



## The Sunken Bell

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### Characters Discussed

Heinrich (HIN-rihkh), (*A Study in Scarlet*) a bell-founder who symbolizes the artist against the world. Trying to carry a bell to a mountain church, he is injured by the spirits of wood and water, and his bell is pushed into a lake. He is saved by the mountain sprite Rautendelein, and they fall in love. A rescue party carries him home, but he returns to Rautendelein. His efforts to make a superlative bell are frustrated by the dwarfs. His wife dies, and her dead hand rings the sunken bell. Dying, and renounced by Rautendelein, he tries to reach a flaming cathedral-castle. Wittikin gives him the wines of life and of the questing spirit; Rautendelein, the wine of aspiration. Embraced by Rautendelein, he dies, hearing the chimes of the sun.

Magda (MAHG-dah), his wife.

Rautendelein (row-TEHN-deh- lin), a mountain sprite. She is intended as the bride of the Nickelmännchen but falls in love with Heinrich. When he is taken home dying, she revives him. Renounced by Heinrich, she marries the Nickelmännchen but returns to Heinrich as he dies.

Wittikin (VIHT-tih-kihn), a sorceress and the grandmother of Rautendelein.

The Nickelmännchen, a water spirit whom Rautendelein marries.

The Vicar, representing spirit.

The Schoolteacher, representing mind.

The Barber, representing body.

### Bibliography:

Garten, Hugh F. *Gerhart Hauptmann*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1954. A useful general introduction to the writer and his work.

McInnes, E. O. H. "The 'Active' Hero in Gerhart Hauptmann's Dramas." In *Hauptmann: Centenary Lectures*, edited by K. G. Knight and F. Norman. London: University of London's Institute of Germanic Studies, 1964. A relevant essay in a collection that mostly deals with later works.

Maurer, Warren R. *Gerhart Hauptmann*. Boston: Twayne, 1982. A study with emphasis on the works; *The Sunken Bell* is discussed in chapter 6, "Folklore and Symbolism."

Maurer, Warren R. "Hauptmann's 'Die versunkene Glocke' and Ibsen's 'Auf den Höhen.'" *Monatshefte* 52 (1960): 189-193. A comparison of the two works.

## The Sunken Bell: The Sunken Bell

Reichart, Walter A. "Gerhart Hauptmann's Dramas on the American Stage." *Maske und Kothurn* 8 (1962): 223-232. About the staging of Hauptmann's plays in the United States.

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