Higher!

**Queen.** *[Offstage.]* On! On!

*[The SNOW QUEEN enters USR in her sleigh. She comes to the window, and looks at KAI, smiles, then waves her hand as if performing a spell.]*

**Queen.** *[In a voice low at first, but growing steadily more penetrating.]* Kai, Kai, Kai.

*[KAI freezes in his tracks.]*

**Queen.** *[Holding out her arms.]* Kai, come!

**Kai.** *[In a voice stifled by fear.]* Go way! Go way!

**Queen.** *[Smiling.]* Come to my great palace, Kai; come slide down my snow mountains!

**Kai.** *[In a frightened voice.]* Grandmother! Grandmother!

**Queen.** Come feed my white birds!

**Kai.** *[His fear decreasing.]* Birds?

**Queen.** And ride my white bears!

**Kai.** *[As if in a trance.]* Bears?

**Queen.** *[Smiling, coming closer to the window, still waving.]* Yes! Come hitch your sled behind as I fly. Come, Kai. Are you afraid?

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**Kai.** No, I'm not! I'm not afraid. *[Pause]* You're very pretty!

*[SNOW QUEEN smiles and puts her arms around KAI.]*

**Kai.** *[Shivering.]* You're cold! *[He struggles with one small sliver of fear; in a whisper.]* Grandmother! Grandmother!

**Queen.** Shh. *[Kissing him on the forehead.]* Are you cold now?

*[KAI'S head drops drowsily. The QUEEN lifts him and starts toward the sleigh.]*

**Kai.** *[Murmuring drowsily.]* My new sled!

*[The QUEEN laughs softly and placed KAI in the sleigh. She picks up the sled, leaving a large snow flake in it's place, and carries it to the sleigh. KAI'S eyes close, his head falls back, he is sound asleep. She leaves a crystal snow flake on KAI'S bed.]*

**Queen.** *[Seating herself in the sleigh, still holding KAI in her arms. Casting her spell.]* Home!

*[The sled exits USL. As the snow flurries end, GERDA comes in, in a night-gown, followed by GRAN in a dressing-gown, carrying a lighted candle.]*

**Gerda.** I know I heard Kai call!

**Gran.** It was the window blowing open. How cold it is! *[She goes to window and closes it.]*

**Gerda.** *[Turning to the bed.]* Kai, didn't you call? *[She stoops and looks terrified at the empty bed.]* Grandmother!

*[GRAN hurries to her with the candle.]*

**Gerda.** *[Sobbing.]* Oh! grandmother, Kai's gone!

**Gran.** Kai, where are you? *[Searching.]* Are you hiding, Kai?

**Gerda.** *[Crying.]* Oh, no, grandmother, Kai's not here.

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*[GRAN looks about bewildered. She sees the crystal snow flake on the floor. GERDA looks at GRAN.]*

**Gerda.** Grandmother, what is it?! *[She sees snow flake, picks it up, drops it.]* It's ice!

*[GRAN stoops to pick the crystal up, but drops it shuddering. Suddenly she covers her face with her hands, and sits in the chair, sobbing.]*

**Gerda.** *[Clinging to her.]* Has the Snow Queen taken Kai? Is that why you're crying? *[Sobbing.]* Oh, it is! It was the mirror that got into Kai's eyes and heart!

**Gran.** *[Her lace still covered.]* Kai! My little Kai!

**Gerda.** *[Running to the window, stretching out her arms.]* Kai, can't you hear me? Kai! *[Turning towards GRAN.]* Grandmother, I must go look for Kai!

**Gran.** *[Hurrying to her.]* No, no!

**Gerda.** But grandmother...

**Gran.** *[Soothing her.]* No, no, you can't find Kai in all the deep snow. Kai will come home.

**Gerda.** *[Clinging to her.]* When?

**Gran.** *[Soothingly.]* When the snow is gone.

**Gerda.** *[Clinging to GRAN, looking up at her.]* Oh, grandmother, will he come then? You said he couldn't. You said the Snow Queen would keep him. Forever.

**Gran.** *[Rocking GERDA.]* Shh, child. Shh. Just wait until the snow melts.

*[Light fade on GERDA and GRAN rocking gently in the chair.]*

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SCENE 2  
MOTHER KINDIKEN'S GARDEN

The house is sitting in the DSR wing. This must have a door that can open and close. The WILD CRANE is perched on a box on the USL side of the house. USR, toward USC, there is a cherry tree, with a bench underneath. On the bench is a large basket of cherries. There is a blanket there as well. DSL is a large and colorful flower garden. The Roses are actors. In the SL wing is a gate with latch. This should open and close slightly. Gerda is seen coming from USR, along river bank, in a boat.

**Gerda.** *[Standing in the boat, waving to the wooden soldiers on the roof].* Please come down! I need help stopping the boat! *[She looks at them anxiously].* Oh dear, I don't believe the soldiers hear me. *[Calling more loudly.]* Please come!

*[SOUND: Birds chirping unpleasantly.]*

**Mother.** *[Hurrying out of house.]* Dear, Dear!

*[SHE looks about bewildered. SOUND: Birds chirp louder.]*

**Gerda.** *[Holding out her arms.]* Please come stop my boat!

**Mother.** *[Holding her hand up to shield her eyes.]* Oh! A little girl! *[The boat glides on.]*

**Gerda.** *[Sobbing.]* Help!

**Mother.** There, there, don't cry. *[She hurries to the bank, supporting herself on a crooked cane.]* Who are you? How did you get here?

**Gerda.** *[Rising, reaching out her arms.]* If you please, I'm Gerda. I came looking for Kai. *[She tries to curtsy, but the boat rocks, and she falls back. The boats drifts almost off stage]* Oh, please stop my boat!

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*[MOTHER KINDIKEN draws the boat in with her cane. GERDA jumps out and stands shyly.]*

**Gerda.** Thank you.

**Mother.** *[Smiling.]* So you came to look for Kai?

**Gerda.** Yes, have you seen him?

**Mother.** *[Smiling.]* Come. Tell me about him.

*[She goes towards the bench. GERDA follows.]*

**Gerda.** *[Clapping her hands.]* Oh, how beautiful!

**Mother.** Pretty, aren't they?

*[She seats herself and motions to GERDA. GERDA comes up and stands by her, looking timid.]*

**Mother.** *[Stroking GERDA'S hair.]* Don't be frightened! Are you hungry? *[GERDA nods.]* Here.

*[MOTHER KINDIKEN offers a huge bowl of cherries that are sitting on the bench.]*

**Gerda.** How many!

**Mother.** Sit here and eat as many as as you'd like.

*[GERDA seats herself and begins eating the cherries.]*

**Mother.** *[Watching GERDA.]* Why did you come here to look for Kai?

**Gerda.** *[Eating.]* I offered the river my red shoes to take me to Kai. Then I got in the boat and it brought me here.

**Mother.** Is Kai your brother?

**Gerda.** Yes. The Snow Queen took him to her palace. Gran thought that when the snow had gone he'd come home. *[Rubbing her hand over her eyes.]* I must go.

THE SNOW QUEEN

*[GERDA rises and putting the cherries on the bench.]*

**Mother.** No, no, you should wait here for Kai. I'm fond of little girls.

**Gerda.** *[Moving further away.]* I must go look for Kai.

**Mother.** *[As if in a trance.]* Kai will come.

**Gerda.** *[Skeptical.]* What?

**Mother.** *[Waving her crutch.]* The river will bring him.

**Gerda.** Oh, will it. Will the river really bring Kai?

**Mother.** Yes, wait and see. You rest while I fix you some supper.

*[MOTHER goes to the bench and GERDA follows. MOTHER waves her hand over the bench as GERDA sits. Although it says there are cushions, there aren't. It's all illusion.]*

**Gerda.** *[Astonished.]* Why, it's soft!

**Mother.** Smell the cushions.

**Gerda.** *[Bending over the "cushions".]* Violets! They're smell like violets!

*[She lies down burying her head in her arms. MOTHER KINDIKEN glances at her, and kicks the boat offstage.]*

**Gerda.** It smells so good.

**Mother.** *[Coming back.]* Yes. And wait until you feel the covers.

**Gerda.** *[Feeling them.]* Rose leaves! I smell roses!

*[MOTHER throws a ratty blanket over GERDA.]*

**Gerda.** How soft.

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*[GERDA rubs the blanket over her cheek, laughs; and again buries her head in the cushions. MOTHER KINDIKEN again looking at GERDA to see she doesn't notice, goes hastily to the gate. She fastens the latch and tries it to see if it holds; then returns to GERDA.]*

**Mother.** Now I'll get you some supper.

**Gerda.** *[Drowsily, burrowing deeper.]* How the wind sings!

**Mother.** *[Murmuring.]* Yes. Sleep.

*[MOTHER KINDIKEN nods, looking satisfied, then goes quickly into the house. We hear the sound of birds. One by one the ROSES drop back their petals showing children's faces beneath.]*

**First Rose.** *[Peeking over at GERDA.]* She's asleep!

**Second Rose.** *[Moving closer to HER.]* Come and play, little girl.

**Third Rose.** *[Moving closer, whispering]* Come, play! Come, play!

**Gerda.** *[Waking.]* What...

**Roses.** *[Swaying back and forth.]* Come and play! Come and play!

**Gerda.** *[Sitting up.]* Oh, you can talk!

**Fourth Rose.** Shh. *[Furtively glancing back towards the house.]*  
Only when we're alone.

**Fifth Rose.** We talk when we're alone. *[Giggles.]*

*[The bird continues singing loudly.]*

**Gerda.** How pretty you are.

*[The ROSES giggle softly. Music starts and the FLOWERS sing and dance with GERDA.]*

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**Roses.** Come, come, come! One and all, to our call  
Through the meadow grasses tall, Glad and free,  
here you see, merry hearts have we.  
Who'll not gladly come and play,  
foolishly at home may stay,  
While we sing, dance and spring,  
let the echoes ring!"

*[Suddenly the birds stop singing, the FLOWERS glance furtively towards the house, stop circling, draw up their petals, move swiftly to their beds and stand stiffly as before. GERDA stands looking after them wondering, as the door opens, and MOTHER KINDIKEN comes out carrying a bowl and spoon.]*

**Mother.** I thought I heard you talking.

**Gerda.** *[Hesitating.]* I was playing with the flowers.

**Mother.** Pretty aren't they? Well, now come have your supper.

*[She carries the bowl to the bench. GERDA follows her and seats herself, obediently taking the bowl and looking up at MOTHER KINDIKEN.]*

**Gerda.** I've never seen such flowers.

**Mother.** There aren't any others like them in the world. Now, eat. Then you can rest till I get back.

**Gerda.** *[Troubled.]* Where are you going?

**Mother.** I must put my other flowers to bed.

**Gerda.** *[Surprised.]* You have more?

*[MOTHER KINDIKEN nods.]*

**Gerda.** *[Thoughtfully.]* Are they far away? Will you ask if they've seen Kai?

**Mother.** Yes, I'll ask.

**Gerda.** *[Rising.]* Perhaps I could go with you?

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Mother.** No, no, you stay here. I won't be gone very long and I promise to ask about Kai.

*[She strokes GERDA'S cheek and goes into the house. GERDA sits, looking after her. The house door is heard being loudly locked and bolted from within. It is very quiet.]*

**Gerda.** I hope Kai will come soon!

*[She sighs, sits on the bench, and slowly eats the supper. The birds begins singing again, and the FLOWERS gradually come back to life.]*

**First Rose.** She's gone. Now, come and play.

**Second Rose.** Yes, come play!

**Gerda.** I'm so glad you can talk. It isn't as lonely.

**Third Rose.** Stay with us! Mother Kindiken wants a little girl.

**Gerda.** *[Laughing.]* No, no, I must look for Kai.

**Fourth Rose.** Don't go! Come, live with us! Be a flower too!

**Gerda.** *[Startled.]* Oh! Were you once little girls?

*[The ROSES giggle.]*

**Fifth Rose.** We are flowers! We're just flowers.

**First Rose.** We like it here in the sun.

**Gerda.** *[Wonderingly.]* May be she will want me to be a flower, too? I must go before she comes.

*[GERDA runs to the boat and finds it missing.]*

**Gerda.** The boat! Where is my boat?!

**Second Rose.** *[Bending towards her.]* Don't go!

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Gerda.** I must! [*She runs hastily to the gate and finds it locked.*] Locked tight! Oh! dear, what shall I do? [*She runs back to the river and looks both ways, then goes slowly goes back to the bench and sits, sobbing softly.*]

**Third Rose.** Why don't you come and play?

**Gerda.** She's locked me in.

**Fourth Rose.** Stay with us!

**Gerda.** No, no, I must go. How can I get out? [*Looking about.*] And it's growing dark. I won't be able to find my way.

**Fifth Rose.** [*Softly.*] The sun is setting.

**Roses.** [*Sleepily.*] The sun's setting. We must go to sleep.

**Gerda.** [*Frightened.*] Please don't go to sleep.

**Roses** [*Singing and swaying.*]  
"Now the sun is setting in the golden west. Birds and bees, and children, all have gone to rest"

**Gerda.** Oh, please don't all go to sleep and leave me alone!

**Roses.** [*Singing.*] "And the merry river as it runs along. With a voice of sweetness, sings its evening song."

*[As they stop singing, they stand in their beds motionless, petals drawn up. The stage has grown darker.]*

**Gerda.** They've all gone to sleep. How dark it is! Oh, how shall I get out!

*[She runs to the house door, tries it, and finding it locked, goes back to the bench, seats herself, her head in her arms, sobbing. A CRANE is seen climbing over the bank. He comes forward, flapping his wings, but pauses suddenly when he sees GERDA; then stands looking at her, turning his head from side to side.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Crane.** Goo day, goo day!

**Gerda.** [*Startled.*] Oh! good evening. When did you get here?

[*CRANE looks at her, inquisitively turning his head from side to side.*]

**Crane.** You're crying. What makes you cry?

**Gerda.** [*Pointing.*] The boat is gone! And the gate is locked! I can't get out!

**Crane.** Hmm! [*He stalks to the gate looking extremely dignified.*] Is that all? [*He pushes the latch with his beak, turning with pride, as the gate flies open.*] See!

**Gerda.** [*Jumping up.*] Oh! thank you, thank you. Now I can go and look for Kai!

**Crane.** [*Looking at her inquisitively.*] Who's Kai?

**Gerda.** My brother. The Snow Queen took him away. [*Going closer.*] Have you seen Kai?

**Crane.** [*Cocking his head proudly.*] Does he look like you?

**Gerda.** He's \_\_\_\_\_ than me; and his hair is \_\_\_\_\_.  
[*The director should fill in blanks after casting.*]

**Crane.** [*Nods impressively.*] Does he carry a bundle?

**Gerda.** [*Shaking her head.*] No, no bundle. Wait! His sled. It might have been his sled!

**Crane.** [*Nodding.*] Maybe! I couldn't see well in the crowd.

**Gerda.** Oh! You have seen Kai! [*Throwing her arms about CRANE.*]

**Crane.** [*Freeing himself.*] Stop. You're ruffling my feathers.

## THE SNOW QUEEN

- Gerda.** Oh, you, dear Crane, where did you see Kai?
- Crane.** With the Princess, to be sure!
- Gerda.** *[Astonished.]* With the Princess! You saw Kai with a princess?
- Crane.** No; Sweetheart did. She's a Tame Crane. She's engaged at Court. *[Flapping his wings.]* I'm a wild Crane!
- Gerda.** Oh, grandmother will be so glad Kai's living with a princess. Did the princess marry Kai? Is Kai a prince?
- Crane.** How many questions you ask! Can you talk Crane's talk?
- Gerda.** *[Shakes her head.]* No. My grandmother can.
- Crane.** *[The CRANE walks away.]* It would be easier if you understood Crane talk.
- Gerda.** *[Running after him and stroking him.]* Oh, dear Crane, I understand you just fine. Please tell me about Kai. Why did the princess marry him?
- Crane.** Well, you see, she wanted a clever prince.
- Gerda.** *[Nodding earnestly.]* Yes, and Kai is so clever!
- Crane.** And a prince that wasn't frightened of the Lackeys.
- Gerda.** *[Shaking her head.]* Kai is never afraid.
- Crane.** And the others who came to marry her were all frightened.
- Gerda.** Were there so many?
- Crane.** *[Impressively.]* Crowds and crowds! But they couldn't talk, they were so scared when they saw the Lackeys.
- Gerda.** *[Wonderingly.]* Why?

## THE SNOW QUEEN

**Crane.** *[Disdainfully.]* Don't you know? The Lackeys are grand! They wear scarlet plush and gold buttons and silver lace! They're so splendid and fine and tall! But the Prince wasn't scared. He just walked right in, with his bundle on his back.

**Gerda.** *[Who has been listening excitedly.]* His sled, you mean.

**Crane.** *[Severely.]* Don't interrupt. And there sat the princess on a big white pearl, big as this! *[Spreads his wings and whirls round.]*

**Gerda.** *[Duly impressed.]* My!

**Crane.** *[Nodding.]* Yes, and he answered all the questions.

**Gerda.** That was Kai! I know it was. He's oh so clever! He can read,--just anything; and do sums in his head! And he's never scared. Why, he wasn't even afraid of the Snow Queen!

**Crane.** Hum! it must be Kai!

**Gerda.** Oh, yes! Dear Crane, please take me to Kai!

**Crane.** *[Scornfully.]* Why, the lackeys wouldn't let you in.

**Gerda.** *[Laughing.]* That doesn't matter. Kai will let me in!

**Crane.** Hum, hum. Think so? I can ask my sweetheart. She'll know.

**Gerda.** Oh, yes, *[Nodding]* she's at Court.

**Crane.** *[Proudly.]* She's lady in waiting to the princess.

**Gerda.** Then maybe she'll take me to him. *[Thinking.]* Perhaps she would like my scarf! *[She takes it off and carries it to the CRANE.]* Please take this to her, and ask her to take me to see Kai.

*[The CRANE slowly it in his wings, rubs it on his beak.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Crane.** *[Looking back.]* Wait here. *[The CRANE walks on and disappears over the bank.]*

**Gerda.** *[Follows him to the end of the river.]* But it's dark. And what if Mother Kindiken comes back? *[Wandering about the garden looking frightened.]* She'd never let me go if she wants a little girl!

*[She goes back towards the bench, hears a sound and stands listening. The CRANE is now seen returning over the bank. He flaps his wings excitedly. GERDA runs to meet him.]*

**Gerda.** Did you find Sweetheart? Can she take me to see Kai?

**Crane.** Yes. Yes.

**Gerda.** And?

**Crane.** And she says that the prince and princess are coming to see the garden.

**Gerda.** Really? They're coming here?

**Crane.** They're on the river. On their way.

**Gerda.** Oh! dear Crane! *[Throwing her arms about him.]* How good you are!

**Crane.** Feathers. Feathers!

*[GERDA begins to pace, sits on the bench, and paces more.]*

**Gerda.** Are they coming yet?

**Crane.** No. Wait.

*[GERDA drops back on the bench. The PRINCE and PRINCESS enter on a small barge with SWEETHEART, who is wearing the scarf. They are followed by two LACKEYS. The LACKEYS assist the Princess off the barge, then SWEETHEART. It is important that the PRINCE keep his back to GERDA.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Princess.** *[Astonished.]* Why, here's a little girl. What a pretty little girl! *[SHE crosses to GERDA.]*

**Crane.** *[Whispering to GERDA.]* It's the princess. Make your curtsy.

**Gerda.** *[Curtsies, looking at floor.]* May I please. . .

**Crane.** *[Whispering.]* Say, "Your Majesty".

**Gerda.** If you please, Your Majesty, where's Kai?

**Princess.** *[Astonished.]* Kai! Oh, yes, my lady in waiting told me. You're the little girl who is looking for her brother.

**Gerda.** *[Rising.]* Yes, Kai.

*[She looks about puzzled, then seeing the PRINCE, clasps her hands as she runs toward him.]*

**Gerda.** Kai! *[Hugging him from behind.]* Kai!

*[The PRINCE struggles to free himself, shocked.]*

**Gerda.** Kai? *[As SHE lets go, she notices that he is not KAI.]* You're not Kai. *[Sobbing, looking at WILD CRANE.]* He isn't Kai.

*[The PRINCE and PRINCESS stare at GERDA.]*

**Sweetheart** *[Curtsying]* She thought His Majesty was her brother.

**Princess** Oh, the poor little girl! *[Kneeling beside GERDA.]*

**Prince.** And she came all this way alone, to look for him!

**Princess** Don't cry. You shall come and live with me.

**Gerda.** *[Rising.]* No, no!

**Princess** You shall live at the palace, and have a beautiful white pony to ride.

## THE SNOW QUEEN

**Gerda.** *[Moving away.]* Oh, no, may it please Your Majesty, I must find Kai! *[Looking towards the gate.]* Mother Kindiken will be back soon! I must go to the Snow Queen's palace!

**Prince.** *[Approving.]* A brave little girl! But it's a long, long way, to the Snow Queen's palace. How can she go alone?

**Princess** The good sweet child! Don't you see she has the power of a good child! Everyone will help her! It's because she is so brave and loving that she can help Kai.

**Gerda.** *[Thinking, then curtsying deeply.]* If it please Your Majesty, might I have a carriage, or a pony to ride. Grandmother says it's far over woods and hills; *[Rising and looking at her bare feet.]* and a pair of boots.

**Prince.** She's bare-foot, too!

**Princess.** *[Suddenly clapping her hands.]* You shall! You shall! *[She motions to SWEETHEART and a LACKEY and whispers to them. Aloud, as they turn away.]* Make haste!

*[SWEETHEART and LACKEY are seen hurrying out of gate.]*

**Princess** Now come sit by me, little girl, and tell me how the Snow Queen carried Kai away.

*[She seats herself on the bench. The PRINCE sits beside her. GERDA stands before them. The remaining LACKEY and CRANE come closer.]*

**Gerda.** It was Christmas Eve. She came in her sled and carried Kai off.

**Princess.** *[Indignantly.]* I'm sure she shouldn't! How very unkind!

**Gerda.** *[Shaking her head mournfully.]* We waited and waited. The snow was all gone. And we put the roses out.

**Prince.** And Kai didn't come?

THE SNOW QUEEN

*[GERDA shakes her head sorrowfully.]*

**Princess.** Poor little girl!

**Gerda.** And now Grandmother's all alone.

*[GERDA rubs her eyes with her hands. Footsteps are heard. GERDA turns towards the gate, and listens.]*

**Gerda.** It's Mother Kindiken! Oh, she won't let me go. What shall I do!

**Prince.** *[Smiling.]* Go see what it is.

*[GERDA runs to the gate, looking out.]*

**Gerda.** Oh, how wonderful! Oh, it's wonderful!

*[The LACKEY enters carrying sacks and boxes. On top are a pair of boots. HE takes them and places them on the barge. SWEETHEART follows holding a coat, hat, mittens, and scarf. The PRINCE and PRINCESS rise smiling.]*

**Princess** *[Going to GERDA.]* All for you.

*[GERDA runs to PRINCESS kissing her hands, then kisses the hand of the PRINCE. The PRINCESS beckons SWEETHEART, who brings the boots to GERDA.]*

**Gerda.** Oh! They're beautiful. Thank you.

*[She sits on the ground and puts on her boots.]*

**Princess** Now she'll be nice and warm.

**Prince.** Yes, it's very cold where the Snow Queen lives.

*[The PRINCE and PRINCESS help GERDA on with her coat scarf. SWEETHEART looks slightly embarrassed as the PRINCE places the scarf around GERDA's neck.]*

**Princess.** Now you're quite ready.

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Gerda.** Oh! yes. How good everybody is!

*[Suddenly she kneels again before the PRINCESS, kissing her hand.]*

**Princess** *[Stroking GERDA'S hair.]* What is it? Have you another wish?

**Gerda.** *[Looking up.]* If you please, the Crane has been very kind; may he go part way?

*[The PRINCESS nods and smiles. The CRANE makes a deep bow, then walks with dignity to the barge, joining the LACKEY.]*

**Princess** *[Putting her arms about GERDA.]* Goodbye! Follow the river and you will find Kai!

*[The PRINCESS reaches up, and strokes GERDA'S cheek. The LACKEY lifts his arm in salute.]*

**Gerda.** *[Curtsying.]* Thank you, your majesty.

*[GERDA gets on the barge and it exits. The PRINCE and PRINCESS wave, as the lights fade.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

SCENE 3  
THE ROBBER CAMP

A small clearing in a forest. There is a campfire center stage with bedrolls around it. We can see cookware, but nothing fancy. FOURTH ROBBER is wrapped in a red blanket sleeping by the fire. There is a bedroll DSL, along with a pigeon in a cage. This is ROBBER GIRL's "room".

GERDA and LACKEY enter on the barge from USR. They are dressed as at end of Scene 2. GERDA's clothes look worn, the barge is a little emptier, and the LACKEY has lost part of his finery.

**Gerda.** Oh, a bonfire! *[Clapping her hands.]* Stop the boat. *[She draws her cloak about her and gets out of the barge.]*  
Now we can get warm!

**Lackey.** *[Exiting the barge.]* We must go back. *[He pulls her.]*

**Gerda.** No, no. We we can't go back. We must go...

*[The LACKEY cuts her off.]*

**Gerda.** What do you hear?

*[GERDA looks about anxiously and hides with LACKEY as ROBBERS enter and group themselves around the fire. Some play cards, some sharpen knives. ROBBER WOMAN is last to enter generally harasses the others.]*

**Gerda.** *[Looking at the group wonderingly, whispering.]* I'll go ask them if they have seen Kai.

**Lackey.** *[Motioning towards group terrified.]* No, no! Don't you see? They're robbers! They'll kill us!

*[As they speak, the ROBBER GIRL enters, and creeps stealthily across upstage.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Lackey.** *[Going to GERDA.]* Quick, we must go back!

*[The LACKEY takes GERDA'S hand and draw her back.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Running towards them.]* Ho, ho! I heard you! *[She sees the barge.]* My! *[She snatches something, stuffs her mouth.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Shouting and pointing.]* See here! See here!

*[The ROBBERS before the fire glance up, but continue dice and cards. The LACKEY draws GERDA to his side and begins to move away into the wings stage right.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Running after them, shouting.]* Stop! Stop, I say!

*[She rushes offstage after GERDA and LACKEY. One of the ROBBERS runs after her.]*

**First Robber** *[Offstage.]* Gold!

**Second Robber** Gold! *[Runs offstage.]* Look at the plunder!

*[A FLIGHTY JIM runs offstage and helps other ROBBERS bring on a pouch of gold, food and boxes. They appear to be quarreling, as they sack it and eat. As GERDA and ROBBER GIRL enter, the LACKEY peeks out, then rushes towards GERDA, trying to draw her away.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Clutching GERDA, drawing a small knife.]* No, you don't, no, you don't.

*[ROBBER GIRL drags GERDA to the fire as GERDA tries to get away. FIRST ROBBER stands and faces LACKEY.]*

**First Robber.** *[Pointing his sword.]* I'll brain you.

*[The LACKEY shrieks in terror and runs away.]*

**First Robber.** *[Laughing.]* Ah, the blooming cowards!

**Second Robber.** *[Laughing]* Bloody villains!

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Flighty Jim.** *[Giving chase.]* Cowards! *[Runs offstage.]*

**Gerda.** *[Running forward.]* Oh, please, don't hurt them!

*[She runs between the gun and the LACKEYS. The First ROBBER points his gun at GERDA.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Pushing GERDA aside.]* Ninny!

**Third Robber.** *[Holding his hands on his hips, laughing.]* Ha! ha!  
Flighty Jim'll catch them!

*[The ROBBER WOMAN is now seated at the first with a large loaf of bread on her lap. She cuts thick slices from it, and seems to be eating fast, scowling.]*

**Gerda.** *[Running to the ROBBER GIRL.]* Oh, he won't really hurt him, will he? How will I find my way to Kai now?

**Robber Girl.** *[Hopping about, jeering.]* You won't! You'll stay here! Oh, ho! You're afraid! *[She dances about GERDA.]* You shall give me your pretty cap, and your dress, and your nice soft muff. *[She takes the muff, and rubs it against her face.]* I say you shall stay - and you will play with me!

**Gerda.** *[Backing away.]* But I must go to look for Kai!

**Robber Woman.** Stop! What's this! *[She seizes GERDA.]* Oh, ho!

**Robber Woman.** *[Grinning, deliberately scary.]* Why, she's all stuffed with sugar-plums. She'll taste good! She's tender as a young lamb!

*[GERDA struggles to free herself. ROBBER GIRL has snuck around ROBBER WOMAN and grabs her from behind.]*

**Robber Girl.** Let her go! *[Biting her arm.]*

**Robber Woman.** Stop it! Ow, let go, you cub!

THE SNOW QUEEN

*[She circles about wildly, trying to free herself. GERDA runs to left front. The ROBBERS turn, laugh, and clap their hands.]*

**First Robber.** Keep it up, little one, keep it up!

**Second Robber.** She's a good one, she is!

**Third Robber.** See how she makes the old one spin!

**Robber Woman.** Let go! You, wild cat!

**Robber Girl.** Only if you promise you shan't hurt her. *[Stamping.]* She's mine! *[Holding GERDA tight.]* They shan't hurt you. Nobody shall! *[She puts her arms around GERDA'S neck.]*

**First Robber.** *[Laughing.]* Good for you, little one! No they shan't! She's yours!

**Robber Woman.** *[Turning back, grumbling.]* That imp a' mine!

*[The ROBBERS laugh and turn back to the fire, sitting about, eating, again playing dice and cards. GERDA watches them.]*

**Robber Girl.** Don't be frightened. They won't touch you. Come and play! *[Moves GERDA to her "room".]* Come sit here! Tell me who you are. What a pretty dress! *[Feeling the dress.]* You shall give it to me. Where do you come from? You must be a princess.

**Gerda.** *[Shaking her head.]* Oh, no, I'm just Gerda.

**Robber Girl.** Then where did you get the barge and the Lackey?

**Gerda.** The Princess gave them to me to go and look for Kai. *[Wiping her eyes.]* And now the Lackey is gone. How shall I get there? I don't know the way.

**Robber Girl.** Why do you want to look for Kai?

**Gerda.** He's my brother! Oh, poor Kai. *[She sobs in her hands.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Robber Girl.** And you came all alone to look for him?

*[GERDA nods.]*

**Robber Girl.** Weren't you afraid?

**Gerda.** Oh! yes, but I must go. *[Rises.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Holding her back.]* No, no, they won't let you; wait!

*[GERDA sits down looking frightened.]*

**Robber Girl.** Where did Kai go?

**Gerda.** The Snow Queen took him to her palace; over woods and hills. *[Looking about.]* These are the woods. *[She shivers.]* Have you seen Kai?

**Robber Girl.** *[Looking thoughtful.]* Perhaps. Tell me more about him. *[Sees the FIRST ROBBER offstage.]* Wait!

*[The FIRST ROBBER enters as ROBBER GIRLS crosses to him.]*

**Robber Girl.** Where are they? Ha! ha! You lost them!

*[SHE skips about him teasingly. The ROBBER frowns and goes towards the fire. SHE crosses back to GERDA.]*

**Gerda.** *[Whispering.]* Did they really get away?

*[ROBBER GIRL nods and GERDA claps her hands softly. The ROBBER GIRL seats herself again. They are seen talking. The ROBBERS look up laughing as the FIRST ROBBER approaches the fire.]*

**Second Robber.** Did they give you the slip?

**Third Robber.** *[Laughing.]* They out-ran Flighty Jim!

**Flighty Jim.** *[Disdainfully.]* Ha, ha. Got this! *[He holds up a purse.]* And, I saw Reddy Jack! *[Lays purse beside him.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

*[All the ROBBERS turn towards him eagerly.]*

**First Robber.** *[Excited.]* Reddy Jack!

**Second Robber.** What's on to-night?

**Flighty Jim.** We're to meet at the pond.

**Third Robber.** Oh, ho! *[Rises.]*

*[All the ROBBERS rise, look excited, and gather about the FLIGHTY JIM. The Third Robber, as others turn away, seizes the purse.]*

**Flighty Jim.** *[Snatching it.]* Oh, no you don't, you snorting rascal! *[Pushes him and he trips over FOURTH ROBBER.]*

**Robber Woman.** *[Seizing the purse.]* Here, let me have it! *[She turns back to the fire counting the money.]*

**Third Robber.** *[Rising, rubbing his head.]* I'll break your skull!

**Fourth Robber.** I say what's doing? We going somewhere?

**Flighty Jim.** To sack the castle. The swaggering dudes, we'll give them a twist!

**Fourth Robber.** Yes! We'll make a night of it! Give us a snack of something hot, old one, to stay us.

*[The ROBBER WOMAN fills wooden plates from the cauldron, putting in wooden spoons, and hands them about. The ROBBERS eat.]*

**Flighty Jim.** We're to be on hand when Reddy Jack gives the signal.

**Robber Girl.** *[Whispering loudly.]* You hear, they're going in the woods. When they're gone, you watch. I know where the Snow Queen lives!

**Gerda.** Oh, do you?

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Robber Girl.** Yes, hush! they'll hear you. I know, because Bah told me.

**Gerda.** Bah?

**Robber Girl.** My reindeer. He was born there. He knows the way.

**Gerda.** *[Clapping her hands.]* Oh! goody!

**Robber Girl.** Hush, they'll hear you. If you try to get away they'll kill you. But they shan't. *[Stamps her foot.]* Not even if I'm angry, they shan't! I'll do it myself then!

**Gerda.** Oh! I wish grandmother were here! *[Sobs.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Opening her eyes wide, throwing her arms about GERDA.]* No, no, nobody shall; not even if I'm angry. You weren't afraid? You came all alone to look for Kai!

*[The two girls put their arms about each other's necks.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Whispering.]* Come and play now. Then they won't know we heard. We'll find which way they go. *[Aloud.]* See my pigeons! *[She opens the bird cage seizing a pigeon by the feet and flapping it in GERDA'S face.]*

**Robber Girl.** Kiss him! kiss him!

*[GERDA shrinks back.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Pursuing her.]* Kiss him

*[The ROBBERS look on and laugh. Once more they seat themselves before the fire. Some are eating, others sharpening their knives, etc.]*

**Robber Woman.** *[Turning with two plates.]* Come, little cub. Here's your supper. *[Glaring at GERDA.]* Here's her's.

*[GERDA shrinks back.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Robber Woman.** Let her eat. It'll make her fat. *[Grinning.]* The little lamb!

*[The ROBBER GIRL takes the plate to GERDA. They seat themselves. GERDA tries to eat. The ROBBER GIRL eats fast and at same time watches the ROBBERS.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Whispering.]* They'll go soon now, then mother will go to sleep.

*[The WOMAN looks towards the CHILDREN, and the ROBBER GIRL again bends over her plate, pretending to eat.]*

**Gerda.** *[Moving closer.]* Tell me what it's like where the Snow Queen lives.

**Robber Girl.** There are great snow mountains and fields of ice and snow. It's bitter, shivering cold. Shan't you be afraid?

**Gerda.** Oh, poor Kai. How cold he must be! *[Moving closer.]* But Bah knows the way.

**Robber Girl.** Yes. Hush! Listen.

*[She raises her hand, a low whistle is heard. The ROBBERS turn and listen. FLIGHTY JIM exits. The other ROBBERS are seen gesticulating and whispering. The ROBBER GIRL steals up close and listens.]*

**Fourth Robber.** *[Turning and seeing the ROBBER GIRL.]* What are you doing here? Away with you, you baggage!

*[The ROBBER GIRL laughs, and slyly steals the purse from the ROBBER WOMAN, waving it over her head.]*

**Robber Woman.** *[Seeing her, seizes the purse.]* Give it here! To bed, you wild cat!

*[The ROBBER GIRL again laughs, and takes her knife. She runs back to GERDA.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Whispering.]* Now come; pretend you're asleep!

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Gerda.** *[Shrinking away.]* Do you always sleep with your knife?

**Robber Girl.** Yes. You never know what'll happen. Lie still!

*[GERDA moves as far away as she can. Both children lie still pretending to sleep. A sharp whistle is heard. GERDA starts up.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Drawing her back, in a loud whisper.]* Lie still!

*[GERDA lies down. The forest has grown darker. The stage is lighted giving the appearance of night.]*

**Flighty Jim.** *[Entering.]* Here's Reddy Jack; quick! *[He lights his torch at the fire. All the ROBBERS follow the HIM towards the trees and exit.]*

**Gerda.** *[Rising.]* They're gone.

**Robber Girl.** *[Drawing her back.]* Lie still!

*[The ROBBER WOMAN looks at the children. She goes close to the bed carrying a red blanket. GERDA moves slightly. The ROBBER GIRL seizes her, holding her quiet. The ROBBER WOMAN moves her hands as if about to seize GERDA; then looks at the ROBBER GIRL and shakes her head.]*

**Robber Woman.** She wants her, my young wild cat. I'll wait.

*[She covers the ROBBER GIRL carefully with the blanket, then goes back to the fire, seating herself with her back to the children, stirring the fire.]*

*[Both children lie still watching her. All conversation between them is now in loud whispers, with glances towards the ROBBER WOMAN.]*

*[The ROBBER WOMAN wraps herself in a red blanket and lies down before the fire, still with her back to the children. She rolls over; then appears to be in deep sleep.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Robber Girl.** [*Sitting up listening.*] She's asleep. [*She listens an instant, then holds up her hand. A bird over-head is heard singing softly.*]

**Gerda.** [*Starts up.*] What's that?

**Robber Girl.** Hush! let me hear what he says.

[*GERDA looks at the bird, listening.*]

**Gerda.** [*Puzzled.*] I can't understand what he says.

**Robber Girl.** [*Excited.*] I can. He's seen Kai!

**Gerda.** [*Wriggling with excitement.*] Oh, where? where?

**Robber Girl.** Hush! [*She listens, holding up her hand. Again the bird sings.*] It was so cold when the Snow Queen flew over the trees that some of the little birds froze.

**Gerda.** Oh, where did the Snow Queen go?

[*The bird sings. The ROBBER GIRL sits up listening. The bird ceases singing.*]

**Robber Girl.** He says Bah knows. A big white bird carried Kai's sled. [*Suddenly throwing her arms about GERDA.*] Now you'll find Kai!

**Gerda.** Oh, yes, yes! [*The two little girls hug each other.*]

[*The ROBBER WOMAN stirs slight and the GIRLS freeze.*]

**Gerda.** Is she waking up?

**Robber Girl.** [*Crawling softly off the bed.*] Wait, I'll go see.

[*She tiptoes to the ROBBER WOMAN looking at her cautiously, then goes softly back to GERDA.*]

**Robber Girl.** No, she's still asleep. I'll get Bah; you wait here.

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Gerda.** But, I'm afraid. [*ROBBER GIRL disappears offstage.*]

**Robber Woman.** The fat lamb!

**Gerda.** [*Pretending to sleep again.*] Oh, I wish she'd come back with Bah.

[*GERDA stays on the bed, looking at the ROBBER WOMAN and looking off for ROBBER GIRL.*]

**Robber Girl.** [*Entering with Bah.*] You are to take the little girl to the Snow Queen. [*The REINDEER nods solemnly.*] You remember where it is? [*The REINDEER nods.*] You were born there, you ought to! And you'll take good care of Gerda?

[*The REINDEER nods low. GERDA sees the ROBBER GIRL, and tiptoes to her.*]

**Robber Girl.** Here's Bah, old Bah. [*She draws her knife under his throat. The DEER starts.*] Ha! ha! [*She laughs softly and noiselessly claps her hands.*] I'll miss tickling you with my knife, Bah! Well, jump on!

[*SHE helps GERDA up on BAH. GERDA looks anxiously toward the ROBBER WOMAN.*]

**Robber Girl.** We must be quick, but wait!

[*She runs softly to the fire, puts bread and fruit in a sack, and an enormous pair of gloves.*]

**Robber Girl.** See, this is for you to eat on the way. [*She puts the sack around BAH's neck.*]

**Gerda.** Does he know the way?

[*BAH nods.*]

**Gerda.** Oh! I'm so glad! Good Bah! [*She strokes the DEER putting her arms about his neck.*]

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Robber Girl.** *[Whispering.]* Now off with you, quick!

*[GERDA suddenly lets go of BAH and throws her arms about the ROBBER GIRL'S neck.]*

**Gerda.** Come with us! It is so dark here in the woods. *[She shivers.]* Grandmother will love you; so will Kai! *[She kisses the ROBBER GIRL.]*

**Robber Girl.** Don't! *[She starts back rubbing her face.]* I will! I shan't stay here. Come I'll lead you. *[She takes the reins.]*

**Gerda.** Oh! look! *[She points to the WOMAN who sits up in her sleep.]*

**Robber Girl.** *[Drawing her knife, whispers.]* Run, Bah, if she comes I'll stop her.

*[She stands guard beside the DEER holding out her knife.]*

**Gerda.** *[Whispering.]* Quick, Bah, for Kai.

*[As the lights dim, BAH, GERDA and ROBBER GIRL begin their exit as the ROBBER WOMAN wakes.]*

THE SNOW QUEEN

SCENE 4  
THE SNOW QUEEN'S PALACE

As lights rise, the SNOW QUEEN is sitting in her throne DSL. KAI is playing at her feet. Throughout this scene, KAI speaks in a monotone as though he has no emotion at all.

**Queen.** Are you happy here, my little Kai?

**Kai.** Happy? Oh, yes. I suppose so. I like doing my puzzles. Look, I've made so many pictures and words.

**Queen.** You are the most clever boy I know. Will you stay here always and play in my palace?

**Kai** Always? And forever?

**Queen** [*Tenderly, but cold.*] Always and forever.

[*KAI stares at her. He struggles with an emotion and goes back to his puzzle. SNOW QUEEN leaves her throne and kneels beside him.*]

**Queen** What is it Kai?

**Kai** [*Puzzled.*] Just a vague thing. There's a word. I want to spell it. In my puzzle. I almost remember but...

**Queen** Well, when you solve your puzzle, I will give you the whole world and a new pair of skates. [*SHE kisses KAI on the forehead and HE shivers.*] I must leave you for a few days to whiten the tops of the mountains in warmer countries. Then they will know that not even the sun can rule the Snow Queen! I won't be gone long. [*Exits.*]

[*Kai sits alone, rearranging puzzle pieces, trying to make the word. The lights dim and our focus changes to GERDA and BAH, who are entering from the stage right aisle.*]

THE SNOW QUEEN

*[GERDA looks dirtier than before and is now missing her hat, scarf and mittens.]*

**Gerda.** The villagers said it was straight ahead to the Snow Queen's Palace. *[She glances back, then looks anxiously before her.]* Poor Bah, you can't see in the snow. Here, Bah, I'll lead you. *[She slips from the DEER'S back to the ground, still holding the bridle.]* Oh, how cold it is *[They walk a little farther.]* It can't be far now. Oh, I wish you could talk, Bah!

*[The DEER shakes his head and struggles forward. We hear wind. GERDA loses her hold on BAH's reins and falls onto the SR steps.]*

**Gerda.** *[Looking up.]* I can't go on Bah, I can't! Oh, poor Kai! *[She sobs, her head on her knees.]*

*[BAH moves closer and nudges GERDA in the direction of KAI. The Snow Flake Effect begins.]*

**Gerda.** Bah, I must rest for just a minute.

*[BAH nudges her more insistently until her head turns to face Kai.]*

**Gerda.** *[Whispered.]* Kai. *[Louder.]* Kai! *[To BAH.]* He doesn't hear me. *[Stands and looks off right, then left. Then, to BAH]* Wait here.

*[GERDA slowly crosses to KAI and sits next to him.]*

**Gerda.** Hello, Kai.

**Kai.** Hello, Gerda

**Gerda.** Is that all? "Hello, Gerda"?

*[GERDA puts her hand on KAI's shoulder.]*

**Gerda.** Oh, Kai. You're so cold. It must be the glass in his heart. It's freezing him from the inside.

THE SNOW QUEEN

*[She looks at KAI's puzzle. He has spelled "forever".]*

**Gerda.** *[Looking before her.]* "Forever". *[More thoughtfully.]*  
"Forever". Oh, it can't be that simple. *[She looks at  
the puzzle, then KAI, and begins to sing.]*

"The Fir and Pine, the Fir and Pine,  
Are fresh and green forever."

*[As GERDA sings, KAI looks at HER but appears not to  
recognize GERDA.]*

**Gerda.** That's it Kai. *[Singing louder.]*

"The Fir and Pine, the Fir and Pine,  
Are fresh and green for ever,  
Not only in the summer time,  
But mid the winter's frost and rime."

*[GERDA hugs KAI, who does not hug back. SHE pulls away  
and holds her hand to his heart. SHE continues singing.]*

**Gerda.** "The Fir and Pine, the Fir and Pine,  
I love them always dearly . ."

*[KAI begins to softly sing as well.]*

"How oft to me on Christmas night  
The fir and pine have brought delight."

*[Suddenly KAI covers GERDA's hand with his. SHE looks in  
HIS eyes. HE releases her hand and wipes away a tear.]*

**Gerda.** What is it?

*[KAI holds out his hand, showing his tear to GERDA.]*

**Gerda.** It's the glass. Your tears have melted the glass.

**Kai.** Gerda?

**Gerda.** *[Crying.]* Oh, Kai, how glad I am to have found you.

THE SNOW QUEEN

**Kai.**       *[Looking about, wondering.]* Where are we?

**Gerda.**     At the Snow Queen's Palace.

**Kai.**       *[Shakes his head.]* How cold it is.

**Gerda.**     *[Laughing.]* Yes. *[Concerned again.]* Don't you remember?  
The Snow Queen brought you here?

*[KAI shakes his head.]*

**Gerda.**     In her sled all white and shining.

*[KAI looks puzzled.]*

**Gerda & Kai.** On Christmas Eve!

**Kai.**       *[Softly]* She called me! She called to me... and kissed  
me... and I fell asleep. *[Wonderingly.]* Have I been  
asleep this whole time? *[Looking about.]* Where have you  
been, Gerda?

**Gerda.**     Looking for you. It was spring when I left home Kai.

**Kai.**       Let's go home! *[Anxiously.]* We must leave quickly,  
before she comes back. *[HE takes HER hand.]* But how  
shall we go?

**Gerda.**     *[Pointing.]* Bah will take us. And the friends I made  
along the way will help.

*[They walk to BAH, GERDA leading. We see the Mirror Snow  
Effect as they start exit.]*

**Queen.**     *[Offstage.]* Gallop! Gallop!

**Kai.**       She's here, Gerda!

*[KAI turns back and we see the SNOW QUEEN enter on her  
sleigh and stops. SHE stands, reaching a hand toward  
KAI. HE takes GERDA's hand and leads her offstage as the  
lights fade.]*

## THE SNOW QUEEN

### CURTAIN CALL

The curtain call should be used to get Kai and Gerda back to grandmother's house. This time can also be used for GERDA, KAI and BAH to get back to the stage. If there is double casting, that person could put on a piece of their earlier persona at that point in the curtain call.

It should flow, more or less, in this order:

Robbers, lead by Flighty Jim  
Robber Woman  
Robber Girl  
Lackey  
Sweetheart  
Prince & Princess  
Wild Crane  
Roses  
Mother Kindiken (she should lead the roses)  
Boys of the Village  
Girls of the Village  
Grandmother  
Kai & Gerda (who should run in and hug her first)  
The Snow Queen (who lead group bow)  
Group Bow