

These excerpts highlight the sensitive and empathetic side of Siegfried.

The **first** shows his attention and care for the birds and beasts of the forest and how he learned about love

The **second**. his delight in the serenity and loveliness of the woods, as well as his tender longing for and appreciation of his mother whom he has never seen.

The **third** expresses his admiration for the serene and glorious mountain heights, his careful appreciation for the sleeping figure before him, then his vulnerability encountering her even while she sleeps, and finally his fearlessness even to his own perishing as he resolves to wake here

The **fourth** demonstrates his desire to rescue Brünnhilde from her terrors aroused by his impetuosity.

And the **fifth** and final excerpt expresses he reawakened desire to see her blissfully happy again, and perhaps his own role in causing her distressed condition.

5 excerpts Wagner's Ring

4 from Siegfried – (23 minutes)

And 1 from Götterdämmerung – (4 minutes)

3rd & 4th dramas in his Ring Cycle: Der Ring des Nibelungen

Excerpt I -- from Siegfried: Act 1; Scene 1, Lines 224-251, Measures 769-829 (Schott p/v: pp: 33-36)

CD 1 – Track 5 (1:45 minutes)

Herbert von Karajan (conductor) & Jess Thomas (tenor)

Translation of Stewart Spencer & Barry Millington

Siegfried here confronts his step-father the dwarf Mime with his realization that he is not his natural son despite the lies Mime has told him and shows his tender care for nesting animals.

Siegfried

Ei, Mime, bist du so witzig,
so lass' mich eines noch Wissen!

Hey, Mime, if you're so clever,
tell me one thing more!

(simply)

Es sangen die Vöglein
so selig im Lenz,

(58) In spring the birds
would sing so blithely,

(tenderly)

das eine lockte das and're:
du sagtest selbst —
da ich's wissen wollt' —
das wären Männchen

the one would entice the other:
you said so yourself —
since I wanted to know —

(58) that these were fathers

(tenderly)

und Weibchen.

and mothers.

Sie kos'ten so lieblich,
und ließen sich nicht;
sie bauten ein Nest
und brüteten drin:
da flatterte junges
Geflügel auf,
und beide pflegten der Brut. —

(69) They dallied so fondly
not leaving each other
but building a nest
and brooding inside it:
young fledgings
would flutter out
and both of them tended their brood. —

So ruhten im Busch
auch Rehe gepaart,
selbst wilde Füchse und Wölfe:
Nahrung brachte
zum Neste das Männchen,
das Weibchen säugte die Welpen.
Da lernt' ich wohl
was Liebe sei:
der Mutter entwandt' ich
die Welpen nie. —
Wo hast du nun, Mime,
dein minniges Weibchen,
daß ich es Mutter nenne?

Deer, too, would rest
in pairs in the bushes
with even wild foxes and wolves:
the father brought
(58) food to the lair,
the mother suckled the whelps.
There I learned
what love is:
from their mother I never
took the whelps. —
Where, Mime, is
your loving wife,
that I may call her mother?

Excerpt II –from **Act 2; Scene 2**; Lines 1449-1492; Measures 704-872 (Schott p/v: pp. 194-203)

CD 2 – Track 12 (6:15)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=5&v=SYBLEfItPY

Herbert von Karajan (conductor) & Jess Thomas (tenor)

Siegfried is on a quest to learn fear (which he mistakes for feelings of love) and muses about his missing parentage.

(Siegfried stretches out comfortably beneath the lime- tree and watches Mime go.)

Siegfried

Daß der mein Vater nicht ist,
wie fühl' ich mich drob so froh!
Nun erst gefällt mir
der frische Wald;
nun erst lacht mir
der lustige Tag,
da der garstige von mir schied,
und ich gar nicht ihn wiederseh'!

(70) That he is not my father —
how happy I feel at that!
Only now do the fresh
woods delight me;
only now does the day
smile upon me in gladness
now that the loathsome dwarf has left me
and I'll nevermore see him again!

(He falls into a silent reverie.)

Wie sah mein Vater wohl aus? —
Ha! — gewiß wie ich selbst:
denn wär' wo von Mime ein Sohn,
müßt' er nicht ganz
Mime gleichen?
G'rade so garstig,
griesig und grau,
klein und krumm,
höck'rig und hinkend,
mit hängenden Ohren,
triefigen Augen —
fort mit dem Alp!

What must my father have looked like? —
Ha! — Of course, like me!
(20) If any son of Mime's existed,
must he not look
just like Mime?
Just as filthy,
fearful and wan,
short and misshapen,
hunchbacked and halting,
with drooping ears
and runny eyes —
away with the elf!

Ich mag ihn nicht mehr seh'n!

I don't want any more to see him!

(He leans further back and looks up through the treetops. Deep silence. Forest murmurs.)

Aber — wie sah

(70) But — what must

meine Mutter wohl aus?	(36)	my mother have looked like? —
Das — kann ich		That I cannot
nun gar nicht mir denken! —	(70)	imagine at all!
Der Rehhindin gleich		Like those of the roe-deer,
glänzten gewiß		her bright-shining eyes
ihr hell schimmernden Augen, —		must surely have glistened —
nur noch viel schöner! —	(36)	only far fairer! —
	(<i>very softly</i>)	
Da bang sie mich geboren,		When, in fear, she gave me birth,
warum aber starb sie da?		why did she have to die then?
Sterben die Menschenmütter		Do all human mothers
an ihren Söhnen		perish
alle dahin?		because of their sons?
Traurig wäre das, traun! — —	(58)	Sad that would be, in truth! —
Ach! möcht' ich Sohn		Ah, might I, her son,
meine Mutter sehen! — —		see my mother! — —
Meine — Mutter!		My mother —
Ein Menschenweib! —	(2)	a human woman!
	(14a & c) (70) (69)	
<i>(He sighs deeply and leans further back. Deep silence. The whisperings of the forest increase. Siegfried's attention is finally caught by the song of the forest birds. He listens with growing interest to a wood-bird in the branches above him.)</i>		
Du holdes Vög'lein!	(70)	You lovely wood-bird!
Dich hört' ich noch nie:		I've never heard you before:
bist du im Wald hier daheim? —		is the forest here your home? —
Verständ' ich sein süßes Stammeln!		Could I only make sense of his sweet babble!
Gewiß sagt' es mir 'was, —		He must be telling me something —
vielleicht — von der lieben Mutter? —	(69)	perhaps — about my dear mother? —

Excerpt III – from **Act 3; Scene 3**: Lines 2347-2408; Measures 825-1066 (Schott p/v: pp. 318-330)

CD 4 – Tracks 3-4 (11:14) (= 3:59 + 7:15)

Herbert von Karajan (conductor) & Jess Thomas (tenor)

Here Siegfried encounters Brünnhilde who has been put in a magic sleep; he reveals his vulnerability and learns fear and love in awakening her.

Siegfried

(54) (47) (14a & c)

(*quietly*)

Selige Öde		Blissful emptiness
auf wonniger Höh'!	(13)	on wondrous heights!
<i>(He climbs right up and, standing on a rock by the precipice at the back, observes the scene in wonderment. He gazes into the pinewood at the side and moves further downstage.)</i>		
Was ruht dort schlummernd		What lies there, in slumber,
im schattigen Tann? —		within the shade of the pines?
Ein Roß ist's,		A horse I see,
rastend in tiefem Schlaf!	(55)	resting in deepest sleep!

*(Slowly coming nearer, he stops in astonishment when,
still some distance away, he notices Brünnhilde's form.)*

Was strahlt mir dort entgegen? —	What beam of light bedazzles my gaze? —
Welch' glänzendes Stahlgeschmeid?	What metalwork wrought in glittering steel?
Blendet mir noch	Is it the blaze
die Lohe den Blick? —	that still blinds my eye? —
Helle Waffen! —	Shining weapons! —
Heb' ich sie auf?	Shall I remove them?

*(He raises the shield and sees Brünnhilde's form,
although her face remains largely concealed by her helmet.)*

Ha! in Waffen ein Mann: —	Ha! In weaponry a man: —
wie mahnt mich wonnig sein Bild! —	how his likeness fills me with wonder! —
Das hehre Haupt	Does his helm perhaps
drückt wohl der Helm?	press on his noble head?
Leichter würd' ihm,	(13) Lighter it were
lös't' ich den Schmuck.	if I loosened his headgear.

*(He carefully loosens the helmet and removes it from the sleeper;
long curling hair breaks free. Siegfried starts.)
(tenderly)*

Ach! — wie schön! —	Ah! — how fair! —
<i>(He remains lost in the sight of it.)</i>	
Schimmernde Wolken	Shimmering clouds
säumen in Wellen	have fringed a shining
den hellen Himmelssee:	celestial lake with their waves:
leuchtender Sonne	the radiant sunlight's
lachendes Bild	smiling likeness
strahlt durch das Wogengewölk!	shines through a billowing bank of clouds!

(He bends closer to the sleeping figure.)

Von schwellendem Athem	His breast is heaving
schwingt sich die Brust: —	with swelling breath: —
brech' ich die enge Brünne?	(42) shall I break the trammelling breastplate open?
<i>(He tries to loosen the breastplate.)</i>	

Komm', mein Schwert,	Come, my sword,
schneide das Eisen!	(32) and cut through the iron!

(Siegfried draws his sword and, with tender care, cuts through the rings of mail on both sides of the armour. He then lifts away the breastplate and greaves, so that Brünnhilde now lies before him in a woman's soft garment. He starts up in shock and astonishment.)

Das ist kein Mann! — —	(13)(72) This is no man! — —
<i>(He stares at the sleeping woman in a state of utter turmoil.)</i>	
Brennender Zauber	Burning enchantment
zückt mir in's Herz;	charms my heart;
feurige Angst	(72) fiery terror
faßt meine Augen:	transfixes my eyes:
mir schwankt und schwindelt der Sinn!	(36) my senses stagger and swoon!
<i>(He is filled with immense apprehension.)</i>	

Wen ruf' ich zum Heil,	To save me, whom shall I
daß er mir helfe? —	call on to help me? —
Mutter! Mutter!	Mother! Mother!

Gedenke mein'! —	(72)	Remember me! —
<i>(He sinks, as if fainting, on Brünnhilde's breast. He starts up with a sigh.)</i>		
Wie weck' ich die Maid,		How shall I waken the maid
daß sie ihr Auge mir öff'ne?		so that she opens her eyes for me?
Das Auge mir öff'nen?	(72)	Opens her eyes for me?
Blende mich auch noch der Blick?		Will the sight might yet blind me!
Wagt' es mein Trotz?		Might my bravery dare it?
Ertrüg' ich das Licht? —		Could I bear their light? —
Mir schwebt und schwankt	(75)	Around me everything floats
und schwirrt es umher;		and sways and swims;
sehrendes Sehnen		searing desire
zehrt meine Sinne:		consumes my senses:
am zagenden Herzen		on my quaking heart
zittert die Hand! —	(54)	my hand is trembling! —
Wie ist mir Feigem? —		What is this, coward? —
Ist dieß das Fürchten? —		Is this what it is to fear? —
O Mutter! Mutter!		O mother! Mother!
Dein muthiges Kind!		Your mettlesome child!
	<i>(very tenderly)</i>	
Im Schlafe liegt eine Frau: —	(54)	A woman lies asleep: —
die hat ihn das Fürchten gelehrt! —	(14a & c)	she has taught him the feeling of fear! —
Wie end' ich die Furcht?		How can I overcome my fear?
Wie fass' ich Muth? —		How can I summon up courage? —
Daß ich selbst erwache,		That I myself may awaken,
Muß die Maid ich erwecken! —		I must waken the maid! —
<i>(As he approaches the sleeper anew, he is again held enthralled by the sight of her as a result of his more tender feelings. He bends closer.)</i>		
Süß erbebt mir		Sweetly quivers
ihr blühender Mund. —		her burgeoning mouth. —
Wie mild erzitternd	(13)	gently trembling it lures me on,
mich zagen er reizt! —		faint-hearted that I am! —
Ach, theses Athems		Ah, the blissfully warming
wonnig warmes Gedüft'! —		fragrance of that breath! —
	<i>(as though in despair)</i>	
Erwache! erwache!		Awake! Awake!
heiliges Weib! —		holiest woman! —
	<i>(He gazes at her.)</i>	
Sie hört mich nicht. —	(47)	She cannot hear me. —
	<i>(slowly, with urgent and insistent expression)</i>	
So saug' ich mir Leben		So I suck my life
aus süßesten Lippen		from the sweetest of lips
	<i>(relenting)</i>	
sollt' ich auch sterbend vergeh'n!	(10)	though I should perish and die!
<i>(He sinks, as though dying, on the sleeping woman and, with his eyes closed, presses his lips on her mouth. Brünnhilde opens her eyes....)</i>		

Excerpt IV – from **Act 3; Scene 3**; Lines 2560-2598; Measures 1356-1460 (Schott p/v: pp. 347-352)

CD 4 – Tracks 8-9 (...4:04) (8 start at 3:38-6:01 to end 9 at 1:42)

Herbert von Karajan (conductor) & Jess Thomas (tenor) & Helge Dernesh (soprano)

This is a bit later; she a semi-divine shield maiden has been deprived of her divinity and is shocked to confront her human vulnerability when Siegfried impetuously tries to embrace her. But note his response to her anxiety.

Brünnhilde

Kein Gott nahte mir je:		No god has ever dared draw near me:
der Jungfrau neigten		in awe the heroes bowed
scheu sich die Helden:		before the virgin maid:
heilig schied sie aus Walhall! —	(11)	holy she left Valhalla! —
Wehe! Wehe!		Alas! Alas!
Wehe der Schmach,		Alas for the shame,
der schmachlichen Noth!		for my ignominious plight!
Verwundet hat mich,		He who woke me
der mich erweckt!		has wounded me, too!
Er erbrach mir Brünne und Helm:		He broke open my breastplate and helmet:
Brünnhilde bin ich nicht mehr!		Brünnhilde am I no longer!

Siegfried

Noch bist du mir	To me you are still
die träumende Maid:	the dreaming maid:
Brünnhildes Schlaf	Brünnhilde's sleep
brach ich noch nicht.	I have not yet broken through.
Erwache! Sei mir ein Weib!	Awaken, and be a woman for me!

Brünnhilde

(in a state of confusion)

Mir schwirren die Sinne;	My senses swirl;
mein Wissen schweigt:	my knowledge falls silent:
soll mir die Weisheit schwinden?	is my wisdom to forsake me now?

Siegfried

Sang'st du mir nicht,	(73)	Did you not sing
dein Wissen sei		that your knowledge stemmed
das Leuchten der Liebe zu mir?	(73)	from the shining light of your love for me?

Brünnhilde

(staring ahead of her)

Trauriges Dunkel	Grievous darkness	
trübt meinen Blick;	beclouds my gaze;	
mein Auge dämmert,	(26)	my eye grows dim,
das Licht verlischt:		its light dies out:
Nacht wird's um mich;		night closes round me;
aus Nebel und Grau'n		from mist and dread
windet sich wuthend		a confusion of anxiety
ein Angstgewirr!		now writhes and rages!
Schrecken schreitet		Terrors stalk
und bäumt sich empor!		and tower over!

(Brünnhilde impulsively covers her eyes with her hands.)

Siegfried

(gently removing her hands from her eyes)

Nacht umfängt		Night imprisons
gebund'ne Augen;	(73)	eyes that are bound;
mit den Fesseln schwindet		with your fetters
das finst're Grau'n:		your gloomy dread will fade:
tauch' aus dem Dunkel und sieh' —		rise from the darkness and see —
sonnenhell leuchtet der Tag!		bright as the sun shines the day!

Excerpt V – from *Götterdämmerung*: **Act 3, Scene 2**; Lines 1902-1919; Measures 868-914
(Schott p/v: pp. 403-407)

Herbert von Karajan (conductor) & Helge Brilioth (tenor)

CD 4 – Track 5 (4:10)

(Also compare:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZQd59ijm4HQ>

Jonathan Nott & Klaus Florian Vogt (4:15)

Siegfried as empathetic liberator and enlightener culminates in the coda that is his final and thorough retrospective of his life – the retrospective coda occurs as he lies dying in which relives his first encounter with Brünnhilde at the end of *Siegfried* and, selflessly disregarding his own impending mortality, expresses concern that she is psychologically and spiritually **in sleep again!**

Siegfried

(supported in a sitting position by two men, opens his eyes radiantly)

Brünnhilde —	(76)	Brünnhilde —
heilige Braut —		holiest bride —
wach' auf! öffne dein Auge! —	(76)	awaken! Unclose your eyes! —
Wer verschloß dich		Who locked you
wieder in Schlaf?		in sleep yet again?
Wer band dich in Schlummer so bang? —	(48)	Who bound you in slumber so dread? —
Der Wecker kam;		A wakener has come;
er küßt dich wach,	(50)	he kisses you awake
und aber der Braut		and moreover breaks
bricht er die Bande: —		the bride's bonds: —
da lacht ihm Brünnhilde's Lust! —		so Brünnhilde's joy will laugh upon him. —
Ach, dieses Auge,	(77)	Ah! Those eyes,
ewig nun offen! —		now open for ever! —
Ach, dieses Athems		Ah, this breath's
wonniges Wehen! —	(78)	enchanted sighing! —
Süßes Vergehen —		Sweet extinction, —
seliges Grauen — :		blissful terror —
Brünnhild' bietet mir — Gruß! —	(47)	Brünnhilde offers me greeting! —
	(105)	

(Siegfried sinks back and dies. This is followed by perhaps the single most intense stretch of orchestral music in the entire Ring: the Funeral Procession, an epic encomium in music to Siegfried as hero!)

Leitmotifs heard in Siegfried Talk Examples

(in order of hearing)

Excerpt I

- # 58 – Sehnsucht – Yearning (for woman's love and beauty)
- # 69 – Waldvogel – Woodbird
- # 58 – Sehnsucht

Excerpt II

- # 70 – Waldweben – Forest Murmurs (Weavings)
- # 20 – Nibelung smithy
- # 36 – Wälsungenweh – Woe of the Valsungs
- # 70 – Waldweben
- # 58 – Sehnsucht – Yearning
- # 2 – Wellen – Waves
- # 14a & c – Love's Allure ["Freia"]
- # 70 – Waldweben
- # 69 – Waldvogel
- # 70 – Waldweben
- # 69 – Waldvogel

Excerpt III

- # 54 – Schlummer – Sleep
- # 47 – Schicksalskunde – Annunciation of Fate
- # 54 – Schlummer
- # 14a & c – Weibesverlockung – Woman's Allure [Freia]
- # 54 – Schlummer
- # 14a & c – Love's Allure
- # 13 – Liebesbann – Love's spell
- # 42 – Valkyrie
- # 55 – Scheidegruss – Farewell
- # 13 – Liebesbann
- # 42 – Valkyrie
- # 72 – Liebeslust – Love's Delight
- # 13 – Liebesbann
- # 72 – Liebeslust
- # 36 – Wälsungenweh
- # 72 – Liebeslust
- # 75 – Liebesverwirrung – Love's Confusion
- # 54 – Schlummer
- # 14a & c – Woman's Allure
- # 32 – Schwert – Sword
- # 12 – Vertrag – Contract
- # 13 – Liebesbann
- # 47 – Schicksalskunde
- # 10 – Entsagung – Renunciation
- # 14a & c – Woman's Allure

Excerpt IV

- # 11 – Walhall
- # 73 – Welterbschaft – World Inheritance

Excerpt V

- # 76 – Weltbegrüssung – World greeting
- # 48 – Todesverkündigung – Annunciation of Death
- # 50 – Siegfried
- # 77 – Liebesgruss
- # 78 – Liebesgruss – Love's greeting
- # 47 – Fate
- # 105 – Todestrauer – Mourning

