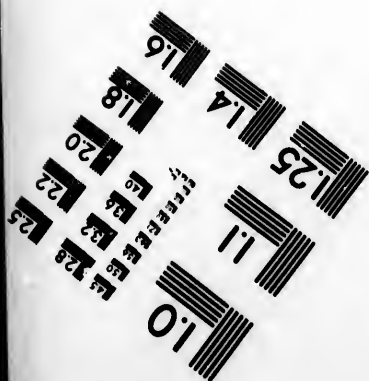
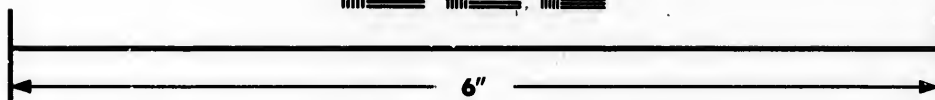
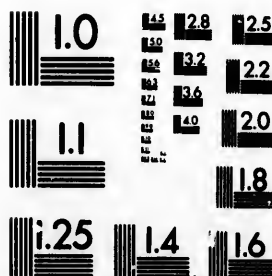


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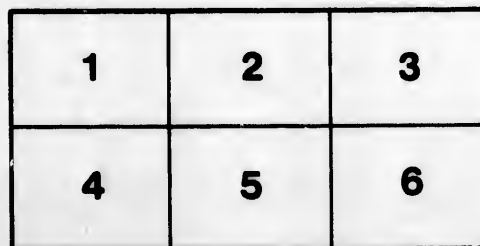
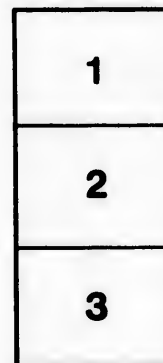
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[Piano-vocal score. English]

OR,

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1888



*Produced at the Savoy Theatre, London, under the management of Mr.  
D'Oyly Carte, 3rd October, 1888, and at the Casino, New York,  
17th October, 1888, under the management of Mr. Rudolph Aronson.*

# THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD ; OR,

## THE MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID.

### Dramatis Personæ.

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| SIR RICHARD CHOLMONDELEY ( <i>Lieutenant<br/>of the Tower</i> ) .....                  | ..... |
| COLONEL FAIRFAX ( <i>under sentence of death</i> ) .....                               | ..... |
| SERGEANT MERYLL ( <i>of the Yeomen of the<br/>Guard.</i> ) .....                       | ..... |
| LEONARD MERYLL ( <i>His Son</i> ) .....  | ..... |
| JACK POINT ( <i>A Strolling Jester</i> ) .....   | ..... |
| WILFRED SHADBOLT ( <i>Head Jailor of the<br/>Tower and Assistant Tormentor</i> ) ..... | ..... |
| THE HEADSMAN .....   | ..... |
| FIRST YEOMAN .....   | ..... |
| SECOND " .....   | ..... |
| THIRD " .....  | ..... |
| FOURTH " .....   | ..... |
| FIRST CITIZEN .....  | ..... |
| SECOND " .....   | ..... |
| ELSIE MAYNARD ( <i>A Strolling Singer</i> ) .....                                      | ..... |
| PHOEBE MERYLL ( <i>Sergeant Meryll's Daughter</i> ) .....                              | ..... |
| DAME CARRUTHERS ( <i>Housekeeper to the Tower.</i> ) .....                             | ..... |
| KATE ( <i>Her Niece</i> ) .....  | ..... |

Chorus of Yeomen of the Guard, Gentlemen, Citizens, &c.

Scene, Tower Green, London.

Period, Sixteenth Century.



# THE YEOMEN OF THE GUARD;

OR,

## THE MERRYMAN AND HIS MAID.

### ACT I.

SCENE—*Tower Green.*

PHŒBE *discovers spinning.*

#### SONG.—PHŒBE.

When maiden loves, she sits and sighs,

She wanders to and fro ;

Unbidden tear-drops fill her eyes,

And to all questions she replies,

With a sad heigho !

"Tis but a little word—" Heigho ! "

So soft, 'tis scarcely heard—" Heigho ! "

An idle breath,

Yet life and death

May hang upon a maid's "Heigho ! "

When maiden loves, she mopes apart,

As owl mopes on a tree ;

Although she keenly feels the smart,

She cannot tell what ails her heart,

With its sad "Ah me ! "

"Tis but a foolish sigh—" Ah me ! "

Born but to droop and die—" Ah me ! "

Yet all the sense

Of eloquence

Lies hidden in a maid's "Ah me ! "

*Enter WILFRED.*

WIL. Mistress Meryll !

PHŒ. (*looking up*). Eh! Oh! it's you, is it? You may go away, if you like. Because I don't want you, you know.

WIL. Haven't you anything to say to me?

PHŒ. Oh, yes! Are the birds all caged? The wild beasts all littered down? All the locks, chains, bolts, and bars in good order? Is the Little Ease sufficiently uncomfortable? The racks, pincers, and thumbscrews all ready for work? Ugh! you brute!

WIL. These allusions to my professional duties are in doubtful taste. I didn't become a head-jailer because I like head-jailing. I didn't become an assistant-tormenter because I like assistant-tormenting. We can't *all* be sorcerers, you know. (PHŒBE *annoyed*). Ah! you brought that upon yourself.

PHŒ. Colonel Fairfax is *not* a sorcerer. He's a man of science and an alchemist.

WIL. Well, whatever he is, he won't be one long, for he's to be beheaded to-day for dealings with the devil. His master nearly had him last night, when the fire broke out in the Beauchamp Tower.

PHŒ. Oh! how I wished he had escaped in the confusion! But take care: there's still time for a reply to his petition for mercy.

WIL. Ah! I'm content to chance that. This evening at half-past seven.

PHŒ. You're a cruel monster to speak so unfeelingly of the death of a young and handsome soldier.

WIL. Young and handsome! How do you know he's young and handsome?

PHŒ. Because I've seen him every day for weeks past taking his exercise on the Beauchamp Tower. (WILFRED *utters a cry of agony*). There, I believe you're jealous of *him*, now. Jealous of a man I've never spoken to! Jealous of a poor soul who's to die in an hour!

WIL. I am! I'm jealous of everybody and everything. I'm jealous of the very words I speak to you—because they reach your ears—and I musn't go near 'em!

PHŒ. How unjust you are! Jealous of the words you speak

to me ! Why, you know as well as I do, that I don't even like them.

WIL. You used to like 'em.

PHÆ. I used to *pretend* I liked them. It was mere politeness to comparative strangers. (*Exit PHÆBE, with spinning wheel*).

WIL. I don't believe you know what jealousy is ! I don't believe you know how it eats into a man's heart—and disorders his digestion—and turns his interior into boiling lead. Oh, you are a heartless jade to trifle with the delicate organization of the human interior.

*Enter crowd of Men and Women, followed by Yeomen of the Guard, led by SERGEANT MERYLL.*

CHORUS (*as Yeomen march on*).

Tower warders,  
Under orders,  
Gallant pikemen, valiant sworders,  
Brave in bearing,  
Foeman scaring,  
In their bygone days of daring.  
Ne'er a stranger,  
There to danger—  
Each was o'er the world a ranger.  
To the story  
Of our glory  
Each a bold contributory !

CHORUS OF YEOMEN.

In the autumn of our life,  
Here at rest in ample clover,  
We rejoice in telling over  
Our impetuous May and June.  
In the evening of our day,  
With the sun of life declining,  
We recall without repining  
All the heat of bygone noon.

## SOLO.—MERYLL

This the autumn of our life,  
 This the evening of our day :  
 Weary we of battle strife,  
 Weary we of mortal fray.  
 But our year is not so spent,  
 And our days are not so faded,  
 But that we with one consent,  
 Were our loved land invaded,  
 Still would face a foreign foe,  
 As in days of long ago.

PEOPLE.  
 Tower warders,  
 Under orders, &c.

YEOMEN.  
 In the autumn time of life, &c

[*Exeunt Crowd. Manent Warders.*]

*Enter DAME CARRUTHERS.*

DAME. A good-day to you, Sergeant.

MERYLL. Good-day, Dame Carruthers. Busy to-day ?

DAME. Busy, aye ! the fire in the Beauchamp last night has given me work enough. A dozen poor prisoners—Richard Colfax, Sir Martin Byfleet, Colonel Fairfax, Warren the preacher poet, and half-a-score others—all packed into one small cell, not six feet square. Poor Colonel Fairfax, who's to die to-day, is to be removed to No. 14 in the Cold Harbour Tower, that he may have his last hour alone with his confessor ; and I've to see to that.

MER. Poor gentleman ! He'll die bravely. I fought under him two years since, and he valued his life as it were a feather.

PHŒ. He's the bravest, the handsomest, and the best young gentleman in England ! He twice saved my father's life ; and it's a cruel thing, a wicked thing, and a barbarous thing that so gallant a hero should lose his head—for it's the handsomest head in England—

DAME. For dealings with the devil. Aye ! if all were be-headed who dealt with *him*, there'd be busy doings on Tower Green.

PHŒ. You know very well that Colonel Fairfax is a student

of alchemy—nothing more, and nothing less ; but this wicked Tower, like a cruel giant in a fairy-tale, must be fed with blood, and that blood must be the best and bravest in England, or it's not good enough for the old blunderbore. Ugh !

DAME. Silence, you silly girl ; you know not what you say. I was born in the old keep, and I've grown grey in it, and, please God, I shall die and be buried in it ; and there's not a stone in its walls that is not as dear to me as my own right hand.

SONG.—DAME CARRUTHERS.

When our gallant Norman foes  
Made our merry land their own,  
And the Saxons from the Conqueror were flying,  
At his bidding it arose,  
In its panoply of stone,  
A sentinel unliving and undying.  
Insensible, I trow,  
As a sentinel should be,  
Though a queen to save her head should come a-suing,  
There's a legend on its brow  
That is eloquent to me,  
And it tells of duty done and duty doing.  
The screw may twist and the rack may turn,  
And men may bleed and men may burn,  
On London town and all its hoard  
I keep my solemn watch and ward !

CHORUS. The screw may twist, &c.

Within its wall of rock  
The flower of the brave  
Have perished with a constancy unshaken.  
From the dungeon to the block,  
From the scaffold to the grave,  
Is a journey many gallant hearts have taken.  
And the wicked flames may hiss  
Round the heroes who have fought  
For conscience and for home in all its beauty ;  
But the grim old fortalice  
Takes little heed of aught  
That comes not in the measure of its duty.



The screw may twist and the rack may turn,  
 And men may bleed and men may burn,  
 On London town and all its hoard  
 It keeps its silent watch and ward!

*[Exeunt all but PHOEBE and SERGEANT MERYLL.]*

PHOEBE. Father! No reprieve for the poor gentleman?

MERYLL. No, my lass; but there's one hope yet. Thy brother Leonard, who, as a reward for his valour in saving his standard and cutting his way through fifty foes who would have hanged him, has been appointed a Tower warder, will arrive this morning; and as he comes straight from Windsor, where the Court is, it may be—it may be—that he will bring the expected reprieve with him.

PHOEBE. Oh, that he may!

MERYLL. Amen! For the Colonel twice saved my life, and I'd give the rest of my life to save his! And will thou not be glad to welcome thy brave brother, with the fame of whose exploits all England is a-ringing?

PHOEBE. Aye, truly, if he brings the reprieve.

MERYLL. And not otherwise?

PHOEBE. Well, he's a brave fellow indeed, and I love brave men!

MERYLL. All brave men?

PHOEBE. Most of them, I verily believe! But I hope Leonard will not be too strict with me—they say he is a very dragon of virtue and circumspection! Now, my dear old father is kindness itself, and—

MERYLL. And leaves thee pretty well to thine own ways, eh? Well, I've no fears for thee; thou hast a feather-brain, but thou'rt a good lass.

PHOEBE. Yes, that's all very true, but if Leonard is going to tell me that I may not do this, and I may not do that, and I must not talk to this one, or walk with that one, but go through the world with my lips pursed up and my eyes cast down, like a poor nun who has renounced mankind—why, as I have *not* renounced mankind, and don't mean to renounce mankind, I won't have it—there!

MERYLL. Nay, he'll not check thee more than is good for thee,



Phoebe ! He's a brave fellow, and bravest among brave fellows ; and yet it seems but yesterday that he robbed the Lieutenant's orchard.

SONG.—MERYLL

A laughing boy but yesterday,  
A merry urchin, blithe and gay !  
Whose joyous shout  
Came ringing out,  
Unchecked by care or sorrow—  
To-day, a warrior, all sun-brown,  
Whose deeds of soldierly renown  
Are all the boast of London Town ;  
A veteran, to-morrow !

When at my Leonard's deeds sublime  
A soldier's pulse beats double time,  
And brave hearts thrill,  
As brave hearts will,  
At tales of martial glory ;  
I burn with flush of pride and joy,  
A pride unbittered by alloy,  
To find my boy—my darling boy—  
The theme of song and story !

*Enter LEONARD MERYLL*

LEON. Father !

MER. Leonard ! my brave boy ! I'm right glad to see thee,  
and so is Phoebe !

PHOE. Aye—hast thou brought Colonel Fairfax's reprieve ?

LEON. Nay, I have here a despatch for the Lieutenant, but  
no reprieve for the Colonel !

PHOE. Poor gentleman ! poor gentleman !

LEON. Aye, I would I had brought better news. I'd give  
my right hand—nay, my body—my life, to save his !

MER. Dost thou speak in earnest, my lad ?

LEON. Aye, I'm no braggart. Did he not say my life ? and  
am I not his foster-brother ?

MER. Then hearken to me. Thou hast come to join the  
Yeomen of the Guard.

LEON. Well?

MER. None has seen thee but ourselves?

LEON. And a sentry, who took but scant notice of me!

MER. Now to prove thy words. Give me the despatch. Get thee hence at once! Here is money, and I'll send thee more. Lie hidden for a space, and let no one know. I'll convey a suit of yeoman's uniform to the Colonel's cell—he shall shave off his beard so that none shall know him, and I'll own him as my son, the brave Leonard Meryll, who saved his flag and cut his way through fifty foes who thirsted for his life. He will be welcomed without question by my brother yeomen. I'll warrant that. Now, how to get access to his cell? The key is with thy sour-faced admirer, Wilfred Shadboldt (to PHOEBE).

PHOE. (*demurely*). I *think*—I say, I *think*—I can get anything I want from Wilfred. I think—I say, I *think*—you may leave that to me.

MER. Then get thee hence at once, lad—and bless thee for this sacrifice.

PHOE. And take my blessing too, dear, dear Leonard.

LEON. And thine, eh? Humph! Thy love is new-born; wrap it up, lest it take cold and die.

TRIO.—LEONARD, PHOEBE, MERYLL

PHOE. Alas! I waver to and fro—

Dark danger hangs upon the deed!

ALL Dark danger hangs upon the deed!

LEON. The scheme is rash and well may fail;

But ours are not the hearts that quail—

The hands that shrink—the cheeks that pale

In hours of need!

ALL No, ours are not the hearts that quail—

The hands that shrink—the cheeks that pale

In hours of need!

The air I breathe to him I owe:

My life is his—I count it naught!

That life is his—so count it naught!

LEON. And shall I reckon risks I run  
When services are to be done

To save the life of such an one?  
Unworthy thought !

ALL. And shall we reckon risks we run  
To save the life of such an one ?  
Unworthy thought !

PHÆ. We may succeed—who can foretell ?  
May heaven help our hope—farewell !

ALL. We may succeed—who can foretell ?  
May heaven help our hope—farewell !

LEONARD *embraces MERYLL and PHÆBE, and then exit.*  
PHÆBE *weeping.*

MER. Nay, lass, be of good cheer, we may save him yet.

PHÆ. Oh ! see, father—they bring the poor gentleman  
from the Beauchamp. Oh, father ! his hour is not yet come ?

MER. No, no, they lead him to the Cold Harbour Tower to  
wait his end in solitude. But softly—the Lieutenant ap-  
proaches ! He should not see thee weep.

[*Enter FAIRFAX, guarded. The LIEUTENANT enters, meeting him.*]

LIEUT. Halt ! Colonel Fairfax, my old friend, we meet but  
sadly.

FAIR. Sir, I greet you with all good-will ; and I thank you  
for the zealous care with which you have guarded me from the  
pestilent rangers which threaten human life outside. In this  
happy little community, death, when he comes, doth so in  
punctual and business-like fashion, and, like a courtly gentle-  
man, giveth due notice of his advent, that one may not be  
taken unawares.

LIEUT. Sir, you bear this bravely, as a brave man should.

FAIR. Why, sir, it is no light boon to die swiftly and surely  
at a given hour and in a given fashion. Truth to tell, I would  
gladly have my life ; but if that may not be, I have the next  
best thing to it, which is death. Believe me, sir, my lot is not  
so much amiss.

PHÆ (*aside to MERYLL.*) Oh, father, father, I cannot bear  
it !

MER. My poor lass !

FAIR. Nay, pretty one, why weepest thou ? Come, be com-

forted. Such a life as mine is not worth weeping for. (*sees MERYLL*) Sergeant Meryll, is it not? (*to LIEUT.*) May I greet my old friend? (*shakes MERYLL'S hand.*) Why, man, what's all this? Thou and I have faced the grim old king a dozen times, and never has his majesty come to me in such goodly fashion. Keep a stout heart, good fellow—we are soldiers, and we know how to die, thou and I. Take my word for it, it is easier to die well than to live well—for, in sooth, I have tried both.

BALLAD.—FAIRFAX.

Is life a boon?  
 If so, it must befall  
 That death when'er he call,  
 Must call too soon.  
 Though fourscore years he give,  
 Yet one would pray to live  
 Another moon!  
 What kind of plaint have I,  
 Who perish in July?  
 I might have had to die,  
 Perchance, in June!

Is life a thorn?  
 Then count it not a whit!  
 Man is well done with it;  
 Soon as he's born  
 He should all means essay  
 To put the plague away;  
 And I, war-worn,  
 Poor captured fugitive,  
 My life most gladly give—  
 I might have had to live  
 Another morn!

[*At the end, PHOEBE is led off, weeping, by MERYLL.*]

FAIR. And now, Sir Richard, I have a boon to beg. I am in this strait for no better reason than because my kinsman, Sir Clarence Poltwhistle, one of the Secretaries of State, has charged me with scrcery, in order that he may succeed to my estate, which devolves to him provided I die unmarried.

LIEUT. As thou wilt most surely do.

FAIR. Nay, as I will most surely not do, by your worship's grace I have a mind to thwart this good cousin of mine.

LIEUT. How?

FAIR. By marrying forthwith, to be sure!

LIEUT. But heaven ha' mercy, whom wouldst thou marry?

FAIR. Nay, I am indifferent on that score. Coming Death hath made of me a true and chivalrous knight who holds all womankind in such esteem that the oldest, and the meanest, and the worst favored of them is good enough for him. So, my good lieutenant if thou wouldst serve a poor soldier who has but an hour to live, find me the first that comes; my confessor shall marry us, and her dower shall be my dishonoured name and a hundred crowns to boot. No such poor dower for an hour of matrimony!

LIEUT. A strange request. I doubt that I should be warranted in granting it.

FAIR. Tut tut! There never was a marriage fraught with so little of evil to the contracting parties. In an hour she'll be a widow, and I—a bachelor again for aught I know!

LIEUT. Well, I will see what can be done, for I hold thy kinsman in abhorrence for the scurvy trick he has played thee.

FAIR. A thousand thanks, good sir; we meet again on this spot in an hour or so. I shall be a bridegroom then, and your worship will wish me joy. Till then, farewell. *(To guard)*—I am ready, good fellows.

*(Exit with Guard into Cold Harbour Tower.)*

LIEUT. He is a brave fellow, and it is a pity that he should die. Now to find him a bride at short notice. Well, the task should be easy!

*[Exit.]*

*Enter JACK POINT and ELSIE MAYNARD, pursued by a crowd of men and women. POINT and ELSIE are much terrified. POINT, however, assuming an appearance of self-possession,*

CHORUS.

Here's a man of jollity,

Jibe, joke, jollify!

Give us of your quality,

Come fool, follify!

If you vapour vapidly,  
 River runneth rapidly,  
 Into it we fling  
 Bird who doesn't sing.

Give us an experiment  
 In the art of merriment,  
 Into it we throw  
 Cock who doesn't crow.

Banish your timidity,  
 And with all rapidity  
 Give us quip and quiddity—  
 Willy-nilly, O!

River none can mollify,  
 Into it we throw  
 Fool who doesn't follify,  
 Cock who doesn't crow!

POINT (*alarmed.*) My masters, I pray you bear with us, and we will satisfy you, for we are merry folk who would make all merry as ourselves. For, look you, there is humor in all things and the truest philosophy is that which teaches us to find it and to make the most of it.

ELSIE (*struggling with one of the crowd.*) Hands off, I say, unmannerly fellow! (*pushing him away.*)

POINT (*to 1st Citizen.*) Ha! Didst thou hear her say, "Hands off?"

FIRST CIT: Aye, I heard her say it, and I felt her do it! What then?

POINT. Thou dost not see the humor of that?

FIRST CIT. Nay, if I do, hang me!

POINT. Thou dost not? Now observe. She said, "Hands off!" Whose hands? Thine. Off what? Off *her*. Why? Because she is a woman. Now had she *not* been a woman, thine hands had not been set upon her at all. So the reason for the laying on of hands is the reason of the taking off of hands, and herein is contradiction contradicted. It is the very marriage of *pro* with *con*; and no such lopsided union either, as times go, for *pro* is not more unlike *con* than man is unlike woman—yet men and women marry every day with none to say,



"Oh, the pity of it," but I and fools like me ! Now wherewithal shall we please you ? We can rhyme you couplet, triolet, quatrain, sonnet, rondolet, ballade, what you will. Or we can dance you saraband, gondolet, carole, pimpernel or Jumping Joan.

ELSIE. Let us give them the singing farce of the Merryman and his Maid—therein is song and dance too.

ALL. Aye, the Merryman and his Maid !

DUET.—POINT and ELSIE.

POINT. I have a song to sing, O !

ELSIE. Sing me your song, O !

POINT. It is sung to the moon  
By a love-lorn loon,

Who fled from the mocking throng, O !

It's the song of a merryman, moping mum,

Whose soul was sad and whose glance was glum,

Who sipped no sup and who craved no crumb,

As he sighed for the love of a ladye,

Heighdy ! heighdy !

Misery me, lackadaydy !

He sipped no sup, and he craved no crumb,

As he sighed for the love of a ladye !

ELSIE. I have a song to sing, O !

POINT. Sing me your song, O ?

ELSIE. It is sung with the ring

Of the songs maids sing

Who love with a love life-long, O !

It's the song of a merrymaid, peerly proud,

Who loved a lord, and who laughed aloud

At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,

Whose soul was sore and whose glance was glum,

Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,

As he sighed for the love of a ladye !

Heighdy ! heighdy !

Misery me, lackadaydy !

He sipped no sup, &c.

POINT. I have a song to sing, O !

ELSIE. Sing me your song, O !

**POINT.** It is sung to the knell  
 Of a churchyard bell,  
 And a doleful dirge, ding dong, O !  
 It's a song of a popinjay, bravely born,  
 Who turned up his noble nose with scorn  
 At the humble merrymaid, peerly proud,  
 Who loved that lord and who laughed aloud  
 At the moan of the merryman, moping mum,  
 Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,  
 Who sipped no sup and who craved no crumb,  
 As he sighed for the love of a ladye.

**BOTH.** Heighdy ! heighdy !  
 Misery me, lackadaydy !  
 He sipped no sup, &c.

**ELSIE.** I have a song to sing, O !

**POINT.** Sing me your song, O !

**ELSIE.** It is sung with a sigh  
 And a tear in the eye,  
 For it tells of a righted wrong, O !  
 It's a song of a merrymaid, once so gay,  
 Who turned on her heel and tripped away  
 From the peacock popinjay, bravely born,  
 Who turned up his noble nose with scorn  
 At the humble heart that he did not prize ;  
 She begged on her knees, with a downcast eyes,  
 For the love of the merryman moping mum,  
 Whose soul was sad, and whose glance was glum,  
 Who sipped no sup, and who craved no crumb,  
 As he sighed for the love of a ladye !

**BOTH.** Heighdy ! heighdy !  
 Misery me, lackadaydy !  
 His pains were o'er, and he sighed no more,  
 For he lived in the love of a ladye !

**1ST CIT.** Well sung and well danced !

**2ND CIT.** A kiss for that, pretty maid !

**ALL.** Aye, a kiss all round.

**ELSIE** (*drawing dagger*). Best beware ! I am armed !

**POINT.** Back, sirs—back ! This is going too far.

2ND CIT. Thou dost not see the humour of it, eh! Yet there is humour in all things—even in this. (*Trying to kiss her.*)

ELSIE. Help! Help!

*Enter LIEUTENANT with guard. Crowd falls back.*

LIEUT. What is this pother?

ELSIE. Sir, I sang to these folk, and they would have repaid me with gross courtesy, but for your honour's coming.

LIEUT. (*to MOB.*) Away with ye! Clear the rabble. (*Guards push crowd off, and go off with them.*) Now, my girl, who are you, and what do you here?

ELSIE! May it please you, sir, we are two strolling players, Jack Point and I, Elsie Maynard, at your worship's service. We go from fair to fair, singing and dancing, and playing brief interludes; and so we make a poor living.

LIEUT. You two, eh? Are ye man and wife?

POINT. No, sir, for though I'm a fool, there is a limit to my folly. Her mother, old Bridget Maynard, travels with us (*for Elsie is a good girl*), but the old woman is a-bed with fever, and we have come here to pick up some silver, to buy an electuary for her.

LIEUT. Hark ye, my girl! Your mother is ill?

ELSIE. Sorely ill, sir.

LIEUT. And needs good food, and many things that thou canst not buy?

ELSIE. Alas! sir, it is too true.

LIEUT. Wouldst thou earn a hundred crowns?

ELSIE. An hundred crowns! They might save her life!

LIEUT. Then listen. A worthy, but unhappy gentleman is to be beheaded in an hour on this very spot. For sufficient reasons, he desires to marry before he dies, and he hath asked me to find him a wife. Wilt thou be that wife?

ELSIE. The wife of a man I have never seen!

POINT. Why sir, look you, I am concerned in this; for though I am not yet wedded to Elsie Maynard, Time works wonders, and there's no knowing what may be in store for us. Have we your worship's word for it that this gentleman will die to-day?

LIEUT. Nothing is more certain, I grieve to say.

POINT. And the maiden will be allowed to depart the very instant the ceremony is at an end?

LIEUT. The very instant. I pledge my honour that it shall be so.

POINT. An hundred crowns?

LIEUT. An hundred crowns!

POINT. For my part, I consent. It is for Elsie to speak.

TRIO.—ELSIE, POINT, AND LIEUT.

LIEUT. How say you, maiden, will you wed  
A man about to lose his head?

No harm to you can thence arise,  
In half an hour, poor soul, he dies.

For half an hour

You'll be a wife,

And then the dower

Is yours for life.

This tempting offer why refuse?

If truth the poets tell,

Most men, before they marry, lose

Both head and heart as well!

ALL

Temptation, oh temptation,

Were we in truth intended

To shun whate'er our station,

Your fascinations splendid;

Or fall whene'er we view you,

Head over heels into you!

ELSIE. A strange proposal you reveal,  
It almost makes my senses reel,  
Alas! I'm very poor indeed,  
And such a sum I sorely need.

Unfortunately,

Life and death

Have hung till lately

On a breath.

My mother, sir, is like to die,

This money life may bring,

Bear this in mind, I pray, if I

Consent to do this thing!

ALL. Temptation, oh temptation, &c.

POINT. Though as a general rule of life  
I don't allow my promised wife,  
My lovely bride that is to be,  
To marry anyone but me,  
The circumstances  
Of this case  
May set such fancies  
Out of place.  
So if the fee is duly paid,  
And he, in well earned grave,  
Within the hour is duly laid,  
Objection I will waive!

ALL. Temptation, oh, temptation, &c.

*During this, the LIEUTENANT has whispered to WILFRED (who has entered.) WILFRED binds ELSIE'S eyes with a kerchief and leads her into the Cold Harbour Tower.*

LIEUT. And so, good fellow, you are a jester?

POINT. Aye, sir, and, like some of my jests, out of place.

LIEUT. I have a vacancy for such an one. Tell me, what are your qualifications for such a post?

POINT. Marry, sir, I have a pretty wit. I can rhyme you extempore; I can convulse you with quip and conundrum; I have the lighter philosophies at my tongue's tip; I can be merry, wise, quaint, grim, and sardonic, one by one, or all at once; I have a pretty turn for anecdote; I know all the jests—ancient and modern—past, present, and to come; I can riddle you from dawn of day to set of sun, and, if that content you not, well on to midnight and the small hours. Oh, sir, a pretty wit, I warrant you—a pretty, pretty wit!

RECIT. AND SONG.—POINT.

I've jest and joke

And quip and crank,

For lowly folk

And men of rank.

I ply my craft

And know no fear,

I aim my shaft

At prince or peer.



At peer or prince—at prince or peer,  
I aim my shaft and know no fear !

I've wisdom from the East and from the West,  
That's subject to no academic rule,  
You may find it in the jeering of a jest,  
Or distil it from the folly of a fool.

I can teach you with a quip if I've a mind—  
I can trick you into learning with a laugh,  
Oh winnow all my folly and you'll find  
A grain or two of truth among the chaff !

I can set a braggart quailing with a quip,  
The upstart I can wither with a whim,  
He may wear a merry laugh upon his lip ;  
But his laughter has an echo that is grim,  
When they're offered to the world in merry guise,  
Unpleasant truths are swallowed with a will—  
For he who'd make his fellow creatures wise  
Should always gild the philosophic pill !

LIEUT. And how came you to leave your last employ ?

POINT. Why sir, it was in this wise. My Lord was the Archbishop of Canterbury and it was considered that one of my jokes was unsuited to his Grace's family circle. In truth I ventured to ask a poor riddle, sir—Wherein lay the difference between his Grace and poor Jack Point ? His Grace was pleased to give it up, sir. And thereupon I told him that whereas his Grace was paid £10,000 a year for being good, poor Jack Point was good for nothing. 'Twas but a harmless jest, but it offended his Grace, who whipped me and set me in the stocks for a scurril rogue, and so we parted. I had as lief not take post again with the dignified clergy.

LIEUT. But I trust you are very careful not to give offence. I have daughters.

POINT. Sir, my jests are most carefully selected, and anything objectionable is expunged. If your honour pleases, I will try them first on your honour's chaplain.

LIEUT. Can you give me an example. Say that I had sat me down hurriedly on something sharp ?

POINT. Sir, I should say that you had sat down on the spur of the moment.



LIEUT. Humph. I don't think much of that. Is that the best you can do?

POINT. It has always been much admired, sir, but we will try again.

LIEUT. Well then, I am at dinner, and the joint of meat is but half cooked.

POINT. Why then, sir, I should say—that what is *underdone* cannot be helped.

LIEUT. I see. I think that manner of thing would be somewhat irritating.

POINT. At first, sir, perhaps; but use is everything, and you would come in time to like it.

LIEUT. We will suppose that I caught you kissing the kitchen wench under my very nose.

POINT. Under *her* very nose, good sir—not under yours! That is where I would kiss her. Do you take me? Oh, sir, a pretty wit—a pretty, pretty wit!

LIEUT. The maiden comes. Follow me, friend, and we will discuss this matter at length in my library.

POINT. I am your worship's servant. That is to say, I trust I soon shall be. But, before proceeding to a more serious topic, can you tell me, sir, why is a cook's brain-pan like an overwound clock?

LIEUT. A truce to this fooling—follow me.

POINT. Just my luck; my best conundrum wasted!

*Exeunt.*

*Enter ELSIE from Tower, followed by WILFRED, who removes the bandage from her eyes.*

#### RECITATIVE AND BALLAD.—ELSIE

'Tis done! I am a bride! Oh, little ring,  
That bearest in thy circlet all the gladness  
That lovers hope for, and that poets sing,  
What bringest thou to me but gold and sadness?  
A bridegroom all unknown, save in this wise,  
To-day he dies! To-day, alas, he dies!

Though tear and long-drawn sigh

Ill fit a bride,  
No sadder wife than I

The whole world wide !  
 Ah me ! Ah me !  
 Yet maids there be  
 Who would consent to lose  
 The very rose of youth,  
 The flower of life,  
 To be, in honest truth,  
 A wedded wife,  
 No matter whose !

Ere half an hour has rung,  
 A widow I !

As heaven, he is too young,  
 Too brave to die !

Ah me ! Ah me !  
 Yet wives there be  
 So weary worn, I trow,  
 That they would scarce complain,  
 So that they could  
 In half an hour attain  
 To widowhood,  
 No matter how !

[Exit ELSIE as WILFRED comes down.]

WIL. (*looking after Elsie.*) 'Tis an odd freak, for a dying man and his confessor to be closetted alone with a strange singing girl. I would fain have espied them, but they stopped up the keyhole. *My keyhole.*

Enter PHOEBE with MERYLL, who carries a bundle. MERYLL remains in the background, unobserved by WILFRED.

PHOE. (*aside.*) Wilfred—and alone ! Now to get the keys from him. (*Aloud.*) Wilfred—has no reprieve arrived ?

WIL. None. Thine adored Fairfax is to die.

PHOE. Nay, thou knowst that I have naught but pity for the poor condemned gentleman.

WIL. I know that he who is about to die is more to thee than I, who am alive and well.

PHOE. Why, that were out of reason, dear Wilfred. Do they not say that a live ass is better than a dead lion ? No, I don't mean that.

WIL. They say that, do they ?

PHŒ. It's unpardonably rude of them, but I believe they put it in that way. Not that it applies to thee, who art clever beyond all telling.

WIL. Oh, yes ; as an assistant-tormentor.

PHŒ. As a wit, as a humorist, as a most philosophic commentator on the vanity of human resolution.

(PHŒBE slyly takes a bunch of keys from WILFRED'S waistband, and hands them to MERYLL, who enters the Tower unnoticed by WILFRED.)

WIL. Truly, I have seen great resolution give way under my persuasive methods (*working a small thumbscrew*). In the nice regulation of a screw, in the hundredth part of a single revolution lieth all the difference between stony reticence and a torrent of impulsive unbosoming that the pen can scarcely follow. Ha! ha! I am a mad wag.

PHŒ. (*with a grimace.*) Thou art a most light-hearted and delightful companion, Master Wilfred. Thine anecdotes of the torture-chamber are the prettiest hearing.

WIL. I'm a pleasant fellow an I choose. I believe I am the merriest dog that barks. Ah, we might be passing happy together.

PHŒ. Perhaps. I do not know.

WIL. For thou wouldst make a most tender and loving wife.

PHŒ. Aye, to one whom I really loved. For there is a wealth of love within this little heart—saving up for—I wonder whom? Now, of all the world of men, I wonder whom? To think that he whom I am to wed is now alive and somewhere! Perhaps far away, perhaps close at hand. And I know him not! It seemeth that I am wasting time in not knowing him.

WIL. Now say that it is I—nay! suppose it for the nonce. Say that we are wed—suppose it only—say that thou art my very bride, and I thy cheery, joyous, bright, frolicsome husband—and that the day's work being done, and the prisoners stored away for the night, thou and I are alone together—with a long, long evening before us.

PHŒ. (*with a grimace.*) It is a pretty picture—but I scarcely

know. It cometh so unexpectedly—and yet—and yet—were I  
thy bride—

WIL. Aye—wert thou my bride?—

PHÆ. Oh, how I would love thee!

BALLAD.—PHÆBE.

Were I thy bride,  
Then the whole world beside  
Were not too wide  
To hold my wealth of love—  
Were I thy bride.

Upon thy breast  
My loving head would rest,  
As on her nest  
The tender turtle dove—  
Were I thy bride.

This head of mine  
Would be one head with thine,  
And in that shrine  
Our happiness would dwell—  
Were I thy bride.

And all day long  
Our lives should be a song,  
No grief, no wrong  
Should make my heart rebel—  
Were I thy bride.

The silvery flute  
The melancholy lute,  
Were night owls hoot  
To my love-whispered coo—  
Were I thy bride.

The skylark's trill  
Were but discordance shrill  
To the soft thrill  
Of wooing as I'd woo—  
Were I thy bride.

MERYLL *re-enters*; gives keys to PHOEBE, who replaces them at WILFRED'S girdle unnoticed by him.

The rose's sigh  
Were as a carrion's cry  
To lullaby  
Such as I'd sing to thee,  
Were I thy bride.  
A feather's press  
Were leaden heaviness  
To my caress.

But then of course you see  
I'm not thy bride!

[*Exit PHOEBE.*]

WILL. No, thou'rt not—not yet! But, Lord, how she woo'd! I should be no mean judge of wooing, seeing that I have been more hotly woo'd than most men. I have been woo'd by maid, widow, and wife. I have been woo'd boldly, timidly, tearfully, shyly—by direct assault, by suggestion, by implication, by inference, and by innuendo. But this wooing is not of the common order: it is the wooing of one who must needs woo me, if she die for it!

[*Exit WILFRED.*]

*Enter MERYLL, cautiously, from Tower.*

MER. (*looking after them.*) The deed is, so far, safely accomplished. The sly boots, how she wheedled him! What a helpless ninny is a love-sickman? He is but as a lute in a woman's hands—she plays upon him whatever tune she will. But the Colonel comes. I' faith he's just in time, for the yeomen parade here for his execution in two minutes!

*Enter FAIRFAX, without beard and moustache, and dressed in Yeoman's uniform.*

FAIR. My good and kind friend, thou runnest a grave risk for me.

MER. Tut, sir, no risk. I'll warrant none here will recognize you. You make a brave Yeoman, sir! So—this ruff is too high, so—and the sword should hang thus. Here is your halbert, sir; carry it thus. The yeomen come. Now, remember you are my brave son, Leonard Meryll.

FAIR. If I may not bear mine own name, there is none other I would bear so readily.

MER. Now, sir, put a bold face on it ; for they come.

*Enter Yeomen of the Guard.*

RECITATIVE.—SERGEANT MERYLL.

Ye Tower yeomen, nursed in war's alarms,  
Suckled on gunpowder, and weaned on glory,  
Behold my son, whose all-subduing arms  
Have formed the theme of many a song and story !  
Forgive his aged father's pride ; nor jeer  
His aged father's sympathetic tear !

*(pretending to weep.)*

CHORUS.

Leonard Meryll !  
Leonard Meryll !  
Dauntless he in time of peril !  
Man of power,  
Knighthood's flower,  
Welcome to the grim old Tower :  
To the Tower, welcome thou !

RECITATIVE.—FAIRFAX.

Forbear, my friends, and spare me this ovation ;  
I have small claim to such consideration :  
The tales that of my prowess are narrated  
Have been prodigiously exaggerated.

CHORUS.

'Tis ever thus !  
Wherever valour true is found,  
True modesty will there abound.  
'Tis ever thus !  
Wherever valour true is found,  
True modesty will there abound.

COUPLETS.

1ST YEOMAN. Didst thou not, oh, Leonard Meryll !  
Standard lost in last campaign,  
Rescue it at deadly peril—  
Bear it bravely back again ?



CHORUS. Leonard Meryll, at his peril,  
Bore it bravely back again !

2ND YEOMAN. Didst thou not, when prisoner taken,  
And debarred from all escape,  
Face, with gallant heart unshaken,  
Death in most appalling shape ?

CHORUS. Leonard Meryll faced his peril,  
Death in most appalling shape !

FAIR. Truly I was to be pitied,  
Having but an hour to live,  
I reluctantly submitted,  
I had no alternative !  
Oh ! the facts that have been stated  
Of my deeds of derring do,  
Have been much exaggerated,  
Very much exaggerated,  
Monstrously exaggerated !  
Scarce a word of them is true !

3RD YEOMAN. You, when brought to execution,  
Like a demigod of yore,  
With heroic resolution  
Snatched a sword and killed a score !

CHORUS. Leonard Meryll, Leonard Meryll  
Snatched a sword and killed a score !

4TH YEOMAN. Then escaping from the toemen,  
Boltered with the blood you shed,  
You, defiant, fearing no men,  
Saved your honour and your head !

CHORUS. Leonard Meryll, Leonard Meryll  
Saved his honour and his head !

FAIR. True, my course with judgment shaping,  
Favoured, too, by lucky star,  
I succeeded in escaping  
Prison bolt and prison bar !  
Oh ! the tales that have been stated  
Of my deeds of derring do,  
Have been much exaggerated, &c.

CHORUS. They are not exaggerated, &c.

*Enter PHŒBE. She rushes to FAIRFAX and embraces him.*

## RECIT.

PHŒ. Leonard!

FAIR. (*puzzled.*) I beg your pardon?

PHŒ. Don't you know me?

I'm little Phœbe!

FAIR. (*still puzzled.*) Phœbe? Is this Phœbe?  
My little Phœbe? (*Aside.*) Who the deuce may she  
be? It can't be Phœbe, surely?

WIL. Yes, 'tis Phœbe—

Thy sister Phœbe!

ALL. Aye, he speaks the truth;

'Tis Phœbe!

FAIR. (*pretending to recognize her.*) Sister Phœbe!

PHŒ. Oh, my brother! (*Embrace.*)

FAIR. Why, how you've grown! I did not recognize you!

PHŒ. So many years! Oh, brother! (*Embrace.*)

FAIR. Oh, my sister!

WIL. Aye, hug him, girl! There are three thou mayst  
[hug—

Thy father and thy brother and—myself!

FAIR. Thyself, forsooth? And who art thou thyself?

WIL. Good sir, we are betrothed. (*FAIRFAX turns enquir-  
ingly to PHŒBE.*)

PHŒ. Or more or less—

But rather less than more.

WIL. To thy fond care

I do commend thy sister. Be to her  
An ever-watchful guardian—eagle-eyed!  
And when she feels (as sometimes she does feel)  
Disposed to indiscriminate caress,  
Be thou at hand to take those favours from her.

ALL. Yes, yes,

Be thou at hand to take those favours from her.

PHÆ. (*in FAIRFAX'S arms.*) Yes, yes,  
Be thou at hand to take those favours from me.

TRIO.—WILFRED, FAIRFAX AND PHÆBE.

WIL. To thy fraternal care  
Thy sister I commend :  
From every lurking snare  
Thy lovely charge defend ;  
And to achieve this end,  
Oh ! grant, I pray, this boon—  
She shall not quit thy sight.  
From morn to afternoon—  
From afternoon to night.  
From seven o'clock to two—  
From two to eventide.  
From dim twilight to 'leven at night  
She shall not quit thy side !

ALL. Oh ! grant, I pray, this boon, &c.

PHÆ. So amiable I have grown,  
So innocent as well,  
That if I'm left alone  
The consequences fell  
No mortal can foretell.  
So grant, I pray, this boon—  
I shall not quit thy sight  
From morn to afternoon—  
From afternoon to night.  
From seven o'clock till two.  
From two till day is done,  
From dim twilight to 'leven at night  
All kinds of risk I run.

ALL. So grant, I pray, this boon, &c.

FAIR. With brotherly readiness,  
For my fair sister's sake,  
At once I answer "Yes"—  
That task I undertake—  
My word I never break.  
I freely grant that boon,  
And I'll repeat my plight.

From morn to afternoon— (kiss)  
 From afternoon to night, (kiss)  
 From seven o'clock to two. (kiss)  
 From two to evening meal, (kiss)  
 From dim twilight to 'leven at night,  
 That compact I will seal. (kiss)

ALL. He freely grants that boon, &c.

*(The Bell of St. Peter's begins to toll. The crowd enters; the block is brought on to the stage, and the headsman takes his place. The Yeoman of the Guard form up, FAIRFAX and two others entering the Cold Harbour Tower, to bring the prisoner to execution. The LIEUTENANT enters and takes his place, and tells off FAIRFAX and two others to bring the prisoner to execution.)*

CHORUS—(to tolling accompaniment.)

The prisoner comes to meet his doom ;  
 The block, the headsman, and the tomb.  
 The funeral bell begins to toll ;  
 May heaven have mercy on his soul !

SOLO.—ELSIE.

Oh, Mercy, Thou whose smile has shone  
 So many a captive on ;  
 Of all immured within these walls,  
 The very worthiest falls.

REPRISE OF CHORUS.

The prisoner comes to meet his doom—  
 The block, the headsman, and the tomb.  
 The funeral bell begins to toll—  
 May Heaven have mercy on his soul !

*(Enter FAIRFAX and two other Yeomen from Tower in great excitement.)*

FAIR. My lord ! my lord ! I know not how to tell  
 The news I bear !  
 I and my comrades sought the prisoner's cell—  
 He is not there !

ALL. He is not there !  
 They sought the prisoner's cell—he is not there !

TRIO.—FAIRFAX and two Yeomen.

As escort for the prisoner

We sought his cell in duty bound :

The double gratings open were,

No prisoner at all we found !

We hunted high, we hunted low,

We hunted here, we hunted there—

The man we sought, as truth will show,

Had vanished into empty air !

ALL. Had vanished into empty air !

The man they sought with anxious care

Had vanished into empty air !

GIRLS. Now, by our troth, the news is fair,

The man hath vanished into air.

ALL. As escort for the prisoner

They sought his cell in duty bound, &c.

LIEUT. Astounding news ! The prisoner fled.

(*To Wilfred.*) Thy life shall forfeit be instead !

(*WILFRED is arrested.*)

WILFRED. My lord, I did not set him free,

I hate the man—my rival he !

(*WILFRED is taken away.*)

MERYLL. The prisoner gone—I am all agape !

Who could have helped him to escape ?

PHOEBE. Indeed, I can't imagine who !

I've no idea at all—have you ?

DAME. Of his escape no traces lurk

Enchantment must have been at work !

ELSIE (*aside to Point.*) What have I done ! Oh, woe is me

I am his wife, and he is free !

POINT. Oh, woe is *you* ? Your anguish sink !

Oh, woe is *me*, I rather think !

Oh, woe is *me*, I rather think !

Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think !

Whate'er betide

You are his bride,

And I am left

Alone—bereft !

Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think !  
 Yes, woe is *me*, I rather think !

## ENSEMBLE.

| LIEUTENANT.                                   | ELSIE.   | POINT.   |
|---|--|--|
| All frenzied with de-<br>spair I rave,        | All frenzied with de-<br>spair I rave,                                 | All frenzied with de-<br>spair I rave,                                       |
| The grave is cheat-<br>ed of its due.         | My anguish rends<br>my heart in two.                                   | My anguish rends<br>my heart in two.   |
| Who is the misbe-<br>gotten knave             | Unloved, to him my<br>hand I gave ;                                    | Your hand to him<br>you freely gave.   |
| Who hath contrived<br>this deed to do ?       | To him, unloved,<br>bound to be true !                                 | It's woe to <i>me</i> , not<br>woe to you !                                  |
| Let search be made<br>throughout the<br>land. | Unloved, unknown,<br>unseen, the brand<br>Of infamy upon his<br>head ; | My laugh is dead,<br>my heart unmanned,<br>A jester with a soul<br>of lead ! |
| Or my vindictive<br>anger dread—              | A bride that's hus-<br>bandless, I stand                               | A lover, loverless, I<br>stand,  |
| A thousand marks<br>to him I hand             | To all mankind for<br>ever dead !                                      | To womankind<br>for ever dead !  |
| Who brings him<br>here, alive or dead.        |  |  |

*The others sing the LIEUTENANT'S verse with altered pronouns.  
 At the end, ELSIE faints in FAIRFAX'S arms ; all the  
 Yeomen and populace rush off the stage in different direc-  
 tions, to hunt for the fugitive, leaving only the Headsman  
 on the stage, with FAIRFAX, and ELSIE insensible in his  
 arms.*

ACT DROP.



## ACT II.

SCENE.—*Tower Green by Moonlight.**Women and Warders Discovered.*

## CHORUS OF WOMEN.

Night has spread her pall once more,  
 And the prisoner still is free :  
 Open is his dungeon door,  
 Useless now his dungeon key !  
 He has shaken off his yoke—  
 How, no mortal man can tell !  
 Shame on loutish jailor-folk—  
 Shame on sleepy sentinel !

ALL

He has shaken off his yoke, &amp;c.

## SOLO.—DAME CARRUTHERS.

Warders are ye ?  
 Whom do ye ward ?  
 Bolt, bar, and key,  
 Shackle and cord,  
 Fetter and chain,  
 Dungeon of stone,  
 All are in vain—  
 Prisoner's flown !  
 Spite of ye all, he is free—he is free !  
 Whom do ye ward ? Pretty warders are ye !

## CHORUS OF WARDERS.

Up and down, and in and out,  
 Here and there and round about ;  
 Every chamber, every house,  
 Every chink that holds a mouse :  
 Every crevice in the keep,  
 Where a beetle black could creep ;  
 Every outlook, every drain,  
 Have we searched, but all in vain !

## WARDERS.

Warders are we.  
 Whom do we ward?  
 Bolt, bar, and key,  
 Shackle and cord,  
 Fetter and chain,  
 Dungeon of stone,  
 All are in vain.  
 Prisoner's flown!  
 Spite of us all, he is free!  
 he is free!  
 Whom do we ward? Pretty  
 warders are we!

## WOMEN AND CIVILIANS.

Warders, are ye?  
 Whom do ye ward?  
 Bolt, bar, and key;  
 Shackle and cord,  
 Fetter and chain,  
 Dungeon of stone,  
 All are in vain.  
 Prisoner's flown!  
 Spite of ye all, he is free  
 he is free!  
 Whom do ye ward? Pretty  
 warders are ye!

*Exeunt all.*

*Enter JACK POINT, in low spirits, reading from a huge volume.*

POINT (*reads*). "The Merrie Jestes of Hugh Ambrose. No. 7863. The Poor Wit and the Rich Councillor. A certayne poor wit, being an hungered, did meet a well-fed councillor. 'Marry, fool,' quoth the councillor, 'whither away?' 'In truth,' said the poor wag, 'in that I have eaten naught these two dayes, I do wither away, and that right rapidly.' The councillor laughed hugely, and gave him a sausage." Humph! The councillor was easier to please than my new master, the Lieutenant. I would like to take post under that councillor. Ah! 'tis but melancholy mumming when poor, heart-broken jilted Jack Point must needs turn to Hugh Ambrose for original light humour!

*Enter WILFRED, also in low spirits.*

WIL (*sighing*). Ah, Master Point!

POINT (*changing his manner*). Ha! friend jailor—jailor that wast—jailor that never shalt be more! Jailor that jailed not, or that jailed, if jail he did, so unjailorly that 'twas but jerry-jailing, or jailing in joke—though no joke to him who, by unjailorlike jailing, did so jeopardize his jailorship. Come, take heart, smile, laugh, wink, twinkle, thou tormentor that tormentest none—thou racker that rackest not—thou pincher out of place—come, take heart, and be merry, as I am!—(*aside, dolefully*)—as I am!

WIL. Aye, it's well for thee to laugh. Thou hast a good post, and hast cause to be merry.

POINT. (*bitterly.*) Cause? Have we not all cause? Is not the world a big butt of humor, into which all who will may drive a gimlet? See, I am a salaried wit; and is there aught in nature more ridiculous? A poor, dull, heart-broken man, who must needs be merry, or he will be whipped; who must rejoice lest he starve; who must jest you, jibe you, quib you, crank you, wrack you, riddle you, from hour to hour, from day to day, from year to year, lest he dwindle, perish, starve, pine, and die! Why, when there's naught else to laugh at, I laugh at myself till I ache for it!

WIL. Yet I have often thought that a jester's calling would suit me to a hair.

POINT. Thee? Would suit thee, thou death's head and cross-bones!

WIL. Aye, I have a pretty wit—a light, airy, joysome wit, spiced with anecdotes of prison cells and the torture chamber. Oh, a very delicate wit! I have tried it on many a prisoner, and there have been some who smiled. Now it is not easy to make a prisoner smile. And it should not be difficult to be a good jester, seeing that thou art one.

POINT. Difficult? Nothing easier. Nothing easier. Attend and I will prove it to thee!

#### SONG.—POINT.

Oh! a private buffoon is a light-hearted loon,  
 If you listen to popular rumour;  
 From morning to night he's so joyous and bright,  
 And he bubbles with wit and good humour!  
 He's so quaint and so terse, both in prose and in verse;  
 Yet though people forgive his transgression,  
 There are one or two rules that all family fools  
 Must observe if they love their profession!  
     There are one or two rules,  
     Half a dozen, may be,  
     That all family fools,  
     Of whatever degree,  
 Must observe, if they love their profession.

If you wish to succeed as a jester you'll need  
 To consider each person's auricular ;  
 What is all right for B would quite scandalize C  
 (For C is so very particular) ;  
 And D may be dull, and E's very thick skull  
 Is as empty of brains as a ladle ;  
 While F is F sharp, and will cry with a carp,  
 That he's known your best joke from his cradle !  
     When your humour they flout,  
     You can't let yourself go ;  
     And it *does* put you out  
     When a person says " Oh,  
     I have known that old joke from my cradle ! "

If your master is surly, from getting up early  
 (And tempers are short in the morning),  
 An inopportune joke is enough to provoke  
 Him, to give you, at once, a month's warning.  
 Then if you refrain, he is at you again,  
 For he likes to get value for money.  
 He'll ask then and there, with an insolent stare,  
 " If you know that you're paid to be funny ? "  
     It adds to the task  
     Of a merryman's place,  
     When your principal asks,  
     With a scowl on his face,  
     If you know that you're paid to be funny ?

Comes a Bishop, maybe, or a solemn D.D.—  
 Oh, beware of his anger provoking !  
 Better not pull his hair—don't stick pins in his chair ;  
 He don't understand practical joking.  
 If the jests that you crack have an orthodox smack,  
 You may get a bland smile from these sages ;  
 But should it, by chance, be imported from France,  
 Half-a-crown is stopped out of your wages.  
     It's a general rule,  
     Though your zeal it may quench,  
     If the family fool  
     Tells a joke that's too French,  
     Half-a-crown is stopped out of his wages !

Though your head it may rack with a bilious attack.  
 And your senses with toothache you're losing,  
 Don't be mopy and flat—they don't fine you for that,  
 If you're properly quaint and amusing.  
 Though your wife ran away with a soldier that day,  
 And took with her your trifle of money ;  
 Bless your heart, they don't mind, they're exceedingly kind—  
 They don't blame you—as long as you're funny.  
     It's a comfort to feel  
     If your partner should flit,  
     Though *you* suffer a deal,  
     They don't mind it a bit—  
 They don't blame you—so long as you're funny.

POINT. And so thou wouldst be a jester, eh? Now, listen !  
 My sweetheart, Elsie Maynard, was secretly wed to this Fairfax  
 half an hour ere he escaped.

WIL. She did well.

POINT. She did nothing of the kind, so hold thy peace and  
 perpend. Now, while he liveth she is dead to me and I to her,  
 and so, my jibes and jokes notwithstanding, I am the saddest  
 and the sorriest dog in England.

WIL. Thou art a very dull dog indeed.

POINT. Now, if thou wilt swear that thou didst shoot this  
 Fairfax while he was trying to swim across the river—it  
 needs but the discharge of an arquebus on a dark night—and  
 that he sank and was seen no more, I'll make thee the very  
 Archbishop of jesters, and that in two days' time ! Now, what  
 sayest thou ?

WIL. I am to lie ?

POINT. Heartily. But thy lie must be a lie of circum-  
 stance which we will support with the testimony of eyes, ears,  
 and tongue.

WIL. And thou wilt qualify me as a jester ?

POINT. As a jester among jesters. I will teach thee all my  
 original songs, my self-constructed riddles, my own ingenious  
 paradoxes ; nay, more, I will reveal to thee the source whence I  
 get them. Now, what sayest thou ?

WIL. Why, if it be but a lie thou wantest of me, I hold it  
 cheap enough, and I say yes, it is a bargain.

## ENSEMBLE.—POINT and WILFRED.

BOTH.

Hereupon we're both agreed,

And all that we two

Do agree to

We'll secure by solemn deed,

To prevent all

Error mental.

{ I } on Elsie { am } to call  
{ you } { are }

With a story

Grim and gory ;

How this Fairfax died, and all

{ I } declare to  
{ you }{ you're } to swear to!  
{ I'm }

Tell a tale of cock and bull,

Of convincing detail full !

Tale tremendous,

Heaven defend us !

What a tale of cock and bull !

In return for { your } own part  
{ my }{ you are } making,  
{ I am }

Undertaking,

To instruct { me } in the art  
{ you }

(Art amazing,

Wonder raising)

Of a jester, jesting free.

Proud position—

High ambition !

And a lively one { I'll } be  
{ you'll }

Wag-a-wagging,

Never flagging !

Tell a tale of cock and bull, 2c.

[*Exeunt together.*]*Enter FAIRFAX.*

FAIR. A day and a half gone, and no news of poor Fairfax.  
The dolts ! They seek him everywhere save within a dozen yards



of his dungeon. So I am free! Free, but for the cursed haste with which I hurried headlong into the bonds of matrimony with—heaven knows whom. As far as I remember, she should have been young; but even had not her face been concealed by her kerchief, I doubt whether, in my then plight, I should have taken much note of her. Free! Bah! The Tower bonds were but a thread of silk compared with these conjugal fetters which I, fool that I was, placed upon mine own hands. From the one I broke readily enough—how to break the other!

SONG.—FAIRFAX.

Free from his fetters grim—  
 Free to depart;  
 Free both in life and limb—  
 In all but heart!  
 Bound to an unknown bride  
 For good and ill;  
 Ah, is not one so tied  
 A prisoner still?  
 Free, yet in fetters held  
 Till his last hour,  
 Gyves that no smith can weld,  
 No rust devour!  
 Although a monarch's hand  
 Had set him free,  
 Of all the captive band  
 The saddest he!

*Enter MERYLL.*

FAIR. Well, Sergt. Meryll, and how fares thy pretty charge, Elsie Maynard?

MER. Well enough, sir. She is quite strong again and leaves us to-night.

FAIR. Thanks to Dame Carruthers' kind nursing, eh?

MER. Aye, deuce take the old witch! Ah, 'twas but a sorry trick you played me, sir, to bring the fainting girl to me. It gave the old lady an excuse for taking up her quarters in my house, and for the last two years I've shunned her like the plague. Another day of it and she would have married me! Good Lord, here she is again! I'll e'en go—*(going)*.

*Enter DAME CARRUTHERS and KATE, her niece.*

DAME. Nay, Sergt. Meryll, don't go. I have something of grave import to say to thee.

MER. (*aside*). It's coming.

FAIR. (*laughing*). I' faith, I think I'm not wanted here. (*Going*).

DAME. Nay, Master Leonard, I've naught to say to thy father that his son may not hear.

FAIR. (*aside*). True. I'm one of the family; I had forgotten.

DAME. 'Tis about this Elsie Maynard. A pretty girl, Master Leonard.

FAIR. Ay, fair as a peach blossom—what then?

DAME. She hath a liking for thee, or I mistake not.

FAIR. With all my heart. She's as dainty a little maid as you'll find in a midsummer day's march.

DAME. Then be warned in time, and give not thy heart to her. Oh, I know what it is to give my heart to one who will have none of it.

MER. (*aside*). Ay, *she* knows all about that. (*Aloud*) And why is my boy to take heed of her. She's a good girl, Dame Carruthers.

DAME. Good enough, for aught I know. But she's no girl. She's a married woman.

MER. A married woman. Tush, old lady—she's promised to Jack Point, the Lieutenant's new jester.

DAME. Tush in thy teeth, old man! As my niece Kate sat by her bedside to-day, this Elsie slept, and as she slept she moaned and groaned, and turned this way and that way—and, "How shall I marry one I have never seen?" quoth she—then, "a hundred crowns!" quoth she—then, "Is it certain he will die in an hour?" quoth she—then, "I love him not, and yet I am his wife!" quoth she. Is it not so, Kate?

KATE. Aye, mother, 'tis even so.

FAIR. Art thou sure of all this?

KATE. Aye, sir, for I wrote it all down on my tablets.

DAME. Now, mark my words: it was of this Fairfax she spake, and he is her husband, or I'll swallow my kirtle!

MERYLL (*aside*). Is this true, sir?

FAIR. True? Why, the girl was raving! Why should she marry a man who had but an hour to live?

DAME. Marry? There be those who would marry but for a minute, rather than die old maids!

MERYLL (*aside*.) Aye, I know one of them!

QUARTETTE.—KATE, FAIRFAX, DAME CARRUTHERS *and* MERYLL.

Strange adventure! Maiden wedded

To a groom she's never seen!

Never, never, never seen!

Groom about to be beheaded,

In an hour on Tower Green!

Tower, Tower, Tower Green!

Groom in dreary dungeon lying—

Groom as good as dead, or dying,

For a pretty maiden sighing—

Pretty maid of seventeen!

Seven—seven—seventeen!

Strange adventure that we're troling:

Modest maid and gallant groom—

Gallant, gallant, gallant groom!—

While the funeral bell is tolling,

Tolling, tolling, Bim-a-boom!

Bim-a, Bim-a, Bim-a-boom!

Modest maiden will not tarry;

Though but sixteen year she carry,

She must marry, she must marry—

Though the altar be a tomb—

Tower—Tower—Tower tomb!

[*Exeunt* DAME CARRUTHERS, MERYLL, *and* KATE.]

FAIR. So my mysterious bride is no other than this winsome Elsie! By my hand, 'tis no such ill plunge in fortune's lucky bag! I might have fared worse with my eyes open! But she comes! Now to test her principles. 'Tis not every husband who has a chance of wooing his own wife!

*Enter* ELSIE.

FAIR. Mistress Elsie!

ELSIE. Master Leonard

FAIR. So thou leavest us to-night?

ELSIE. Yes, Master Leonard. I have been kindly tended, and I almost fear I am loth to go!

FAIR. And this Fairfax. Wast thou glad when he escaped?

ELSIE. Why, truly Master Leonard, it is a sad thing that a young and gallant gentleman should die in the very fulness of his life.

FAIR. Then, when thou didst faint in my arms, it was for joy at his safety?

ELSIE. It may be so. I was highly wrought, Master Leonard, and I am but a girl, and so, when I am highly wrought, I faint.

FAIR. Now, dost thou know? I am consumed with a parlous jealousy?

ELSIE. Thou? And of whom?

FAIR. Why, of this Fairfax, surely!

ELSIE. Of Colonel Fairfax?

FAIR. Aye. Shall I be frank with thee? Elsie—I love thee, ardently, passionately! (ELSIE *alarmed and surprised.*) Elsie, I have loved thee these two days—which is a long time—and I would fain join my life to thine!

ELSIE. Master Leonard! Thou art jesting!

FAIR. Jestings? May I shrivel up into raisins if I jest! I love thee with a love that is a fever—with a love that is a frenzy—with a love that eateth up my heart! What sayest thou? Thou wilt not let my heart be eaten up?

ELSIE. (*aside.*) Oh, mercy! What am I to say?

FAIR. Dost thou love me, or hast thou been insensible these two days?

ELSIE. I love all brave men.

FAIR. Nay, there is love in excess. I thank heaven there are many brave men in England; but if thou lovest them all, I withdraw with my thanks.

ELSIE. I love the bravest best. But, sir, I may not listen—I am not free—I—I am a wife!

FAIR. Thou a wife? Whose? His name? His hours are numbered—nay, his grave is dug, and his epitaph set up! Come, his name?

ELSIE. Oh, sir! keep my secret—it is the only barrier that Fate could set up between us. My husband is none other than Colonel Fairfax.

FAIR. The greatest villain unhung! The most ill-begotten, ill-favoured, ill-mannered, ill-natured, ill-omened, ill-tempered dog in Christendom.

ELSIE. It is very like. He is naught to me—for I never saw him. I was blindfolded, and he was to have died within the hour; and he did not die—and I am wedded to him, and my heart is broken!

FAIR. He was to have died, and he did *not* die? The scoundrel! The perjured, traitorous villain! Thou shouldst have insisted on his dying first, to make sure. 'Tis the only way with these Fairfaxes.

ELSIE. I now wish I had.

FAIR. (*Aside*) Bloodthirsty little maiden! (*Aloud*.) A fig for this Fairfax! Be mine—he will never know—he dares not show himself; and if he dare, what art thou to him? Fly with me, Elsie—we will be married to-morrow, and thou shalt be the happiest wife in England!

ELSIE. Master Leonard! I am amazed! Is it thus that brave soldiers speak to poor girls? Oh! for shame, for shame! I am wed—not the less because I love not my husband. I am a wife, sir, and I have a duty, and—oh, sir! thy words terrify me—they are not honest—they are wicked words, and unworthy thy great and brave heart! Oh, shame upon thee! shame upon thee!

FAIR. Nay, Elsie, I did but jest. I spake but to try thee—

(*shot heard.*) Enter MERRYLL *hastily*.

MER. (*Rec'd.*) Hark! What was that, sir?

FAIR. Why, an arquebus—  
Fired from the wharf, unless I much mistake.

MER. Strange—and at such an hour! What can it mean?

[*In the meantime the Chorus have entered.*]

CHORUS.

Now what can that have been—  
A shot so late at night,

Enough to cause affright !  
What can the portent mean ?

Are foemen in the land ?  
Is London to be wrecked ?  
What are we to expect ?  
What danger is at hand ?  
Yes, let us understand  
What danger is at hand !

LIEUTENANT *enters, also POINT and WILFRED.*

LIEUT. Who fired that shot ? At once the truth declare !

WIL. My lord, 'twas I—to rashly judge forbear !

POINT. My lord, 'twas he—to rashly judge forbear !

DUET AND CHORUS.—WILFRED *and* POINT.

WIL. Like a ghost his vigil keeping—

POINT. Or a spectre all-âpalling—

WIL. I beheld a figure creeping—

POINT. I should rather call it crawling—

WIL. He was creeping—

POINT. He was crawling—

WIL. He was creeping, creeping—

POINT. Crawling—

WIL. Not a moment's hesitation—

I myself upon him flung,

With a hurried exclamation

To his draperies I hung.

Then we closed with one another.

In a rough and tumble smother ;

Colonel Fairfax and no other

Was the man to whom I clung !

FAIR. Colonel Fairfax and no other

Was the man to whom he clung !

ALL. Colonel Fairfax and no other

Was the man to whom he clung !

Yes—they closed with one another



In a rough and tumble smother ;  
Colonel Fairfax and no other  
Was the man to whom he clung !

WIL. After mighty tug and tussle—

POINT. It resembled more a struggle—

WIL. He, by dint of stronger muscle—

POINT. Or by some infernal juggle—

WIL. From my clutches quickly sliding—

POINT. I should rather call it slipping—

WIL. With a view, no doubt, of hiding—

POINT. Or escaping to the shipping—

WIL. With a gasp, and with a quiver—

POINT. I'd describe it as a shiver—

WIL. He plunged headlong in the river  
And, alas, I cannot swim !

ALL. It's enough to make one shiver,  
With a gasp and with a quiver,  
He plunged headlong in the river,  
It was very brave of him !

WIL. Ingenuity is catching ;  
With the view my king of pleasing,  
Arquebus from sentry snatching—

POINT. I should rather call it seizing—

WIL. With an ounce or two of lead  
I despatched him through the head—

ALL. He despatched him through the head.

WIL. I discharged it without winking,  
Little time he lost in thinking,  
Like a stone I saw him sinking—

POINT. I should say a lump of lead.

WIL. Like a stone, my boy, I said—

POINT. Like a heavy lump of lead.

WIL. Anyhow the man is dead.

ALL. Whether stone or lump of lead,  
Arquebus from sentry seizing,

With the view his king of pleasing,  
 Wilfred shot him through the head,  
 And he's very, very dead.  
 And it matters very little whether stone or lump of lead  
 It is very, very certain that he's very, very dead !

## CHORUS.

Hail ! the valiant fellow who  
 Did this deed of derring do ;  
 Honours wait on such an one ;  
 By my head, 'twas bravely done !

## RECIT.—LIEUTENANT.

The river must be dragged—no time be lost ;  
 The body must be found at any cost.  
 To this attend without undue delay ;  
 So set to work with what despatch ye may.

[Exit.

ALL.

Yes, yes,

We'll set to work with what despatch we may !

*Four men raise WILFRED, and carry him off on their shoulders.*

## CHORUS.

Hail the valiant fellow who  
 Did this deed of derring do,  
 Honours wait on such an one ;  
 By my head, 'twas bravely done !

*[Exeunt all but ELSIE, POINT, FAIRFAX, and PHOEBE.*

POINT *(to ELSIE, who is weeping)*. Nay, sweetheart, be comforted. This Fairfax was but a pestilent fellow, and, as he had to die, he might as well die thus as any other way. 'Twas a good death.

ELSIE. Still he was my husband, and had he not been, he was nevertheless a living man, and now he is dead ; and so, by your leave, my tears may flow unchidden, Master Point.

FAIR. And thou didst see all this ?

POINT. Aye, with both eyes at once—this and that. The testimony of one eye is naught—he may lie. But when it is corroborated by the other, it is good evidence that none

may gainsay. Here are both present in court, ready to swear to him!

PHŒ. But art thou sure it was Colonel Fairfax? Saw you his face?

POINT. Aye, and a plaguey ill-favoured face too. A very hang-dog face—a felon face—a face to fright the headsman himself, and make him strike awry. Oh, a plaguey bad face, take my word for't. (PHŒBE and FAIRFAX *laugh*.) How they laugh! 'Tis ever thus with simple folk—an accepted wit has but to say, "Pass the mustard," and they roar their ribs out!

FAIR. (*aside*.) If ever I come to life again thou shalt pay for this, Master Point.

POINT. Now, Elsie, thou art free to choose again, so behold me; I am young and well-favoured. I have a pretty wit. I can jest you, jibe you, quip you, crank you, wrack you, riddle you—

FAIR. Tush, man, thou knowest not how to woo. 'Tis not to be done with time-worn jests and thread-bare sophistries; with quips, conundrums, rhymes, and paradoxes. 'Tis an art in itself, and must be studied gravely and conscientiously.

TRIO.—FAIRFAX, ELSIE, and PHŒBE.

FAIR. A man who would woo a fair maid,  
Should 'prentice himself to the trade,  
And study all day,  
In methodical way,  
How to flatter, cajole and persuade,  
He should 'prentice himself at fourteen,  
And practice from morn to e'en;  
And when he's of age,  
If he will, I'll engage,  
He may capture the heart of a queen!

ALL. It is purely a matter of skill,  
Which all may attain if they will.  
But every Jack,  
He must study the knack  
If he wants to make sure of his Jill.

ELSIE. If he's made the best use of his time,  
His twig he'll so carefully line,

That every bird  
 Will come down at his word,  
 Whatever its plumage and clime.  
 He must learn that the thrill of a touch  
 May mean little, or nothing, or much ;  
 It's an instrument rare,  
 To be handled with care,  
 And ought to be treated as such.  
**ALL** It is purely a matter of skill, &c.

**PHOE** Then a glance may be timid or free,  
 It will vary in mighty degree,  
 From an impudent stare  
 To a look of despair  
 That no maid without pity can see ;  
 And a glance of despair is no guide—  
 It may have its ridiculous side :  
 It may draw you a tear  
 Or a box on the ear ;  
 You can never be sure till you've tried !

**ALL** It is purely a matter of skill, &c.

**FAIR** (*aside to POINT*). Now, listen to me—'tis done thus—  
 (*aloud*)—Mistress Elsie, there is one here who, as thou knowest,  
 loves thee right well !

**POINT** (*aside*.) That he does—right well !

**FAIR** He is but a man of poor estate, but he hath a loving,  
 honest heart. He will be a true and trusty husband to thee,  
 and if thou wilt be his wife, thou shalt lie curled up in his heart,  
 like a little squirrel in its nest.

**POINT** (*aside*.) 'Tis a pretty figure. A maggot in a nut lies  
 closer, but a squirrel will do.

**FAIR** He knoweth that thou wast a wife—an unloved and  
 unloving wife, and his poor heart was near to breaking. But  
 now that thine unloving husband is dead, and thou art free, he  
 would fain pray that thou wouldst hearken unto him, and give  
 him hope that thou wouldst be his !

**PHOE** (*alarmed*). He presses her hands—and he whispers in  
 her ear ! Odds boddikins, what does it mean ?

**FAIR** Now, sweetheart, tell me—wilt thou be this poor  
 good fellow's wife ?

ELSIE. If the good, brave man—is he a brave man?

FAIR. So men say.

POINT (*aside*). That's not true, but let it pass this once.

ELSIE. If this brave man will be content with a poor penniless untaught maid—

POINT (*aside*). Widow—but let *that* pass.

ELSIE. I will be his true and loving wife, and that with my heart of hearts!

FAIR. My own dear love! (*Embracing her.*)

PHŒ. (*in great agitation.*) Why, what's all this? Brother—brother—it is not seemly!

POINT (*also alarmed.*) (*Aside.*) Oh, I can't let *that* pass! (*Aloud.*) Hold, enough, Master Leonard! An advocate should have his fee, but methinks thou art overpaying thyself!

FAIR. Nay, that is for Elsie to say. I promised thee I would show thee how to woo, and herein is the proof of the virtue of my teaching. Go thou, and apply it elsewhere. (*PHŒBE bursts into tears.*)

QUARTETTE.—ELSIE, FAIRFAX, PHŒBE, and POINT.

ELSIE and FAIR. When a wooer  
Goes a-wooing,  
Naught is truer  
Than his joy.  
Maiden hushing,  
All his suing—  
Boldly blushing—  
Bravely coy!

ALL. Oh, the happy days of doing!  
Oh, the sighing and the suing!  
When a wooer goes a-wooing,  
Oh, the sweets that never cloy!

PHŒ. (*weeping.*) When a brother  
Leaves his sister  
For another,  
Sister weeps.

Tears that trickle,  
Tears that blister—  
'Tis but mickle  
Sister reaps !

ALL            Oh, the doing and undoing,  
Oh, the sighing and the suing,  
When a brother goes a wooing,  
And a sobbing sister weeps !

POINT.        When a jester  
Is out-witted,  
Feelings fester  
Heart is lead !  
Food for fishes  
Only fitted,  
Jester wishes  
He was dead !

ALL            Oh, the doing and undoing,  
Oh, the sighing and the suing,  
When a jester goes a-wooing,  
And he wishes he was dead !

*[Exeunt all but PHCEBE, who remains weeping.]*

PHCE. And I helped that man to escape, and I've kept his secret, and pretended that I was his dearly loving sister, and done everything I could think of to make folk believe I *was* his loving sister, and this is his gratitude ! Before I pretend to be sister to anybody again, I'll turn nun, and be sister to everybody—one as much as another.

*Enter WILFRED.*

WIL. In tears, ch ? What a plague art thou grizzling for now ?

PHCE. Why am I grizzling ? Thou hast often wept for jealousy—well 'tis for jealousy I weep now. Aye, yellow, bilious, jaundiced jealousy. So make the most of that, Master Wilfred.



WIL. But I have never given thee cause for jealousy. The Lieutenant's cook-maid and I are but the merest gossips.

PHŒ. Jealous of thee! Bah! I'm jealous of no craven cock-on-a-hill, who crows about what he'd do an' he dared. I am jealous of another and a better man than thou—set that down, Master Wilfred. And he is to marry Elsie Maynard, the little pale fool, set that down, Master Wilfred, and my heart is well nigh broken! There, thou hast it all! Make the most of it!

WIL. The man thou lovest is to marry Elsie Maynard? Why, that is no other than thy brother, Leonard Meryll!

PHŒ. (*aside*) Oh, mercy, what have I said?

WIL. Why, what manner of brother is this, thou lying little jade. Speak! Whom is this man whom thou hast called brother, and fondled, and coddled, and kissed—with my connivance, too! Oh! Lord, with my connivance! Ah! should it be this Fairfax! (PHŒBE *starts*.) It is! It is this accursed Fairfax! It's Fairfax! Fairfax, who—

PHŒBE. Whom thou hast just shot through the head, and who lies at the bottom of the river!

WIL. A—I—I may have been mistaken. We are but fallible mortals, the best of us. But I'll make sure—I'll make sure (*going*).

PHŒ. Stay—one word. I think it cannot be Fairfax—mind I say I *think*—because thou hast just slain Fairfax. But whether he be Fairfax or no Fairfax, he is to marry Elsie—and—as thou hast shot him through the head, and he is dead, be content with that, and I will be thy wife!

WIL. Is that sure?

PHŒ. Aye, sure enough, for there's no help for it? Thou art a very brute—but even brutes must marry I suppose.

WIL. My beloved! (*embraces her*.)

PHŒ. (*aside*.) Ugh!

*Enter* LEONARD, *hastily*.

LEON. Phœbe, rejoice, for I bring glad tidings. Colonel Fairfax's reprieve was signed two days since, but it was foully and maliciously kept back by Secretary Poltwhistle, who de-

signed that it should arrive after the Colonel's death. It hath just come to hand and it is now in the Lieutenant's possession.

PHŒ. Then the Colonel is free? Oh kiss me, kiss me, my dear. Kiss me, again, and again!

WIL. (*dancing with fury*). Ods, bobs, death o' my life! Art thou mad! Am I mad? Are we *all* mad?

PHŒ. Oh my dear—my dear, I am well nigh crazed with joy. (*kissing LEONARD*).

WIL. Come away from him, thou hussy—thou jade—thou kissing, clinging cockatrice! And as for thee, sir, I'll rip thee like a herring for this! I'll skin thee for it! I'll cleave thee to the chine! I'll—Oh! Phœbe! Phœbe! Phœbe! Who is this man?

PHŒ. Peace, fool, he is my brother!

WIL. Another brother! Are there any more of them? Produce them all at once, and let me know the worst!

PHŒ. This is the real Leonard, dolt; the other was but his substitute. The *real* Leonard, I say—my father's own son!

WIL. How do I know this? Has he "brother" writ large on his brow? I mistrust thy brothers! Thou art but a false jade!

*Exit LEONARD.*

PHŒ. Now, Wilfred, be just. Truly I did deceive thee before—but it was to save a precious life—and to save it, not for me, but for another. They are to be wed this very day. Is not this enough for thee? Come—I am thy Phœbe—thy very own—and we will be wed in a year—or two—or three, at the most, Is not that enough for thee?

*Enter MERYLL, excitedly, followed by DAME CARRUTHERS (who listens unobs.rved.)*

MER. Phœbe, hast heard the brave news?

PHŒ. (*still in WILFRED'S arms.*) Aye, father.

MER. I'm nigh mad with joy! (*seeing WILFRED.*). Why, what's all this?

PHŒ. Oh, father, he discovered our secret through my folly, and the price of silence is—

WIL. Phœbe's heart.

PHÆ. Oh, dear no—Phœbe's hand.

WIL. It's the same thing!

PHÆ. Is it?

[*Exeunt WILFRED and PHÆBE.*]

MER. (*looking after them.*) 'Tis pity, but the colonel had to be saved at any cost, and as thy folly revealed our secret, thy folly must e'en suffer for it! (*DAME CARRUTHERS comes down.*) Dame Carruthers!

DAME. So this is a plot to shield this arch-fiend, and I have detected it. A word from me, and three heads besides his would roll from their shoulders.

MER. Nay, Colonel Fairfax is reprieved. (*Aside.*) Yet if my complicity in his escape were known! Plague on the old meddler! There's nothing for it!—(*aloud*—Hush, pretty one! Such bloodthirsty words ill-become those cherry lips! (*Aside.*) Ugh!

DAME. (*bashfully.*) Sergeant Meryll!

MER. Why look ye, chuck, for many a month I've—I've thought to myself—"There's snug love saving up in that middle-aged bosom for someone, and why not for thee—that's me—so take heart and tell her—that's thee—that thou—that's me—lovest her—thee—and—and—well, I'm a miserable old man, and I've done it—and that's me!" But not a word about Fairfax! The price of thy silence is—

DAME. Meryll's heart?

MER. No, Meryll's hand.

DAME. It's the same thing.

MER. Is it?

DUET—MERYLL and DAME CARRUTHERS.

DAME. Rapture, rapture!

When love's votary

Flushed with capture,

Seeks the notary,

Joy and jollity

Then is polity;

Reigns frivolity!

Rapture, rapture!

MER. Doleful, doleful !  
 When humanity,  
 With its soul full  
 Of satanity,  
 Courting privity,  
 Down declivity  
 Seeks captivity !  
 Doleful, doleful !

DAME Joyful, joyful !  
 When virginity  
 Seeks, all coyful,  
 Man's affinity ;  
 Fate all flowery,  
 Bright and bowery  
 Is her dowery !  
 Joyful, joyful !

MER. Ghastly, ghastly !  
 When man, sorrowful,  
 Firstly, lastly,  
 Of to-morrow full,  
 After tarrying.  
 Yields to harrying—  
 Goes a-marrying.  
 Ghastly, ghastly !

#### FINALE.

*Enter Beefeaters, Women and ELSIE as Bride.*

#### CHORUS OF WOMEN.

#### (ELEGIACS.)

Comes the pretty young bride, a-blushing, timidly shrinking—  
 Set all thy fears aside—cheerily, pretty young bride !  
 Brave is the youth to whom thy lot thou art willingly linking !  
 Flower of valour is he—loving as loving can be !

Brightly thy summer is shining,  
 Fair is the dawn of the day ;  
 Take him, be true to him—  
 Tender his due to him—  
 Honour him, love and obey !

## TRIO.—PHOEBE, ELSIE, and DAME CARRUTHERS.

'Tis said that joy in full perfection  
 Comes only once to womankind—  
 That, other times, on close inspection,  
 Some lurking bitter we shall find.  
 If this be so, and men say truly,  
 My day of joy has broken duly.  
 With happiness my soul is cloyed—  
 This is my joy-day unalloyed!

ALL Yes, yes,  
 This is her joy-day unalloyed!

*Flourish—enter* LIEUTENANT.

LIEUT. Hold, pretty one! I bring to thee  
 News—good or ill, it is for thee to say.  
 Thy husband lives—and he is free,  
 And comes to claim his bride this very day!

ELSIE. No! no! recall those words—it cannot be!  
 Leonard, my Leonard, come, oh, come to me!  
 Leonard, my own—my loved one—where art thou?  
 I knew not how I loved thine heart till now!

## ENSEMBLE.

| ELSIE and PHOEBE.                     | CHORUS and OTHERS.                        | LIEUT. and POINT.                     |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Oh, day of terror! day of tears!      | Oh, day of terror! day of tears!          | Come, dry these unbecoming tears,     |
| What fearful tidings greet mine ears? | What words are these that greet our ears? | Most joyful tidings greet thine ears, |
| Oh, Leonard, come thou to my side,    | Who is the man who, in his pride,         | The man to whom thou art allied       |
| And claim me as thy loving bride.     | So boldly claims thee as his bride?       | Appears to claim thee as his bride.   |

*Flourish. Enter* COLONEL FAIRFAX, *handsomely dressed, and attended by other Gentlemen.*

FAIR. (*sternly.*) All thought of Leonard Meryll set aside.  
 Thou art mine own! I claim thee as my bride.

ELSIE. A suppliant at thy feet I fall,  
 Thine heart will yield to pity's call!

FAIR. Mine is a heart of massive rock,  
Unmoved by sentimental shock.

ALL Thy husband he !

ELSIE. Leonard, my loved one—come to me.  
They bear me hence away !  
But though they take me far from thee,  
My heart is thine for aye !  
My bruised heart,  
My broken heart,  
Is thine, my own, for aye !

(To FAIRFAX.) Sir, I obey,  
I am thy bride ;  
But ere the fatal hour  
I said the say  
That placed me in thy power,  
Would I had died !  
Sir, I obey !  
I am thy bride !

(Looks up and recognizes FAIRFAX.) Leonard !

FAIR. My own !

ELSIE. Ah ! (*embrace.*)

ELSIE & { With happiness my soul is cloyed,  
FAIR. { This is my joy-day unalloyed !

ALL Yes, yes,  
With happiness their souls are cloyed,  
This is their joy-day unalloyed !

POINT. Oh thoughtless crew !  
Ye know not what ye do !  
Attend to me, and shed a tear or two—  
For I have a song to sing, O !

ALL Sing me your song, O ! &c.

POINT. It is sung to the moon  
By a love-lorn loon,  
Who fled from the mocking throng, O !



It's the song of a merryman moping mum,  
 Whose soul was sad and whose glance was glum,  
 Who sipped no sup and who craved no crumb,  
 As he sighed for the love of a ladye !

ALL. Heighdy ! heighdy !  
 Misery me, lackadaydy !  
 He sipped no sup and he craved no crumb,  
 As he sighed for the love of a ladye !

ELSIE. I have a song to sing, O !

ALL. Sing me your song, O !

ELSIE. It is sung with the ring  
 Of the songs maids sing  
 Who love with a love life long, O !  
 It's the song of a mermaid, peerly proud,  
 Who loved a lord and who laughed aloud  
 At the moan of a merryman moping mum,  
 Whose soul was sad and whose glance was glum,  
 Who sipped no sup and who craved no crumb,  
 As he sighed for the love of a ladye !

ALL. Heighdy ! heighdy !  
 Misery me, lackadaydy !  
 He sipped no sup and he craved no crumb.  
 As he sighed for the love of a ladye !

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