

# *The Slave of Duty*

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Adapted from

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE  
By Sir W. S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan

First produced at the Opera Comique on April 3, 1880

## DRAMATIS PERSONAE

THE PIRATE KING

SAMUEL (his Lieutenant)

### HENCHMEN

STEPHAN

FIDDLER

MARTIN

FREDERICK (a pirate' apprentice)

RUTH (a Pirate Maid of all Work)

MABEL \

EDITH \

> (General Stanley's Daughters)

KATE /

ISABEL /

MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY

LIEUTENANT OF THE BRITISH NAVY

Ensemble of Pirates,  
British Navy  
and General Stanley's 8 other daughters

ACT I

A rocky seashore on the coast

ACT II

A ruined chapel by moonlight

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ACT I (Scene 1770. A rocky seashore on the coast of Cornwall. In the distance is a calm sea, on which a schooner is lying at anchor. There is a rock sloping down toward the center of stage. Under these rocks is a cavern, the entrance to which is seen at first entrance. A natural arch of rock occupies the other side of the stage. As the curtain rises groups of pirates are discovered -- some drinking, some gallivanting. HE PIRATE KING enters on a boat with SAMUEL, the Pirate Lieutenant and Henchmen. The pirate women are going from one group to another, filling the cups from a flask. FREDERICK is seated at the back of the boat in a despondent attitude, RUTH kneels at his feet.)

KING O! Pour the pirate's sherry! Fill this pirate's glass to make us more than merry.

SAMUEL: For today our pirate apprentice rises from his indentures freed.

HENCHMEN: He's a true pirate now! (ALL PIRATES CHEER)

KING : Here's good luck to Frederick's ventures! Yes, Frederick, from today which marks the day of your birth and that day marking you twenty-one years old, you rank as a full-blown member of our pirate band.

ALL: Hurrah!

FREDERICK: My friends, I thank you all, from my heart, for your kindly wishes. Would that I could repay them as they deserve!

KING: What do you mean?

FREDERICK: Today I am out of my indentures, and today I leave you forever.

KING: But this is quite unaccountable; a keener hand at scuttling a merchant ship or cutting out a barque never shipped a handspike.

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FREDERICK: Yes, I have done my best for you. And why? It was my duty under my indentures, and I am a slave of duty. As a child I was regularly apprenticed to your band. It was through an error -- no matter, the mistake was ours, not yours, and I was in honor bound by it.

SAMUEL: An error? What error? (RUTH rises and comes forward)

FREDERICK: I cannot tell you; it would reflect ill upon my well-loved Ruth.

RUTH: Nay, dear master, my mind has long been gnawed by the cankering tooth of mystery. Better have it out at once. When Frederick was a little lad he proved so brave and daring, his father thought he'd apprentice him to some seafaring career. I was, alas! his nursery maid, and so it fell to me to take and bind the promising boy apprentice to a pilot -- a life not too disagreeable for a hardy lad, you might do worse than make your boy a pilot. Alas, I was a stupid nursery maid, and I did not catch the word just right, because, you see, I am a bit hard of hearing. Mistaking my instructions, which within my brain did gyrate, I took and bound this promising boy to be an apprentice to a pirate. A sad mistake it was; to doom him to a vile lot in life. I bound him to a pirate -- you! -- instead of to a pilot. But I hadn't the fortitude to return to my place, and break the news of it to my master. So I made up my mind to go as a kind of piratical maid to this boy who I had so wrongly wronged. And that is how you find me now, a member of your crew. Oh, if only I had heard the word and he had been bound apprentice to a pilot. Oh, pardon! Frederick, pardon! (Kneels)

FREDERICK: Rise, sweet one, I have long pardoned you. (Ruth rises)

RUTH: The two words were so much alike!

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FREDERICK: They were. They still are, though years have rolled over their heads. But this afternoon my obligation ceases. Individually, I love you all with affection unspeakable; but, collectively, I look upon you with a disgust that amounts to absolute detestation. Oh! pity me, my beloved friends, for such is my sense of duty that, once out of my indentures, I shall feel myself bound to devote myself heart and soul to your extermination!

ALL: Poor lad -- poor lad! (All weep)

KING: Well, Frederick, if you conscientiously feel that it is your duty to destroy us, we cannot blame you for acting on that conviction. Always act in accordance with the dictates of your conscience, my boy, and chance the consequences.

SAMUEL: Besides, we can offer you but little temptation to remain with us.

STEPHAN: We don't seem to make piracy pay.

SAMUEL: I'm sure we don't know why, but we don't.

MAR/FIED: We don't.

FREDERICK: I know why, but, alas! I mustn't tell you; it wouldn't be right.

KING: Why not, my boy? It's only half-past eleven, and you are one of us until the clock strikes twelve.

SAMUEL: True, and until then you are bound to protect our interests.

ALL: Hear, hear!

FREDERICK: Well, then, it is my duty, as a pirate, to tell you that you are too tenderhearted. For instance, you make a point of never attacking a weaker party than yourselves, and when you attack a stronger party you invariably get thrashed.

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STEPHAN: There is some truth in that.

FREDERICK: Then, again, you make a point of never capturing an orphan!

SAMUEL: Of course: we are orphans ourselves

FIDDLER and know what it is to be alone and lost in the world.

MARTIN and know what it is to be alone and lost in the world.

ALL: Alone. Lost.....

FREDERICK: Yes, but it has got about, and what is the consequence? Every one we capture says he's an orphan. The last three ships we took proved to be manned entirely by orphans, and so we had to let them go. One would think that Great Britain's mercantile navy was recruited solely from her orphan asylums -- which we know is not generally the case.

KING: But, damn it all, Frederick! You wouldn't have us absolutely merciless?

FREDERICK: There's my difficulty; until twelve o'clock I would, after twelve I wouldn't. Was ever a man placed in so delicate a situation?

RUTH: And Ruth, your own Ruth, whom you love so well, and who has won her middle-aged way into your boyish heart, what is to become of her?

KING: Oh, he will take you with him.

FIDDLER: She goes with you!

MARTIN: She goes with you!

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FREDERICK: Well, Ruth, I feel some difficulty about you. It is true that I admire you very much, but I have been constantly at sea since I was eight years old, and yours is the only woman's face I have seen during that time.

FEMALE PIRATES: What? What about this face?

FEMALE PIRATE: What about my face?

FREDERICK: It is the only *gentlewoman's* face I have seen during that time. And...I think it is a sweet face.

RUTH: It is -- oh, it is!

FREDERICK: I say I think it is; that is my impression. But as I have never had an opportunity of comparing you with other women --

(Again reactions from the women pirates)

FREDERICK: Other gentlewomen's faces and it is just possible I may be mistaken.

KING: True.

FREDERICK: What a terrible thing it would be if I were to marry this innocent person, and then find out that she is, on the whole, plain!

KING: Oh, Ruth is very well, very.. well indeed.

SAMUEL: Yes, there are the remains of a fine gentlewoman about Ruth.

FREDERICK: Do you really think so?

SAMUEL: I do.

STEPHAN: I do

FIDDLER: We do.

MARTIN: We do.

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FREDERICK: Then I will not be so selfish as to take her from you. In justice to her, and in consideration for you, I will leave her behind.

(Hands RUTH to KING)

KING: No, Frederick, this must not be. This ship is crewed by Ruffians who lead rough lives, but we are not so utterly heartless as to deprive thee of thy love. I think I am right in saying that there is not one here who would rob thee of this inestimable treasure for all the world holds dear.

PIRATES: (loudly) Not one!

SAMUEL: Not one!

KING: No, I thought there wasn't. Keep thy love, Frederick, keep thy love.

(Hands her back to FREDERICK)

FREDERICK: You're very good, I'm sure.

KING: Well, it's the top of the tide, and we must be off. Farewell, Frederick. When your process of extermination begins, let our deaths be as swift and painless as you can conveniently make them.

S, F, M, SAM ENACT THEIR DEATHS

FREDERICK: I will! By the love I have for you, I swear it! Would that you could render this extermination unnecessary by accompanying me back to civilization!

HENCHMEN: No. No.

KING: No, Frederick, it cannot be. I don't think much of our profession, but, contrasted with respectability, it is comparatively honest. No, Frederick, I shall live and die a Pirate King.

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STEPHAN: Better far to live and die under the brave black flag we fly, than play a self-righteous part (Add HMEN):with a pirate head and a pirate heart. (add the henchmen)

KING Off you go to a cheating world, where pirates all are well-to-do; I'll be true to my pirate head and pirate heart and live and die a Pirate!

HENCHMEN/ALL: I'll live and die a pirate.

KING Oh, it is, it is a glorious thing to be a Pirate King.

ALL: It is. It is. A glorious thing to be the pirate king.

FID/MART: It's true, very true, He sinks more ships/ than a well-bred monarch ought to.

KING: But many a KING on a first-class throne, if he wants to call His crown his own, must manage somehow to get through more dirty work than I shall ever do, for you see, my dear, boy, Frederick, I am a Pirate KING. And it is such a glorious thing to be a Pirate KING.

ALL: Hurrah for the Pirate KING!

KING: A glorious thing....

ALL: It is! It is! Hurrah for the Pirate KING!

KING: To be a Pirate KING!

(Exeunt all except FREDERICK and RUTH.)

RUTH: Oh, take me with you! I cannot live if I am left behind.

FREDERICK: Ruth, I will be quite candid with you. You are very dear to me, as you know, but I must be circumspect. You see, you are considerably older than I. A lad of twenty-one usually looks for a wife of seventeen.

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- RUTH: A wife of seventeen! You will find me a wife of a thousand!
- FREDERICK: No, but I shall find you a wife of forty-seven, and that is quite enough. Ruth, tell me candidly and without reserve: compared with other women, how are you?
- RUTH: I will answer you truthfully, master: I have a slight cold, but otherwise I am quite well.
- FREDERICK: I am sorry for your cold, but I was referring rather to your personal appearance. Compared with other women, are you beautiful?
- RUTH: (bashfully) I have been told so, dear master.
- FREDERICK: Ah, but lately?
- RUTH: Oh, no; years and years ago.
- FREDERICK: What do you think of yourself?
- RUTH: It is a delicate question to answer, but I think I am a fine woman.
- FREDERICK: That is your candid opinion?
- RUTH: Yes, I should be deceiving you if I told you otherwise.
- FREDERICK: Thank you, Ruth. I believe you, for I am sure you would not practice on my inexperience. I wish to do the right thing, and if --I say if -- you are really a fine woman, your age shall be no obstacle to our union!
- (Shakes hands with her. Chorus of girls heard in the distance.)
- FREDERICK: Hark! Surely I hear voices! Who has ventured to approach our all but inaccessible lair? Can it be Custom House? No, it does not sound like Custom House.

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RUTH: (aside) Consternation! It is the voices of young girls! If he should see them I am lost.

FREDERICK: (looking off) By all that's marvelous, a bevy of beautiful maidens!

RUTH: (aside) Lost! Lost! Lost!

FREDERICK: How lovely, how surpassingly lovely is the plainest of them! What grace- what delicacy- what refinement! And Ruth-- Ruth told me she was beautiful! Oh, false one, you have deceived me!

RUTH: I have deceived you?

FREDERICK: Yes, deceived me! (Denouncing her.) You told me you were fair as gold!

RUTH: (wildly) And, master, am I not?

FREDERICK: Now I see you're plain and old.

RUTH: I am sure I am not a jot so.

FREDERICK: You play upon my innocence.

RUTH: I'm could never be one who could plot so.

FREDERICK: Your face is lined, and your hair is gray.

RUTH: Not gray...it is merely silver. And it has gradually gotten so over the years.

FREDERICK: Faithless woman, you've deceived me, I who trusted you so! Leave me or I leave you here...

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RUTH: Master, do not leave me! Hear me, before you go! Do not reject my love before you think about what I have to say: Take a maiden, tender, her affection is raw and green. Even the worldliest rated maiden has only been a maiden for seventeen summers. Seventeen summers, my beloved master. Please don't crush me with such disastrous news that you would leave me. What is such a dowry to the dowry I have here? My love, unabated, has been accumulating for forty-seven years. For forty-seven years.

RUTH FREDERICK

But my beloved master,  
my love for you is greater than  
any green maiden who has had  
no worldly knowledge in her  
tender years.

Master, master, do not leave me,  
me!

Master, master, do not leave me,  
hear me before you send my away.

Master?

Hear me

Your former master!

If, as you have stated,  
your love has been  
accumulating

For forty-seven years --  
forty-seven years?

Faithless woman,  
you have deceived me.

I who trusted you so! Leave

Faithless woman,  
to deceive me.

I who trusted you so!  
Faithless woman!

Faithless...

I trusted you so! Now go!

(RUTH dejectedly leaves.)

FREDERICK What shall I do? Before these gentle maidens I dare not show in this alarming costume! No, no, I must remain in close concealment until I can appear in decent clothing!

(Hides in cave as they enter climbing over the rocks and through arched rock.)

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- SISTER 1: Climbing over rocky mountain,
- SISTER 2: Skipping through every fountain and brook,
- SISTER 3: Passing where the willows sway in the breeze,
- SISTER 4: By the ever-rolling river, swollen with the summer rain,
- SISTER 5: Threading long and leafy mazes
- SISTER 6: Dotted with innumerable daisies,
- SISTER 7: Dotted,
- SISTER 8: Dotted,
- SISTER 9: Dotted,
- SISTER 10: Dotted with innumer....innumbral...inmuba...innuba
- ALL: Countless!
- SISTER 10: Countless Daises!
- SISTER 11: Scaling rough and rugged passages,
- SISTER 12: Climb we hardy lasses,
- ALL Till the bright seashore we gain!
- EDITH: Let us tread the measure! Make the most of this fleeting leisure time that we have sisters, hail it as a true ally, though it perishes on the by-and-by.
- SISTERS: Hail it as a true ally, though it perishes by-and-by.
- SISTER 10: By and by...

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EDITH: (taking out her book of poetry and reading)  
Every moment brings a treasure  
Of its own especial pleasure;  
Though the moments quickly die,

SISTERS: Though the moments quickly die,

SISTER 10: Die!

EDITH: Greet them gaily as they fly.

SISTERS: Greet them gaily as they fly.

{EDITH hands the book to Kate.}

KATE: Far away from toil and care,  
Reveling in fresh sea-air,  
Here we live and reign alone  
In a world that's all our own.

SISTER: Here, in this our rocky den,  
Far away from mortal men,  
We'll be queens, and make decrees--  
They may honor them who please.

KATE: We'll be queens...

SISTERS: We'll be queens, and make decrees--

EDITH: They may honor them who please.

SISTERS: They may honor them who please.

EDITH: What a picturesque spot! I wonder where we are!

KATE: And I wonder where Papa is. We have left him ever so far behind.

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ISABEL: Oh, he will be here presently! Remember poor Papa is not as young as we are, and we came over a rather difficult country.

KATE: But how thoroughly delightful it is to be so entirely alone! Why, in all probability we are the first human beings who ever set foot on this enchanting spot.

ISABEL: Except the mermaids--it's the very place for mermaids.

KATE: Who are only human beings down to the waist--

EDITH: And who can't be said strictly to set foot anywhere. Tails they may, but feet they cannot.

KATE: But what shall we do until Papa arrive with the luncheon?

EDITH: We are quite alone, and the sea is as smooth as glass. Suppose we take off our shoes and stockings and wade into the surf?

SISTER: (aghast) Take of our shoes?

SISTER: (aghast) And our stockings?

EDITH: Yes,

SISTERS: Yes! The very thing!

(They prepare to carry, out the suggestion. They have all taken off one shoe, when FREDERICK comes forward from cave.)

FREDERICK: Stop, ladies, pray!

SISTERS: (Hopping on one foot) A man!

FREDERICK: I had intended not to intrude myself upon your notice in this effective but alarming costume; but under these peculiar circumstances, it is my bounden duty to inform you that your proceedings will not go unwitnessed!

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EDITH: But who are you, sir? Speak! (All hopping)

FREDERICK: I am a pirate!

SISTERS: (recoiling, hopping) A pirate! Horror!

FREDERICK: Ladies, do not shun me! This evening I renounced my vile profession; and, to that end, O! pure and peerless maidens! O!, blushing buds of ever-blooming beauty! I, sore at heart, implore your kind assistance.

EDITH: How pitiful his tale!

KATE: How rare his beauty.

SISTERS: How pitiful his tale! How rare his beauty!

FREDERICK: Oh, is there not one maiden's breast which does not feel the moral advantage of making worldly interest subordinate to one's own sense of duty? Who would not give up willingly all matrimonial ambition, to rescue such a one as I from his unfortunate position? Oh, is there not one maiden here whose homely face and bad complexion have caused all hope to disappear of ever winning man's affection? Of such a one, if such there be, I swear by Heaven's arch above you, if you will cast your eyes on me, however plain you be, I'll love you. I'll love you. I'll love you. I'll love you. I'll love you!

SISTER 7: Alas! there's not one maiden here

SISTER 8: Whose homely face and bad complexion

SISTER 9: Have caused all hope to disappear

SISTER 10: Of ever winning man's affection!

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FREDERICK: (in despair) Not one?

SISTERS: No -- not one!

FREDERICK: Not one?

SISTERS: No, no!

MABEL: (entering) Yes, one!

SISTERS: 'Tis Mabel!

MABEL: Yes, 'tis Mabel! Oh, sisters, deaf to pity's name, for shame! It is true that he has gone astray, but pray tell, is that a reason good and true why you should all be deaf to pity's name? And turn from one with such a keen sense of duty?

EDITH: (aside) The question is, had he not been a thing of beauty, would she be swayed by quite as keen a sense of duty?

MABEL: For shame, for shame, sisters! For shame! Poor wandering one! Though thou hast surely strayed, take upon yourself a heart of grace and retrace thy steps. If such poor love as mine could help thee find true peace of mind – why, take it, it is thine!

(MABEL and FREDERICK go to mouth of cave and converse. EDITH beckons her sisters, who form a semicircle around her.)

EDITH: What ought we to do, gentle sisters, say? Propriety, we know, says we ought to stay; while sympathy exclaims, "Free them from your tether-- Play at other games-- Leave them here together."

ISABEL: Her case may, any day, be yours, my dear, or mine.

SISTER 10: Let her make hay while the sun doth shine.

KATE: Let us compromise, our hearts are not so tough as worn leather, let us shut our eyes and talk about the weather.

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SISTERS: Oh, yes, let's talk about the weather.

SISTER 4: How beautifully blue the sky...

SISTER 5: The glass is rising...

SISTER 6: I hope it may continue to be fine...

SISTER 7: And yet it rained but yesterday.

SISTER 8: Tomorrow it may pour again...

SISTER 9: I hear the country wants some rain...

SISTER 10: Yet people say, that we shall have a warm July!

SISTERS: What? Why?

SISTER 10: I know not. Yet that is what some say.

SISTERS: A warm July?!

(Enter MABEL and FREDERICK)

MABEL Did ever a maiden wake from her dream of domestic duty, to find the daylight breaking with such exceeding beauty?

FREDERICK: Did ever a pirate roll his mind in guilty dreaming, and wake to find a soul beaming with peace and virtue?

MABEL: Did ever a maiden close her eyes on waking gloom, to dream of such exceeding gladness?

FREDERICK: Did ever a pirate, so loathed, forsake his hideous vocation to find himself betrothed to lady of position?

(FREDERICK and MABEL get closer as if to kiss.)

FREDERICK: Stay, we must not lose our senses. Ladies, pirates who stick at no illegality will soon be here to ply their dreadful

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trade! Pray you, ladies, pray get you hence, young ladies, while the coast is clear.

(FREDERICK and MABEL retire)

EDITH: No, we must not lose our senses,

ISABEL: We should not be here!

KATE: Nice companions for young ladies!

EDITH: Let us dis -- a --

SISTER 10: A Pirates!

SISTERS: Too Late!

(During this the PIRATES have entered stealthily, and form a semicircle behind the GIRLS. As the GIRLS move to go off, a PIRATE seizes a GIRL.)

PIRATES: Argh!

PIRATE 1: Here's a first rate chance for us to get married without any unpleasant consequences.

SISTER 1: Married?

PIRATE 2: And a chance to indulge in the happiness of unbounded domesticity.

SISTER 2: Domesticity?

PIRATE 3: You young ladies shall quickly be parsonified...

SISTER 3: Parson - ified?

PIRATE 4: Conjugally matrimonified...

SISTER 4: Matrimonified?

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PIRATE 5: By a doctor of divinity...

SISTER 5: A doctor of divinity?

PIRATE 6: Who is located in this vicinity.

SISTER 6: This vicinity?

PIRATES: Parsonified! Matrimonified!

SISTERS: Parsonified? Matrimonified?

PIRATES: Doctor of Divinity! Located in this vicinity!

SISTERS: This vicinity?

MABEL: (coming forward) Hold, monsters! Ere your pirate caravan proceed, against our will, to wed us all, just bear in mind that we are wards in Chancery, and our father is a Major-General!

SAMUEL: (cowed) We'd better pause, or danger may befall, their father is a Major-General.

SISTERS: Yes; he is a Major-General!

(The MAJOR-GENERAL has entered unnoticed, on the rock up stage of the action.)

GENERAL: Yes, I am a Major-General!

SAMUEL: He is a Major-General!

SISTERS: He is! Hurrah for the Major-General!

GENERAL: And it is, it is a glorious thing to be a Major-General!

SISTERS: It is! Hurrah for the Major-General!

GENERAL: I am the very model of a modern Major-General. I have information vegetable, animal, and mineral. I know the

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kings of England, and I quote the historical fights from Marathon to the battle of Blenheim, in order categorical; I know the ship-shape sea pilots from the honest and the noble to the scoundrels and pyratival. I'm very well acquainted, too, with matters mathematical, I understand equations, both the simple and quadratic, about binomial theorem I'm teeming with a lot of advice, and with many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.

EDITH: With many cheerful facts about the square of the hypotenuse.

GENERAL: I'm very good at integral and differential calculus; I know the scientific names of all beings animalcules. I know our mythic history, King Arthur's and Queen Boudicca's. I can answer hard acrostics; I've a pretty taste for paradox. I quote in elegiac fashion all the crimes of Heliogabalus. In conics, I can quote peculiarities of any parabolas. I can tell undoubted Raphaels from Dows and Zoffanies. I know the opening chorus from the Frogs by Aristophanes! Then I can hum a fugue of which I've heard the music only once.

HMEN: And hum a fugue of which his heard the music only once.

GENERAL: Then I can write a washing bill in Babylonian cuneiform, and tell you every detail of the great Rameses' burial uniform. In fact, I know what is meant by "mammalian" and "raveling"; I can tell at sight a Mauser rifle from a javelin. And at such affairs as sorties and surprises I'm always the center conversationalist who none have grow away at. And when I know precisely what is meant by "commissariat", when I have learned what progress has been made in modern gunnery, when I know more of tactics than a novice in a nunnery - - in short, when I've a smattering of elemental strategy, you'll say a better Major-General has never sat a gee.

SAMUEL: Sat a gee?

GENERAL: Sat a gee.

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SAMUEL: (to pirates) Sat a gee?

(Pirates mime "gee" for Samuel.)

SAMUEL: Oh! Sat a gee!

GENERAL: And now that I've introduced myself, I should like to have some idea of what's going on.

KATE: Oh, Papa-- we---

STEPHAN: Permit me, I'll explain in two words: We propose to marry your daughters.

GENERAL: Dear me!

SISTERS: Against our wills, Papa--against our wills!

GENERAL: Oh, but you mustn't do that! May I ask--this is a picturesque uniform, but I'm not familiar with it. What are you?

KING: We are all a merry band comprised of many single gentlemen.

GENERAL: Yes, I gathered that. Anything else? (FIDDLER/MARTIN look to the KING who nods no.)

FID/MARTIN: No, nothing else.

EDITH: Papa, don't believe them; they are pirates -- the famous Pirates of Penzance!

GENERAL: The Pirates of Penzance! I have often heard of them.

MABEL: All except this gentleman (indicating FREDERICK), who was a pirate once, but who is out of his indentures today, and who means to lead a blameless life evermore.

GENERAL: But wait a bit. I object to pirates as sons-in-law.

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KING: And as a general rule, we object to major-generals as fathers-in-law. But we waive that point.

SAMUEL: We do not press it.

MAR/FID: We look over it.

GENERAL: (aside) Hah! An idea! (aloud) And do you mean to say that you would deliberately rob me of these, the sole remaining props of my old age, and leave me to go through the remainder of my life unfriended, unprotected, and alone?

KING: Well, yes, that's the idea.

GENERAL: Tell me, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan?

PIRATES: (disgusted) Oh,

STEPHAN: Dash it all!

KING: Here we go again!

GENERAL: I ask you, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan?

KING: Often!

GENERAL: Yes, orphan. Have you ever known what it is to be one?

KING: I say, often.

PIRATES: (disgusted) Often, often, often. (Turning away)

GENERAL: I don't think we quite understand one another. I ask you, have you ever known what it is to be an orphan, and you say "orphan". As I understand you, you are merely repeating the word "orphan" to show that you understand me.

KING: I didn't repeat the word often.

GENERAL: Pardon me, you did indeed.

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SAMUEL: He only repeated it once.

STEPHAN:

GENERAL: True, but he repeated it.

KING: But not often.

GENERAL: Stop! I think I see where we are getting confused. When you said "orphan", did you mean "orphan", a person who has lost his parents, or "often", frequently?

KING: Ah! I beg pardon-- I see what you mean -- frequently.

GENERAL: Ah! You said "often", frequently.

QUEEN: No, only once.

GENERAL: (irritated) Exactly-- you said "often", frequently, only once.

QUEEN: O R P H A N. Once.

GENERAL: Oh, leader of this dark and dismal lot, I beg you, forgo your cruel employ, have pity on my lonely state, I am an orphan boy!

KING  
and SAMUEL: An orphan boy?

GENERAL: An orphan boy!

PIRATES: How sad, an orphan boy.

GENERAL: These children, these young ladies, whom you see are all that I can call my own!

HMEN: Poor fellow!

GENERAL: Take them away from me, and I shall be indeed alone.

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PIRATES: Poor fellow!

GENERAL: If you can feel any pity, leave me my sole remaining delight--see, at your feet they kneel; you cannot steel your hearts against the sad, sad tale of this lonely orphan boy!

PIRATES: (sobbing)Poor fellow!

SAMUEL: The orphan boy!

STEPHAN: ORPHAN GARCON!

KING: The orphan boy!

PIRATES: Poor fellow!

GENERAL: I'm telling a terrible tale, but it doesn't diminish my glory, for they would have taken my daughters over the billowing waters.

EDITH: He's telling a terrible tale...

KATE: Which could diminish his glory...

ISABEL: But they would have taken us, his daughters, over the waters.

PIRATE 1: If he is telling a terrible tale, he shall die by a death that is gory.

PIRATE 2: Yes, one of the cruelest slaughters...

PIRATE 3: That were ever known in these waters.

GENERAL: If I hadn't, in elegant verbiage, indulged in an innocent fiction – which is not in the same category as a regular terrible story.

KATE: It is easy, in elegant verbiage, to call it innocent fiction...

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EDITH: But it comes in the same category as a terrible story.

SAMUEL: It is easy, in elegant verbiage, to call it an innocent fiction...

KING: But it comes in the same category as telling a regular terrible story.

GENERAL: Oh, yes, I am a lonely orphan boy.

KING: Although our dark career sometimes involves the crime of stealing, we rather think that we're not altogether void of feeling. Although we live by strife, we're always sorry to begin it, for what, we ask, is life without a touch of poetry in it?

(All kneel)

EDITH: Oh! Poetry. Allow me...  
Hail, Poetry, thou heaven-born maid!  
Thou gildest even the pirate's trade.

Hail, flowing fount of sentiment!  
All hail, all hail, divine emollient!

(All rise)

KING: You may go, for you're at liberty, our pirate rules protect you, and elect you as honorary members of our pirate band!

SAMUEL: For he is an orphan boy!

CHORUS: He is! Hurrah for the orphan boy!

GENERAL: And it sometimes is a useful thing to be an orphan boy.

(RUTH enters and comes down to FREDERICK)

RUTH: Oh, master, hear one word, I do implore! Remember Ruth, your Ruth, who kneels before you!

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PIRATES: Yes, yes, remember Ruth, who kneels before you!

FREDERICK: Away, you did deceive me!

PIRATES: (Threatening RUTH) Away, you did deceive him!

RUTH: Oh, do not leave me!

PIRATES: Oh, do not leave her!

FREDERICK: Away, you grieve me!

PIRATES: Away, you grieve him!

FREDERICK: I wish you'd leave!

(FREDERICK casts RUTH from him)

PIRATES: We wish you'd leave!

(GIRLS and MAJOR-GENERAL go up rocks. The MAJOR-GENERAL produces a British flag, and the PIRATE QUEEN, in arched rock, produces a black flag with skull and crossbones. Enter RUTH, who makes a final appeal to FREDERICK, who casts her from him.)

END OF ACT I

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- ACT II (Scene -- A ruined chapel by moonlight. Aisles C., R. and L., divided by pillars and arches, ruined Gothic windows at back. MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY discovered seated R.C. pensively, surrounded by his daughters.)
- EDITH: Papa, dry the glistening tear that dews that military cheek.
- KATE: Thy loving children are here, let them comfort you.
- ISABEL: Let them creep their sympathetic arms around you.
- EDITH: We cannot bear to see our father weep!
- MABEL: (entering) Dear father, why did you leave your bed at this untimely hour, when happy daylight is gone, and darksome dangers lower? See, heaven has lit her lamp, the midnight hour is coming fast. And the night-air is chilly
- SISTER 10: And damp.
- EDITH: And the dews are falling fast!
- MABEL: Oh father, why did you leave your bed...
- (FREDERICK enters)
- MABEL: Frederick, cannot you, in the calm excellence of your wisdom, reconcile it with your conscience to say something that will relieve my father's sorrow?
- FREDERICK: I will try, dear Mabel. But why does he sit, night after night, in this drafty old ruin?
- GENERAL: Why do I sit here? To escape from the pirates' clutches, I described myself as an orphan; and, heaven help me, I am no orphan! I come here to humble myself before the tombs of my ancestors, and to implore their pardon for having brought dishonor on the family escutcheon.
- FREDERICK: But you forget, sir, you only bought the property a year ago, and the mortar on your baronial castle is scarcely dry.

# *The Slave of Duty*

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GENERAL: Frederick, in this chapel are ancestors: you cannot deny that. With the estate, I bought the chapel and its contents. I don't know whose ancestors they were, but I know whose ancestors they are, and I shudder to think that their descendant by purchase (if I may so describe myself) should have brought disgrace upon what, I have no doubt, was an unstained escutcheon.

FREDERICK: Be comforted. Had you not acted as you did, these reckless men would assuredly have called in the nearest clergyman, and have married your large family on the spot.

GENERAL: I thank you for your proffered solace, but it is unavailing. I assure you, Frederick, that such is the anguish and remorse I feel at the abominable falsehood by which I escaped these easily deluded pirates, that I would go to their simple-minded queen this very night and confess all, did I not fear that the consequences would be most disastrous to myself. At what time does your expedition march against these scoundrels?

FREDERICK: At eleven, and before midnight I hope to have atoned for my involuntary association with the pestilent scourges by sweeping them from the face of the earth-- and then, dear Mabel, you will be mine!

GENERAL: Are your devoted followers at hand?

FREDERICK: They are, they only wait my orders.

GENERAL: Then, Frederick, let your lionhearted escort be summoned to receive a general's blessing, ere they depart upon their dread adventure.

FREDERICK: Sir, I believe I hear them coming.

(Enter members of the British Navy, marching in single file. They are marching in rhythm to a chant.)

LIEUTENANT: When the foe man bares his steel,

# *The Slave of Duty*

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SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: And we uncomfortable feel,

SAILORS: Tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: And we find the wisest thing,

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: Is to slap our chests and sing,

SAILORS: Tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: For when threatened with some brutes,

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: And your heart is in your boots,

SAILORS: Tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: There is nothing brings it round,

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: Like the trumpets martial sound.

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara! Tarantara - RAH!

LIEUTENANT: Company Halt!

MABEL: Go, ye heroes, go to glory, though ye may die in gory  
combat, ye shall live in song and story.

EDITH  
and KATE: Go to immortality!

SISTER 10: Go to death, to slaughter and die! Go, ye heroes, go and  
die!

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LIEUTENANT: Though it is, to us, evident that you mean well by your attention, such expressions don't appear to cheer these men who are going to meet their fate in a highly nervous state.

SAILOR 1: But, sir, if I may be so bold, we do realize that your ladyships had every intention of good cheer.

EDITH: Go and do your best, and before we sever all links, we will say farewell forever.

SISTER 10: Go to glory and the grave!

KATE: For your foes are fierce, ruthless, false, unmerciful, and truthless; do not vainly crave their mercy.

LIEUTENANT: We observe too great a stress on the risks you press upon us and the reference of the lack of the chance of us coming back.

SAILOR 1: Still, sir, if I may be so bold, perhaps it would be best not to complain or criticize, for it is evident these young ladies' attentions are well meant.

SAILORS: Yes, it's very evident these attentions are well meant. Evident, yes, well meant, evident, ah, yes, well meant!

LIEUTENANT: Company: Attention!

SISTER 10: Go, ye heroes, go and die!

GENERAL: Away, away!

LIEUTENANT: (without moving) Yes, yes, we go.

GENERAL: Go and slay these pirates.

LIEUTENANT: Company: March!

GENERAL: Lieutenant, why this delay?

# *The Slave of Duty*

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LIEUTENANT: Company: Tarantara!

GENERAL: Why do you stay? Go!

SISTER 10: Go, go and die!

LIEUTENANT: All right, we go.

SAILORS: Forward on to fight the foe!

GENERAL: But you don't go!

LIEUTENANT: We go, we go

SAILORS: Forward on to fight the foe!

GENERAL: Go!

SISTER 10: Go, ye heroes, go and die!

LIEUTENANT: We go, we go

ALL: At last they go!

SISTER 10: They really go!

(Exeunt SAILORS. MABEL tears herself from FREDERICK and exits, followed by her sisters, consoling her. The MAJOR-GENERAL and others follow the SAILORS off. FREDERICK remains alone.)

FREDERICK: Now for the pirates' lair! Oh, joy unbounded! Oh, sweet relief! Oh, rapture unexampled! At last I may atone, in some slight measure, for the repeated acts of theft and pillage which, at a sense of duty's stern dictation, I, circumstance's victim, have been guilty!

(PIRATE QUEEN and RUTH appear at the window, armed.)

QUEEN: Young Frederick! (Covering him with pistol)

# *The Slave of Duty*

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FREDERICK: Who calls?

QUEEN: Your late commander!

RUTH: And I, your little Ruth! (Covering him with pistol)

FREDERICK: Oh, mad intruders, How dare ye face me? Know ye not, oh rash ones, that I have doomed you to extermination?

(QUEEN and RUTH hold a pistol to each ear)

QUEEN: Have mercy on us! hear us, ere you slaughter!

FREDERICK: I do not think I ought to listen to you. Yet, mercy should alloy our stern resentment, and so I will be merciful -- say on!

RUTH: When you had left our pirate fold, we tried to raise our falling spirits. According to our old customs we told snatches of old stories, sang quaint sea chanties. But all in vain. We lay and sobbed upon the deck of the ship, until to somebody occurred a startling paradox.

FREDERICK: A paradox?

QUEEN: (laughing) A paradox!

RUTH: A most ingenious paradox!

QUEEN: We knew your taste for curious tales, for a fancy turn of phrase and queer contradictions; and with the laughter on our lips, we wished you were there to hear. We said, "If we could tell it him, how Frederick would enjoy this little joke of ours!" So we've risked both life and limb to tell it to our boy.

FREDERICK: (interested). A paradox? What paradox?

QUEEN  
and RUTH: (laughing) A most ingenious paradox!

# *The Slave of Duty*

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QUEEN: For some ridiculous reason, to which, however, I've no desire to be disloyal, some person in authority, I don't know who, very likely a Caesarean Astronomer, has decided that, although for such a beastly month as February is, twenty-eight days as a rule are plenty, one year in every four February's days shall be reckoned as twenty-nine. And, through some singular coincidence --

RUTH: I shouldn't be surprised if it were owing to the agency of an ill-natured fairy--

QUEEN: You are the victim of this clumsy arrangement, having been born in leap-year, on the twenty-ninth of February; and so, by a simple arithmetical process, you'll easily discover, that though you've lived twenty-one years, that, if we go by birthdays, you're only five --

RUTH: And a little bit over!

QUEEN: I'd say about a quarter!

(QUEEN and RUTH roll with laughter)

FREDERICK: Dear me! Let's see! (counting on fingers) Yes, yes; My figures do agree with yours!

(All laugh.)

FREDERICK: (more amused than any) How quaint the ways of Paradox! She gaily mocks common senses! Though counting in the usual way, I've been alive twenty-one years. Yet, reckoning by my natal day, I am a little boy of five.

QUEEN: And a little bit over!

FREDERICK: Yes, (laughing) just a quarter!

(RUTH and QUEEN are exhausted with laughter)

# *The Slave of Duty*

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FREDERICK: Upon my word, this is most curious -- most absurdly whimsical. Five-and-a-quarter! No one would think it to look at me!

RUTH: You are glad now, I'll be bound, that you spared us. You would never have forgiven yourself when you discovered that you had killed two of your comrades.

FREDERICK: My comrades?

QUEEN: (rises) I'm afraid you don't appreciate the delicacy of your position: You were apprenticed to us --

FREDERICK: Until I reached my twenty-first year.

QUEEN: No, until you've reached your twenty-first birthday (producing document), and, going by birthdays, you are as yet only five-and-a-quarter.

FREDERICK: You don't mean to say you are going to hold me to that?

QUEEN: No, we merely remind you of the fact, and leave the rest to your sense of duty.

RUTH: Your sense of duty!

FREDERICK: Sense of Duty? (wildly) Don't put it on that footing! As I was merciful to you just now, be merciful to me! I implore you not to insist on the letter of your bond just as the cup of happiness is at my lips!

RUTH: We insist on nothing; we content ourselves with pointing out to you your duty.

QUEEN: Your duty!

# *The Slave of Duty*

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FREDERICK: Duty? (after a pause) Well, you have appealed to my sense of duty, and my duty is only too clear. I abhor your infamous calling; I shudder at the thought that I have ever been mixed up with it; but duty is before all -- at any price I will do my duty.

QUEEN: Bravely spoken! Come, you are one of us once more.

FREDERICK: Lead on, I follow. (Suddenly) Oh, horror!

QUEEN  
and RUTH: What is the matter?

FREDERICK: Ought I to tell you? No, no, I cannot do it; and yet, as one of your band--

QUEEN: Speak out, I charge you by that sense of conscientiousness to which we have never yet appealed in vain.

FREDERICK: General Stanley, the father of my Mabel--

QUEEN  
and RUTH: Yes, yes!

FREDERICK: He escaped from you on the plea that he was an orphan?

QUEEN: He did.

FREDERICK: It breaks my heart to betray the honored father of the girl I adore, but as your apprentice I have no alternative. It is my duty, for I am a slave of duty, to tell you that the very model of a modern Major-General Stanley is no orphan!

QUEEN  
and RUTH: What!

FREDERICK: More than that, he never was one!

# *The Slave of Duty*

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QUEEN: Am I to understand that, to save his contemptible life, he dared to practice on our credulous simplicity? (FREDERICK nods as he weeps) Our revenge shall be swift and terrible. We will go and collect our band and attack Tremorden Castle this very night.

FREDERICK: But stay--

QUEEN: Not a word! He is doomed!

QUEEN	FREDERICK
Away, away! my heart's on fire; it burns to repay this deception. This very night my swift vengeance shall glut itself in gore. Away, away!	Away, away! ere I expire-- I may find my duty hard to do today! My heart is filled with such anguish, It strikes me to my very core. Away, away!

QUEEN: With falsehood foul he has tricked my men out of their brides. Let vengeance howl! I have decided! He softened us with lies and, in return, the traitor dies tonight!

RUTH: Yes! The Traitor dies tonight!

QUEEN: Yes, or early tomorrow.

FREDERICK: His girls likewise?

QUEEN: They will wither in sorrow. That one soft spot a child has is it's nature to cherish a thing. The thing they cherish...

RUTH: Papa!

QUEEN: Will perish! Tonight the very model of a modern Major-General dies!

RUTH: Tonight he dies.

QUEEN: What says ye, my pretty pirate mate?

FREDERICK: Tonight he dies!

# *The Slave of Duty*

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(Exeunt QUEEN and RUTH. FREDERICK throws himself on a stone in blank despair. Enter MABEL.)

MABEL: All is prepared, your gallant crew await you. My Frederick in tears? It cannot be that the lionhearted quails at the coming conflict?

FREDERICK: No, Mabel, no. A terrible disclosure has just been made. Mabel, my dearly loved one, I bound myself to serve the pirate queen until I reached my twenty-first birthday--

MABEL: But you are twenty-one?

FREDERICK: I've just discovered that I was born in leap-year on the leap day of the year, and that birthday will not be reached by me until eighteen and thirty-three!

MABEL: But that is sixty more years.

FREDERICK: Sixty-three to be exact...

MABEL: Oh, horrible! What a catastrophe! You'll be...

FREDERICK: Eighty four!

MABEL: Appalling!

FREDERICK: And so, farewell!

MABEL: No, no! Frederick, hear me. They have no legal claim. I will not let a shadow of shame fall upon thy name. Frederick, stay!

FREDERICK: No, Mabel! Tonight I leave this place. The very thought of returning to a life of a pirate appalls my soul. But, I am a slave of duty. And when duty calls, I must obey.

MABEL: Frederick, stay!

FREDERICK: I must not stay. My duty calls.

# *The Slave of Duty*

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MABEL: Leave me not to pine alone and desolate; no fate seemed fair as mine, no happiness so great! Because I have found someone who loves me.

FREDERICK: I do not want to leave thee here in endless night to dream of a happier time. But he who loves you must leave you.

(They kiss.)

FREDERICK: This I swear. When I am of age and served my indenture, I'll then return, and claim you in 1833.

MABEL: That seems so long!

FREDERICK: Swear that, till then, you will be true to me.

MABEL: 1833. . .

FREDERICK: He who loves you, begs this of you.

MABEL: Yes, I'll be strong! By all the Stanleys that are dead and buried and gone, I swear it!

FREDERICK: Then here is love, and truth and food for joyous laughter. I to you and you to me ever faithful will be.

(FREDERICK rushes to window and leaps out)

MABEL: Ever faithful...1833? (almost fainting) No, I am brave! 1833! What is this? It is the lieutenant and his men.

(Enter SAILORS, marching in single file)

LIEUTENANT: Though in body and in mind

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: We are timidly inclined,

SAILORS: Tarantara!

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LIEUTENANT: And anything but blind

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: To the danger that's behind,

SAILORS: Tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: Yet, when the danger's near,

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

LIEUTENANT: We manage to appear

SAILORS: Tarantara! tarantara!

MABEL: Lieutenant, approach! Young Frederick was to have led you to death and glory.

SAILOR 1: That, if I may be so bold, is not a pleasant way of putting it.

MABEL: No matter; he will not so lead you, for he has allied himself once more with his old associates.

LIEUTENANT: He has acted shamefully!

MABEL: You speak falsely. You know nothing about it. He has acted nobly.

LIEUTENANT: He has acted nobly?

MABEL: Dearly as I loved him before, his heroic sacrifice to his sense of duty has endeared him to me tenfold; but if it was his duty to constitute himself my foe, it is likewise my duty to regard him in that light. He has done his duty. I will do mine. Go ye and do yours.

(Exit MABEL)

SAILORS: Right oh!

# *The Slave of Duty*

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LIEUTENANT: This is perplexing.

SAILOR: We cannot understand it at all.

LIEUTENANT: Still, as he is actuated by a sense of duty--

SAILOR: That makes a difference, of course. At the same time, I cannot understand it at all.

LIEUTENANT: No matter. Our course is clear: we must do our best to capture these pirates alone. It is most distressing to us to be the agents whereby our erring fellow creatures are deprived of that same liberty which is so dear to us all-- but we should have thought of that before we joined his majesty's fleet.

SAILORS: We should?

LIEUTENANT: It is too late now!

SAILORS: It is?

LIEUTENANT: When a felon's not engaged in his employment or maturing his felonious little plans, his capacity for innocent enjoyment is just as great as any man what's honest. Our feelings we with difficulty smother when there's constabulary duty to be done. Ah, take one consideration with another, a royal sailor's lot is not a happy one. When the enterprising burglar isn't burgling or when the cutthroat isn't occupied in crime, he loves to hear the brook splashing and listen to the sounds from a merry village. When the accouster is finished jumping on his victim, he loves to lie basking in the sun. And taking one consideration with another, a royal sailor's lot is not a happy one.

# *The Slave of Duty*

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PIRATES: (Singing in the distance.)  
A rollicking band of pirates we,  
Who, tired of tossing on the sea,  
Are trying their hand at a burglary,  
With weapons grim and gory.

LIEUTENANT: Hush, hush! I hear them on the manor green, with  
stealthy step the pirates are approaching. They come in  
force. Our obvious course is now--to hide.

(The Sailors conceal themselves in aisles. As they do so, the  
Pirates, with RUTH and FREDERICK, are seen appearing at  
ruined window. They enter cautiously, and come down  
stage on tiptoe.)

QUEEN: With catlike tread upon our prey we'll steal...

(SAMUEL is laden with burglarious tools and pistols, he  
trips, disturbing the silence of the moment.)

QUEEN: With catlike, catlike, catlike tread upon our prey we steal.

SAMUEL: (distributing implements to various pirates) Here's your  
crowbar, center bit, matches, lantern, file and skeleton  
keys.

FREDERICK: Hush, hush! Not a word; I see a light! The Major-General  
comes, so quickly hide!

PIRATES: Yes, the Major-General comes!

(Exeunt QUEEN, FREDERICK, SAMUEL, and RUTH)

SAILORS: Yes, the Major-General comes!

GENERAL: (entering in dressing-gown, carrying a light)  
Yes, the Major-General comes tormented with the anguish  
dread of unatoned falsehood. Upon a sleepless bed I lay  
and toss and turn. The man who finds his conscience  
aches will enjoy no peace at all. As I lay in bed awake, I  
thought I heard a noise.

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PIRATES

and SAILORS: He thought he heard a noise-- ah ha!

GENERAL: No, all is still. My mind is set at ease. So still the scene -- it must have been the sighing of the breeze rustling through the poplar trees or a rippling of the brook as it caresses round the nook. Oh, I've made a little poem...I think I'll try a second stanza...for a modern Major General should be in commance of all things poetical...

(GENERAL STANLEY contemplates for a moment.)

Yet, the breeze is but a rover,  
When he wings away,  
Brook and poplar mourn a lover  
Sighing , "Well-a-day!"

PIRATES

and SAILORS: Well-a-day!

GENERAL: Pretty brook, thy dream is over,  
For thy love is but a rover;  
Sad the lot of poplar trees,  
Courtred by a fickle breeze!

PIRATES

and SAILORS: Fickle breeze!

(Enter the MAJOR-GENERAL's daughters, led by MABEL, all in peignoirs and nightcaps, and carrying lighted candles.)

SISTER 7: Now what is this,?

SISTER 8: And what is that?

SISTERS 9: And why does father leave his rest at such a time of night as this?

SISTER 10: And so very incompletely dressed?

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EDITH: Dear father is, and always was, the most methodical of men! It's his invariable rule to go to bed at half-past ten.

KATE: What strange occurrence can it be that calls dear father from his bed and into the dark night?

SISTER 10: And so very incompletely dressed?

(Enter QUEEN, SAMUEL, and FREDERICK)

QUEEN: Forward, my men, and seize that General there! His life is over.

(They seize the GENERAL)

SISTERS: The pirates! the pirates! Oh, despair!

QUEEN: (springing up) Yes, we're the pirates, so despair!

GENERAL: Frederick here! Oh, joy! Oh, rapture! Summon your men and effect their capture!

MABEL: Frederick, save us!

FREDERICK: Beautiful Mabel, I would if I could, but I am not able.

RUTH: He's telling the truth, he is not able.

QUEEN: With base deceit you worked upon our sympathies! Revenge is sweet, and flavors all our dealings! With courage and manly resolution prepare for death unhappy General Stanley.

MABEL: (wildly) Is he to die, unshriven, unannealed?

SISTERS: Oh, spare him!

MABEL: Will no one in his cause a weapon wield?

SISTERS: Oh, spare him!

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SAILORS: (springing up) We are here!

LIEUTENANT: Though hitherto concealed!

SISTERS: Oh, rapture!

LIEUTENANT: So to the royal navy, pirates yield!

SISTERS: Oh, rapture!

(A struggle ensues between Pirates and Sailors, RUTH tackling the LIEUTENANT. Eventually the Sailors are overcome and fall to the floor, the Pirates standing over them with drawn swords.)

QUEEN: We triumph now! Your mortal seafaring career will now be far far shorter than before. I can not allow for one of my pirate band to ever take the stand before a criminal court.

LIEUTENANT: You've contrived to gain a brief advantage, but your proud triumph will not be long lived.

QUEEN: Don't say you are orphans, for we know that game.

LIEUTENANT: We've a stronger claim on our allegiance. We charge you yield, in the name of King George III!

QUEEN: (baffled) You do?

SAILORS: We do! Yield, in King George's name!

(PIRATES kneel, SAILORS stand over them triumphantly.)

QUEEN: We yield at once, with humbled hearts, because, with all our faults, we love our King.

PIRATES: For King, for country.

SAILORS: They love their King?

# *The Slave of Duty*

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PIRATES: Yes, we love our King.

(SAILORS, holding PIRATES by the collar, take out handkerchiefs and weep.)

GENERAL: Away with them, and place them at the bar!

RUTH: One moment! Let me tell you who they are. They are no members of a common pirate band, nor house of commons, as it were; they are all lords and ladies who have a need for a bit of seafaring recreation.

SAILORS  
and SISTERS: They are..what?

QUEEN: You see, 'tis true. Pirates at heart, but House of Lords by birth. We spend our days in the parliament serving our king and during the months the house is out of session we have a bit of fun on the high seas.

FREDERICK: But you're, however, we -- as I am a part of it all -- we are the dreaded Pirates of Penzance. What about all the ships we sank? The plundering? The pillaging? Chests of gold?

QUEEN: Nothing more than stories designed to insure our glory and to insure we could sail under pirate flag without confrontation. In all the years you were with us, did you never wonder why you were not involved in any piratical adventures of sinking ships, plundering innocents, pillaging villages or taking golden treasure?

RUTH: Did you not ever wonder why, all those years, you and I spent months alone in that lovely seaside castle and all the pirates disappeared.

FREDERICK: I had supposed that was when they did their plundering and when I came of age I would be forced to take part in their heinous acts.

SAMUEL: I've heard some acts of Parliament referred to in that manner.

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QUEEN: Yes, some would say that our avocation was more honest than our vocation!

ALL: 'Tis true...'tis true!

GENERAL: Lords and Ladies. No Englishman can stay unmoved when he hears such news, because, we, with all our faults, love our House of Peers.

(All kneel)

GENERAL: I pray you, pardon me, ex-Pirate Queen! Peers will be peers, and youth will have its fling. Resume your ranks and legislative obligations. And all you single lords take my daughters, all of whom are beauties.

END OF PLAY