



7= Prompt (Stage L) mid wings; 8= Prompt (Stage L), DS corner

## Act One

### Curtain Up at start of music

**Bridesmaids enter from 3 and arrange themselves across the front of the stage.**

**Zorah hauls on sandwich board from 3 "Rederring Professional Bridesmaids. Hourly & Weely Rates. Better Dead than Un-wed"**

### No.1. - CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS (Solo Soprano, Zorah)

Chorus. Fair is Rose as bright May-Day; Individual Pose & sigh physically  
Soft is Rose as warm west-wind; Individual Pose & sigh physically  
Sweet is Rose as new-mown hay; Individual Pose & sigh physically  
Rose is the queen of maiden-kind! Individual Pose & sigh physically  
Rose, all glowing with virgin blushes, say -Unison  
Is anybody going to marry you today?

**Other B's retire around the stage. Some are tired, some are bored, some are silly etc.  
They react to what Z is saying.**

Zorah. Every day, as the days roll on,  
Bridesmaid's garb we gaily don,  
Sure that a maid so fairly famed  
Can't long remain unclaimed.  
Hour by hour and day by day  
Several months have passed away,  
Though she's the fairest flower that blows,  
No one has married Rose!

### All coming forward.

Chorus. Rose, all glowing with virgin blushes, say -  
Is anybody going to marry you today?

Zorah. Hour by hour and day by day  
Months have passed away.

### Back to opening pose

Chorus. Fair is Rose as bright May-Day;  
Soft is Rose as warm west-wind;  
Sweet is Rose as new-mown hay;  
Rose is the queen of maiden-kind!  
Rose, all glowing with virgin blushes, say -  
Is anybody going to marry you today?

Fair is Rose -  
Soft is Rose -  
Rose is the queen of maiden-kind!

**Enter DAME HANNAH from 8. She carries a large shopping basket. She is on her way to the fishmongers. She walks across the stage towards 2.**

Hannah. **(Dismissively as she walks)** Nay, gentle maidens, you sing well but vainly, for Rose is still heart-free, and looks but coldly on her many suitors. **She exits to 2.**

Zorah. It's very disappointing. **(Calling after her – in a raised voice. She is frustrated).** Every young man in the village is in love with her, but they are appalled by her beauty and modesty, and won't declare themselves **(Again addresses this to DH whom is now off stage)**; so, until she makes her own choice, there's no chance for anybody else. **( She is very dejected. She realises DH can't hear her as she has gone into the shop. Crosses back to 1. She meets Ruth)**

Ruth. **(Talking to Z)** This is, perhaps, the only village in the world that possesses an endowed corps of professional bridesmaids who are **(very wearily)** bound to be on duty every day from ten to four - and it is at least six months since our services were required. The pious charity by which we exist is practically wasted!

Zorah. We shall be disendowed **(Panicky – everyone reacts with a small “oh”)** - that will be the end of it! **(Everyone : “ah”. Z crosses back to 2 to meet DH coming on. Dame H keeps walking back with shopping basket with two fishtails appearing out of it, to 8, not paying much attention. Z follows her, talking over her shoulder).** Dame Hannah - you're a nice old person - you could marry if you liked. There's Old Adam - Robin's faithful servant - he loves you with all the frenzy of a boy of fourteen!

**DH stops in her tracks just before she was about to exit.**

Hannah. Nay - that may never be - for I am **pledged!**

All. To whom?

Hannah. **(DH turns back to them).** To an eternal maidenhood! **(Sounding very noble. She moves back towards 1 – very obvious that she is about to tell a story)** Many years ago I was betrothed to a god-like youth who wooed me under an assumed name. But on the very day upon which our wedding was to have been celebrated, I discovered that he was no other than Sir Roderic Murgatroyd, one of the bad baronets of Ruddygore, **(B's all small scream in horror)** and the uncle of the man who now bears that title. As a son of that accursed race he was no husband for an honest girl, so madly as I loved him, I left him then and there. He died but ten years since, but I never saw him again. **She again is about to leave towards 8.**

**B's express relief.**

Zorah. **(Z runs after her).** But why should you not marry a bad baronet of Ruddygore?

Ruth. **(The same)**All baronets are bad; but was he worse than other baronets? **R joins Z.**

Hannah. My child, he was accursed! **Turning back to them. B's all large scream.**

Zorah. **(Trembling)** But who cursed him? Not you **(big emphasis on "you")** I trust!

Hannah. The curse is on all his line and has been, ever since the time of Sir Rupert, the first baronet. Listen, and you shall hear the legend.

**B's run towards her and gather around. Dame Hannah leaves her basket at 8.**

### **No.2. - SONG - (Hannah and Chorus)**

Hannah. Sir Rupert Murgatroyd  
His leisure and his riches  
He ruthlessly employed  
In persecuting witches.

**B's react with horror.**

With fear he'd make them quake -  
He's duck them in his lake -  
He'd break their bones  
With sticks and stones,  
And burn them at the stake!

Chorus. This sport he much enjoyed,  
Did Rupert Murgatroyd -  
No sense or shame  
Or pity came  
To Rupert Murgatroyd!

**They rise and sink variously as they sing. Eg: One B goes up on a line while another goes down to full squat. etc**

**Dame H walks towards 1. The B's follow after her, huddled together.**

**They all arrive with her.**

Hannah. Once, on the village green  
A palsied hag he roasted,  
And what took place, I ween,  
Shook his composure boasted,

**DH heads towards 2. B's follow.**

For, as the torture grim  
Seized on each withered limb,

**Specials up on Witch on US end of pier and Rupert who is US near 6.**

The writhing dame

**Dame Hannah indicates with L hand.**

'Mid fire and flame  
Yelled forth this curse on him:

**Witch sings:**

*"Each Lord of Ruddygore,  
Despite his best endeavour,  
Shall do one crime, or more,  
Once, every day, for ever!  
This doom he can't defy  
However he may try,  
For should he stay  
His hand, that day  
In torture he shall die!"*

**B's all huddle together. Special fades on witch. Witch exits in darkness. Special out on Rupert.**

Chorus. This doom they can't avoid, **(Up and down as before)**  
These Lords of Murgatroyd -  
Both last and first,  
You're all accurst  
Oh, House of Murgatroyd!

Hannah. The prophesy came true:  
Each heir who held the title  
Had, every day, to do  
Some crime of import vital;  
Until, with guilt o'erplied,

**Special up on Rupert, who is in great distress. He sings:**

*"I'll sin no more!"*

**Rupert staggers off as Special fades.**

**DH resumes:**

he cried,  
And on the day

He said that say,  
In agony he died!

**The B's wander around the stage, singing to each other, and generally all exit towards 3 & 4 as they sing:**

Chorus. And thus, with sinning cloyed,  
Has died each Murgatroyd,  
And so shall fall,  
Both one and all,  
Each coming Murgatroyd!

**DH has finished US by pier. Looking to where witch was. She turns and sees Rose.**

**Exit chorus of Bridesmaids towards 3 & 4. Enter ROSE MAYBUD from corner 8, with small basket on her arm.**

Hannah. **(Coming DS C to meet her).** Whither away, dear Rose? On some errand of charity, as is thy wont?

Rose. A few gifts, dear aunt, for deserving villagers. **(She shows props out of basket).** Lo, here is some peppermint rock for old Gaffer Gadderby, a set of false teeth for pretty little Ruth Rowbottom, and a pound of snuff for the poor orphan girl on the hill.

Hannah. Ah, Rose, pity that so much goodness **(DH puts L hand on RM's US shoulder).** should not help to make some gallant youth happy for life! Rose, **(She takes her by the arm and leads her DS to the foots).** why dost thou harden that little heart of thine? **(Loud stage whisper)** Is there none hereaway whom thou couldst love?

Rose. **(Loud stage whisper back).** And if there were such an one, verily it would ill become me to tell him so. **She crosses to 2 with her back to DH.**

Hannah. Nay, dear one, **(DH starts to follow her and speaks loudly).** where true love is, there is little need of prim formality.

Rose. Hush, dear aunt, **(She rushes back to DH)** for thy words pain me sorely. Hung **(She crosses back to centre and says rather formally)** in a plated dish-cover to the knocker of the workhouse door, with nought that I could call mine own, save a change of baby linen and a book of etiquette, little wonder I have always regarded that work as a voice from a parent's tomb. This hallowed volume **(Puts down her basket and produces a book of etiquette),** composed, if I may believe the title page, by no less an authority than the wife of a Lord Mayor, has been, through life, my guide and monitor. By its solemn precepts I have learnt to test the moral worth of all who approach me. **(She gradually gets more agitated as the speech goes on, and almost whips herself up into a religious fervour)** The man who bites his bread, or eats peas with a knife, I look upon as a lost creature, and he who has not acquired the proper way of entering and leaving a room, is the object of my pitying horror. There are those in this village who bite their

nails, dear aunt, and nearly all are wont to use their pocket combs in public places. In truth, I could pursue this painful theme much further, but behold, I have said enough. **(Almost hysterical, she picks up her basket and is about to leave towards 2. She crosses in front of DH).**

Hannah. **(Follows her and gently touches her on the shoulder).** But is there no one amongst them who is faultless, in thine eyes? For example - young Robin. He combines the manners of a Marquis with the morals of a Methodist. Couldst thou not love him?

Rose. And even **(said as a sigh)** if I could, how should I confess it unto him? For lo, he is shy, and sayeth nought! **(She walks US towards 6 then turns back to face DH on Intro. She puts her basket down)**

### No.3. - SONG - (Rose)

If somebody there chanced to be **(Slowly walking towards DH)**  
Who loved me in a manner true,  
My heart would point him out to me,  
And I would point him out to you.

**(Referring to book with DH now are both on Centre)**

But here it says of those who point,  
Their manners must be out of joint -  
You may not point -  
You must not point -  
It's manners out of joint to point!

Had I the love of such as he, **(She runs with full of hope towards 2)**  
Some quiet spot he'd take me to,  
Then he could whisper it to me,  
And I could whisper it to you.

**(Becoming frustrated: Referring to book)**

But whispering, I've somewhere met,  
Is contrary to etiquette:

Where can it be? **(Searching book. DH crosses to her)**

Now let me see - **(Finding reference)**

Yes, yes!

It's contrary to etiquette! **(Showing it to Hannah)**

**Rose runs back towards 6 as she did at the start; she is about to leave but has another idea. Turns and sings towards DH.**

If any well-bred youth I knew,  
Polite and gentle, neat and trim,  
Then I would hint as much to you,  
And you could hint as much to him. **(Referring to book)**  
But here it says, in plainest print,  
It's most unladylike to hint -

You may not hint, **(She crosses back to DH who is near No 2 corner)**  
You must not hint -  
It says you mustn't hint, in print!  
And if I loved him through and through –**(Takes DH by the arm and leads her across the stage towards corner 8)**  
(True love and not a passing whim),  
Then I could speak of it to you,  
And you could speak of it to him.  
**(Referring to book)**  
But here I find it doesn't do  
To speak until you're spoken to.  
Where can it be? **(Searching book)**  
Now let me see - **(Finding reference)**  
"Don't speak until you're spoken to!"

**Exit HANNAH at corner , picking up basket as she leaves to 8.**

Rose. **(Big deliberate cross to Centre and speaking over footlights to audience).**  
Poor Aunt! Little did the good soul think , when she breathed the hallowed name of Robin, that he would do even as well as another. But he resembleth all the youths in this village, in that he is unduly bashful in my presence, and lo, it is hard to bring him to the point. **(she looks over her R shoulder).** But soft, he is here!

**ROSE is about to go towards 2 when ROBIN enters from 4 on the flat and circles towards the pier, and calls her.**

Robin. Mistress Rose!

Rose. **(Mock surprise)** Master Robin! **(She turns. We need to know she is quite smitten – at least with his wealth)**

**Big pause**

Robin. I wished to say that - it is fine! **(Slowly advancing to her in corner 2)**

Rose. It is passing fine.

**Big pause.**

Robin. But we do want rain.**(Another small advance towards her)**

Rose. Aye, sorely. Is that all?

**Big pause.**

Robin. **(Trying to think of more to say)** That is all.

Rose. Good day, Master Robin! **(She is about to exit to 2)**

Robin. Good day, Mistress Rose! **(He rushes blushing towards 8)**

**Both going - both stop and rush towards each other and meet at 1.**

Rose. } I crave pardon, I – **(very rapidly)**

Robin. } I beg pardon, I – **(very rapidly)**

Rose. You were about to say? – **(very rapidly)**

Robin. I would fain consult you – **(very rapidly)**

Rose. Truly?

Robin. It is about a friend. **(Breathless and gushy)**

Rose. In truth I have a friend myself. **(Giggling)**

Robin. Indeed? I mean, of course – **(Breathless, then he catches himself)**

Rose. And I would fain consult you -

Robin. **(anxiously)** About him?

Rose. **(prudishly)** About her.

Robin. **(relieved)** Let us consult one another –

**They sit together on the bench which is centred on OP between the wings and the pier. They sit at opposite ends. RM sits on DS end; Rb on US end.**

#### **No.4. - DUET - (Rose and Robin)**

Robin. I know a youth who loves a little maid -  
(Hey, but his face is a sight for to see!)  
Silent is he, for he's modest and afraid -  
(Hey, but he's timid as a youth can be!)

Rose. I know a maid who loves a gallant youth -  
(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!)  
She cannot tell him all the sad, sad truth -  
(Hey, but I think that little maid will die!)

Robin. Poor little man! **(He moves one place towards her)**

Rose. Poor little maid! **(She does the same)**

Robin. Poor little man! **(He does again) by side.**

Both. **They get embarrassed and jump up and run towards centre DS)**

Now, tell me pray, and tell me true,  
What in the world should the young man/maid do?

Robin. He cannot eat and he cannot sleep **\_(Walking almost backwards towards 8)**  
(Hey, but his face is a sight for to see) **(Faces away from her)**

Daily he goes for to wail - for to weep –(**Continues as before**)  
(Hey, but he's wretched as a youth can be!) (**Turns away from her**)

Rose. She's very this and she's very pale –(**She does the same heading towards 2**)  
(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!) (**Turns away from him**)  
Daily she goes for to weep - for to wail – (**Resumes**)  
(Hey, but I think that little maid will die!) (**Turns away again**)

Robin. Poor little maid! (**Small advance towards her**)

Rose. Poor little man! (**Small advance towards him**)

Robin. Poor little maid! (**Repeat**)

Rose. Poor little man! (**Repeat**)

Both. Now, tell me pray, and tell me true, (**Very close and they address each other**)

What in the world should the young man/maid do?

Rose. If I were the youth I should offer her my name -  
(Hey, but her face is a sight for to see!) (**She turns away**)

Robin. If I were the maid I should fan his honest flame -  
(Hey, but he's bashful as a youth can be!) (**He turns away**)

Rose. If I were the youth I should speak to her today -  
(Hey, but she sickens as the days go by!) (**She turns away**)

Robin. If I were the maid I should meet the lad half way -  
(For I really do believe that timid youth will die!) (**He turns away**)

Rose. Poor little man! (**She takes a few steps away from him**)

Robin. Poor little maid! (**He takes a few steps away from him**)

Rose. Poor little man! (**Repeat**)

Robin. Poor little maid! (**Repeat. They are now quite apart**)

Both. I thank you miss/sir, for your counsel true; (**Rb bows and RM curtsies**)  
I'll tell that maid/youth what she/he ought to do!

**Exit ROSE picking up her basket, into corner 2.**

Robin. (**Big cross to DS C and addresses audience over the footlights**). Poor child!  
I sometimes think that if she wasn't quite so particular I might venture - but  
no, no - even then I should be unworthy of her!

**He walks back to bench and sits despondently. Enter OLD ADAM from corner 4 on the flat.**

- Adam. My kind master is sad! **(He addresses him over the bench)** Dear Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd -
- Robin. Hush! **(Jumps up and rushes behind bench to silence OA)** As you love me breathe not that hated name. Twenty years ago, **(They walk slowly forward. Rb in stage whisper)** in horror at the prospect of inheriting that hideous title and, with it, the ban that compels all who succeed to the baronetcy to commit at least one deadly crime per day, for life, I fled my home and concealed myself in this innocent village under the name of Robin Oakapple. My younger brother, Despard, believing me to be dead, succeeded to the title and its attendant curse. For twenty years I've been dead and buried. **(Exasperated)** Don't dig me up now. **(Shrugs and crosses back to 8).**
- Adam. Dear master, **(Approaches him in corner 8)** it shall be as you wish, for have I not sworn to obey you for ever in all things? Yet, as we are here alone, and as I belong to that particular description of good old man to whom the truth is a refreshing novelty, let me call you by your own right title once more! **(ROBIN assents. OA crosses back to Centre)** Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd! Baronet! Of Ruddygore! Whew! It's like eight hours at the seaside!
- Robin. My poor old friend! **(Rb crosses back to him with hand on shoulder)** Would there were more like you!
- Adam. Would there were indeed! But I bring you good tidings! Your foster-brother, Richard, has returned from sea - his ship the TOM-TIT rides yonder **(points US OP)** at anchor, and he himself is even now in this very village!
- Robin. **(great excitement)** My beloved foster-brother? No, no - it cannot be! **(Heads off towards 3)**
- Adam. It is even so - and see, he comes this way! **(Follows him).**

**Exeunt together. The bridesmaids almost knock them down on their entrance. They look upstage, and then assemble downstage to inform the audience.**

## No.5 CHORUS OF BRIDESMAIDS

From the briny sea  
Comes young Richard, all victorious! **(They jump about with enthusiasm)**  
Valorous is he -  
His achievements all are glorious! **(Repeat)**  
Let the welkin ring  
With the news we bring  
Sing it - shout it - **(Jumping variously)**  
Tell about it -  
Safe and sound returneth he,  
All victorious from the sea! **(All wave their arms victoriously. They scream and produce white handkerchiefs, and rush US to welcome DD)**

**Enter RICHARD. He runs along rostrum and finishes at the end of the pier. Throws his knap sack to one of the Bridesmaids who catches in and puts in the wings. The B's gather around the bottom step with backs to the audience.**

**No.6 SONG (Richard with chorus of Bridesmaids)**

Richard. I shipped, d'ye see, in a revenue sloop,  
And, off Cape Finistere,  
A merchantman we see,  
A Frenchman, going free,  
So we made for the bold Mounseer,  
D'ye see? **(Points to a specific Bridesmaid)**  
We made for the bold Mounseer.

But she proved to be a frigate -  
And she up with her ports,  
And she fires with a thirty-two!

**(Jumps off pier and head towards corner 2)**

It come uncommon near, **(4 cakelike struts, hands in lapels, stepping on R on "come")**

But we answered with a cheer,  
Which paralysed **(Slap thigh)** the Parley-voo!  
D'ye see? **(Turn back and asks a Bridesmaid)**  
Which paralysed the Parley-voo!

Chorus. **(They follow him excitedly)** Which paralysed the Parley-voo!  
D'ye see? **(Pointing to each other, mimmicking DD)**  
Which paralysed the Parley-voo!

Richard. **(All in corner 2)** Then our Captain he up and he says, says he,  
"That chap we need not fear -  
We can take her if we like,  
She is sartin for to strike,  
For she's only a darned Mounseer,  
D'ye see? **(Pointing to a Bridesmaid)**  
She's only a darned Mounseer!  
But to fight a French fal-lal -  
It's like hittin' of a gal -  
It's a lubberly thing for to do;  
For we, with all our faults, **(Repeat 4 cakewalk struts starting on L on "we" and heading towards 8)**  
Why we're sturdy British salts,  
While she's only a Parley-voo,  
D'ye see? **(Pointing to bridesmaid)**  
A miserable Parley-voo!"

Chorus. **(As before)** While she's only a Parley-voo,  
D'ye see?  
A miserable Parley-voo!

Richard. So we up with our helm, and we scuds before the breeze  
And we gives a compassionating cheer;  
Froggee answers with a shout  
As he sees us go about,  
Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer,  
D'ye see? **(To B)**  
Which was grateful of the poor Mounseer!  
And I'll wager in their joy  
They kissed each other's cheek  
(Which is what them furriners do),  
And they blessed their luck stars **(Repeat 4 cakewalk struts back to C,  
starting on R on "blessed")**  
We were hard British Tars  
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo,  
D'ye see? **(Pointing to B)**  
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo!

Chorus. **(As before. They rush back to centre and pose around him)**  
  
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo,  
D'ye see?  
Who had pity on a poor Parley-voo!

**He breaks through the group and circles US to take a position on C) Bridesmaids  
gather in a large semi-circle around him.**

## **No.6. - HORNPIPE**

**Bridesmaids exit towards 7, like they have to get back to work. DD tries to detain  
them, taking Zorah to kiss. Enter ROBIN, from 3. He interrupts DD's conquest. DD is  
clearly ready for some slap and tickle and after a bit after all the months at sea.**

Robin. Richard!

Richard. **(Hesitates with embarrassment. Sends Zorah away, then enthusiastically)**  
Robin!

Robin. My beloved foster-brother, **(They greet on centre and shake hands)** and very  
dearest friend, welcome home again after ten long years at sea! It is such  
deeds as you have just described that cause our flag to be loved and dreaded  
throughout the civilized world!

Richard. Why, lord love ye, Rob, **(DD hugs him)** that's but a trifle to what we have  
done in the way of sparing life! I believe I may say, without exaggeration,  
that the marcifful little TOM-TIT **(Goes US and jumps up onto pier and  
points out his ship)** has spared more Foreign frigates than any craft afloat!  
**(Strutting DS along pier)** But, 'tain't for a British seaman to brag so I'll just

stow my jawin' tackle and belay. **(Coming down steps) (ROBIN sighs walking towards corner 2)** But 'vast heavin', messmate, what's bought you all a-cock-bill?

Robin. **(Shyly, kicking at the ground facing away from DD)** Alas, Dick, I love Rose Maybud, and love in vain!

Richard. *You* love in vain? **(Crossing towards him, pointing towards him)** Come, that's good! **(Slaps his thigh)** Why, you're a fine strapping muscular young fellow **(Puts his hands on his shoulders and turns him around, looking him up and down)** - tall and strong as a to'-gall'n-m'st - taut as a fore-stay - aye, and a barrowknight to boot **(exaggerated bow)** , if all had their rights!

Robin. Hush, Richard **(Cross DS of DD and heads towards 8), looking around him)** - not a word about my true rank, which none here suspect. Yes, I know well enough that few men are better calculated to win a woman's heart than I. I'm a fine fellow, **(Turns back to DD)** Dick, and worthy any woman's love - happy the girl who gets me, **(Big point to his own chest)** say I. But I'm timid, Dick; **(Turns back away)** shy - nervous - modest - retiring - diffident - and I cannot tell her, Dick, I cannot tell her! Ah, you've no idea what a poor opinion I have of myself, and how little I deserve it.

Richard. Robin, **(Crossing towards him at 8)** do you call to mind how, years ago, we swore that, come what might, we would always act upon our hearts' dictates?

Robin. Aye, Dick, and I've always kept that oath. **(Rb turns and puts his R arm on DD's US shoulder)** In doubt, difficulty and danger, **(Giving him a small pat on each word)** I've always asked my heart **(Sweeps hand to heart)** what I should do, and it has never failed me.

Richard. Right! **(Enthusiasticlaly leads Rb back towards C)** Let your heart be your compass, with a clear conscience for your binnacle light **(Points out front into the distance)** , and you'll sail ten knots on a bowline, clear of shoals, rocks and quicksands! Well, now, **(DD walks towards 2)** what does my heart say in this here difficult situation? **(Turning back towards Rb)** Why, it says, "Dick," it says - (it calls me, "Dick" acos it's known me from a babby) - "Dick," it says, "you ain't shy - you ain't modest - speak you up for him as is!" Robin, my lad, **(goes back to Rb)** just you lay me alongside, and when she's becalmed in my lee, I'll spin a yarn that'll sarve to fish you two together for life!

Robin. **(very excited).** Will you do this thing for me? Can you, do you think? Yes, **(feeling his pulse)** there's no false modesty about you. **(Backs away and opens arms to look at him)** Your - what I should call bumptious self-assertiveness (I mean the expression in its complimentary sense) has already made you a bos'n's mate, and it will make an admiral of you in time, if you work it properly, you dear, incompetent old impostor! My dear fellow, I'd give my right arm for one tenth of your modest assurance!

**Robin separates on Intro and heads US then turns to sing:**

**No.7. - SONG - (Robin with Richard) As per DVD**

Robin. My boy, you may take it from me,  
That of all the afflictions accurst  
With which a man's saddled  
And hampered and addled,  
A diffident nature's the worst.  
Though clever as clever can be -  
A Crichton of early romance -  
You must stir it and stump it,  
And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance.

If you wish in the world to advance,  
Your merits you're bound to enhance,  
You must stir it and stump it,  
And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

Both. If you wish in the world to advance,  
Your merits you're bound to enhance,  
You must stir it and stump it,  
And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

Robin. Now take, for example, my case:  
I've a bright intellectual brain -  
In all London city  
There's no one so witty -  
I've thought so again and again.  
I've a highly intelligent face -  
My features cannot be denied -  
But, whatever I try sir,  
I fail in - and why, sir?

Robin. I'm modestly personified!  
  
If you wish in the world to advance,  
Your merits you're bound to enhance,  
  
You must stir it and stump it,  
And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

Both. If you wish in the world to advance,  
Your merits you're bound to enhance,  
You must stir it and stump it,

And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

Robin. As a poet I'm tender and quaint -  
I've passion and fervour and grace -  
From Ovid and Horrace  
To Swinburn and Morris,  
They all of them take a back place.  
Then I sing and I play and I paint:  
Though none are accomplished as I,  
To say so were treason:  
You ask me the reason?

Robin. I'm diffident, modest and shy!  
  
If you wish in the world to advance,  
Your merits you're bound to enhance,  
You must stir it and stump it,  
And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

Both. If you wish in the world to advance,  
Your merits you're bound to enhance,  
You must stir it and stump it,  
And blow your own trumpet,  
Or, trust me, you haven't a chance!

**They cross and Robin goes out towards 6.**

Richard. **(Coming forward and addressing audience over footlights)** Ah! It's a thousand pities he's such a poor opinion of himself, for a finer fellow don't walk! Well, I'll do my best for him. "Plead for him as though it was for your own father" - that's what my heart's a-remarkin' to me just now. **(He sees RM coming from 2)** But here she comes! Steady! Steady it is!

**Enter ROSE with basket again. She is returning from her mercy round. He is much struck by her. He circles DS of her to follow her as she heads towards 6. He is checking her out.**

Richard. By the Port Admiral but she's a tight little craft! Come, come, she's not for you, Dick, and yet - she'd been fit to marry Lord Nelson! By the flag of old England, I can't look at her unmoved.

Rose. **(Aware of his presence. She stops)** Sir, you are agitated -

Richard. Aye, aye, my lass, well said! I am agitated, true enough! **(hands behind back, rocking backwards and forwards)** - took flat aback, my girl, but 'tis naught - 'Twill pass. **(Rushes forward and large aside to audience)** This here heart of mine's a-dictatin' to me like anythink. Question is, have I the right to disregard its promptings?

- Rose. **(Crosses towards him)** Can I do aught to relieve thine anguish, for it seemeth to me that thou art in sore trouble? This apple - **(proffering a damaged apple out of her basket)**
- Richard. **(examining it and returning it)** No my lass, 'taint that: I'm took flat aback **(He walks shyly towards 2)** - I never see anything like you in all my born days. Parbuckle me **(Slaps his thigh)** you ain't the loveliest gal **(Goes back to her and takes her by the hands)** I've ever set eyes on. There, I can't say fairer than that, can I?
- Rose. No! **(She turns and heads towards 8 and aside to audience)** The question is, is it meet that an utter stranger should thus express himself? **(Refers to book)** Yes - "Always speak the truth."
- Richard. **(On centre facing her)** I'd no thought of sayin' this here to you on my own account, for, to tell the truth, I was chartered by another; but when I see you my heart it up and it says, says it, "This is the very lass for you, Dick" - "Speak up to her, Dick" it says - (it calls me Dick acos we was at school together) - "Tell her all, Dick," it says, "Never sail under false colours - it's mean!" That's what my heart tells me to say, and in my rough, common-sailor fashion, I've said it, and I'm a-waitin' for your reply. I'm a-tremblin', miss. Lookye here - **(holding out his hand. It trembles)** That's narvousness!
- Rose. **(aside to audience)** Now, how should a maiden deal with such an one? **(consults book- quickly like a panic. She is clearly impressed by his manliness)** "Keep no one in unnecessary suspense." **(aloud and slowly and pompously like ER II)** Behold, I will not keep you in unnecessary suspense **(refers to book - quickly)** "In accepting an offer of marriage, do so with apparent hesitation." **(aloud and slowly)** I take you but with a certain show of reluctance.**(Holds out hand and then retracts it)** **(refers to book- quickly)** "Avoid any appearance of eagerness" **(aloud and slowly)** Though you will bear in mind that I am far from anxious to do so. **(refers to book)** "A little show of emotion will not be misplaced!" **(aloud)** Pardon this tear! **(Walking a little towards him and wipes her eye)**
- Richard. Rose, you've made me the happiest blue-jacket in England! **(Bounds to her. They meet on Centre).** I wouldn't change places with the admiral of the fleet, no matter who he's a-huggin' at this present moment! But, axin' your pardon, miss, **(wiping his lips on his hand)** might I be permitted to salute the flag I'm a-goin' to sail under?
- Rose. **(referring to book)** "An engaged young lady should not permit too many familiarities" **(aloud)** Once! **She offers her cheek. Instead he takes her passionately in his arms and gives a lingering kiss on the lips. She is all flustered and rushes back to corner 8)**

**No.8. - DUET - (Rose and Richard)**

- Richard. **(Slowly walking towards her in corner 8. She is facing away from him)**

The battle's roar is over,  
O my love!  
Embrace thy tender lover **(Holds out his arms)**  
O my love!  
From tempest's welter,  
From war's alarms,  
O give me shelter  
Within those arms! **(he holds his own arms)**  
Thy smile alluring, **(He holds her from behind. She softens and succumbs. They are in corner 8)**  
All heart-ache curing,  
Gives peace enduring,  
O my love!

**Releasing from him, she turns with L shoulder US and takes a few steps away from him towards centre**

Rose. If heart both true and tender  
O my love!  
A life-love can engender, **(Offers her hand and he rushes and takes it)**  
O my love!  
A truce to sighing **(She draws him closer as they slowly walk together)**  
And tears of brine,  
For joy undying  
Shall aye be mine.

Both. And thou and I, love, **(They reach Centre, and are in an embrace)**  
Shall live and die, love,  
Without a sigh, love -  
My own, my love!

**Enter ROBIN, with chorus of Bridesmaids from US corner 4. RM rushes to 8 as they enter.**

### **No.9. - ENTRANCE OF BRIDESMAIDS<sup>1</sup>**

I well his suit has sped,  
Oh, may they soon be wed!  
Oh, tell us, tell us pray,  
What doth the maiden say? **(They address DD)**  
In singing are we justified,  
In singing are we justified?

"Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride  
Let the nuptial knot be tied:  
In fair phrases

Hymn their praises,  
Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride"?

**Choreography for "Hail the Bridegroom":**

**3 hops in parallel 1st with hands like bunny rabbits, and last one is a wave with R hand. Hops are on "bridegroom" "Hail" "Bride".**

**Repeat on "nuptial", "knot" "tied"**

**2 pas de basques (RLR, LRL)**

**Repeat 3 hops**

Robin. **(Coming to Pt side of DD)** Well - what news? Have you spoken to her?

Richard. Aye, my lad, I have - so to speak - spoke her.

Robin. And she refuses?

Richard. Why, no, I can't truly say she do!

Robin. Then she accepts! My darling! **(Rb crosses towards 8 embraces ROSE. Bridesmaids almost knock DD over as they rush to get around Rb and RM)**

Bridesmaids. "Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride  
Let the nuptial knot be tied:  
In fair phrases  
Hymn their praises,  
Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride" **(They dance as before)**

Rose. **(Struggles in Rb's arms in an attempt to get to her book. Referring to book)**  
Now, what should a maiden do when she is embraced by the wrong gentleman?

Richard. Belay, my lad, belay! **(He pushes Bridesmaids out of the way as he tries to get to Rb. They back away with pouts)** You don't understand!

Rose. Oh, sir, belay, I beseech you! **(Pushing him away. Rb is now onstage of DD and RM)**

Richard. You see, it's like this: she accepts - but it's me! **(Pointing to himself)**

Robin. You! **(Pointing to him)**

**RICHARD embraces ROSE.**

Bridesmaids. **(Pushing Rb aside)**

"Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride  
Let the nuptial knot be tied – **(They dance)**

Robin. **(He pushes back through them and pushes them aside, interrupting angrily. They pout and head towards 2)** Hold your tongues, will you! Now then, what does this mean?

Richard. My poor lad, my heart grieves for thee, but it's like this: **(Takes Rb on the shoulders and walks away with him towards 2. RM is left in corner8)**. The moment I see her, and just as I was a-goin' to mention you name, my heart it up and it says, says it, "Dick, you fell in love with her yourself," it says. "Be honest and sailor-like - don't skulk under false colours - speak up," it says, "Take her, you dog, **(DD gestures and RM rushes to C and takes DD hands)** and with her my blessin'!"

Bridesmaids. "Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride –

**They gather in a semi-circle US of them.**

Robin. Will you be quiet! **(One doesn't hear and keeps singing)** Go away! **(Chorus poke tongues out at him and exit towards 6 & 7)** Vulgar girls!

Richard. What could I do? **(Embracing RM on C)** I'm bound to obey my heart's dictates.

Robin. **(Walking US of them and heading towards 8)** Of course - no doubt. It's quite right - I don't mind, that is - not particularly - only it's - it is disappointing, you know.

Rose. **(to ROBIN)** Oh, but, sir, I knew not that thou didst seek me in wedlock, **(She crosses to him)** or in very truth **(Loud stage whisper)** I should not have hearkened unto this man, **(Normal voice)** for behold, he is but a **(whisper)** lowly mariner, and very **(whisper)** poor withal, whereas thou art a **(loudly)** tiller of the land, and thou hast fat oxen, and many sheep and swine, a considerable dairy farm, and much corn and oil! **(She rattles this off like she has said it many times before – as she probably has to herself)**

Richard. **(Overhears everything and advances)** That's true, my lass, **(Takes her by the hand and leads her back towards C)** but it's done now, ain't it, Rob?

Rose. Still, **(She stops and removes her hand from his)** it may be that I should not be happy in thy love. I am passing young, and little able to judge. Moreover, as to thy character, I know naught! **(She backs away from him)**

Robin. Nay, Rose, I'll answer for that. Dick has won thy love fairly. **(Pushes her back towards him)** Broken-hearted as I am, I'll stand up for Dick through thick and thin!

Richard. **(with emotion)** Thankye, messmate! **(Crosses DS of RM who has turned upstage to think up a new strategy)**. That's well said. That's spoken honest. Thankye Rob! **(grasps his hand)**

Rose. **(With a sudden new reason. She is now between them again)** Yet methinks I have heard that sailors are but worldly men, and little prone to lead serious and thoughtful lives.

Robin. And what then? Admit that Dick is not a steady character, and that when he's excited he uses language that would make your hair curl, - Grant that, he does - it's the truth, and I'm not going to deny it! But look at his good qualities. He's as nimble as a pony, and his hornpipe is the talk of the fleet!

**RICHARD dances a few steps.**

Robin. There! And that's only a bit of it. **(Rb very enthusiastic. RM could care less)**

Richard. Thankye Rob! That's well spoken. Thankye Rob!

Rose. **(crosses DS of Rb and goes towards 8)** But it may be that he drinketh strong waters that do bemuse a man, and make him even as the wild beasts of the desert!

Robin. Well, suppose he does, and I don't say he don't, for rum's his bane and ever has been. He does drink - I won't deny it. But what of that? Look at his arms - tattooed to the shoulder! **(RICHARD rolls up his sleeve)** No, no - I won't hear a word against Dick!

Rose. **(This is her last attempt to get out of the proposal. She announces it very deliberately).** But they say that mariners are rarely true to those that they profess to love!

Robin. Granted - granted - and I don't say that Dick isn't as bad as any of 'em. **(RICHARD chuckles)** You are, you know you are, you dog! A devil of a fellow - a regular out-and-out Lothario! But what then? You can't have everything, and a better hand at turning in a dead-eye don't walk a deck! And what an accomplishment that is in a family man! **(Puts arm around DD's shoulders)** No, no - not a word against Dick. I'll stick up for him through thick and thin!

Richard. Thankye, Rob, thankye! You're a true friend. **(Big embrace)** I've acted accordin' to my heart's dictates, and such orders as them no man should disobey!

### **No.10. - TRIO - (Rose, Richard and Robin)**

**RM is near 8; Rb on C; DD near 2**

In sailing o'er life's ocean wide  
Your heart should be your only guide;

**(Choreography: 4 large swaying steps to R, L, R, L)**  
With summer sea and favouring wind  
Yourself in port you'll surely find.

**(Rocking from side to side. R first)**

Richard. **(Circling US and then coming DS and Rb moves off to 2)**

My heart says, "To this maiden strike -  
She's capture you  
She's just the sort of girl you like -. **(Indicates RM)**  
You know you do  
If other men her heart should gain,  
I shall resign."  
That's what it says to me quite plain,  
This heart of mine.

Robin. **(Circling US and coming DS C. DD off to 2)**

My heart says, "You've a prosperous lot  
With acres wide;  
You mean to settle all you've got  
Upon your bride." **(indicates RM)**  
It don't pretend to shape my acts  
By word or sign;  
It merely states these simple facts,  
This heart of mine!

Rose. **(Circling US and coming DS C. Rb to 8. Dick and Robin listen is like original poster)**

Ten minutes since my heart said, "White!" **(to DD)**  
It now says, "Black!" **(to Rb)**  
It then said, "Left!" **(To DD)** It now says, "Right!" **(to Rb)**  
Hearts often tack.  
I must obey its latest strain -  
You tell me so. **(to RICHARD)**  
But should it change its mind again,  
I'll let you know!

**Turning from RICHARD to ROBIN, who embraces her.**

Ensemble. In sailing o'er life's ocean wide  
No doubt the heart should be your guide;  
But it is awkward when you find  
A heart that does not know its mind!

**Exit ROBIN and ROSE to 8., and RICHARD R., to 2 weeping.**

**Enter MAD MARGARET. She is wildly dressed in picturesque tatters, and is an obvious caricature of theatrical madness.**

**No.11. - RECIT. AND ARIA - (Margaret)**

Cheerily carols the lark  
Over the cot.  
Merrily whistles the clerk  
Scratching a blot.

But the lark  
And the clerk,  
I remark,  
Comfort me not!

Over the ripening peach  
Buzzes the bee.  
Splash on the billowy beach  
Tumbles the sea.  
But the peach  
And the beach  
They are each  
Nothing to me!

And why?  
Who am I?  
Daft Madge! Crazy Meg!  
Mad Margaret! Poor Peg!  
He! he! he! he! he! (*chuckling*)  
Mad, I?  
Yes very!  
But, why?  
Mystery!  
Don't call!  
Whist! Whist!

No crime -  
'Tis only  
That I'm  
Love-Lonely!  
That's all!

## **BALLAD**

To a garden full of posies  
Cometh one to gather flowers,  
And he wanders through it's bowers  
Toying with the wanton roses,  
Who, uprising from their beds,  
Hold on high their shameless heads  
With their pretty lips a-pouting,  
Never doubting - never doubting  
That for Cytherean posies  
He would gather aught but roses!

In a nest of weeds and nettles,  
Lay a violet half-hidden,  
Hoping that his glance unbidden  
Yet might fall upon her petals.

Though she lived alone, apart,  
Love lay nestling in her heart,  
But, alas, the cruel awaking  
Set her little heart a-breaking,  
For he gathered for his posies  
Only roses - only roses!

**She bursts into tears. Enter ROSE from 8 with basket again.**

Rose. A maiden, and in tears? Can I do aught to soften thy sorrow? This apple -

**They meet on Centre. ROSE offers an apple. MARGARET examines it and rejects it.**

Mar. No! **(mysteriously)** Tell me, are you mad? **(nose to nose with RM)**

Rose. I? No! That is, I think not. **(Very startled and walks backwards as MM is still nose to nose)**

Mar. That's well! **(Breaking away)**. Then you don't love Sir Despard Murgatroyd? All mad girls love him. I love him. **(She skips girlishly to corner 2)** I'm poor Mad Margaret - Crazy Meg - Poor Peg! He! he! he! he! he! **(chuckles)**

Rose. Thou lovest the bad baronet of Ruddygore? **(Crosses to her in almost disbelief. MM nods. RM recoils)** Oh, horrible - too horrible! **(Walking away)**

Mar. You pity me? Then be my mother! **(Rushes after with awkward embrace)** The squirrel had a mother, but she drank and the squirrel fled! Hush! **(Pushes RM away)** They sing a brave song in our parts - it runs somewhat thus; **(sings to the music of the Love Duet from "Lucia di Lammermoor")**

"The cat and the dog and the little puppee  
Sat down in a - down in a - in - "

I forget what they sat down in, but so the song goes. Listen! I've come to pinch her!

Rose. **(Not very interested)** Mercy, whom!

Mar. You mean, "Who."

Rose. Nay! It is the accusative after the verb. **(Turns away in triumph of her superior knowledge)**

Mar. True. **(melodramatically)** I've come to pinch Rose Maybud!

Rose. **(aside to audience, alarmed)** Rose Maybud!

Mar. **(Heads towards 2 to tell her saga)** Aye! I love him - he loved me once. But that's all gone. Fisht! He gave me an Italian glance - thus **(business)** and made me his. He will give her an Italian glance, and make her his! **(Heading towards Rm)** But it shall not be, for I'll stamp on her - stamp on her - stamp on her! **(Gets closer on each "stamp")** Did you ever kill

anybody? **(Nose to nose again)** No? Why not? Listen - I killed a fly this morning! **(Skips away)** It buzzed, and I wouldn't have it! So it died **(Looks for it)- pop! (Claps her hands)** So shall she!

Rose. But behold, **(Walking defiantly)** I am Rose Maybud, and I would fain not die, **(Imitates RM's looking for fly)** "pop"! **(Claps hands).**

Mar. You **(pointing)** are Rose Maybud?

Rose. Yes, sweet **(pause)** Rose Maybud!

Mar. Strange! They told me she was beautiful! **(Addressing audience)** And *he loves you!* **(Points)** No, no! **(Laughs)** If I thought that, I would treat you as the auctioneer and the land-agent treated the ladybird - I would rend you asunder! **(Grabs RM by the arm)**

Rose. Nay, **(Escapes and pants heavily like she has had a narrow escape).** be pacified, for behold I am pledged to another, and lo, we are to be wedded this very day!

Mar. Swear me that! **(Points towards her)** Come to a Commissioner and let me have it on affidavit! **(Advances threateningly towards her)** I once made an affidavit - but it died - it died - it died! **(Turns away on each "died". She finishes facing 3)** But see, they come **(in a panic)** - Sir Despard and his evil crew! Hide, hide - they are all mad - quite mad! **(Rushes around the stage trying to find somewhere to hide).**

Rose. **(Advances to her)** What makes you think that?

Mar. Hush! They sing choruses in public. That's mad enough I think! Go - hide away, or they will seize you. Hush! **(Huddling in 8).** Quite softly - quite, quite softly!

**Exit together on tiptoe at 8. Enter Chorus of Bucks and Blades followed by Chorus of Bridesmaids.**

## No.12. - CHORUS

### Introduction:

**1-8 5 Officers enter across back rostrum and come on to pier.**

**1-8 4 Officers enter from 4**

**1-4 3 enter from 3**

**1-4 4 enter DS from 2**

All men strike a very “macho” and aggressive pose, with riding crop, walking canes or swagger sticks featured.

## 1-8 Bridesmaids enter from 6 & 7

Bridesmaids. Welcome gentry,  
For your entry  
Sets our tender hearts a-beating. **(They all curtsy – down on “hearts”)**  
Men of station, **(Some rush forward)**  
Admiration **(The rest join them)**  
Prompts this unaffected greeting. **(Limp wave)**  
Hearty greeting offer we!

Men. **(Crops etc down by side in R hand)**

When thoroughly tired **(March on R on “thor”)**  
Of being admired **(March on L on “be”)**  
By ladies of gentle degree - degree, **(March on R on “la”. Two stamps L,R on “gree” and “gree”, slapping thigh with crop or other gesture)**  
With flattery sated **(Repeat all starting L)**  
High-flown and inflated,  
Away from the city we flee - we flee! **(Two stamps R,L on “flee” and “flee”)**  
From charms intramural **(Crop held in two hands across thighs. Legs astride. Crotch forward)**  
To prettiness rural  
The sudden transition  
Is simply Elysian.  
So, come Amaryllis, **(Slide feet together in parallel 1st with crop under L arm)**  
Come Chloe and Phyllis,  
Your slaves for the moment are we!

Girls. **(Slowly advancing towards Officers. Some go up the steps etc)**

The **sons** of the tillage  
Who **dwel** in this village  
Are **people** of lowly degree - degree. **(3 slow walks forward RLR, then over with L and back with R on “gree”, “gree”)**  
Though **honest** and active **(Repeat starting on L)**  
They're **most** unattractive  
And **awkward** as awkward **can be - can be!**  
They're clumsy clodhoppers **(Chattering heads as they find a partner)**  
With axes and choppers,  
And shepherds and ploughmen  
And drovers and cowmen  
Hedgers and reapers

And carters and keepers,  
But never a lover for me!

**(Gazing lovingly/lustily at officers on last line)**

**Couples parade around stage, arm in arm doing their own step as before. Bridesmaids take Officers L arm. The Officers have crop etc in R arm to slap their thighs**

Girls.	So welcome gentry, For your entry  Sets our tender hearts a-beating.  Men of station Admi - ration Prompts this unaf - fected greeting. Hearty greeting offer we!	Men.	When thoroughly tired Of being admired By ladies of gentle degree - degree, With flattery sated High-flown and inflated, Away from the city we flee - we flee!  From charms intermural To prettiness rural The sudden transition Is simple Elysian So, come Amaryllis, Come Chloe and Phyllis, Your slaves for the moment are we!
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**Enter SIR DESPARD along back rostrum and along pier. On accents one group of B's run to 2; then another to 8; then more to 2; then more to 8. Officers group themselves US of them.**

**No.13. - SONG AND CHORUS - (Sir Despard)**

Sir D. **(Singing from front of pier)** Oh why am I moody and sad?  
Chorus. Can't guess!  
Sir D. And why am I guiltily mad?  
Chorus. Confess!  
Sir D. Because I am thoroughly bad!  
Chorus. Oh yes!  
Sir D. You'll see it at once in my face!  
Oh why am I husky and hoarse? **(Dp comes down steps and comes to Centre)**  
Chorus. Ah, why?

Sir D. It's the workings of conscience of course!

Chorus. Fie, fie!

Sir D. And huskiness stands for remorse,

Chorus. Oh my!

Sir D. At least, it does so in my case!

When in crime one is fully employed – **(To officers on his R)**

Chorus. Like you -

Sir D. Your expression gets warped and destroyed:

Chorus. It do.

Sir D. It's a penalty none can avoid;

Chorus. How true!

Sir D. I once was a nice looking youth:  
But like stone from a strong catapult –**(To officers on his L)**

Chorus. A trice -

Sir D. I rushed at my terrible cult -

Chorus. That's vice -

Sir D. Observe the unpleasant result!

Chorus. Not nice.

Sir D. Indeed, I am telling the truth!

Oh, innocents, happy though poor! **(Approaching B's in corner 2)**

Chorus. That's we!

Sir D. If I had been virtuous, I'm sure -

Chorus. Like me!

Sir D. I should be as nice looking as you're!

Chorus. Maybe!

Sir D. You are very nice looking indeed!  
Oh innocents, listen in time – **(Approaching B's in corner 8)**

Chorus. We *doe*.

Sir D. Avoid an existence of crime -

Chorus. Just so -

Sir D. Or you'll be as ugly as I'm -

Chorus. **(loudly)** No, no!

Sir D. And now, if you please, we'll proceed! **(Walking back to center)**

**All the girls express their horror of SIR DESPARD. As he approaches them they fly from him, terror stricken, leaving him alone on the stage. The Officers chase after them.**

Sir D. Poor children, how they loathe me **(Walks DS and looks into pit)** - me whose hands are certainly steeped in infamy, **(Thunderous voice then change into a little child's voice)** but whose heart is as the heart of a little child! But what is a poor baronet to do, when a whole picture gallery of ancestors step down from their frames and threaten him with an excruciating death, if he hesitates to commit his daily crime? But ha! Ha! I am even with them. *(Mysteriously)* I get my crime over the first thing in the morning, and then ha! Ha! For the rest of the day I do good - I do good - I do good! *(Melodrammatically)* **(Head towards corner 2 taking out small pocket book)**. Two days since, I stole a child and built an orphan asylum. Yesterday I robbed a bank and endowed a bishopric. Today I carry off Rose Maybud and atone with a cathedral! This is what it is to be the sport and toy of a picture gallery! But I will be bitterly **(Return to 1)** revenged upon them! I will give them all to the nation, and nobody shall ever look upon their faces again!

**Enter RICHARD from 4 on the flat.**

Richard. Ax your honour's pardon but - **(Toffing hat)**

Sir D. Ha! Observed! And by a mariner! What would you with me fellow?

Richard. Your honour, I'm a poor man-o'-war's man, becalmed in the doldrums -

Sir D. **(Thinks - like they are people he might know)** I don't know them.

Richard. **(DD has arrived and is standing next to Dp on 1)** And I make so bold as to ax your honour's advice. Does your honour know what it is to have a heart?

Sir D. My honour knows what it is to have a complete apparatus for conducting the circulation of the blood through the veins and arteries of the human body.

Richard. **(Walks away from Despard plucking up courage to speak)**. Aye, but has your honour a heart that ups and looks you in the face and gives you quarter-deck orders that it's life and death to disobey?

- Sir D. My honour does not have a heart of that description, but I have a picture gallery that presumes to take that liberty.
- Richard. **(With energy back towards Dp).** Well, your honour, it's like this - your honour had an elder brother -
- Sir D. It had.
- Richard. Who should have inherited your title and with it, it's cuss.
- Sir D. **(walks towards 2)** Aye! But he died - Oh Ruthven! **(Clenching fist in the air)**
- Richard. He didn't.
- Sir D. He did not?
- Richard. He didn't. On the contrary, he lives in this here very village, under the name of Robin Oakapple, and he's a-goin' to marry Rose Maybud this very day.
- Sir D. **(very agitated, out front)** Ruthven alive, and going to marry Rose Maybud? **(Rushes back to DD)** Can this be possible?
- Richard. **(Turns away shyly).** Now the question I was going to ax your honour is - ought I to tell your honour this?
- Sir D. **(Walks towards 8)** I don't know. It's a delicate point. I think you ought. **(Turns back sharply).** Mind, I'm not sure, but I think so!
- Richard. **(Talking to audience, walking towards 2).** That's what my heart says. It says, "Dick", it says **(Turning back to Despard):**(it calls me Dick acos it's entitled to take that liberty), **(facing audience again)** "That there young gal would recoil from him if she knew what he really were. Ought you to stand off and on, and let this young gal take this false step and never fire a shot across her bows to bring her to? No," it says, "you did not ought." **(Marches confidentially back to 1).** And I won't ought, accordin'.
- Sir D. **(Joins him in centre).** Then you really feel yourself at liberty to tell me that my elder brother lives - that I may charge him with his cruel deceit, and transfer to his shoulders the hideous thraldom under which I have laboured for so many years! Free - free at last! Free to live a blameless life, and to die beloved and regretted by all who knew me.

#### **No.14. - DUET - (Richard and Sir Despard)**

**As per DVD. Note: Despard should be on Stage L and Richard on Stage R. The reverse of what is on the DVD.**

**Richard circles to his R and Despard circles to his L.**

- Richard. You understand? **(Pointing to him)**

Sir D. I think I do.  
 With vigour unshaken **(Jump together R,L)**  
 This step shall be taken. **(Repeat)**  
 It's neatly planned.

Richard. I think so too;  
 I'll readily bet it **(Jump together L, R)**  
 You'll never regret it! **(Repeat)**

Both. For duty, duty must be done; **(Hands on shoulders)**  
 The rule applies to everyone,  
 And painful though that duty be,  
 To shirk the task were fiddle-de-dee,  
 To shirk the task were fiddle-de-dee,  
 To shirk the task,  
 To shirk the task were fiddle-de,  
 Fiddle-de, fiddle-de,  
 Fiddle-de, fiddle-de,  
 Fiddle-de, fiddle-de-dee!

**Step back on R on last "dee", then L, R, L before theme step as per video.**

Sir D. The bridegroom comes -

Richard. Likewise the bride -  
 The maidens are very  
 Elated and merry;  
 They are her chums.

Sir D. To lash their pride  
 Were almost a pity,  
 The pretty committee!

Both. For duty, duty must be done;  
 The rule applies to everyone,  
 And painful though that duty be,  
 To shirk the task were fiddle-de-dee,  
 To shirk the task were fiddle-de-dee,  
 To shirk the task,  
 To shirk the task were fiddle-de,  
 Fiddle-de, fiddle-de,  
 Fiddle-de, fiddle-de,  
 Fiddle-de, fiddle-de-dee!

***Exit RICHARD and SIR DESPARD to 2. Enter Chorus from 8.***

## **No.15. - FINALE**

**1-8 Zorah enters scattering rose petals.**

**1-8 Ruth enters and does the same. They stand beside each other facing Wall 3.**

**1-16 Others run in between them and take place on stage of them, until they are 2 lines of 8 across the front of the stage. They sing facing front towards the audience.**

Girls. Hail the bride of seventeen summers: **(All step forward R,L; backwards R,L)**  
In fair phrases **(Step to R and pointe left foot)**  
Hymn her praises; **(Rpt stepping to L)**  
Rend your song on high, all comers. **(Rpt stepping forwards and backwards)**  
She rejoices **(Step to the R and pointe L foot)**  
In your voices. **(Rpt to L. 4 walks around to R to face front again).**  
Smiling summer beams her, **(They all group as in a wedding photograph)**  
Shedding every blessing on her:  
Maidens, greet her -  
Kindly treat her -  
Ye may all be brides some day!

**They arrange themselves US with 10 on OP of rostrum and 6 on Pt side of rostrum.**

Men. **4 Officers enter from 4 on rostrum; 4 enter from 4 on flat; 8 Officers enter from 6 on flat**

**The first 4 Officers from 6 walk up the steps and walk forward along rostrum and stand. The remaining 4 stay on the ground behind the Bridesmaids.**

Hail the bridegroom who advances,  
Agitated  
Yet elated.  
He's in easy circumstances,  
Young and lusty,  
True and trusty!

All. **(Standing on place and singing out. Robin, folowed by Old Adam, Richard and Sweep nervously fumbles his way along rostra at back down along pier egged on by Officers. Zorah & Ruth walk to wings and lead Rose, then Dame H from corner 8)**

Smiling summer beams her,  
Shedding every blessing on her:  
Maidens, greet her -  
Kindly treat her -  
You may all -

Girls. May all be  
Brides some day!

Men. May bridegrooms  
Some fine day!

**Robin comes down steps and greets Rose at 1. Richard and Old Adam walk towards 2, Rose is on centre, with Dame Hannah, then Zorah. Ruth returns to ensemble of Bridesmaids. Rose and Robin embrace. The sweep sits on 1 facing US, with broom over shoulder.**

### **MADRIGAL**

- Rose. When the buds are blossoming,  
Smiling welcome to the spring,  
Lovers choose a wedding day -  
Life is love in merry May!
- Girls. Spring is green - Fal la la!  
Summer's rose - Fal la la!
- Principals. It is sad when summer goes, Fal la!
- Men. Autumn's gold - Fal la la!  
Winter's grey - Fal la la!
- Principals. Winter still is far away, Fal la!
- All. Leaves in autumn fade and fall.  
Winter is the end of all.  
Spring and summer teem with glee:  
Spring and summer then, for me! Fal la!
- Hannah. In the spring-time seed is sown:  
In the summer grass is mown:  
In the autumn you may reap:  
Winter is the time for sleep.
- Girls. Spring is hope - Fal la la!  
Summer's joy - Fal la la!
- Principals. Spring and summer never cloy - Fal la!
- Men. Autumn, toil - Fal la la!  
Winter rest - Fal la la!
- Principals. Winter after all is best - Fal la!
- All. Spring and summer pleasure you,  
Autumn, aye, and winter too -  
Every season has it's cheer  
Life is lovely all the year! Fal la!

### **GAVOTTE**

**They are about to leave, when Despard enters along pier, and stands at the top of the steps. Some couples are already off stage.**

Sir D.            Hold, bride and bridegroom, ere you wed each other,  
I claim young Robin as my elder brother!

**Couples who have gone off re-enter and are shocked.**

**Robin            (To audience) Ah, lost one.**

**Robin runs towards corner 8**

His rightful title I have long enjoyed:  
I claim him as Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd!

Rose            **(Rose rushes wildly over to him)** Deny the falsehood Robin, as you  
should; It is a plot!

Robin.           I would if conscientiously I could,  
But I cannot!

**Rose runs back to DH. OA crosses to Robin.**

All.            Ah, base one!

**SOLO - (Robin)**

**He walks dejectedly back toward DS Centre. OA waits at 8.**

As pure and blameless peasant,  
I cannot, I regret,  
Deny a truth unpleasant:

**Turns towards Rose, who is at 2.**

I am that baronet!

All.            He is that baronet!

Robin.           **(On centre. Chorus gather behind him. They do choreographed step).**

But when completely rated  
Bad baronet am I,  
That I am what he's stated  
I'll recklessly deny!

All.            He'll recklessly deny!

Robin.           When I'm a bad Bart I will tell taradiddles!

All.            He'll tell taradiddles when he's a bad Bart!

Robin.           I'll play a bad part on the falsest of fiddles!

All. On very false fiddles he'll play a bad part!  
Robin. But until that takes place I must be conscientious!  
All. He'll be conscientious until that takes place!  
Robin. Then adieu with good grace to my morals sententious!  
All. To morals sententious adieu with good grace!  
Adieu with good grace to his morals, his morals sententious!

When he's/I'm a bad Bart he/I will tell taradiddles!  
On very false fiddles he'll/I'll play a bad part!  
He'll/I'll play a bad part on the falsest of fiddles!  
And tell taradiddles when he's/I'm a bad Bart!

**Robin is about to exit to 7 or 8, and Zorah rushes to stop him.**

Zorah. Who is the wretch who hath betrayed thee?  
Let him stand forth?

**Richard comes DS to 1.**

Richard. 'Twas I!  
All. Die, traitor!

**Walking towards 2 – to explain to Rose etc.**

Richard. Hold, my conscience made me!  
Withhold your wrath!

### **SONG – Richard**

**Richard walks slowly toward 1, as does Robin from 2. He addresses below to Robin.**

Within this breast there beats a heart  
Whose voice can't be gainsaid.  
It bade me thy true rank impart,  
And I at once obeyed.  
I knew 'twould blight thy budding fate -  
I knew 'twould cause thee anguish great -  
But did I therefore hesitate?  
No! I at once obeyed!

**In a topsy turvy way the chorus gather upstage of him and start to congratulate him for his "honesty".**

All. Acclaim him who, when his true heart  
Bade him young Robin's rank impart,  
Immediately obeyed!

**Zorah, who is now full of admiration for Dick leads him US. Robin again turns as if to leave to 8.**

**SOLO - (Rose)**

Rose. **(addressing ROBIN. She walks forward from 2 to arrive at 1)** Farewell!

Thou hadst my heart -  
'Twas quickly won!  
But now we part -  
Thy face I shun!

**(Queen of the Wilis's shun)**

Farewell!

Go bend the knee

**She turns back to him and gestures him to go. He reluctantly moves back towards 8. She follows him as he goes. Despard comes down from pier.**

At vice's shrine;  
Of life with me  
All hope resign.  
Farewell!

**Robin exits at 8. Rose turns back towards Despard .**

Take me - I am thy bride!

Bridesmaids. Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride!

**Rose goes US to him. Bridesmaids gather around and repeat their ritual.**

When the nuptial knot is tied;  
Every day will bring some joy  
That can never, never cloy!

**Enter MARGARET from DS corner 2, who listens.**

Sir D. Excuse me, I'm a virtuous person now –

**He walks down steps and politely pushes Rose aside as he sees Mad Margaret. Rose moves US.**

Rose. That's why I wed you!

Sir D. And I to Margaret must keep my vow!

Mar. Have I misread you?

**She crosses to him.**

Oh joy! With newly kindled rapture warmed,  
I kneel before you! **(kneels)**

Sir D. I once disliked you; now that I've reformed,  
How I adore you! **(they embrace)**

**The bridesmaids again gather around the couple.**

Bridesmaids. Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride!  
When the nuptial knot is tied;  
Every day will bring some joy  
That can never, never cloy!

**They retire towards 8 as Rose heads DS of them and address Richard.**

Rose. Richard, of him I love bereft,  
Through thy design,  
Thou art the only one that's left,  
So I am thine!

**Bridesmaids rush back towards them, who are now on Centre DS.**

Bridesmaids. Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride!  
Let the nuptial knot is tied!

Rose and Richard.

**All go into freeze frame as each sings.**

Oh, happy the lily  
When kissed by the bee;  
And, sipping tranquilly,  
Quite happy is he;  
And happy the filly  
That neighs in her pride;  
But happier than any  
A pound to a penny,  
A lover is when he  
Embraces his bride!

Sir D. and Mar.

Oh, happy the flowers  
That blossom in June;  
And happy the bowers  
That gain by the boon,  
But happier by hours  
The man of decent,  
Who, folly regretting,  
Is bent on forgetting  
His bad baronetting,  
And means to repent!

Hannah, Adam and Zorah.

Oh, happy the blossom  
That blooms on the lea,  
Likewise the opossum  
That sits on a tree,  
When you come across 'em  
They cannot compare  
With those who are treading  
The dance at a wedding,  
While people are spreading  
The best of good fare!

**Robin re-enters and comes down along pier.**

Robin. Oh, wretched the debtor  
Who's signing a deed!  
And wretched the letter  
That no one can read!  
But very much better  
Their lot it must be,  
Than that of the person  
I'm making this verse on,  
Whose head there's a curse on -  
Alluding to me!

**He exits to 2.**

All. Oh, happy the lily  
When kissed by the bee;  
And, sipping tranquilly,  
Quite happy is he;  
And happy the filly  
That neighs in her pride;  
But happier than any  
A pound to a penny,  
A lover is when he  
Embraces his bride!

**DANCE**

*At the end of the dance, ROBIN falls senseless on the stage. Picture.*

**CURTAIN.**

## Act Two

**Scene: The Great Hall at Ruddigore Castle. Old Adam is seated at a table, filling out the Crimes Ledger, and doing the books. He dramatically turns the pages on each loud accent of the music. Robin enters dramatically from 7 and addresses the audience DS over the footlights.**

### **No.1. - DUET - (Robin and Adam)**

Robin. I once was as meek as a new born lamb,  
I'm now Sir Murgatroyd - ha! ha!  
With greater precision  
(Without the elision),  
Sir Ruthven Murgatroyd - ha! ha!

**Robin turns US and walks to centre of curtains.**

Adam. And I who was once his *valley-de-sham*,

**Getting up and coming to centre.**

As steward I'm now employed - ha! ha!  
The dickens may take him -  
I'll never forsake him!  
As steward I'm now employed - ha! ha!

**Robin comes DS to join him centre. They do a step: 4 down and ups facing 1 starting on R; then turns to OP and do 4 rocks twice as fast; then continue to do down ups heading to OP.**

Both. How dreadful when an innocent heart  
Becomes, perforce, a bad young Bart.,  
And still more hard on Old Adam  
His former faithful *valley-de-sham*!

Robin. My face is the index to my mind,

**Robin walks towards 8, then turns and addresses the audience.**

All venom and spleen and gall - ha! ha!  
Or, properly speaking,  
It soon will be reeking  
Of venom and spleen and gall - ha! ha!

Adam. My name from Adam Goodheart you'll find

**Old Adam does the same heading towards 2.**

I've changed to Gideon Crawle - ha! ha!  
For a bad Bart.'s Steward  
Whose heart is much too hard,  
Is always Gideon Crawle - ha! ha!

**They meet back on centre and repeat choreographed step as before.**

- Both. How providential when you find  
The face the index to the mind,  
And wicked men compelled to call  
Themselves by names like Gideon Crawle - ha! ha!
- Robin. **(Walking with his hands behind his back towards 2)**. This is a painful state of things, Gideon Crawle!
- Adam. **(Very pathetically. He stays at 1)**. Painful, indeed! Ah, my poor master, when I swore that come what would, I would serve you in all things for ever, I little thought to what a pass it would bring me! **(He walks towards Robin)** The confidential advisor to the greatest villain unhung! It's a dreadful position for a good old man!
- Robin. Very likely, **(Walking towards him, pointing at him)** but don't be gratuitously offensive, Gideon Crawle.
- Adam. **(Goes back towards table and tidies the papers on it)** Sir, I am the ready instrument of your abominable misdeeds because I have sworn to obey you in all things, but I have not sworn to allow deliberate and systematic villainy to pass unreprieved. **(Coming forward from behind table)** If you insist upon it I will swear that, too, but I have not sworn it yet. Now, sir, to business. What crime do you propose to commit today?
- Robin. **(Staying on 1)** How should I know? As my confidential adviser, it's your duty to suggest something.
- Adam. Sir, I loathe the life you are leading, but a good old man's oath is paramount and I obey. **(He falls to his knees clutching Robin's arm)**. Richard Dauntless is here with pretty Rose Maybud **(Getting up and crossing to 7)** to ask your consent to their marriage. **(Walks back to him and in a loud stage whisper)** Poison their beer.
- Robin. No - not that - I know I'm a bad Bart., but I'm not as bad a Bart. as all that. **(Out to audience)**.
- Adam. Well there you are, you see! It's no use my making suggestions if you don't adopt them. **(About to leave towards 2)**.
- Robin.** **(melodramatically, grabbing him by the arm. All the following is very dramatic and gets bigger and bigger)**. How would it be, do you think, were I to lure him here with cunning wile - bind him with good stout rope to yonder post - and then, by making hideous faces at him curdle the heart-blood in his arteries, and freeze the very marrow in his bones? How say you Gideon, is not the scheme well planned?
- Adam. **(Very matter of fact)** It would be simply rude - nothing more. But soft - they come!

**The exit DS of table.**

**RICHARD and ROSE enter from 7.**

**Enter chorus of bridesmaids.**

**No.2. - DUET AND CHORUS - (Rose and Richard)**

Richard. Happily coupled are we,  
You see -  
I am a jolly Jack Tar,  
My star,  
And you are the fairest,  
The richest and rarest  
Of innocent lasses you are!

Fanned by a favouring gale,  
You'll sail  
Over life's treacherous sea  
With me,  
And as for bad weather  
We'll brave it together,  
And you shall creep under my lee,  
My wee!  
And you shall creep under my lee!

For you are such a smart little craft -  
Such a neat little, sweet little craft.  
Such a bright little, tight little,  
Slight little, light little,  
Trim little, prim little craft!

Chorus. For she is such a smart little craft -  
Such a neat little, sweet little craft.  
Such a bright little, tight little,  
Slight little, light little,  
Trim little, prim little craft!

Rose. My hopes will be blighted, I fear,  
My dear;  
In a month you'll be going to sea,  
Quite free,  
And all of my wishes  
You'll throw to the fishes  
As though they were never to be!  
And I shall be left all alone  
To moan,  
And weep at your cruel deceit,  
Complete,  
While you'll be asserting  
Your freedom by flirting  
With every woman you meet,

You cheat -  
Ah!  
With every woman you meet!

Though I am such a smart little craft -  
Such a neat little, sweet little craft.  
Such a bright little, tight little,  
Slight little, light little,  
Trim little, prim little craft!

Chorus. For she is such a smart little craft -  
Such a neat little, sweet little craft.  
Such a bright little, tight little,  
Slight little, light little,  
Trim little, prim little craft!

**Enter ROBIN, crouching behind table. He grabs Rose and lead her DS to 1.**

Robin. Soho! Pretty one - in my power at last, eh? Know ye not that I have those within my call who, at my lightest bidding, would immure ye in an uncomfortable dungeon where ye would linger out a lonesome lifetime in silent solitude? **(Rose sinks to her knees).** *(calling)* What ho! Within there!

Richard. Hold - we are prepared for this **(He opens his shirt to reveal he is wearing a Union Jack undershirt).** Here is a flag that none dare defy. **(He wrips out the trick shirt and waves it around. All salute).** And while this glorious rag floats over Rose Maybud's head, the man does not live that would dare to lay unlicensed hands upon her!

Robin. **(Out to audience)** Foiled - and by a Union Jack! But a time will come, and then – **(He crosses towards 8)**

Rose. Nay, let me plead with him. **(to ROBIN. She stays on centre)** Sir Ruthven, have pity. In my book of etiquette the case of a maiden about to be wedded to one who unexpectedly turns out to be a baronet with a curse on him, is not considered. It is a comprehensive work, but it is not as comprehensive as that. Time was when you loved me madly. Prove that this was no selfish love by according your consent to my marriage with one who, if he be not you yourself, is the next best thing - your dearest friend!

**No.3. - SONG - (Rose with chorus of bridesmaids)**

**She slowly walks towards Robin who is at 8 facing out. Richard heads towards 2.**

In bygone days I had thy love -  
Thou hadst my heart.  
But fate, all human vows above,  
Our lives did part!  
By the old love thou hadst for me  
By the fond heart that beat for thee -

By joys that never now can be,  
Grant thou my prayer!

Chorus. Grant thou her prayer!

**Rose turns and walks to Richard who is in 2.**

Rose. My heart that once in truth was thine,  
Another claims -  
Ah, who can laws to love assign,  
Or rule its flames?  
Our plighted love-bond gently bless,  
The seal of thy consent impress  
Upon our promised happiness -  
(*kneeling*) Grant thou my prayer!

Chorus. (*kneeling*) Grant thou her prayer!

**Robin comes to 1**

Robin. (*recit.*) Take her - I yield!

**He exits behind table to 3.**

All. (*recit.*) Oh rapture!

Chorus. Away to the parson we go -  
Say we're solicitous very  
Then he will turn two into one -  
Singing hey, derry down derry!

Richard. For she is such a smart little craft -

Rose. Such a neat little, sweet little craft -

Richard. Such a bright little -

Rose. Tight little -

Richard. Slight little -

Rose. Light little -

Both. Trim little, prim little craft!

Chorus. For she is such a smart little craft -  
Such a neat little, sweet little craft.  
Such a bright little, tight little,  
Slight little, light little,  
Trim little, prim little craft!

**They exit to 7 & 8. Robin returns and sits at table. He turns the pages of the Crime Journal.**

Robin. For a week I have fulfilled my accursed doom! I have duly committed a crime a day! Not a great crime I trust, but still in the eyes of one so strictly regulated as I used to be, a crime. But will my ghostly ancestors be satisfied with what I have done, or will they regard it as an unworthy subterfuge? **(He gets up, taking candelabra with him and addresses imaginary ancestors.)** Oh, my forefathers, wallowers in blood, there came at last a day, when, sick of crime, you, each and every, vowed to sin no more, and so, in agony, called welcome Death to free you from your cloying guiltiness. Let the sweet psalm of that repentant hour soften your long dead hearts and tune your souls to mercy on your poor posterity!

**During this speech he becomes more and more agitated until he collapses on Centre. The candles flicker and go out).**

**The stage darkens and misty. The red curtains slowly part to reveal a blinding light. Ancesters are ranged across the rostrum and are seen in silhouette. Robin slowly comes back to life as if in a nightmare.**

#### **No.4. - CHORUS OF ANCESTORS - (with Solos, Robin and Sir Roderic)**

Chorus. Painted emblems of a race,  
All accursed in days of yore,  
Each from his accustomed place

**They slowly descend from the rostrum.**

Steps into the world once more!  
  
Baronet of Ruddygore,  
Last of our accursed line,  
Down upon the oaken floor -  
Down upon those knees of thine!

**They step forward the return backwards in various numbers and point an accusing fingers at him. He shields himself from their attacks.**

Coward, poltroon, shaker, squeamer,  
Blockhead, sluggard, dullard, dreamer,  
Shirker, shuffler, crawler, creeper,  
Sniffler, snuffler, wailer, weeper,  
Earthworm, maggot, tadpole, weevil!  
Set upon thy course of evil  
Lest the king of Spectre-Land RODERIC descends  
Set on thee his grisly hand!

**The spectre of SIR RODERIC is revealed standing in front of his frame.**

Sir Rod. By the curse upon our race –

**He slowly walks forward to the edge of the rostrum.**

Chorus.      Dead and hèarsed  
                  All accursèd!

Sir Rod.      Each inheriting this place -

Chorus.      Sorrows shake it!  
                  Devil take it!

Sir Rod.      Must perforce, or yea or nay -

Chorus.      Yea or naying  
                  Be obeying!

Sir Rod.      Do a deadly crime each day!

Chorus.      Fire and thunder,  
                  We knocked under -  
                  Some atrocious crime committed  
                  Daily ere the world we quitted!

**Sir Roderic walks down the steps, holding out a warning arm.**

Sir Rod.      Beware! Beware! Beware!

Robin.        Gaunt vision, who art thou  
                  That thus with icy glare  
                  And stern relentless brow,  
                  Appearest, who knows how?

Sir Rod.      I am the spectre of the late  
                  Sir Roderic Murgatroyd,  
                  Who comes to warn thee that thy fate  
                  Thou cans't not now avoid.

Robin.        Alas, poor ghost!

Sir Rod.      The pity you express  
                  For nothing goes:  
                  We spectres are a jollier crew  
                  Than you, perhaps, suppose!

Chorus.      We spectres are a jollier crew  
                  Than you, perhaps, suppose!

**They lift him and he “flies” on to the table.**

Sir Rod.      When the night wind howls in the chimney cowl,  
                  And the bat in the moonlight flies,  
                  And inky clouds, like funeral shrouds,  
                  Sail over the midnight skies -

When the footpads quail at the night-bird's wail,  
And black dogs bay at the moon,  
Then is the spectre's holiday -  
Then is the ghosts' high-noon!

Chorus. Ha! ha!  
Then is the ghosts' high-noon!

Sir Rod. As the sob of the breeze sweeps over the trees  
And the mists lie low on the fen,  
From grey tomb-stones are gathered the bones  
That once were women and men,  
And away they go, with a mop and a mow,  
To the revel that ends too soon,  
For cock-crow limits our holiday -  
The dead of the night's high-noon!

Chorus. Ha! ha!  
The dead of the night's high-noon!

Sir Rod. And then each ghost with his ladye-toast  
To their churchyard beds takes flight.  
With a kiss perhaps, on her lantern chaps,  
And a grisly grim, "good-night!";  
Till the welcome knell of the midnight bell  
Rings forth its jolliest tune,  
And ushers in our next high holiday -  
The dead of the night's high-noon!

Chorus. Ha! ha!  
The dead of the night's high-noon!

**He is "flown" off the table and lands DS of table.**

Robin. I recognise you now - you are the Picture that hangs at the end of the gallery.

Sir Rod. In a bad light. I am.

Robin. Are you considered a good likeness?

Sir Rod. Pretty well. Flattering.

Robin. Because as a work of art you are poor.

Sir Rup. That's true.

Sir Jas. No doubt.

Sir Con. Wants tone.

Sir Mer. Not mellow enough.

Sir Rod. I am crude in colour, **(Crossing to Robin on Centre)**.but I have only been painted ten years. In a couple of centuries I shall be an Old Master, and then you will be sorry you spoke lightly of me.

Robin. And may I ask why you have left your frames?

Sir Rod. It is our duty **(He puts his hand on his heart)** to see that our successors commit their daily crime in a conscientious and workmanlike fashion. It is our duty **(Again hand on heart)** to remind you that you are evading the conditions under which you are permitted to exist.

Robin. **(He crosses to table and picks up Crime Ledger)** Really I don't know what you'd have. I've only been a bad baronet a week and I've committed a crime punctually every day.

Sir Rod. Let us enquire into this. Monday?

**Robin, standing in front of the table, searches for the page.**

Robin. Monday was a bank holiday.

Sir Rod. True. Tuesday?

**He turns the page.**

Robin. On Tuesday I made a false income tax return.

All. Ha! Ha!

Sir Rup. That's nothing.

Ghost 2. Nothing at all.

Sir Con. Everybody does that.

Sir Gil. It's expected of you.

Sir Rod. Wednesday?

**He turns the page again.**

Robin. **(melodramatically)** On Wednesday I forged a will.

Sir Rod. Whose will?

Robin. My own.

Sir Rod. My good sir, you can't forge your own will!

Robin. Can't I though! I like that! I did! Besides, if a man can't forge his own will, whose will can he forge?

Sir Mer. There's something in that.

Sir Des. Yes, it seem reasonable.

Sir Lio. At first sight it does.

Sir Rup. Fallacy somewhere, I fancy!

Robin. A man can do what he likes with his own!

Sir Rod. I suppose he can.

Robin. Well then, he can forge his own will. Stoopid! **(He turns page again)** On Thursday I shot a fox.

All. Hear, hear!

Sir Rod. That's better. **(addressing ghosts)** Pass the fox, I think? **(they assent)** Yes, pass the fox. Friday?

**Robin turns another page.**

Robin. On Friday I forged a cheque.

Sir Rod. Whose cheque?

Robin. Gideon Crawle's.

Sir Rod. But Gideon Crawle hasn't a banker.

Robin. I didn't say I forged his banker, I said I forged his cheque.

Sir Mer. That's true.

Sir Des. Yes, it seems reasonable.

Sir Con. At first sight it does.

Sir Rup. Fallacy somewhere!

Robin. **(Turning page)** On Saturday I disinherited my only son.

Sir Rod. But you haven't got a son.

Robin. No - not yet. I disinherited him in advance, to save time. You see - by this arrangement - he'll be born ready disinherited.

Sir Rod. I see. But I don't think you can do that.

Robin. My good sir, if I can't disinherit my own unborn son, whose unborn son can I disinherit?

Sir Mer. That's right enough.

Sir Des. Yes, it seems reasonable.

Sir Con. At first sight it does.

Sir Rup. Fallacy somewhere!

Sir Rod. **(Crossing to Robin at table)** Yes, all these arguments sound very well, but I can't help thinking that, if they were reduced to syllogistic form, they wouldn't hold water. Now quite understand us. **(Backing Robin into the table)** We are foggy, but we don't allow our fogginess to be presumed upon. Unless you undertake to - well, suppose we say, carry off a lady? **(Walking away and addressing ghosts)** Those who are in favour of his carrying off a lady - **(all raise their hands except a bishop,)**. Those of the contrary opinion? **(Bishop holds up his hands which is rather limp wristed as well)** Oh, you're never satisfied! Yes, unless you **(Heading back towards Robin who is still standing by the table)** undertake to carry off a lady at once - I don't care what lady - any lady - choose your lady - you perish in inconceivable agonies.

Robin. Carry off a lady? **(Walking DS of him and crossing to 8)** Certainly not, on any account. I've the greatest respect for ladies, and I wouldn't do anything of the kind for worlds! No, no. **(Crossing back towards Roderic)** I'm not that kind of a baronet, I assure you! If that's all you've got to say, you'd better go back to your frames.

Sir Rod. Very well - then let the agonies commence.

**Ghosts advance and retreat as they did before. Robin is on Centre. He begins to writhe in agonies. Roderic is at the table.**

Robin. Oh! Oh! Don't do that! I can't stand it!

Sir Rod. Painful, isn't it? It gets worse by degrees.

Robin. Oh! Oh! Stop a bit! Stop it, will you? I want to speak!

**SIR RODERIC makes a sign to the Ghosts who resume their poses.**

Sir Rod. **(Crosses to Robin who is on the floor. He peers into his face)** Better?

Robin. **(Looking up from the floor)** Yes - better now. Whew!

Sir Rod. Well, do you consent?

Robin. But it's such an ungentlemanly thing to do! **(He starts to get up).**

Sir Rod. As you please. **(to ghosts)** Carry on!

Robin. **(Falling back down again)** Stop! I can't stand it! I agree! I promise! It shall be done!

Sir Rod. **(Over him)** To-day?

Robin. **(Looking up)** To-day!

Sir Rod. At once?

Robin. At once! I retract! **(Roderic summons him up)** I apologise! I had no idea it was anything like that!

## No.6. – CHORUS

### **They pick him up and spin him around**

He yields! He answers to our call!  
We do not ask for more.  
A sturdy fellow after all,  
This latest Ruddygore!

### **They put him down, and make menacing poses.**

All perish in unheard-of woe  
Who dare our wills defy;  
We want your pardon, ere we go,  
For having agonized you so –

### **They do a silly skipping step.**

So pardon us -  
So pardon us -  
So pardon us –

### **Then as to curse him.**

Or die!

Robin. I pardon you!  
I pardon you!

All. He pardons us -  
Hurrah!

### **They ascend the rostra. Robin sinks to his knees and returns to his lying position.**

Ghosts. Painted emblems of a race,  
All accursed in days of yore  
Each to his accustomed place  
Steps unwillingly, once more!

### **Curtains close on the last note.**

### **Old Adam appears from under the tablecloth.**

Adam. My poor master, you are not well -

Robin. Gideon Crawle, it won't do - I've just seen 'em - all my ancestors **(He gets up and goes to the table)**- they've just gone. They say I must do something desperate at once, or perish in horrible agonies. Go - go to yonder village – **(Adam comes out from under the table and gets up)**.carry off a maiden - bring her here at once - anyone - I don't care which -

Adam. But -

Robin. Not a word, but obey! Fly!

**Exit ADAM at 7.**

**No.7. - RECIT and SONG - (Robin)**

**He gestures as if sending away to 8.**

Away, Remorse! Compunction, hence!  
Go, Moral Force! Go, Penitence!  
To Virtue's plea a long farewell – **(He waves)**  
Propriety, I ring your knell! **(Taking himself by the throat)**  
Come guiltiness of deadliest hue! **(Summoning from the air)**  
Come desperate deeds of derring-do! **(Again)**

**SONG -**

**He sings first verse as an impersonation of himself in Act 1.**

For thirty-five years I've been sober and wary -  
My favourite tippie came straight from a dairy -  
I kept guinea-pigs and a Belgian canary -  
A squirrel, white mice, and a small black-and-tan.  
I played on the flute, and I drank lemon squashes -  
I wore chamois leather, thick boots, macintoshes,  
And things that will someday be known as galoshes,  
The type of a highly respectable man!

**He impersonates himself as a wicked Baronet.**

For the rest of my life I abandon propriety -  
Visit the haunts of Bohemian society,  
Wax-works, and other resorts of impiety,  
Placed by the moralist under a ban.  
My ways will be those of a regular satyr,  
At carryings-on I must be a first-rater -  
Go night after night to a wicked theayter –

**Reverting back to former self**

It's hard on a highly respectable man!

Well, the man who has spent the first half of his tether,  
On all the bad deeds you can bracket together,  
Then goes and repents - in his cap it's a feather -  
Society pets him as much as it can.  
It's a comfort to think, if I now go a cropper,  
I sha'n't, on the whole, have done more that's improper  
Than he who was once an abandoned tip-topper,  
But now is a highly respectable man!

**Exit ROBIN to 2.**

**Enter SIR DESPARD and MARGARET. They are both dressed in sober black and formal cut, and present a strong contrast to their appearance in Act One.**

**No.8. - DUET - (Margaret and Sir Despard)**

Sir D. I once was a very abandoned person -

Mar. Making the most of evil chances.

Sir D. Nobody could conceive a worse'un -

Mar. Even in all the old romances.

Sir D. I blush for my wild extravagances,  
But be so kind  
To bear in mind

Mar. We were the victims of circumstances!

***Dance.***

That is one of our blameless dances!

I was once an exceedingly odd young lady -

Sir D. Suffering much from spleen and vapours.

Mar. Clergymen thought my conduct shady -

Sir D. She didn't spend much upon linen-drapers.

Mar. It certainly entertained the gapers.  
My ways were strange -  
Beyond all range -

Sir D. Paragraphs got into all the papers.

***Dance.***

We only cut respectable capers.

I've given up all my wild proceedings.

Mar. My taste for a wandering life is waning.

Sir D. Now I'm a dab at penny readings.

Mar. They are not remarkably entertaining.

Sir D. A moderate livelihood we're gaining.

Mar. In fact we rule  
A National school.

Sir D. The duties are dull, but I'm not complaining.

***Dance.***

Sir D. This sort of thing takes a deal of training!

**They finish on Centre DS.**

Sir D. **(Without emotion)** We have been married a week.

Mar. **(Deadpan)** One happy, happy week!

Sir D. **(Same)** Our new life -

Mar. Is delightful indeed!

Sir D. So calm!

Mar. So pure!

Sir D. So peaceful!

Mar. **(Moving slightly away)** So unimpassioned! **(wildly, with a sudden idea)** Master, all this I owe to you! See, I am no longer wild and untidy. My hair is combed. My face is washed. My boots fit! **(Lifts up her dress to above her knees)**

Sir D. Margaret, don't. **(Pushing dress down)** Pray restrain yourself. **(Takes her box and his trombone and puts them on the table)** Be demure, I beg.

Mar. Demure it is. **(resuming her quiet manner staying on Centre)**

Sir D. Then make it so. **(Pointing back to her)** Remember, you are now a district visitor.

Mar. A gentle district visitor!

Sir D. **(Crossing back to her)** You are orderly, methodical, neat **(Doing a list with his fingers)**; you have your emotions well under control. **(He crosses towards 8).**

Mar. I have! **(wildly)** Master, when I think of all you have done for me, I fall at your feet. I embrace your ankles, I hug your knees! **(Chases after him. Falls on to knees then stomach and clutches his ankles.**

Sir D. Hush. This is not well. **(Stepping out of her clutches and walking towards Centre DS)** This is calculated to provoke remark. Be composed, **(missionary hands)** I beg!

Mar. **(Lying on her front)** Ah! You are angry with poor little Mad Margaret!

- Sir D. **(Turning back to her from Centre)** No, not angry; but a district visitor should learn to eschew melodrama. Visit the poor by all means, and give them tea and barley-water, but don't do it as if you were administering a bowl of deadly nightshade. It upsets them. Then, when you nurse sick people, and find them not as well as could be expected, why go into hysterics?
- Mar. **(Coming to kneeling)** Why not?
- Sir D. Because it's too jumpy for a sick room. **(Crosses closer to her and then returns to DS Centre)** Then again, as I've frequently told you, it is quite possible to take too much medicine.
- Mar **(Getting up, and dusting frock)** What, when you're ill?
- Sir D. Certainly. These are valuable remedies but they should be administered with discretion.
- Mar. How strange! **(Backing off as if about to do a run up)** Oh, Master! Master! - How shall I express the all-absorbing gratitude that - **(about to throw herself at his feet)**
- Sir D. Now! **(warningly, putting up a "stop" hand)**
- Mar. Yes, I know dear - it sha'n't occur again. **(He sits on the chair by the table and takes out large polka dot handkerchief to polish trombone)** Shall I tell you one of Mad Margaret's odd thoughts? **(She kneels at his feet)** Well, then, when I am lying awake at night, and the pale moonlight streams through the lattice casement, strange fancies crowd upon my poor mad brain, and I sometimes think that if we could hit upon some word for you to use whenever I am about to relapse - some word that teems with hidden meaning - like, "Basingstoke" - **(She gets up and wanders towards 8 getting more and more insane)** it might recall me to my saner self. For, after all, I am only Mad Margaret! Daft Meg! Poor Peg! He! he! he!
- Sir D. Poor child, she wanders! **(He gets up from table, leaving trombone and crosses towards her)** But soft - someone comes - Margaret - pray recollect yourself - Basingstoke, I beg! Margaret, if you don't Basingstoke at once, I shall be seriously angry.
- Mar. **(recovering herself)** Basingstoke it is!
- Sir D. Then make it so.
- Enter from 2. Addresses audience and then goes and sits at table.**
- Robin. Despard! And his young wife! **(To Margaret and Despard)** This visit is unexpected.
- Mar. Shall I fly at him? **(Despard holding her back. They struggle a bit)** Shall I tear him limb from limb? Shall I rend him asunder? Say but the word and -
- Sir D. **(Angrily)** Basingstoke!

Mar. **(suddenly demure)** Basingstoke it is!

Sir D. **(Through his teeth as loud stage whisper)** Then make it so. **(Regaining his pomposity)** My brother - I call you brother, still, despite your horrible profligacy – **(He crosses and sits at the table)** we have come to urge you to abandon the evil courses to which you have committed yourself, and at any cost to become a pure and blameless ratepayer.

Robin. **(Standing up and very agitated)** That's all very well, but you seem to forget that on the day I reform I perish in excruciating torment.

Sir D. **(Also stands and motions to him to sit)** Oh, better that than pursue a course of life-long villainy. Oh, seek refuge in death, I implore you! **(they both sit)**

Mar. **(Crosses to table and stands behind Despard's chair)** Why not die? Others have died and no one has cared. You will not be mourned.

Sir D. True! You could die so well!

Robin. You didn't seem to be of this opinion when you were a bad baronet.

Sir D. No, because I had no good brother at my elbow to check me when about to do wrong.

Robin. **(He gets up from table and addresses the audience)** A home-thrust indeed! **(Walking DS of table and heading to Corner 8)** But I've done no wrong yet.

Mar. **(wildly, and looking into Despard's face, grabbing him by the lapels)** No wrong! He has done no wrong! Did you hear that!

Sir D. Basingstoke!

Mar. **(recovering herself)** Basingstoke it is!

Sir D. **(gets up and crosses to him)** My brother - I still call you brother, you observe - you forget that you have been, in the eye of the law, a bad baronet of Ruddygore for ten years - and you are therefore responsible - in the eye of the law - for all the misdeeds committed by the unhappy gentleman who occupied your place.

Robin. **(Turns to face him and gestures to him)** Meaning you?

Sir D. **(Pointing to himself)** Meaning me.

Robin. I see! Bless my heart, I never thought of that! **(Looks about him at 2 and then in a loud stage whisper)** Was he - was I very bad?

Sir D. Awful. Wasn't he? **(to MARGARET)**

Mar. **(Coming DS Centre. Despard and Robin are now near corner 8)** Desperate! Oh, you were a flirt! **(Limp wristed)**

Robin. And I've been going on like this for how long?

Sir D. Ten years! Think of all the atrocities you have committed - by attorney, as it were - during that period. Remember how you trifled **(Margaret starts to cry)** with this **(Crosses to her and takes her by the shoulders)** poor child's affections –how you raised her hopes on high (don't cry, my love - Basingstoke, you know), **(Leading her to Robin)** only to trample them in the dust when they were at the very zenith of their fullness. Oh fie sir, fie - she trusted you!

Robin. Meaning you? **(Points to him)**

Sir D. Nothing of the kind sir. **(No with his hand)** I was simply your representative. **(He walks back to 1)**

Robin. Well, meaning us, then. What a scoundrel we must have been! **(Takes Margaret to him)** There, there - don't cry my dear **(to MARGARET who is sobbing on ROBIN's breast)**, it's all right now. Birmingham you know - Birmingham – **(Patting her head)**

Mar. **(sobbing)** It's Ba - Ba - Basingstoke!

Robin. **(Continues patting)** Basingstoke! Of course it is - Basingstoke!

Mar. Then make it so!

Robin. There, there - it's all right - he's married you now - that is, I've married you **(turning to DESPARD)** - I say, which of us has married her?

Sir D. **(From DS Centre)** Oh, I've married her.

Robin. **(aside)** Oh. I'm glad of that. **(to MARGARET, much relieved)** Yes, he's married you now **(He leads her back to Despard who is on Centre)**, and anything more disreputable than my conduct seems to have been I've never even heard of. **(He crosses towards 2)** But my mind is made up - I will defy my ancestors. **(Turns back and points towards curtains)** I will refuse to obey their behests - thus, by courting death, atone in some degree for the infamy of my career!

Mar. I knew it - I knew it - God bless you - **(hysterically, running towards Robin. Despard draws her back)**

Sir D. Basingstoke!

Mar. Basingstoke it is! **(recovering herself. They are now between 1 & 8. Robin has moved US towards curtains slouches on the end of desk, head low, and finally turns to face them)**

### **No.9. - TRIO - (Margaret, Robin and Sir Despard)**

Robin. **(Walking forward towards them as he sings)**

My eyes are fully open to my awful situation -  
I shall go at once to Roderic and make him an oration.

I shall tell him I've recovered my forgotten moral senses,  
And I don't care two-pence halfpenny for any consequences.  
Now I do not want to perish by the sword or by the dagger,  
But a martyr may indulge a little pardonable swagger,  
And a word or two of compliment my vanity would flatter,  
But I've got to die tomorrow, so it really doesn't matter!

Sir D. **(Crosses behind him and takes his R shoulder)** So it really doesn't matter -

Mar. **(Crosses to him and takes his L shoulder)** So it really doesn't matter -

All. So it really doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter, matter!

Mar. **(Leading Robin and conferring with him towards corner 8. They are arm in arm)**

If **it** were not a little mad and generally silly,  
I would give you my advice upon the subject, willy-nilly;  
I should show you in a moment how to grapple with the question,  
And you'd really be astonished by the force of my suggestion.  
On the subject I shall write you a most valuable letter,  
Full of excellent suggestions, when I feel a little better;

**(She skips with a silly girlish gait back towards 1. Despard is at 2)**

But at present I'm afraid I am as mad as any hatter,  
So I'll keep 'em to myself, for my opinion doesn't matter!

Sir D. **(Coming to her)** Her opinion doesn't matter -

Robin. **(Coming to her)** Her opinion doesn't matter -

All. Her opinion doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter, matter!

Sir D. **(Leading Robin by the shoulders towards corner 2)**

If I had been so lucky as to have a steady brother  
Who could talk to me as we are talking now to one another -  
Who could give me good advice when he discovered I was erring  
(Which is just the very favour which on you I am conferring), My  
existence would have made a rather interesting idyll,  
And I might have lived and died a very decent indiwiddle.  
This particularly rapid, unintelligible patter,  
Isn't generally heard, and if it is it doesn't matter!

Robin. If it is it doesn't matter -

Mar. **(Running from Centre to join them)** If it ain't it doesn't matter -

**(Choreographed march back to 1)**

All. If it is it doesn't matter, matter, matter, matter, matter!

**Exit towards 3 SIR DESPARD and MARGARET, taking props from table.**

**Enter ADAM, hauling with difficulty a long rope. It twitches violently. We don't see what is on the end of it.**

Adam. **(Guiltily, huffing and puffing.)** Master - the deed is done!

Robin. What deed?

Adam. She is here - alone, unprotected -

Robin. Who?

Adam. The maiden. I've carried her off - I had a hard task, for she fought like a tiger-cat!

Robin **(Out to audience)** Great heavens, I had forgotten her! I had hoped to have died unspotted by crime, but I am foiled again - and by a tiger-cat! **(Back to Old Adam)** Produce her - and leave us!

### **No.9a. - MELODRAME - (Bars 1 - 5 only)**

**ADAM finally pulls the rope until Dame Hannah is on, very much excited. Old Adam unties her. Dame Hannah swings her handbag at him and it misses. Old Adam exits towards 3.**

Robin. **(Who is near 2)** Dame Hannah! **(Puts his hands up)** This is - this is not what I expected.

Hannah. Well sir, and what would you with me? **(Recovers herself for a moment, fixing her hair)** Oh, you have begun bravely - bravely indeed! **(Shaking her finger at him)** Unappalled by the calm dignity of blameless womanhood, your minion has torn me from my spotless home, **(She starts to advance towards him. He has his back to the table)** and dragged me, blindfold and shrieking, through hedges, over stiles and across a very difficult country, and left me helpless and trembling, at your mercy! **(She now has him pinned to the table and is leaning over him)** Yet not helpless, **(Walks away from him towards 1)** coward sir, for approach one step **(Turns back to him)** - nay, but the twentieth part of one poor inch, and this poniard **(producing a very small dagger, from her handbag)** shall teach ye what it is to lay unholy hands on old Stephen Trusty's daughter. **(Advances towards him)**

Robin. Madam, I am extremely sorry for this. **(He backs up, and crawls on to table)** It is not at all what I intended. Circumstances of a delicate nature compelled me to request your presence **(He jumps off table, and they play cat and mouse around table)** in this confounded castle for a brief period - but anything more correct - more deeply respectful than my intentions towards you, **(makes his escape and runs towards 8. Dame Hannah is now upstage of table)** it would be impossible for anyone - however particular - to desire!

Hannah. **(Coming DS Centre. He is cowering at 8)** Am I a toy - a bauble - a pretty plaything - to grace your roustering banquets and amuse your ribald friends? Am I a gew-gaw to while away an idle hour withal, and then be cast aside like some old glove, when the whim quits you? **(Very close to him)** Harkye, sir, do you take me for a gew-gaw of this description?

Robin. **(appalled, backing away.)** Certainly not - nothing of the kind - anything more profoundly respectful -

Hannah. **(Heading back to 1)** Bah! I am not to be tricked by smooth words, hypocrite!

**No.9a. - MELODRAME - (Bars 6 - 15 repeated ad-lib)**

Hannah. But be warned in time, for there are, without, a hundred gallant hearts whose trusty blades would hack him limb from limb who dared to lay unholy hands on old Stephen Trusty's daughter!

Robin. **(Out front to audience from corner 8)** And this is what it is to embark on a career of unlicensed pleasure!

Hannah. Harkye, miscreant, you have secured me, and I am your poor prisoner; but if you think that I cannot take care of myself you are very much mistaken.

**HANNAH, who has taken a large revolver from her handbag, throws her small dagger to ROBIN.**

Now then, it's one to one, and let the best man win! **(Taking aim with the revolver)**

**No.9a. - MELODRAME - (Bars 16 - 22)**

Robin. **(in an agony of terror, the hand with dagger is trembling while the other shields his face.)** Don't! don't look at me like that! I can't bear it! Roderic! Uncle! Save me!

**No.9a. - MELODRAME - (Bars 23-28)**

**Roderic reappears as ghostly vision on rostrum as Curtains part.**

Sir Rod. **(Addressing Robin from Centre of rostrum. He doesn't see Dame Hannah)**

What is the matter? Have you carried her off?

Robin. I have - she is there - look at her - she terrifies me! Come quite down and save me!

Sir Rod. **(Seeing HANNAH.)** Little Nannikin!

Hannah. **(amazed.)** Roddy-doddy!

Sir Rod. My own old love! Why how came you here?

Hannah. This brute - he carried me off! Bodily! But I'll show him! **(Pointing gun at him again)**

Sir Rod. Stop! **(He puts his hand up. Then to Robin)** What do you mean by carrying off this lady? Are you aware that, once upon a time she was engaged to be married to me? I'm very angry - very angry indeed.

Robin. **(Summoning up the courage)** Now I hope this will be a lesson to you in future, not to -

Sir Rod. Hold your tongue, sir.

Robin. **(Wimpishly turning back around)** Yes uncle.

Sir Rod. **(Addressing Dame Hannah, who has put back her gun into her handbag)** Has he treated you with proper respect since you've been here, Nannikin?

Hannah. Pretty well, Roddy. Come quite down, dear!

Sir Rod. No, I don't think I shall.

Robin. No, I don't think you should.

Sir Rod. Hold your tongue, sir.

Robin. **(Coming downstage)** Yes uncle.

Sir Rod. I'm very much annoyed. **(Addressing Dame Hannah)** Have you given him any encouragement?

Hannah. **(Pointing across to ROBIN.)** Have I given you any encouragement? Frankly, now have I?

Robin. No. Frankly, you have not. Anything more scrupulously correct than your conduct, it would be impossible to desire.

Hannah. There now - come down dear!

Sir Rod. **(reluctantly walking down the steps)** Very well, but you don't deserve it, you know.

Robin. **(Coming between Dame Hannah and Roderic)** Before we go any further, I am anxious to assure you on my honour as a gentleman, and with all the emphasis at my command, that anything more profoundly respectful -

Sir Rod. You go away. **(gesturing him to leave)**

Robin. Yes uncle. **(Bows his head and goes US of table and exits to 3)**

Sir Rod. Little Nannikin! **(They are face to face near the table. They do not touch).**

Hannah. Roddy-doddy!

Sir Rod. This is a strange meeting after so many years!

Hannah. Very. I thought you were dead.

Sir Rod. I am. I died ten years ago.

Hannah. And are you pretty comfortable?

Sir Rod. Pretty well - that is - yes, pretty well.

Hannah. You don't deserve to be, you bad, bad boy, **(She crosses DS of him and walks towards 8, stopping at 1. Roderic stays near table)** for you behaved very shabbily to poor old Stephen Trusty's daughter. For I loved you all the while dear; **(She turns back to face him)** and it made me dreadfully unhappy to hear of all your goings-on, you bad, bad boy!

**On music, she walks out towards 8. Starts to sing facing away from him.**

**No.10. - SONG - (Hannah, with Sir Roderic)**

There grew a little flower  
'Neath a great oak tree:  
When the tempest 'gan to lower  
Little heeded she:  
No need had she to cower,  
For she dreaded not it's power -  
She was happy in the bower  
Of her great oak tree!

**She turns to face him.**

Sing hey,  
Lackaday!  
Let the tears fall free  
For the pretty little flower and the great oak tree!

Both. **(He crosses to her as he sings)** Sing hey,  
Lackaday! etc.:

**She turns and walks away from him to US Centre. She turns and sings back to him.**

When she found that he was fickle,  
Was that great oak tree,  
She was in a pretty pickle,  
As she well might be -  
But his gallantries were mickle,  
For Death followed with his sickle,  
And her tears began to trickle  
For her great oak tree!

**She walks forwards to 1.**

Sing hey,  
Lackaday!

Let the tears fall free  
For the pretty little flower and the great oak tree!

Both. **(He crosses to join her at 1 as he sings)** Sing hey,  
Lackaday! etc.:

**She crosses and sits on the chair near the table. He stays at 1. She then sings back to him.**

Said she, "He loved me never,  
Did that great oak tree,  
But I'm neither rich nor clever  
And so why should he?  
But though fate our fortunes sever,  
To be constant I'll endeavour,  
Aye, for ever and for ever  
To my great oak tree!"  
Sing hey,  
Lackaday!  
Let the tears fall free  
For the pretty little flower and the great oak tree!

Both. **(He crosses and stands behind her chair as he sings)** Sing hey,  
Lackaday! etc.:

**HANNAH falls weeping with her head on the table. Roderic extends a sympathetic hand.**

Sir Rod. Little Nannikin!

Hannah. **(Looking up, but looking towards 2)** Roddy-doddy!

Sir Rod. It's not too late, is it?

Hannah. Oh, Roddy! **(Turning to look at him bashfully.)**

Sir Rod. **(A few steps towards 8 – he does this on every line. She takes a few steps following him.)** I'm quite respectable now, you know.

Hannah. But, you're a ghost, ain't you?

Sir Rod. Well, yes - a kind of a ghost.

Hannah. But what would be my legal status as a ghost's wife?

Sir Rod. It would be a very respectable position.

Hannah. But I should be the wife of a dead husband, Roddy!

Sir Rod. No doubt.

Hannah. But the wife of a dead husband is a widow, Roddy!

Sir Rod. I suppose she is.

Hannah. And a widow is at liberty to marry again, Roddy!

Sir Rod. **(Crosses US of her and heads to 1)** Dear me, yes - that's awkward. I never thought of that.

Hannah. **(Staying at 8)** No Roddy - I thought you hadn't.

Sir Rod. When you've been a ghost for a considerable time it's astonishing how foggy you become!

**Robin enters excitedly from 3, US of table. Roderic is on 1. Dame Hannah on 8**

Robin. Stop a bit - both of you.

Sir Rod. **(Crossing to him)** This intrusion is unmannerly.

Hannah. **(Same)** I'm surprised at you.

Robin. I can't stop to apologise - and idea has just occurred to me. A Baronet of Ruddygore can only die through refusing to commit his daily crime.

Sir Rod. No doubt.

Robin. Therefore, to refuse to commit a daily crime is tantamount to suicide!

Sir Rod. It would seem so.

Robin. But suicide is, itself a crime - and so, by your own showing, you ought none of you to have ever died at all!

Sir Rod. I see - I understand! **(Walking DS thinking. Then with great animation)** We are all practically alive!

Robin. Every man jack of you! **(Running off stage to 7 to fetch everyone)**

Sir Rod. My brother ancestors! **(Turning upstage and addressing the curtains which slowly part)** Down from your frames! **(They creep on to the rostrum quite bewildered)** You believe yourselves to be dead - you may take it from me that you're not, and an application to the Supreme Court is all that is necessary to prove that you never ought to have died at all. **(He goes to Dame Hannah who is DS near table and embraces her. The Ancestors come down and gather around tem, offering their congratulations. Curtains return to close).**

**Robin leads Rose on by the arm, followed by Richard, Despard, Margaret and Bridesmaids, who carry posies.**

Robin. **(Holding her with both hands on Centre)** Rose, when you believed I was a simple farmer, I believe you loved me?

Rose. **(Jumping up and down on the spot)** Madly, passionately!

Robin. But, when I became a bad baronet, you very properly loved Richard instead?

Rose. **(Same)** Passionately, madly!

Robin. But if I should turn out not to be a bad baronet after all, how would you love me then?

Rose. **(Same)** Madly passionately!

Robin. As before?

Rose. Why, of course!

Robin. My darling! **(they embrace.)**

Bridesmaids. **(They push Richard aside and gather around couple)** Hail the bridegroom - hail the bride -

Richard. **(Pulling the bridesmaids aside)** Will you be quiet? **(Tapping Robin on the shoulder)** Belay, my lad, belay, you don't understand!

Rose. **(Dropping her hands from Robin's)** Oh, sir, belay, if it's absolutely necessary.

Robin. Belay? Certainly not. **(Taking Rose back into his arms and addressing Richard)** You see, it's like this - as all my ancestors are alive, it follows, as a matter of course, that the eldest of them is the family baronet, and I revert to my former condition.

Richard. **(Goes off in a huff towards 8)** Well, I think it's exceedingly unfair! **(He goes to Zorah at 8 who waits for him with open arms. They embrace)**

Robin. **(Goes over to group around Roderic and Dame Hannah and leads out SIR RUPERT.)** Here, Great Uncle, allow me to present you. **(to the others.)** Sir Rupert Murgatroyd, Baronet of Ruddygore!

All. Hurrah!

**Ancestors are now grouped in a vague semi-circle across the back; Bridesmaids in a vague semi-circle DS of them.**

Sir Rup. Fallacy somewhere!

**Red curtains fly out to reveal seaside again. Sweep appears and marches down.**

## No.11. - FINALE

Rose. **(With Robin on Centre)** When a man has been a naughty baronet,  
And expresses deep repentance and regret,  
You should help him, if you're able,  
Like the mousie in the fable,  
That's the teaching in my book of etiquette!

All. That's the teaching in her book of etiquette! **(Bridesmaids rush in and throw rice).**

Robin. Having been a wicked baronet a week,  
Once again a modest livelihood I seek;  
Agricultural employment  
Is to me a keen enjoyment,  
For I'm naturally diffident and meek! **(Bridesmaids repeat).**

**They walk towards 8. Chorus part at centre.**

All. For he's naturally diffident and meek!

Richard. **(Richard and Zorah come down dancing hornpipe together. His arms are folded sailor fashion. She rests one of her hands on his shoulder. Chorus close up as they pass)**

If you ask me why I do not pipe my eye,  
Like an honest British sailor I reply,  
That with Zorah for my missis,  
There'll be bread and cheese and kisses,  
Which is just the sort of ration I enjye!

**They join Robin and Rose at 8.**

All. Which is just the sort of ration you enjye! **(Bridesmaids repeat)**

**Chorus again separate to reveal Despard and Margaret. They come down with choreographed step.**

Sir D. & Mar. Prompted by a keen desire to evoke,  
All the blessed calm of matrimony's yoke,  
We will toddle off tomorrow,  
From this scene of sin and sorrow,  
For to settle in the town of Basingstoke!

**They join Hannah and Roderic at 2. Old Adam comes on from 2 with tray of champagne glasses. Roderic and Hannah take, Despard and Margaret after consideration refuse. Then Rose, Robin, Zorah, Dick take.**

**Everyone forms lines for finale step.**

**Pt: Old Adam, Zorah, Dick, Rose, Robin, Margaret, Despard, Dame Hannah, Roderic:  
OP**

All. Prompted by a keen desire to evoke,  
All the blessed calm of matrimony's yoke,  
They will toddle off tomorrow,  
From this scene of sin and sorrow,  
For to settle in the town of Basingstoke!  
For to settle in the town of Basingstoke!  
They will toddle off tomorrow,

From this scene of sin and sorrow,  
For to settle, settle, settle, settle, settle, settle  
In the town of Basingstoke!  
For happy the lily,  
The lily when kissed by the bee;  
But happier than any,  
But happier than any  
A lover is when he  
Embraces his bride!

**CURTAIN.**