

KALMUS VOCAL SCORES

# *TALES of HOFFMANN*

(Les Contes d'Hoffmann).

OPERA FANTASTIQUE.

*In Three Acts with a Prologue and Epilogue.*

French Words by

**JULES BARBIER.**

English Words by

**EDWARD AGATE.**

. . Music by . .

❖ **OFFENBACH** ❖

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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### *Prologue and Epilogue.*

HOFFMANN

NICKLAUS

LUTHER

NATHANIEL

HERMANN

STUDENTS, WAITERS.

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### *First, Second and Third Acts.*

HOFFMANN

NICKLAUS

OLYMPIA

GIULIETTA

ANTONIA

SPALANZANI

CRESPER

COCHENILLE

PITICHINACCIO

FRANZ

COPPELIUS

DAPERTUTTO

MIRACLE

SCHLEMIL

A VOICE.

GUESTS, MASQUERADERS, SERVANTS.

## ARGUMENT.

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The scene is laid at Nuremberg, in Luther's wine cellar, a tavern next door to the opera house. Hoffmann arrives with his friends, a merry company of students. He tells his companions the story of his three loves, and they one and all discard Luther's warning that the curtain is about to rise on the second act of "Don Giovanni," and remain to hear Hoffmann's Tales.

Hoffmann's first tale is of Olympia, the reputed daughter of Spalanzani, the physiologist, whose pupil he becomes in order to be near the object of his love. Olympia is really a wonderful automaton, the creation of Spalanzani and his colleague, Coppélius, who has contributed her eyes, and claims a half share. Spalanzani buys him out by giving him a worthless cheque. Coppélius has artfully contrived to sell the young lover a pair of glasses which endow inanimate objects with life. Olympia is presented to the assembled guests, who marvel at her accomplishments. Finding himself alone with her, Hoffmann is by no means disconcerted at her mechanical replies to his impassioned declarations, and fancies that he is loved in return. Presently a dance takes place, during which Hoffmann claims Olympia for his partner. The doll gets out of control, and Hoffmann is whirled round till he falls in a swoon, whilst she dances out of the room. In falling, Hoffmann has broken his glasses, and when he recovers he hears that Coppélius, infuriated at having been duped, is wreaking vengeance by destroying Olympia. Amid the jeers of the guests, Hoffmann realizes his mistake.

The scene of the second tale is laid in Venice at the sumptuous palace of Giuletta, a courtesan. Hoffmann loves her in spite of the warnings of his friend, Nicklaus. She is the slave of a magician, Dapertutto, who has persuaded her to steal the shadow of Peter Schlemil, and now requires her to obtain the reflection of Hoffmann in a mirror he gives her for that purpose. This is his way of securing souls. She easily succeeds in the course of their love-making. Schlemil arrives on the scene and a quarrel ensues, in which he loses his life. A moment later a gondola passes in which Hoffmann sees the faithless Giuletta with Dapertutto.

The third tale is of Antonia, the beautiful daughter of Councillor Crespel. She has inherited a wonderful voice from her mother, but she is so frail that she must not sing. She loves Hoffmann, but her father disapproves of the match, and forbids his servant Franz to admit him. Franz, being deaf, misunderstands him, and a moment later the lovers are together. When Crespel returns Hoffmann hides behind a curtain, and learns, by overhearing Doctor Miracle, that Antonia is consumptive. Hoffmann entreats her to sing no more, but the Doctor invokes the soul of her dead mother, and persuades her it is her duty to use the gift bequeathed to her. Antonia sings, and the effort kills her.

Those are the three tales that Hoffmann relates to his companions. The opera is over; Hoffmann and the students call for more punch, and the curtain falls on a scene of wild carousal.



# TALES OF HOFFMANN

## PRELUDE.

J. Offenbach

Maestoso.

PIANO

*ff*



Cut to \* page 18.

CURTAIN.

