

THE McAdo

or

THE TOWN OF BALLYDEW

Dramatis Personae

The McAdo, head of the McAdo clan

Nanky Doug (his son, disguised as a wandering minstrel, and in love with Wynn Somme)

Coco (Lord High Executioner of Ballydew)

Pubagh (Lord High Everything Else)

Pischtusch (a Noble Lord)

Wynn Somme \

Pretty Jean \ Three Sisters, Wards of Coco

Wee Jo. \

Katishagh (an Elderly Lady, in love with Nanky Doug)

Chorus of School-Girls, Nobles, Guards, and Scotsmen

Act I. – Court-yard of Coco's Official Residence

Act II. – Coco's Garden

ACT I.

CHORUS of NOBLES.

If you want to know who we are,
We are gentlemen of our clan:
With many a dirk to spar-
With many a tartan grand,
We're rugged in warlike paint:
Our Gaelic is queer and quaint -
You're wrong if you think it ain't, oh!

If you think we are worked by strings,
Like a kilted marionette,
You don't understand these things:
It is simply Court etiquette.

Perhaps you suppose this throng
Can't keep it up all day long?
If that's your idea, you're wrong, oh!

RECIT. - Nanky Doug.

Nank. Gentlemen, I pray you tell me
Where a gentle maiden dwelleth,
Named Wynn Somme, the ward of Coco?
In pity speak - oh, speak, I pray you!

A Noble. Why, who are you who ask this question?

Nank. Come gather round me, and I'll tell you.

SONG. - Nanky Doug and Chorus.

Nank. A wandering minstrel I -
A thing of shreds and patches,
Of ballads, songs and snatches,

And dreamy lullaby!
My catalogue is long,
Through every passion raging,
And to your humours changing
I tune my supple song!

Are you in sentimental mood?
I'll sigh with you,
Oh, sorrow, sorrow!
On maiden's coldness do you brood?
I'll do so, too –
Oh, sorrow, sorrow!
I'll charm your willing ears
With songs of lovers' fears,
While sympathetic tears
My cheeks bedew –
Oh, sorrow, sorrow!

But if patriotic sentiment is wanted,
I've patriotic ballads cut and dried;
For where'er our country's banner may be planted,
All other local banners are defied!
Our warriors, in serried ranks assembled,
Never quail- – or they conceal it if they do –
And I shouldn't be surprised if nations trembled
Before the mighty troops of Ballydew!

Chorus. We shouldn't be surprised, &c.

Nank. And if you call for a song of the sea,
We'll heave the capstan round,
With a yeo heave ho, for the wind is free,
Her anchor's a-trip and her helm's a-lee,
Hurrah for the homeward bound!

Chorus. Yeo-ho – heave ho –
Hurrah for the homeward bound!

Nank. To lay aloft in a howling breeze
May tickle a landsman's taste,
But the happiest hour a sailor sees
Is when he's down at an inland town,
With his Nancy on his knees, yeo ho!
And his arm around her waist!

Chorus. Then man the capstan – off we go,
As the fiddler swings us round,
With a yeo heave ho,
And a rum below,
Hurrah for the homeward bound!

Nank. A wandering minstrel I, &c.

Pisch. And what may be your business with Wynn Somme?

Nank. I'll tell you. A year ago I was a member of the Ballydew town band. It was my duty to take the cap round for contributions. While discharging this delicate office I saw Wynn Somme. We loved each other at once, but she was betrothed to her guardian Coco, a cheap tailor, and I saw that my suit was hopeless. Overwhelmed with despair I quitted the town. Judge of my delight when I heard, a month ago, that Coco had been condemned to death for flirting! I hurried back at once, in the hope of finding Wynn Somme at liberty to listen to my protestations.

Pisch. It is true that Coco was condemned to death for flirting, but he was reprieved at the last moment, and raised to the exalted rank of Lord High Executioner under the following remarkable circumstances: –

SONG. – Pischtus and Chorus.

Pisch. Our great McAdo, virtuous man,
When he to rule our land began,

Resolved to try
A plan whereby
Young men might best be steadied.
So he decreed, in words succinct,
That all who flirted, leered or winked,
(Unless connubially linked,)
Should forthwith be beheaded.

I expect you'll all agree
That he was right to so decree.
And I am right,
And you are right,
And all is right as right can be!

Chorus. And you are right,

Pisch. And we are right, &c.
This stern decree, you'll understand,
Caused great dismay throughout the land!
For young and old
And shy and bold
Were equally affected.
The youth who winked a roving eye,
Or breathed a non-connubial sigh,
Was thereupon condemned to die –
He usually objected.

And you'll allow, as I expect,
That he was right to so object.
And I am right,
And you are right,
And everything is quite correct!

Chorus. And you are right,

Pisch. And we are right, &c.
And so we straight let out on bail

A convict from the county jail,
Whose head was next
On some pretext
Condemned to be mown off,
And made him Headsman, for we said,
"Who's next to be decapited
Cannot cut off another's head
Until he's cut his own off."

And we are right, I think you'll say,
To argue in this kind of way
And I am right,
And you are right,
And all is right - too-looral-lay!

Chorus. And you are right,

Pisch. And we are right, &c.

Nank. Coco, the cheap tailor, Lord High Executioner of Ballydew! Why, that's the highest rank a citizen can attain!

Pubagh. It is. Our logical McAdo, seeing no moral difference between the dignified judge who condemns a criminal to die and the industrious mechanic who carries out the sentence, has rolled the two offices into one, and every Judge is now his own executioner.

Nank. But how good of you (for I see that you are a nobleman of the highest rank) to condescend to tell all this to me, a mere strolling minstrel!

Pubagh. Don't mention it. I am, in point of fact, a particularly haughty and exclusive person, of pre-Adamite ancestral descent. You will understand this when I tell you that I can trace my ancestry back to a protoplasmal

primordial atomic globule. Consequently, my family pride is something inconceivable. I can't help it. I was born sneering. But I struggle hard to overcome this defect. I mortify my pride continually. When all the great officers of State resigned in a body, because they were too proud to serve under an ex-tailor, did I not unhesitatingly accept all their posts at once?

Pisch. And the salaries attached to them? You did.

Pubagh. It is consequently my degrading duty to serve this upstart as First Lord of the Treasury, Lord Chief Justice, Commander-in-Chief, Lord High Admiral, Master of the Buckhounds, Groom of the Back Stairs, Archbishop of Ballydew, and Lord Mayor, both acting and elect, all rolled into one. And at a salary! A Pubagh paid for his services! I a salaried minion! But I do it! It revolts me, but I do it!

Nank. And it does you credit.

Pubagh. But I don't stop at that. I go and dine with middle-class people on reasonable terms. I dance at cheap suburban parties for a moderate fee. I accept refreshment at any hands, however lowly. I also retail State secrets at a very low figure. For instance, any further information about Wynn Somme would come under the head of a State secret. Another insult, and I think a light one!

SONG. – Pubagh with Nanky Doug and Pischtusich.

Pubagh. Young man, despair,
Likewise go to,
Wynn Somme the fair
You must not woo,
It will not do:
I'm sorry for you,

You very imperfect ablutioner!

This very day
From school Wynn Somme
Will wend her way,
And homeward come,
With beat of drum
And a rum-tum-tum,
To wed the Lord High Executioner!
And the brass will crash,
And the pipes will bray,
And they'll cut a dash
On their wedding day.
She'll toddle away, as all aver,
With the Lord High Executioner!

Nank and Pisch. And the brass will crash, &c.

Pubagh. It's a hopeless case,
As you may see,
And in your place
Away I'd flee;
But don't blame me—
I'm sorry to be
Of your pleasure a diminutioner.
They'll vow their pact
Extremely soon,
In point of fact
This afternoon
Her honeymoon
With that buffoon
At seven, commences, so you shun her!

All. And the brass will crash, &c.

RECIT. – -Nanky Doug and Pubagh.

Nank. And have I journeyed for a month, or nearly,
To learn that Wynn Somme, whom I love so dearly,
This day to Coco is to be united!

Pubagh. The fact appears to be as you've recited:
But here he comes, equipped as suits his station;
He'll give you any further information.

SONG. – Coco with Chorus.

Chorus. Behold the Lord High Executioner!
A personage of noble rank and title –
A dignified and potent officer,
Whose functions are particularly vital!
Defer, defer,
To the Lord High Executioner!

Coco. Taken from the county jail
By a set of curious chances;
Liberated then on bail,
On my own recognizances;
Wafted by a favouring gale

As one sometimes is in trances,
To a height that few can scale,
Save by long and weary dances;
Surely, never had a male
Under such like circumstances
So adventurous a tale,
Which may rank with most romances.

Chorus. Defer, defer,
To the Lord High Executioner, &c.

Coco. Ladies and gentlemen, I'm much touched by this reception. I can only trust that by strict attention to duty I shall ensure a continuance of those favours which it will ever be my study to deserve. If I should ever be called upon to act professionally, I am happy to think that there will be no difficulty in finding plenty of people whose loss will be a distinct gain to society at large.

SONG. – Coco with Chorus.

Coco. As some day it may happen that a victim must be found,
I've got a little list – I've got a little list
Of society offenders who might well be underground
And who never would be missed – who never would be missed!

There's the pestilential nuisances who write for TMZ –
The people who in IRL reply with OMG! –
The sellouts who'll say anything as long as someone pays –
The bearded hipster who has lots of thoughts on IPAs –
And all third parties who on spoiling tête-à-têtes insist –
They'd none of 'em be missed – they'd none of 'em be missed!

Chorus. He's got them on the list – he's got them on the list;
And they'll none of them be missed – they'll none of them be missed.

Coco. The ex-CEO of Twitter who has egg upon his face,
And who needs a therapist – I've got him on the list!
And the people who vape e-cigarettes and puff them in your face.
They never would be missed – they never would be missed!

There's the friend who's always running late but swears he'll be there soon,

The Senator who gets too cold then cruises to Cancun;
The ladies in the second row who are texting on their
phones,
And the idiots who wrote the ending to the “Game of
Thrones”;
And that singular anomaly, the insurrectionist –
I don't think he'll be missed – I'm sure he'd not be
missed!

Chorus. He's got them on the list – he's got them on the
list;
And I don't think they'll be missed – I'm sure they'll
not be missed!

Coco. And that internet celebrity, who now is rather rife,
The Dilbert humorist – I've got him on the list!
All funny fellows, comic men, and clowns of private life –
They'd none of 'em be missed – they'd none of 'em be missed

And apologetic statesmen of a compromising kind,
Such as – what do you call them – Thing-a-ma-bobs? I've got
twenty! – Nevermind.
And 'St – 'st – 'st – and What's-his-name, and also You-
know-who –
The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to you.
But it really doesn't matter whom you put upon the list,
For they'd none of 'em be missed – they'd none of 'em be
missed!

Chorus. You may put 'em on the list – you may put 'em on
the list;
And they'll none of 'em be missed – they'll none of
'em be missed!

Coco. The hypocrites who of all stripes attempt to get
books banned,
Those crazed fanaticists – I've got them on the list!

The purists who got angry when we changed it to Scotland! –
They'd none of 'em be missed – they'd none of 'em be missed

And the California tech bros who are struggling to survive,
In the existential nightmare that is I-35.

The trolls who prowl the comment sections, likewise – Kanye
West. –

The task of filling up the blanks I'll let you do the rest.
And the idiotic actor who's become a lyricist,
I don't think he'd be missed – they'd none of 'em be
missed!

Chorus. You may put 'em on the list – you may put 'em on
the list;
And they'll none of 'em be missed – they'll none of
'em be missed!

Coco. Pubagh, it seems that the festivities in connection
with my approaching marriage must last a week. I should
like to do it handsomely, and I want to consult you as to
the amount I ought to spend upon them.

Pubagh. Certainly. In which of my capacities? As First Lord
of the Treasury, Lord Chamberlain, Attorney-General,
Chancellor of the Exchequer, Privy Purse, or Private
Secretary?

Coco. Suppose we say as Private Secretary.

Pubagh. Speaking as your Private Secretary, I should say
that as the city will have to pay for it, don't stint
yourself – do it well.

Coco. Exactly – as the city will have to pay for it. That
is your advice.

Pubagh. As Private Secretary. Of course you will understand that, as Chancellor of the Exchequer, I am bound to see that due economy is observed.

Coco. Oh! But you said just now "don't stint yourself, do it well."

Pubagh. As Private Secretary.

Coco. And now you say that due economy must be observed.

Pubagh. As Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Coco. I see. Come over here, where the Chancellor can't hear us. Now, as my Solicitor, how do you advise me to deal with this difficulty?

Pubagh. Oh. as your Solicitor, I should have no hesitation in saying ' 'chance it - "

Coco. Thank you. I will.

Pubagh. If it were not that, as Lord Chief Justice, I am bound to see that the law isn't violated.

Coco. I see. Come over here where the Chief Justice can't hear us. Now, then, as First Lord of the Treasury?

Pubagh. Of course, as First Lord of the Treasury, I could propose a special vote that would cover all expenses, if it were not that, as Leader of the Opposition, it would be my duty to resist it, tooth and nail. Or, as Paymaster-General, I could so cook the accounts that, as Lord High Auditor, I should never discover the fraud. But then, as Archbishop of Ballydew, it would be my duty to denounce my dishonesty and give myself into my own custody as First Commissioner of Police.

Coco. That's extremely awkward.

Pubagh. I don't say that all these distinguished people couldn't be squared; but it is right to tell you that they wouldn't be sufficiently degraded in their own estimation unless they are insulted with a very considerable bribe.

Coco. The matter shall have my careful consideration. But my bride and her sisters approach, and any little compliment on your part, such as an abject grovel in a characteristic Celtic attitude, would be esteemed a favour.

CHORUS of GIRLS.

Comes a train of bonnie lasses
From scholastic trammels free,
Each a little bit afraid is,
Wondering what the world can be!

Is it but a world of trouble –
Sadness set to song?
Is its beauty but a bubble
Bound to break ere long?

Are its palaces and pleasures
Fantasies that fade?
And the glory of its treasures
Shadow of a shade?

Schoolgirls we, eighteen and under.
From scholastic trammels free,
And we wonder – how we wonder! –
What on earth the world can be!

TRIO. – Wynn Somme, Pretty Jean, and Wee Jo, with Chorus.

The Three. Three little maids from school are we,

Pert as a schoolgirl well can be,
Filled to the brim with girlish glee,
Three little maids from school!

Wynn Somme. Everything is a source of fun.

Wee Jo. Nobody's safe, for we care for none!

Pretty Jean. Life is a joke that's just begun!

The Three. Three little maids from school!
Three little maids who, all unwary,
Come from a ladies' seminary,
Freed from its genius tutelary –
Three little maids from school!

Wynn Somme. One little maid is a bride, Wynn Somme –

Wee Jo. Two little maids in attendance come –

Pretty Jean. Three little maids is the total sum.

The Three. Three little maids from school!

Wynn Somme. From three little maids take one away.

Wee Jo. Two little maids remain, and they –

Pretty Jean. Won't have to wait very long, they say –

The Three. Three little maids from school!

All. Three little maids who, all unwary,
Come from a ladies' seminary,
Freed from its genius tutelary –
Three little maids from school!

Coco. At last, my bride that is to be!

Wynn. You're not going to kiss me before all these people?

Coco. Well, that was the idea.

Wynn. It seems odd, doesn't it?

Wee Jo. It's rather peculiar.

Pretty Jean. Oh, I expect it's all right. Must have a beginning, you know.

Wynn. Well, of course I know nothing about these things; but I've no objection if it's usual.

Coco. Oh, it's quite usual, I think. Eh, Lord Chamberlain?

Pubagh. I have known it done.

Wynn. Thank goodness that's over! Why, that's never you?

Wynn. Oh, I'm so glad! I haven't seen you for ever so long, and I'm right at the top of the school, and I've got three prizes, and I've come home for good, and I'm not going back any more!

Wee Jo. And have you got an engagement? – Wynn Somme's got one, but she doesn't like it, and she'd ever so much rather it was you! I've come home for good, and I'm not going back any more!

Pretty Jean. Now tell us all the news, because you go about everywhere, and we've been at school, but, thank goodness, that's all over now, and we've come home for good, and we're not going back any more!

Coco. I beg your pardon. Will you present me?

Wynn. Oh, this is the musician who used –

Wee Jo. Oh, this is the gentleman who used –

Pretty Jean. Oh, it is only Nanky Doug who used –

Coco. One at a time, if you please.

Wynn. Oh, if you please he's the gentleman who used to play so beautifully on the – on the –

Pretty Jean. On the Ballydew Tattoo.

Wynn. Yes, I think that was the name of the instrument.

Nank. Sir, I have the misfortune to love your ward, Wynn Somme – oh, I know I deserve your anger!

Coco. Anger! not a bit, my boy. Why, I love her myself. Charming lass, isn't she? Pretty eyes, nice hair. Very glad to hear my opinion backed by a competent authority. Thank you very much. Good-bye. Take him away.

Pretty Jean. I beg your pardon, but what is this? Customer come to try on?

Coco. That is a Tremendous Swell.

Pretty Jean. Oh, it's alive.

Pubagh. Go away, lasses. Can't talk to lasses like you. Go away, there's dears.

Coco. Allow me to present you, Pubagh. These are my three wards. The one in the middle is my bride elect.

Pubagh. What do you want me to do to them? Mind, I will not kiss them.

Coco. No, no, you shan't kiss them; a little bow – a mere nothing – you needn't mean it, you know.

Pubagh. It goes against the grain. They are not young ladies, they are young persons.

Coco. Come, come, make an effort, there's a good nobleman.

Pubagh. Well, I shan't mean it. How de do, lasses, how de do? Oh, my protoplasmal ancestor!

Coco. That's very good.

Pubagh. I see nothing to laugh at. It is very painful to me to have to say "How de do, lasses, how de do?" to young persons. I'm not in the habit of saying "How de do, lasses, how de do?" to anybody under the rank of a Stockbroker.

Coco. Don't laugh at him, he can't help it – he's under treatment for it. Never mind them, they don't understand the delicacy of your position.

Pubagh. We know how delicate it is, don't we?

Coco. I should think we did! How a nobleman of your importance can do it at all is a thing I never can, never shall understand.

QUARTET and CHORUS of GIRLS. –
Wynn Somme, Wee Jo, Pretty Jean, and Pubagh.

Wynn, Wee Jo and Pretty Jean. So please you, Sir, we much regret
If we have failed in etiquette

Towards a man of rank so high –
We shall know better by and by.

Wynn. But youth, of course, must have its fling,
So pardon us,
So pardon us,

Pretty Jean. And don't, in girlhood's happy spring,
Be hard on us,
Be hard on us,
If we're inclined to dance and sing.
Tra la la, &c.

Chorus. But youth, of course, &c.

Pubagh. I think you ought to recollect
You cannot show too much respect
Towards the highly titled few;
But nobody does, and why should you!
That youth at us should have its fling,
Is hard on us,
Is hard on us;
To our prerogative we cling –
So pardon us,
So pardon us.
If we decline to dance and sing.
Tra la la, &c

Chorus. But youth, of course, must have its fling, &c.

Nank. Wynn Somme, at last we are alone! I have sought you
night and day for three weeks, in the belief that your
guardian was beheaded, and I find that you are about to be
married to him this afternoon!

Wynn. Alas, yes!

Nank. But you do not love him?

Wynn. Alas, no!

Nank. Modified rapture! But why do you not refuse him?

Wynn. What good would that do? He's my guardian, and he wouldn't let me marry you!

Nank. But I would wait until you were of age!

Wynn. You forget that in our clan lasses do not arrive at years of discretion until they are fifty.

Nank. True; from seventeen to forty-nine are considered years of indiscretion.

Wynn. Besides – a wandering minstrel, who plays a second fiddle outside pubs, is hardly a fitting husband for the ward of a Lord High Executioner.

Nank. But– Shall I tell her?

Offstage. Yes! [Scottish Phrases] No!

Nank. What if it should prove that, after all, I am no musician!

Wynn. There! I was certain of it, directly I heard you play!

Nank. What if it should prove that I am no other than the son of his Lordship the McAdo?

Wynn. The son of the McAdo! But why is your Highness disguised? And what has your Highness done? And will your Highness promise never to do it again?

Nank. Some years ago I had the misfortune to captivate Katishagh, an elderly lady of my father's Court. She misconstrued my customary affability into expressions of affection, and claimed me in marriage, under my father's law. My father, the Lucius Junius Brutus of his race, ordered me to marry her within a week, or perish ignominiously on the scaffold. That night I fled his Court, and, assuming the disguise of a Second Fiddle. I joined the band in which you found me when I had the happiness of seeing you!

Wynn. If you please, I think your Highness had better not come too near. The laws against flirting are excessively severe.

Nank. But we are quite alone, and nobody can see us.

Wynn. Still, that doesn't make it right. To flirt is capital.

Nank. It is capital!

Wynn. And we must obey the law.

Nank. Deuce take the law!

Wynn. I wish it would, but it won't.

Nank. If it were not for that, how happy we might be!

Wynn. Happy indeed!

Nank. If it were not for the law, we should now be sitting side by side, like that.

Wynn. Instead of being obliged to sit half a mile off, like that.

Nank. We should be gazing into each other's eyes, like that.

Wynn. Breathing sighs of unutterable love – like that.

Nank. With our arms round each other's waists, like that.

Wynn. Yes, if it wasn't for the law.

Nank. If it wasn't for the law.

Wynn. As it is, of course, we couldn't do anything of the kind.

Nank. Not for worlds!

Wynn. Being engaged to Coco, you know!

Nank. Being engaged to Coco!

DUET. – Wynn Somme and Nanky Doug.

Nank. Were you not to Coco plighted,
I would say in tender tone,
"Loved one, let us be united –
Let us be each other's own!"
I would merge all rank and station,
Worldly sneers are nought to us,
And, to mark my admiration,
I would kiss you fondly thus –

Both. I would kiss you fondly thus –

Wynn. But as I'm engaged to Coco,
To embrace you thus, con fuoco,
Would distinctly be no gioco,
And for you I should get toco –

Both. Toco, toco, toco, toco!

Nank. So, in spite of all temptation,
Such a theme I'll not discuss,
And on no consideration
Will I kiss you fondly thus -
Let me make it clear to you,
This is what I'll never do!
This, oh this, oh this, oh this -

Both. This, oh this, &c.

Coco. There she goes! To think how entirely my future happiness is wrapped up in that little parcel! Really, it hardly seems worth while! Oh, matrimony! Now then, what is it? Can't you see I'm soliloquizing? You have interrupted an apostrophe, sir!

Pisch. I am the bearer of a letter from his Lordship the McAdo.

Coco. A letter from the McAdo! What in the world can he have to say to me? Ah, here it is at last! I thought it would come sooner or later! The McAdo is struck by the fact that no executions have taken place in Ballydew for a year, and decrees that unless somebody is beheaded within one month the post of Lord High Executioner shall be abolished, and the city reduced to the rank of a village!

Pisch. But that will involve us all in irretrievable ruin!

Coco. Yes. There is no help for it, I shall have to execute somebody at once. The only question is, who shall it be?

Pubagh. Well, it seems unkind to say so, but as you're already under sentence of death for flirting, everything seems to point to you.

Coco. To me? What are you talking about? I can't execute myself.

Pubagh. Why not?

Coco. Why not? Because, in the first place, self - decapitation is an extremely difficult, not to say dangerous, thing to attempt; and, in the second, it's suicide, and suicide is a capital offense.

Pubagh. That is so, no doubt.

Pisch. We might reserve that point.

Pubagh. True, it could be argued six months hence before the full Court.

Coco. Besides, I don't see how a man can cut off his own head.

Pubagh. A man might try.

Pisch. Even if you only succeeded in cutting it half off, that would be something.

Pubagh. It would be taken as an earnest of your desire to comply with the Imperial will.

Coco. No. Pardon me, but there I am adamant. As official Headsman, my reputation is at stake, and I can't consent to embark on a professional operation unless I see my way to a successful result.

Pubagh. This professional conscientiousness is highly creditable to you, but it places us in a very awkward position.

Coco. My good sir, the awkwardness of your position is grace itself compared with that of a man engaged in the act of cutting off his own head.

Pisch. I am afraid that, unless you can obtain a substitute
–

Coco. A substitute? Oh, certainly – nothing easier. Pubagh, I appoint you Lord High Substitute.

Pubagh. I should be delighted. Such an appointment would realise my fondest dreams. But no, at any sacrifice, I must set a limit to my insatiable ambition!

TRIO. – Pubagh, Coco, Pischtus

Pubagh. I am so proud,
If I allowed
My family pride
To be my guide,
I'd volunteer
To quit this sphere
Instead of you
In a minute or two.
But family pride
Must be denied,
And set aside,
And mortified.

Coco. My brain it teems
With endless schemes
Both good and new
For Ballydew,
But if I flit,
The benefit
That I'd diffuse
The town would lose!

Now every man
To aid his clan
Should plot and plan
As best he can,

Pischtusch. I heard one day
A gentleman say
That criminals who
Are cut in two
Can hardly feel
The fatal steel,
And so are slain
Without much pain.
If this is true,
It's jolly for you;
Your courage screw
To bid us adieu,

Coco. And so,
Although,
I'm ready to go,
Yet recollect
'T'were disrespect
Did I neglect
To thus effect
This aim direct,
So I object -

Pubagh. And so,
Although
I wish to go,
And greatly pine
To brightly shine,
And take the line
Of a hero fine,
With grief condign
I must decline -

Pischtusch. And go
And show
Both friend and foe
How much you dare.
I'm quite aware
It's your affair.
Yet I declare
I'd take your share,
But I don't much care –

All. To sit in solemn silence in a dull, dark dock.
In a pestilential prison, with a life-long lock,
Awaiting the sensation of a short, sharp shock,
From a cheap and chippy chopper on a big black block!

Coco. This is simply appalling! I, who allowed myself to be respited at the last moment, simply in order to benefit my native town, am now required to die within a month, and that by a man whom I have loaded with honours! Is this public gratitude? Is this – Go away, sir! How dare you? Am I never to be permitted to soliloquize?

Nank. Oh, go on – don't mind me.

Coco. What are you going to do with that rope?

Nank. I am about to terminate an unendurable existence.

Coco. Terminate your existence? Oh, nonsense! What for?

Nank. Because you are going to marry the girl I adore.

Coco. Nonsense, sir. I won't permit it. I am a humane man, and if you attempt anything of the kind I shall order your instant arrest. Come, sir, desist at once, or I summon my guard.

Nank. That's absurd. If you attempt to raise an alarm, I instantly perform the Happy Despatch with this dagger.

Coco. No, no, don't do that. This is horrible! Why, you cold-blooded scoundrel, are you aware that, in taking your life, you are committing a crime which – which – which is – Oh! Substitute!

Nank. What's the matter?

Coco. Is it absolutely certain that you are resolved to die?

Nank. Absolutely!

Coco. Will nothing shake your resolution?

Nank. Nothing.

Coco. Threats, entreaties, prayers – all useless?

Nank. All! My mind is made up.

Coco. Then, if you really mean what you say, and if you are absolutely resolved to die, and if nothing whatever will shake your determination – don't spoil yourself by committing suicide, but be beheaded handsomely at the hands of the Public Executioner.

Nank. I don't see how that would benefit me.

Coco. You don't? Observe: you'll have a month to live, and you'll live like a fighting cock at my expense. When the day comes there'll be a grand public ceremonial – you'll be the central figure – no one will attempt to deprive you of that distinction. There'll be a procession – bands – dead march – bells tolling – all the girls in tears – Wynn Somme

distracted – then, when it's all over, general rejoicings, and a display of fireworks in the evening. You won't see them, but they'll be there all the same.

Nank. Do you think Wynn Somme would really be distracted at my death?

Coco. I am convinced of it. Bless you, she's the most tender- hearted little creature alive.

Nank. I should be sorry to cause her pain. Perhaps, after all, if I were to withdraw from Scotland, and travel in Europe for a couple of years, I might contrive to forget her.

Coco. Oh, I don't think you could forget Wynn Somme so easily; and, after all, what is more miserable than a love-blighted life?

Nank. True.

Coco. Life without Wynn Somme – why, it seems absurd!

Nank. And yet there are a good many people in the world who have to endure it.

Coco. Poor devils, yes! You are quite right not to be of their number.

Nank. I won't be of their number!

Coco. Noble fellow!

Nank. I'll tell you how we'll manage it. Let me marry Wynn Somme to-morrow, and in a month you may behold me.

Coco. No, no. I draw the line at Wynn Somme.

Nank. Very good. If you can draw the line, so can I.

Coco. Stop, stop – listen one moment – be reasonable. How can I consent to your marrying Wynn Somme if I'm going to marry her myself?

Nank. My good friend, she'll be a widow in a month, and you can marry her then.

Coco. That's true, of course. I quite see that. But, dear me! My position during the next month will be most unpleasant – most unpleasant.

Nank. Not half so unpleasant as my position at the end of it.

Coco. But – dear me! – well – I agree – after all, it's only putting off my wedding for a month. But you won't prejudice her against me, will you? You see, I've educated her to be my wife; she's been taught to regard me as a wise and good man. Now I shouldn't like her views on that point disturbed.

Nank. Trust me, she shall never learn the truth from me.

FINALE.

Chorus. With aspect stern and gloomy stride,
We come to learn how you decide.
Don't hesitate your choice to name,
A dreadful fate you'll suffer all the same.

Pubagh. To ask you what you mean to do we punctually appear.

Coco. Congratulate me, gentlemen, I've found a Volunteer!

All. The Highlander equivalent for Hear, Hear, Hear!

Coco. 'Tis Nanky Doug!

All. Hail, Nanky Doug!

Coco. I think he'll do?

All. Yes, yes, he'll do!

Coco. He yields his life if I'll Wynn Somme surrender.
Now I adore that girl with passion tender,
And could not yield her with a ready will,
Or her allot, if I did not
Adore myself with passion tenderer still!

All. Ah, yes!
He loves himself with passion tenderer still!

Coco. Take her— she's yours!

ENSEMBLE.

Nanky. The threatened cloud has passed away,

Wynn. And brightly shines the dawning day;

Nanky. What though the night may come too soon,

Wynn. There's yet a month of afternoon!

Nanky Doug, Pubagh, Pischusch, Wynn Somme, Pretty Jean
and Wee Jo.

Then let the throng our joy advance,
With laughing song and merry dance,

Chorus. With joyous shout and ringing cheer,

Inaugurate our brief career! &c.

Pretty Jean. A day, a week, a month, a year –

Wynn. Or far or near, or far or near,

Pubagh. Life's eventime comes much too soon,

Pretty Jean. You'll live at least a honeymoon!

All Then let the throng, &c.

Chorus. With joyous shout, &c

SOLO. – Pubagh.

As in a month you've got to die,

If Coco tells us true,

'Twere empty compliment to cry

"Long life to Nanky Doug!"

But as one month you have to live

As fellow-citizen,

This toast with three times three we'll give –

"Long life to you– till then!"

Chorus. May all good fortune prosper you,

May you have health and riches, too,

May you succeed in all you do!

Long life to you – till then!

Kat. Your revels cease! Assist me, all of you!

Chorus. Why, who is this whose evil eyes

Rain blight on our festivities?

Kat. I claim my perjured lover, Nanky Doug!

Oh fool! to shun delights that never cloy!

Chorus. Go, leave thy deadly work undone!

Kat. Come back, oh shallow fool! come back to joy!

Chorus. Away, away! ill-favoured one!

Nank. Ah! 'Tis Katishagh!
The maid of whom I told you.

Kat. No!
You shall not go,
These arms shall thus enfold you!

SOLO. – Katishagh.

Kat. Oh fool, that fleest my hallowed joys!
Oh blind, that seest no equipoise!
Oh rash, that judgest from half, the whole!
Oh base, that grudgest love's lightest dole!
Thy heart unbind, oh fool, oh blind!
Give me my place, oh rash, oh base!

Chorus. If she's thy bride, restore her place,
Oh fool, oh blind, oh rash, oh base!

Kat. Pink cheek, that rulest where wisdom serves!
Bright eye, that foolest heroic nerves!
Rose lip, that scornest lore-laden years!
Smooth tongue, that warmest who rightly hears!
Thy doom is nigh, pink cheek, bright eye!
Thy knell is rung, rose lip, smooth tongue!

Chorus. If true her tale, thy knell is rung,
Pink cheek, bright eye, rose lip, smooth tongue!

Pretty Jean. Away, nor prosecute your quest – :
From our intention, well expressed,

You cannot turn us!
The state of your connubial views
Towards the person you accuse
Does not concern us!
For he's going to marry Wynn Somme –

All. Somme – somme!

Pretty Jean. Your anger pray bury, for all will be merry,
I think you had better succumb –

All. Cumb – cumb!

Pretty Jean. And join our expressions of glee.
On this subject I pray you be dumb –

All. Dumb – dumb.

Pretty Jean. You'll find there are many who'll wed for a
penny –
The word for your guidance is "Mum" –

All. Mum – mum!

Pretty Jean. There's lots of good fish in the sea!

All. On this subject we pray you be dumb, &c.

SOLO. – Katishagh.

The hour of gladness is dead and gone;
In silent sadness I live alone!
The hope I cherished all lifeless lies,
And all has perished save love, which never dies!

Oh faithless one, this insult you shall rue!
In vain for mercy on your knees you'll sue.

I'll tear the mask from your disguising!

Nank. Now comes the blow!

Kat. Prepare yourself for news surprising!

Nank. How foil my foe?

Kat. No minstrel he, despite bravado!

Wynn. Ha! ha! I know!

Kat. He is the son of your -

All. Haud yer weesht!

Kat. In vain you interrupt with this tornado!
He is the only son of your - -

All. Haud yer weesht!

Kat. I'll spoil-

All. Haud yer weesht!

Kat. Your gay gambado - he is the son!

All. Haud yer weesht!

Kat. Of your -

All. Haud yer weesht!

Kat. The son of your -

All. Haud yer weesht!

Katishagh. Ye torrents roar!
Ye tempests howl!
Your wrath outpour
With angry growl!
Do ye your worst, my vengeance call
Shall rise triumphant over all!

The Others. We'll hear no more,
Ill-omened owl,
To joy we soar,
Despite your scowl!
The echoes of our festival
Shall rise triumphant over all!

Katishagh. Prepare for woe,
Ye haughty lords,
At once I go
McAdo-wards,

The Others. Away you go,
Collect your hordes,
Proclaim your woe
In dismal chords.
We do not need their dismal sound.
For joy reigns everywhere around.

Kat. My wrongs with vengeance shall be crowned!

The Others. We do not need their dismal sound.
For joy reigns everywhere around.

End of Act I.

ACT II.

SOLO. – Pretty Jean and Chorus of Girls

Chorus. Braid the raven hair –
Weave the supple tress –
Deck the maiden fair
In her loveliness –
Paint the pretty face –
Dye the coral lip –
Emphasize the grace
Of her ladyship!
Art and Nature, thus allied,
Go to make a pretty bride.

Pretty Jean. Sit with downcast eye –
Let it brim with dew –
Try if you can cry –
We will do so, too.
When you're summoned, start
Like a frightened doe –
Flutter, little heart,
Colour, come and go!
Modesty at marriage tide
Well becomes a pretty bride!

Chorus. Braid the raven hair, &c.

Wynn. Yes, we are indeed beautiful! Sometimes I sit and wonder, why it is that we are so much more attractive than anybody else in the whole world. Can this be vanity? No! Nature is lovely and rejoices in her loveliness. I am a child of Nature, and take after my mother.

SONG. – Wynn Somme.

The sun, whose rays

Are all ablaze
With ever-living glory,
Does not deny
His majesty-
He scorns to tell a story!
He don't exclaim
"I blush for shame,
So kindly be indulgent."
But, fierce and bold,
In fiery gold,
He glories all effulgent!
I mean to rule the earth,
As he the sky -
We really know our worth,
The sun and I!
Observe his flame,
That placid dame,
The moon's Celestial Highness;
There's not a trace
Upon her face
Of diffidence or shyness:
She borrows light
That, through the night,
Mankind may all acclaim her!
And, truth to tell,
She lights up well,
So I, for one, don't blame her!
Ah, pray make no mistake,
We are not shy;
We're very wide awake,
The moon and I!

Wynn. Yes, everything seems to smile upon me. I am to be married to-day to the man I love best, and I believe I am the very happiest lass in the clan!

Wee Jo. The happiest lass indeed, for she is indeed to be envied who has attained happiness in all but perfection.

Wynn. In "all but" perfection?

Wee Jo. Well, dear, it can't be denied that the fact that your husband is to be beheaded in a month is, in its way, a drawback. It does seem to take the top off it, you ken.

Pretty Jean. I don't know about that. It all depends!

Wee Jo. At all events, he will find it a drawback.

Pretty Jean. Not necessarily. Bless you, it all depends!

Wynn. I think it very indelicate of you to refer to such a subject on such a day. If my married happiness is to be – to be –

Wee Jo. Cut short.

Wynn. Well, cut short – in a month, can't you let me forget it?

Nank. Wynn Some in tears – and on her wedding morn!

Wynn. They've been reminding me that in a month you're to be beheaded!

Pretty Jean. Yes, we've been reminding her that you're to be beheaded.

Wee Jo. It's quite true, you ken, you are to be beheaded!

Nank. Humph! How some bridegrooms would be depressed by this sort of thing! A month? well, what's a month? Bah! These divisions of time are purely arbitrary. Who says twenty-four hours make a day?

Pretty Jean. There's a popular impression to that effect.

Nank. Then we'll efface it. We'll call each second a minute – each minute an hour – each hour a day – and each day a year. At that rate we've about thirty years of married happiness before us!

Wee Jo. And, at that rate, this interview has already lasted four hours and three-quarters!

Wynn. Yes. How time flies when one is thoroughly enjoying oneself!

Nank. That's the way to look at it! Don't let's be down-hearted! There's a silver lining to every cloud.

Wynn. Certainly. Let's – let's be perfectly happy!

Go-To. Aye! By all means. Let's – let's thoroughly enjoy ourselves.

Pretty Jean. It's – it's absurd to cry!

Wynn. Quite ridiculous!

MADRIGAL. Wynn Somme, Pretty Jean, Nanky Doug, and Go-To.

Brightly dawns our wedding day;
Joyous hour, we give thee greeting!
Whither, whither art thou fleeting?
Fickle moment, prithee stay!
What though mortal joys be hollow?
Pleasures come, if sorrows follow:
Though the tocsin sound, ere long
Ding dong! Ding dong!
Yet until the shadows fall
Over one and over all,

Sing a merry madrigal -
A madrigal!
Fal-la - fal-la! &c.

Let us dry the ready tear,
Though the hours are surely creeping,
Little need for woeful weeping,
Till the sad sundown is near.
All must sip the cup of sorrow -
I to-day and thou to-morrow;
This the close of every song -
Ding dong! Ding dong!
What, though solemn shadows fall,
Sooner, later, over all?
Sing a merry madrigal -
A madrigal!
Fal-la - fal-la! &c.

Coco. Go on - don't mind me.

Nank. I'm afraid we're distressing you.

Coco. Never mind, I must get used to it. Only please do it
by degrees. Begin by putting your arm round her waist.
There; let me get used to that first.

Wynn. Oh, would you like to retire? It must pain you to see
us so affectionate together!

Coco. No, I must learn to bear it! Now oblige me by
allowing her head to rest on your shoulder.

Nank. Like that?

Coco. I am much obliged to you. Now - kiss her! Thank you -
it's simple torture!

Wynn. Come, come, bear up. After all, it's only for a month.

Coco. No. It's no use deluding oneself with false hopes.

Wynn. What do you mean?

Coco. My child – my poor child! How shall I break it to her? My little bride that was to have been–

Wynn. Was to have been?

Coco. Yes, you never can be mine!

Wynn. Oh what a lovely surprise!

Nank. That's great!

Coco. I've just ascertained that, by the McAdo's law, when a married man is beheaded his wife is buried alive.

Nank and Wynn. Buried alive!

Coco. Buried alive. It's a most unpleasant death.

Nank. But whom did you get that from?

Coco. Oh, from Pubagh. He's my solicitor.

Wynn. But he may be mistaken!

Coco. So I thought; so I consulted the Attorney-General, the Lord Chief Justice, the Master of the Rolls, the Judge Ordinary, and Lord Chancellor. They're all of the same opinion. Never knew such unanimity on a point of law in my life.

Nank. But stop a bit! This law has never been put in force.

Coco. Not yet. You see, flirting is the only crime punishable with decapitation, and married men never flirt.

Nank. Of course, they don't. I quite forgot that! Well, I suppose I may take it that my dream of happiness is at an end!

Wynn. Darling – I don't want to appear selfish, and I love you with all my heart – I don't suppose I shall ever love anybody else half as much – but when I agreed to marry you – my own – I had no idea – pet – that I should have to be buried alive in a month!

Nank. Nor I! It's the very first I've heard of it!

Wynn. It – it makes a difference, doesn't it?

Nank. It does make a difference, of course.

Wynn. You see – burial alive – it's such a stuffy death!

Nank. I call it a beast of a death.

Wynn. You see my difficulty, don't you?

Nank. Yes, and I see my own. If I insist on your carrying out your promise, I doom you to a hideous death; if I release you, you marry Coco at once!

TRIO. – Wynn Somme, Nanky Doug, and Coco.

Wynn. Here's a how-de-do!
If I marry you.
When your time has come to perish,
Then the maiden whom you cherish
Must be slaughtered, too!
Here's a how-de-do!

Nank. Here's a pretty mess!
In a month, or less,
I must die without a wedding!
Let the bitter tears I'm shedding
Witness my distress,
Here's a pretty mess!

Coco. Here's a state of things!
To her life she clings!
Matrimonial devotion
Doesn't seem to suit her notion –
Burial it brings!
Here's a state of things!

Wynn Somme, Nanky Doug. Coco.
With a passion that's intense
I/You worship and adore,
But the laws of common sense
We/You oughtn't to ignore.
If what he says/I say is true,
'Tis death to marry you!
Here's a pretty state of things!
Here's a pretty how-de-do!

Coco. My poor boy, I'm really very sorry for you.

Nank. Thanks, old fellow. I'm sure you are.

Coco. You see I'm quite helpless.

Nank. I quite see that.

Coco. I can't conceive anything more distressing than to have one's marriage broken off at the last moment. But you shan't be disappointed of a wedding – you shall come to mine.

Nank. It's awfully kind of you, but that's impossible.

Coco. Why so?

Nank. Today I die.

Coco. What do you mean?

Nank. I can't live without Wynn Somme. This afternoon I perform the Happy Despatch.

Coco. No, no— pardon me – I can't allow that.

Nank. Why not?

Coco. Why, hang it all, you're under contract to die by the hand of the Public Executioner in a month's time! If you kill yourself, what's to become of me? Why I shall have to be executed in your place!

Nank. It would certainly seem so!

Coco. Now then, Lord Mayor, what is it?

Pubagh. The McAdo and his suite are approaching the city, and will be here in ten minutes.

Coco. The McAdo! He's coming to see whether his orders have been carried out! Now look here, you know – this is getting serious – a bargain's a bargain, and you really mustn't frustrate the ends of justice by committing suicide. As a man of honour and a gentleman, you are bound to die ignominiously by the hands of the Public Executioner.

Nank. Very well, then – behead me.

Coco. What, now?

Nank. Certainly; at once.

Pubagh. Chop it off, Coco, chop it off!

Coco. My good sir, I don't go about prepared to execute gentlemen at a moment's notice. Why, I never even killed a blue-bottle!

Pubagh. Still, as Lord High Executioner –

Coco. My good sir, as Lord High Executioner I've got to behead him in a month. I'm not ready yet. I don't know how it's done. I'm going to take lessons. I mean to begin with a guinea pig, and work my way through the animal kingdom till I come to a Second Fiddle. Why, you don't suppose that, as a humane man, I'd have accepted the post of Lord High Executioner if I hadn't thought the duties were purely nominal? I can't kill you – I can't kill anything! I can't kill anybody!

Nank. Come, my poor fellow, we all have unpleasant duties to discharge at times; after all, what is it? If I don't mind, why should you? Remember, sooner or later it must be done.

Coco. Must it? I'm not so sure about that!

Nank. What do you mean?

Coco. Why should I kill you when making an affidavit that you've been executed will do just as well? Here are plenty of witnesses – the Lord Chief Justice, Lord High Admiral, Commander-in-Chief, Secretary of State for the Home Department, First Lord of the Treasury, and Chief Commissioner of Police.

Nank. But where are they?

Coco. There they are. They'll all swear to it – won't you?

Pubagh. Am I to understand that all of us high Officers of State are required to perjure ourselves to ensure your safety!

Coco. Why not? You'll be grossly insulted, as usual.

Pubagh. Will the insult be cash down, or at a date?

Coco. It will be a ready-money transaction.

Pubagh. Well, it will be a useful discipline. Very good. Choose your fiction, and I'll endorse it! Ha! Ha! Family pride, how do you like that, my buck?

Nank. But I tell you that life without Wynn Somme –

Coco. Oh, Wynn Somme, Wynn Somme! Bother Wynn Somme! Here, Commissionaire, go and fetch Wynn Somme. Take Wynn Somme and marry Wynn Somme, only go away and never come back again. Here she is. Wynn Somme, are you particularly busy?

Wynn. Not particularly.

Coco. You've five minutes to spare?

Wynn. Yes.

Coco. Then go along with his Grace the Archbishop of Ballydew; he'll marry you at once.

Wynn. But if I'm to be buried alive?

Coco. Now don't ask any questions, but do as I tell you, and Nanky Doug will explain all.

Nank. But one moment –

Coco. Not for worlds. Here comes the McAdo, no doubt to ascertain whether I've obeyed his decree, and if he finds you alive I shall have the greatest difficulty in persuading him that I've beheaded you. Close thing that, for here he comes!

ENSEMBLE. – McAdo, Katishagh, and Chorus.

Chorus. Scots wha' hae wi' Wallace bled,
An' Scots wham Bruce has aften led,
Greetin's to our noble Laird,
Out great and noble Laird.
Welcome now to our great an' noble Laird!

DUET. – McAdo and Katishagh.

McAdo. From every kind of man
Obedience I expect;
I'm the Emperor of the land –

Kat. And I'm his daughter-in-law elect!
He'll marry his son
(He's only got one)
To his daughter-in-law elect.

McAdo. My morals have been declared
Particularly correct;

Kat. But they're nothing at all, compared
With those of his daughter-in-law elect!
Bow – Bow –
To his daughter-in-law elect!

Chorus. Bow – Bow –
To his daughter-in-law elect.

McAdo. In a fatherly kind of way
I govern each tribe and sect,
All cheerfully own my sway -

Kat. Except his daughter-in-law elect!
As tough as a bone,
With a will of her own.
Is his daughter-in-law elect!

McAdo. My nature is love and light -
My freedom from all defect -

Kat. Is insignificant quite,
Compared with his daughter-in-law elect!
Bow - Bow -
To his daughter-in-law elect!

Chorus. Bow - Bow -
To his daughter-in-law elect!

SONG. - McAdo and Chorus.

McAdo. A more humane McAdo never
Did in Japan exist,
To nobody second,
I'm certainly reckoned
A true philanthropist.
It is my very humane endeavour
To make, to some extent,
Each evil liver
A running river
Of harmless merriment.
My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time -
To let the punishment fit the crime-
The punishment fit the crime -
And make each prisoner pent

Unwillingly represent
A source of innocent merriment!
Of innocent merriment!

All prosy dull society sinners,
Who chatter and bleat and bore,
Are sent to hear sermons
From mystical Germans
Who preach from ten till four.
The amateur tenor, whose vocal villanies
All desire to shirk,
Shall, during off-hours,
Exhibit his powers
To Madame Tussaud's waxwork.
The lady who dies a chemical yellow,
Or stains her grey hair puce,
Or pinches her figure,
Is painted with vigor
With permanent walnut juice.
The idiot who, in railway carriages,
Scribbles on window-panes,
We only suffer
To ride on a buffer
In Parliamentary trains
My object all sublime, &c.

Chorus. His object all sublime. &c.

McAdo. The advertising quack who wearies
With tales of countless cures,
His teeth, I've enacted,
Shall all be extracted
By terrified amateurs
The music-hall singer attends a series
Of masses and fugues and "ops*"
By Bach, interwoven
With Spohr and Beethoven,

At classical Monday Pops.
The billiard sharp whom anyone catches,
His doom's extremely hard –
He's made to dwell –
In a dungeon cell
On a spot that's always barred.
And there he plays extravagant matches
In fitless finger-stalls
On a cloth untrue,
With a twisted cue
And elliptical billiard balls!
My object all sublime, &c.

Chorus. His object all sublime, &c.

Coco. I am honoured in being permitted to welcome your Lordship. I guess the object of your Lordship's visit – your wishes have been attended to. The execution has taken place.

McAdo. Oh, you've had an execution, have you?

Coco. Yes. The Coroner has just handed me his certificate.

Pubagh. I am the Coroner.

McAdo. And this is the certificate of his death. "At Ballydew, in the presence of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice, Attorney-General, Secretary of State for the Home Department, Lord Mayor, and Groom of the Second Floor Front – "

Pubagh. They were all present, your Lordship. I counted them myself.

McAdo. Very good house. I wish I'd been in time for the performance.

Coco. A tough fellow he was, too – a man of gigantic strength. His struggles were terrific. It was really a remarkable scene.

McAdo. Describe it.

TRIO and CHORUS. – Pretty Jean, Coco, Pubagh, and Chorus.

Coco. The criminal cried, as he dropped him down.
In a state of wild alarm–
With a frightful, frantic, fearful frown,
I bared my big right arm.
I seized him by the braid of his hair,
And on his knees fell he,
As he squirmed and struggled,
And gurgled and guggled,
I drew my snickersnee!
Oh, never shall I
Forget the cry,
Or the shriek that shrieked he.
As I gnashed my teeth,
When from its sheath
I drew my snickersnee!

Chorus. We know him well,
He cannot tell
Untrue or groundless tales –
He always tries
To utter lies,
And every time he fails.

Pretty Jean. He shivered and shook as he gave the sign
For the stroke he didn't deserve;
When all of a sudden his eye met mine,
And it seemed to brace his nerve;
For he nodded his head and kissed his hand,
And he whistled an air, did he,

As the sabre true
Cut cleanly through
His cervical vertebrae!
When a man's afraid,
A beautiful maid
Is a cheering sight to see ;
And it's oh, I'm glad
That moment sad
Was soothed by the sight of me!

Chorus. Her terrible tale
You can't assail,
With truth it quite agrees!
Her taste exact
For faultless fact
Amounts to a disease.

Pubagh. Now though you'd have said that head was dead
(For its owner dead was he),
It stood on its neck, with a smile well bred,
And bowed three times to me!
It was none of your impudent off-hand nods,
But as humble as. could be;
For it clearly knew
The deference due
To a man of pedigree!
And it's oh, I vow,
This deathly bow
Was a touching sight to see;
Though trunkless, yet
It couldn't forget,
The deference due to me!

Chorus. This haughty youth,
He speaks the truth
Whenever he finds it pays!
And in this case

It all took place
Exactly as he says!

McAdo. All this is very interesting, and I should like to have seen it. But we came about a totally different matter. A year ago my son, the heir to the throne of Japan, bolted from our Imperial Court.

Coco. Indeed! Had he any reason to be dissatisfied with his position?

Kat. None whatever. On the contrary, I was going to marry him – yet he fled!

Pubagh. I am surprised that he should have fled from one so lovely!

Kat. That's not true.

Pubagh. No!

Kat. You hold that I am not beautiful because my face is plain. But you know nothing; you are still unenlightened. Learn, then, that it is not in the face alone that beauty is to be sought. My face is unattractive!

Pubagh. It is.

Kat. But I have a left shoulder-blade that is a miracle of loveliness. People come miles to see it. My right elbow has a fascination that few can resist.

Pubagh. Allow me!

Kat. It is on view Tuesdays and Fridays, on presentation of visiting card. As for my circulation, it is the largest in the world.

Coco. And yet he fled.

McAdo. And is now masquerading in this town, disguised as a Second Fiddle.

Coco, Pubagh, and Pretty Jean. A Second Fiddle!

McAdo. Yes; would it be troubling you too much if I asked you to produce him? He goes by the name of –

Kat. Nanky Doug.

McAdo. Nanky Doug.

Coco. It's quite easy. That is, it's rather difficult. In point of fact, he's gone abroad!

McAdo. Gone abroad? His address.

Coco. Titipu, Japan!

Kat. Oh!

McAdo. What's the matter?

Kat. See here – his name – Nanky Doug – beheaded this morning. Oh, where shall I find another? Where shall I find another?

McAdo Dear, dear, dear! this is very tiresome. My poor fellow, in your anxiety to carry out my wishes you have beheaded the heir to the throne of the land!

Coco. I beg to offer an unqualified apology.

Pubagh. I desire to associate myself with that expression of regret.

Pretty Jean. We really hadn't the least notion –

McAdo. Of course you hadn't. How could you? Come, come, my good fellow, don't distress yourself – it was no fault of yours. If a man of exalted rank chooses to disguise himself as a Second Fiddle, he must take the consequences. It really distresses me to see you take on so. I've no doubt he thoroughly deserved all he got.

Coco. We are infinitely obliged to your Lordship –

Pretty Jean. Much obliged, your Lordship.

Pubagh. Very much obliged, your Lordship.

McAdo. Obligated? Not a bit. Don't mention it. How could you tell?

Pubagh. No, of course we couldn't tell who the gentleman really was.

Pretty Jean. It wasn't written on his forehead, you know.

Coco. It might have been on his pocket-handkerchief, but Highlanders don't use pocket-handkerchiefs!

McAdo. I forget the punishment for compassing the death of the Heir Apparent.

Coco, Pubagh and Pretty Jean. Punishment!

McAdo. Yes. Something lingering, with boiling oil in it, I fancy. Something of that sort. I think boiling oil occurs in it, but I'm not sure. I know it's something humorous, but lingering, with either boiling oil or melted lead. Come, come, don't fret – I'm not a bit angry.

Coco. If your Lordship will accept our assurance, we had no idea –

McAdo. Of course –

Pretty Jean. I knew nothing about it.

Pubagh. I wasn't there.

McAdo. That's the pathetic part of it. Unfortunately, the fool of an Act says "compassing the death of the Heir Apparent." There's not a word about a mistake; –

Coco, Pretty Jean and Pubagh. No!

McAdo. Or not knowing –

Coco. No!

McAdo. Or having no notion –

Pretty Jean. No!

McAdo. Or not being there –

Pubagh. No!

McAdo. There should be, of course–

Coco, Pretty Jean and Pubagh. Yes!

McAdo. But there isn't.

Coco, Pretty Jean and Pubagh. Oh!

McAdo. That's the slovenly way in which these Acts are always drawn. However, cheer up, it'll be all right. I'll

have it altered next session. Now, let's see about your execution – will after luncheon suit you? Can you wait till then?

Coco, Pretty Jean and Pubagh. Oh, yes – we can wait till then!

McAdo. Then we'll make it after luncheon.

Pubagh. I don't want any lunch.

McAdo. I'm really very sorry for you all, but it's an unjust world, and virtue is triumphant only in theatrical performances.

GLEE. – Pretty Jean, Katishagh, Coco, Pubagh, and McAdo.

McAdo. See how the Fates their gifts allot.
For A is happy – B is not.
Yet B is worthy, I dare say,
Of more prosperity than A!

Coco, Pubagh, and Pretty Jean. Is B more worthy?

Kat. I should say
He's worth a great deal more than A.

Ensemble. Yet A is happy!
Oh, so happy!
Laughing, Ha! ha!
Chaffing, Ha! ha!
Nectar quaffing, Ha! ha! ha!
Ever joyous ever gay,
Happy, undeserving A!

Coco, Pubagh, and Pretty Jean.
If I were Fortune – which I'm not–

B should enjoy A's happy lot,
And A should die in miserie –
That is, assuming I am B.

McAdo. and Kat. But should A perish?

Coco, Pubagh, and Pretty Jean. That should he
(Of course, assuming I am B).

Ensemble. B should be happy!
Oh, so happy!
Laughing, Ha! ha!
Chaffing, Ha! ha!
Nectar quaffing, Ha! ha! ha!
But condemned to die is he,
Wretched, meritorious B!

Coco. Well, a nice mess you've got us into, with your
nodding head and the deference due to a man of pedigree!

Pubagh. Merely corroborative detail, intended to give
artistic verisimilitude to an otherwise bald and
unconvincing narrative.

Pretty Jean. Corroborative detail indeed! Corroborative
fiddlestick!

Coco. And you're just as bad as he is with your cock-and-a-
bull stories about catching his eye and his whistling an
air. But that's so like you! You must put in your oar!

Pubagh. But how about your big, right arm?

Pretty Jean. Yes, and your snickersnee!

Coco. Well, well, never mind that now. There's only one
thing to be done. Nanky Doug hasn't started yet – he must

come to life again at once. Here he comes. Here, Nanky Doug, I've good news for you – you're reprieved.

Nank. Oh, but it's too late. I'm a dead man, and I'm off for my honeymoon.

Coco. Nonsense! A terrible thing has just happened. It seems you're the son of the McAdo.

Nank. Yes, but that happened some time ago.

Coco. Is this a time for airy persiflage? Your father is here, and with Katishagh!

Nank. My father! And with Katishagh!

Coco. Yes, he wants you particularly.

Pubagh. So does she.

Wynn. Oh, but he's married now.

Coco. But, bless my heart! what has that to do with it?

Nank. Katishagh claims me in marriage, but I can't marry her because I'm married already – consequently she will insist on my execution, and if I'm executed, my wife will have to be buried alive.

Wynn. You see our difficulty.

Coco. Yes. I don't know what's to be done.

Nank. There's one chance for you. If you could persuade Katishagh to marry you, she would have no further claim on me, and in that case I could come to life without any fear of being put to death.

Coco. I marry Katishagh!

Wynn. I really think it's the only course.

Coco. But, my good girl, have you seen her? She's something appalling!

Pretty Jean. Ah! that's only her face. She has a left elbow which people come miles to see!

Pubagh. I am told that her right heel is much admired by connoisseurs.

Coco. My good sir, I decline to pin my heart upon any lady's right heel.

Nank. It comes to this: While Katishagh is single, I prefer to be a disembodied spirit. When Katishagh is married, existence will be as welcome as the flowers in spring.

DUET. – Nanky Doug and Coco.
(With Wynn Somme, Pretty Jean, and Pubagh.)

Nank. The flowers that bloom in the spring,
Tra la,
Breathe promise of merry sunshine –
As we merrily dance and we sing,
Tra la,
We welcome the hope that they bring,
Tra la,
Of a summer of roses and wine.
And that's what we mean when we say that a thing
Is welcome as flowers that bloom in the spring.
Tra la la la la la, &c.

All. Tra la la la, &c.

Coco. The flowers that bloom in the spring,
Tra la,
Have nothing to do with the case.
I've got to take under my wing,
Tra la,
A most unattractive old thing,
Tra la,
With a caricature of a face.
And that's what I mean when I say, or I sing,
"Oh, bother the flowers that bloom in the spring."
Tra la la la la la, &c.

All. Tra la la la, Tra la la la, &c.

RECITATIVE and SONG. – Katishagh.

Alone, and yet alive! Oh, sepulchre!
My soul is still my body's prisoner!
Remote the peace that Death alone can give –
My doom, to wait! my punishment, to live!

SONG.

Hearts do not break!
They sting and ache
For old love's sake.
But do not die,
Though with each breath
They long for death
As witnesseth
The living I!
Oh, living I!
Come, tell me why,
When hope is gone,
Dost thou stay on?
Why linger here,
Where all is drear?

Oh, living I!
Come, tell me why,
When hope is gone,
Dost thou stay on?
May not a cheated maiden die?

Coco. Katishagh!

Kat. The miscreant who robbed me of my love! But vengeance pursues – they are heating the cauldron!

Coco. Katishagh – behold a suppliant at your feet!
Katishagh – mercy!

Kat. Mercy? Had you mercy on him? See here, you! You have slain my love. He did not love me, but he would have loved me in time. I am an acquired taste – only the educated palate can appreciate me. I was educating his palate when he left me. Well, he is dead, and where shall I find another? It takes years to train a man to love me. Am I to go through the weary round again, and, at the same time, implore mercy for you who robbed me of my prey – I mean my pupil – just as his education was on the point of completion? Oh, where shall I find another?

Coco. Here! – Here!

Kat. What!!!

Coco. Katishagh, for years I have loved you with a white-hot passion that is slowly but surely consuming my very vitals! Ah, shrink not from me! If there is aught of woman's mercy in your heart, turn not away from a love-sick suppliant whose every fibre thrills at your tiniest touch! True it is that, under a poor mask of disgust, I have endeavoured to conceal a passion whose inner fires are broiling the soul within me! But the fire will not be

smothered – it defies all attempts at extinction, and, breaking forth, all the more eagerly for its long restraint, it declares itself in words that will not be weighed – that cannot be schooled – that should not be too severely criticized. Katishagh, I dare not hope for your love – but I will not live without it! Darling!

Kat. You, whose hands still reek with the blood of my betrothed, dare to address words of passion to the woman you have so foully wronged!

Coco. I do – accept my love, or I perish on the spot!

Kat. Go to! Who knows so well as I that no one ever yet died of a broken heart!

Coco. You know not what you say. Listen!

SONG. – Coco.

On a tree by a river a little tom-tit
Sang "Willow, tit-willow, tit-willow!"
And I said to him, "Dicky-bird, why do you sit
Singing 'Willow, tit-willow, tit-willow'?"

"Is it weakness of intellect, birdie?" I cried,
"Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?"
With a shake of his poor little head, he replied,
"Oh, willow, tit-willow, tit-willow!"

He slapped at his chest, as he sat on that bough,
Singing "Willow, tit-willow, tit-willow!"
And a cold perspiration bespangled his brow,
Oh, willow, tit-willow, tit-willow!

He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave,
Then he plunged himself into the billowy wave,

And an echo arose from the suicide's grave –
"Oh, willow, tit-willow, tit-willow!"

Now I feel just as sure as I'm sure that my name
Isn't Willow, tit-willow, tit-willow,
That 'twas blighted affection that made him exclaim.
"Oh, willow, tit-willow, tit-willow!"

And if you remain callous and obdurate, I
Shall perish as he did, and you will know why,
Though I probably shall not exclaim as I die,
"Oh, willow, tit-willow, tit-willow!"

Kat. Did he really die of love?

Coco. He really did.

Kat. All on account of a cruel little hen?

Coco. Yes.

Kat. Poor wee chap!

Coco. It's an affecting tale, and quite true. I knew the
bird intimately.

Kat. Did you? He must have been very fond of her.

Coco. His devotion was something extraordinary.

Kat. Poor wee chap! And – and if I refuse you, will you go
and do the same?

Coco. At once.

Kat. No, no – you mustn't! Anything but that! Oh, I'm a
silly little goose!

Coco. You are!

Kat. And you won't hate me because I'm just a little teeny weeny wee bit bloodthirsty, will you?

Coco. Hate you? Oh, Katishagh! is there not beauty even in bloodthirstiness?

Kat. My idea exactly.

DUET. – Katishagh and Coco.

Kat. There is beauty in the bellow of the blast,
There is grandeur in the growling of the gale,
There is eloquent outpouring
When the lion is a-roaring,
And the tiger is a-lashing of his tail!

Coco. Yes, I like to see a tiger
From the Congo or the Niger,
And especially when lashing of his tail!

Kat. Volcanoes have a splendour that is grim,
And earthquakes only terrify the dolts,
But to him who's scientific
There's nothing that's terrific
In the falling of a flight of thunderbolts!

Coco. Yes, in spite of all my meekness,
If I have a little weakness,
It's a passion for a flight of thunderbolts!

Both. If that is so,
Sing derry down derry!
It's evident, very,
Our tastes are one.
Away we'll go,

And merrily marry,
Nor tardily tarry
Till day is done!

Coco. There is beauty in extreme old age –
Do you fancy you are elderly enough?
Information I'm requesting
On a subject interesting:
Is a maiden all the better when she's tough?

Kat. Throughout this wide dominion
It's the general opinion
That she'll last a good deal longer when she's tough.

Coco. Are you old enough to marry, do you think?
Won't you wait till you are eighty in the shade?
There's a fascination frantic
In a ruin that's romantic;
Do you think you are sufficiently decayed?

Kat. To the matter that you mention
I have given some attention,
And I think I am sufficiently decayed.

Both. If that is so,
Sing derry down derry!
It's evident, very,
Our tastes are one !
Away we'll go
And merrily marry,
Nor tardily tarry
Till day is done !

McAdo. Now then, we've had a capital lunch, and we're quite
ready. Have all the painful preparations been made?

Pisch. Your Lordship, all is prepared.

McAdo. Then produce the unfortunate gentleman and his two well-meaning but misguided accomplices.

Kat. Mercy! Mercy for Coco! Mercy for Pretty Jean! Mercy even for Pubagh!

McAdo. I beg your pardon; I don't think I quite caught that remark.

Pubagh. Mercy even for Pubagh.

Kat. Mercy! My husband that was to have been is dead, and I have just married this miserable object.

McAdo. Oh! You've not been long about it!

Coco. We were married before the Registrar.

Pubagh. I am the Registrar.

McAdo. I see. But my difficulty is that, as you have slain the Heir Apparent –

Nank. The Heir Apparent is not slain.

McAdo. Bless my heart, my son!

Wynn. And your daughter-in-law elected!

Kat. Traitor, you have deceived me!

McAdo. Yes, you are entitled to a little explanation, but I think he will give it better whole than in pieces.

Coco. Your Lordship, it's like this: It is true that I stated that I had killed Nanky Doug –

McAdo. Yes, with most affecting particulars.

Pubagh. Merely corroborative detail intended to give artistic verisimilitude to a bald and unconvincing –

Coco. Will you refrain from putting in your oar?

Pubagh. Narrative.

Coco. It's like this: When your Lordship says, "Let a thing be done," it's as good as done – practically, it is done – because your Lordship's will is law. Your Lordship says, "Kill a gentleman," and a gentleman is told off to be killed. Consequently, that gentleman is as good as dead – practically, he is dead – and if he is dead, why not say so?

McAdo. I see. Nothing could possibly be more satisfactory!

FINALE.

Pretty Jean. For he's gone and married Wynn Somme –

All. Wynn Somme!

Pretty Jean. Your anger pray bury, For all will be merry,
I think you had better succumb –

All. Cumb – cumb!

Pretty Jean. And join our expressions of glee!

Coco. On this subject I pray you be dumb –

All. Dumb – dumb!

Coco. Your notions, though many,

Are not worth a penny,
The word for your guidance is "Mum" –

All. Mum – mum!

Coco. You've a very good bargain in me.

All. On this subject we pray you be dumb –
Dumb– dumb!

We think you had better succumb –
Cumb – cumb!

You'll find there are many
Who'll wed for a penny,
There are lots of good fish in the sea.

Wynn and Nank. The threatened cloud has passed away,
And fairly shines the dawning day;
What though the night may come too soon,
We've years and years of afternoon!

All. Then let the throng Our joy advance,
With laughing song and merry dance,
With joyous shout and ringing cheer,
Inaugurate our/their new career!

Curtain.