



PRINCESS IDA

OR

CASTLE ADAMANT

**A Respectful Operatic Per-Version of Tennyson's "Princess"
in a Prologue and Two Acts**

Written by W S Gilbert

Composed by Arthur Sullivan

*First produced at the Savoy Theatre, London on Saturday 5th January 1884
Under the management of Mr R D'Oyly Carte*

This edition privately published by Ian C Bond at 'Quiver Lodge', 2 Priory Park, TAUNTON, TA1 1PX - © 2011

New Edition

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¹ Very soon after the opening night, the opera was re-designated as being in Three Acts.

PRINCESS IDA

Preface to the 2001 edition

Although never the most popular of the Gilbert and Sullivan series, after the initial Savoy production in 1884 PRINCESS IDA did remain in the repertoire of the touring D'Oyly Carte companies right through until the second world war.

Unlike many of the rest of the Savoy series, this opera was not subjected to any major changes during the initial production period. This was mainly due to the fact that the work was adapted from an earlier burlesque by Gilbert: THE PRINCESS, produced at the Olympic Theatre in 1870. This work had been presented in 5 scenes with songs set to melodies from various well known operas of the day by such composers as Offenbach, Rossini etc.

For the new opera Gilbert converted his original 5 scene libretto into a Prologue and Two Acts (re-designated as Three Acts early in the initial run), pruned some of the minor characters, (although the character of ATHO, Hildebrand's Lord Chamberlain, was reinstated as a silent rôle by D'Oyly Carte in 1955), ditched all the original lyrics and converted some of the blank verse dialogue into new lyrics.

The only changes to the format of the opera during the original production were a slight change of lyric to No: 14, the Quartet for Ida, Cyril, Hilarion and Florian, (The world is but a broken toy) and the excision at some point of a short Melodrame following No: 22, intended to underscore the Act Three entrance of Gama. As this Melodrame appears in the early editions of the vocal score it was almost certainly used throughout the initial Savoy production and has been included in this libretto.

Lady Blanche's song, No: 11 (Come mighty must) was, for many years, omitted in professional performance. This practice seems to have begun after the tragic death of Bertha Lewis on 8th May 1931 as the result of a car accident. Basically her successor found it difficult to sing. It was, however, returned to regular performance by the original company in the late 1970's. Whenever possible it should be used as the piece establishes Blanche's character very strongly and, without it, this is difficult to do successfully. The great danger is to take the number too slowly - it should be stately, proud and well paced - and at the right speed the singer will find the awkward tessitura more comfortable.

Sometime between the two world wars, major changes were made to the sequence of events in Act Three. Indeed some versions of the libretto and vocal score still present this format, with Ida's aria No: 22 (I built upon a rock) and Gama's song No: 23 (Whene're I spoke) presented in reverse order and with corresponding changes in the sequence of dialogue. Also in Act Three, Arac's song (This helmet I suppose) was moved forward to immediately after the chorus No: 24 (When anger spreads his wing) resulting in the need for the Cyril, Hilarion and Florian to be unbound and disrobed hurriedly at the end of their dialogue scene and launch immediately into the fight, No: 26.

Why these changes were made has never been fully explained and, of course, never had the sanction of either Gilbert or Sullivan. They do make the Act very uneven. In this libretto therefore, the order has been returned to Gilbert's original.

Lastly, mention has to be made of the melodrame that follows immediately after Cyril's kissing song, No: 19. Over the years the habit of halting the action either for applause or, indeed, to grant an encore has crept into performance. Wherever possible this should be avoided with the action being allowed to sweep on unchecked through the drama of the melodrame into the finale.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

KING HILDEBRAND

HILARION (His son)

Hilarion's friends:

CYRIL

FLORIAN

KING GAMA

His sons:

ARAC

GURON

SCYNTHIUS

PRINCESS IDA (Gama's daughter)

LADY BLANCHE (Professor of Abstract Science)

LADY PSYCHE (Professor of Humanities)

MELISSA (Lady Blanche's Daughter)

Girl Graduates:

SACHARISSA

CHLOE

ADA

Soldiers, Courtiers, "Girl Graduates," "Daughters of the Plough,"

etc.

PROLOGUE

Pavilion in King Hildebrand's Palace

ACT I

Gardens of Castle Adamant

ACT II

Courtyard of Castle Adamant

Prologue.

***SCENE:** - Pavilion attached to King Hildebrand's Palace. Soldiers and courtiers discovered looking out through opera-glasses, telescopes, etc., Florian leading.*

No: 1 - CHORUS AND SOLO (Florian)

Chorus. Search throughout the panorama
For a sign of royal Gama,
Who to-day should cross the water
With his fascinating daughter -
Ida is her name.

Some misfortune evidently
Has detained them – consequently
Search throughout the panorama
For the daughter of King Gama,
Prince Hilarion's flame!
Prince Hilarion's flame!

SOLO - Florian

Florian. Will Prince Hilarion's hopes be sadly blighted?

Chorus. Who can tell? Who can tell?

Florian. Will Ida break the vows that she has plighted?

Chorus. Who can tell? Who can tell?

Florian. Will she back out, and say she did not mean them?

Chorus. Who can tell?

Florian. If so, there'll be the deuce to pay between them!

Chorus. No, no - we'll not despair, we'll not despair,
For Gama would not dare
To make a deadly foe
Of Hildebrand, and so,
Search through the panorama
For a sign of royal Gama,
Who today should cross the water
With his fascinating daughter -
Ida, Ida is her name.

(Enter KING HILDEBRAND with CYRIL)

Hild. See you no sign of Gama?

Florian. None, my liege!

Hild. It's very odd indeed. If Gama fail
To put in an appearance at our Court
Before the sun has set in yonder west,
And fail to bring the Princess Ida here
To whom our son Hilarion was betrothed
At the extremely early age of one,
There's war between King Gama and ourselves!

(aside to CYRIL)

Oh, Cyril, how I dread this interview!
It's twenty years since he and I have met.
He was a twisted monster - all awry - -
As though Dame Nature, angry with her work,
Had crumpled it in fitful petulance!

Cyril. But, sir, a twisted and ungainly trunk
Often bears goodly fruit. Perhaps he was
A kind, well-spoken gentleman?

Hild. Oh, no!
For, adder-like, his sting lay in his tongue.
(His "sting" is present, though his "stung" is past.)

Florian. *(looking through glass)*
But stay, my liege; o'er yonder mountain's brow
Comes a small body, bearing Gama's arms;
And now I look more closely at it, sir,
I see attached to it King Gama's legs;
From which I gather this corollary
That that small body must be Gama's own!

Hild. Ha! Is the Princess with him?

Florian. Well, my liege,
Unless her highness is full six feet high,
And wears mustachios too - and smokes cigars - -
And rides en cavalier in coat of steel - -
I do not think she is.

Hild. One never knows.
She's a strange girl, I've heard, and does odd things!
Come, bustle there!
For Gama place the richest robes we own - -
For Gama place the coarsest prison dress - -
For Gama let our best spare bed be aired - -
For Gama let our deepest dungeon yawn - -
For Gama lay the costliest banquet out - -
For Gama place cold water and dry bread!

For as King Gama brings the Princess here,
Or brings her not, so shall King Gama have
Much more than everything - much less than nothing!

No: 2 - SONG (Hildebrand and Chorus)

- Hild. Now hearken to my strict command
On every hand, on every hand - -
- Chorus. To your command,
On every hand,
We dutifully bow.
- Hild. If Gama bring the Princess here,
Give him good cheer, give him good cheer.
- Chorus. If she come here
We'll give him a cheer,
And we will show you how.
Hip, hip, hurrah! hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!
We'll shout and sing
Long live the King,
And his daughter, too, I trow!
Then shout ha! ha! hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hip, hip, hurrah!
For the fair Princess and her good papa,
Hurrah, hurrah!
- Hild. But if he fail to keep his troth,
Upon our oath, we'll trounce them both!
- Chorus. He'll trounce them both,
Upon his oath,
As sure as quarter-day!
- Hild. We'll shut him up in a dungeon cell,
And toll his knell on a funeral bell.
- Chorus. From his dungeon cell,
His funeral knell
Shall strike him with dismay!
Hip, hip, hurrah! hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hurrah! hurrah! hurrah!
As up we string
The faithless King,
In the old familiar way!
We'll shout ha! ha! hip, hip, hurrah!
Hip, hip, hip, hip, hurrah!
As we make an end of her false papa,
Hurrah, hurrah!

(Exeunt all)

(Enter HILARION)

No: 3 - RECITATIVE AND SONG (Hilarion)

RECITATIVE - Hilarion

To-day we meet, my baby bride and I -
But ah, my hopes are balanc'd by my fears!
What transmutations have been conjur'd by
The silent alchemy of twenty years!

BALLAD - Hilarion

Ida was a twelve-month old,
Twenty years ago!
I was twice her age, I'm told,
Twenty years ago!
Husband twice as old as wife
Argues ill for married life
Baleful prophecies were rife,
Twenty years ago,
Twenty years ago!

Still, I was a tiny prince
Twenty years ago.
She has gained upon me, since
Twenty years ago.
Though she's twenty-one, it's true,
I am barely twenty-two -
False and foolish prophets you
Twenty years ago,
Twenty years ago!

(Enter HILDEBRAND)

Hilarion. Well, father, is there news for me at last?

Hild. King Gama is in sight, but much I fear
With no Princess!

Hilarion. Alas, my liege, I've heard,
That Princess Ida has forsworn the world,
And, with a band of women, shut herself
Within a lonely country house, and there
Devotes herself to stern philosophies!

Hild. Then I should say the loss of such a wife
Is one to which a reasonable man
Would easily be reconciled.

Hilarion. Oh, no!
Or I am not a reasonable man.
She is my wife - has been for twenty years!
(Holding glass) I think I see her now.

Hild. Ha! Let me look!

Hilarion. In my mind's eye, I mean - a blushing bride
All bib and tucker, frill and furbelow!
How exquisite she looked as she was borne,
Recumbent, in her foster-mother's arms!
How the bride wept - nor would be comforted
Until the hireling mother-for-the-nonce
Administered refreshment in the vestry.
And I remember feeling much annoyed
That she should weep at marrying with me.
But then I thought, "These brides are all alike.
You cry at marrying me? How much more cause
You'd have to cry if it were broken off!"
These were my thoughts; I kept them to myself,
For at that age I had not learnt to speak.

(Exeunt HILDEBRAND and HILARION)

(Enter Courtiers)

No: 4 - CHORUS

Chorus. From the distant panorama
Come the sons of royal Gama.
They are heralds evidently,
And are sacred consequently,
Sons of Gama, hail! oh, hail!

(Enter ARAC, GURON, and SCYNTHIUS)

No: 5 - TRIO (Arac, Guron, Scynthius and Chorus)

SONG - Arac

Arac. We are warriors three,
Sons of Gama, Rex,
Like most sons are we,
Masculine in sex.

All Three. Yes, yes, yes,
Masculine in sex.

Arac. Politics we bar,
They are not our bent;
On the whole we are
Not intelligent.

All Three. No, no, no,
Not intelligent.

Arac. But with doughty heart,
And with trusty blade
We can play our part -
Fighting is our trade.

All Three. Yes, yes, yes,
Fighting is our trade.

Bold and fierce, and strong, ha! ha!
For a war we burn,
With its right or wrong, ha! ha!
We have no concern.
Order comes to fight, ha! ha!
Order is obey'd,
We are men of might, ha! ha!
Fighting is our trade.
Yes - yes, yes,
Fighting is our trade, ha! ha!

The Three.

Ha! ha!

Fighting
is, yes, yes, yes,
Fighting is our trade, ha!
ha!

Chorus.

They are men of might, ha! ha!
Fighting is their trade.
Order comes to fight, ha! ha!
Order is obey'd!
Order comes to fight!

Order is obey'd!
Fighting
is
their
trade!

(Enter KING GAMA)

No: 6 - SONG (Gama)

Gama. If you give me your attention, I will tell you what I am:
I'm a genuine philanthropist - all other kinds are sham.
Each little fault of temper and each social defect
In my erring fellow-creatures, I endeavour to correct.
To all their little weaknesses I open people's eyes;
And little plans to snub the self-sufficient I devise;
I love my fellow creatures - I do all the good I can -
Yet ev'rybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

To compliments inflated I've a withering reply;
And vanity I always do my best to mortify;
A charitable action I can skillfully dissect;
And interested motives I'm delighted to detect;
I know ev'rybody's income and what ev'rybody earns;
And I carefully compare it with the income-tax returns;
But to benefit humanity however much I plan,
Yet ev'rybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

I'm sure I'm no ascetic; I'm as pleasant as can be;
You'll always find me ready with a crushing repartee,
I've an irritating chuckle, I've a celebrated sneer,
I've an entertaining snigger, I've a fascinating leer.
To ev'rybody's prejudice I know a thing or two;
I can tell a woman's age in half minute - and I do.
But although I try to make myself as pleasant as I can,
Yet ev'rybody says I'm such a disagreeable man!
And I can't think why!

Chorus. He can't think why!

All. He/I can't think why!

(Enter HILDEBRAND, HILARION, CYRIL and FLORIAN)

Gama. So this is Castle Hildebrand? Well, well!
Dame Rumour whispered that the place was grand;
She told me that your taste was exquisite,
Superb, unparalleled!

Hild. *(Gratified)* Oh, really, King!

Gama. But she's a liar! Why, how old you've grown!
Is this Hilarion? Why, you've changed too -
You were a singularly handsome child!
(To FLORIAN) Are you a courtier? Come, then ply your trade,
Tell me some lies. How do you like your King?
Vile rumour says he's all but imbecile.
Now, that's not true?

Florian. My lord, we love our King.
His wise remarks are valued by his court
As precious stones.

Gama. And for the self-same cause.
Like precious stones, his sensible remarks
Derive their value from their scarcity!
Come now, be honest, tell the truth for once!
Tell it of me. Come, come, I'll harm you not.

This leg is crooked - this foot is ill-designed -
This shoulder wears a hump! Come, out with it!
Look, here's my face! Now, am I not the worst
Of Nature's blunders?

Cyril. Nature never errs.
To those who know the workings of your mind,
Your face and figure, sir, suggest a book
Appropriately bound.

Gama. (*Enraged*) Why, harkye, sir,
How dare you bandy words with me?

Cyril. No need
To bandy aught that appertains to you.

Gama. (*Furiously*) Do you permit this, King?

Hild. We are in doubt
Whether to treat you as an honoured guest
Or as a traitor knave who plights his word
And breaks it.

Gama. (*Quickly*) If the casting vote's with me,
I give it for the former!

Hild. We shall see.
By the terms of our contract, signed and sealed,
You're bound to bring the Princess here to-day:
Why is she not with you?

Gama. Answer me this:
What think you of a wealthy purse-proud man,
Who, when he calls upon a starving friend,
Pulls out his gold and flourishes his notes,
And flashes diamonds in the pauper's eyes?
What name have you for such an one?

Hild. A snob.

Gama. Just so. The girl has beauty, virtue, wit,
Grace, humour, wisdom, charity and pluck.
Would it be kindly, think you, to parade
These brilliant qualities before your eyes?
Oh no, King Hildebrand, I am no snob!

Hild. (*Furiously*) Stop that tongue,
Or you shall lose the monkey head that holds it!

Gama. Bravo! Your King deprives me of my head,
That he and I may meet on equal terms!

Hild. Where is she now? (*Threatening*)

Gama. In Castle Adamant,
One of my many country houses. There
She rules a woman's University,
With full a hundred girls, who learn of her.

Cyril. A hundred girls! A hundred ecstasies!

Gama. But no mere girls, my good young gentleman;
With all the college learning that you boast,
The youngest there will prove a match for you.

Cyril. With all my heart, if she's the prettiest!
(*To FLORIAN*) Fancy, a hundred matches - all alight! -
That's if I strike them as I hope to do!

Gama. Despair your hope; their hearts are dead to men.
He who desires to gain their favour must
Be qualified to strike their teeming brains,
And not their hearts. They're safety matches, sir,
And they light only on the knowledge box -
So you've no chance!

Florian. Are there no males whatever in those walls?

Gama. None, gentlemen, excepting letter mails -
And they are driven (as males often are
In other large communities) by women.
Why, bless my heart, she's so particular
She'll hardly suffer Dr. Watts's hymns -
And all the animals she owns are "hers"!
The ladies rise at cockcrow every morn -

Cyril. Ah, then they have male poultry?

Gama. Not at all,
(*Confidentially*) The crowing's done by an accomplished hen!

**No: 7 - FINALE (Gama, Hildebrand, Cyril, Hilarion, Florian and Chorus
of Girls and Men)**

Gama. P'raps if you address the lady
Most politely, most politely -
Flatter and impress the lady,
Most politely, most politely, -
Humbly beg and humbly sue -
She may deign to look on you,

But your doing you must do
Most politely, most politely, most politely!

All Humbly beg and humbly sue,
She may deign to look on you,
But your doing you must do
Most politely, most politely, most politely!

Hild. Go you and inform the lady,
Most politely, most politely,
If she don't, we'll storm the lady
Most politely, most politely!
(To GAMA) You'll remain as hostage here;
Should Hilarion disappear,
We will hang you, never fear,
Most politely, most politely, most politely!

All. He'll/I'll/You'll remain as hostage here.
Should Hilarion disappear,
They/We will hang me/you never fear,
Most politely, most politely, most politely!

(GAMA, ARAC, GURON and SCYNTHIUS are marched off in custody, HILDEBRAND following)

RECITATIVE - Hilarion

Come, Cyril, Florian, our course is plain,
To-morrow morn fair Ida we'll engage;
But we will use no force her love to gain,
Nature, nature has arm'd us for the war we wage!

TRIO - Hilarion, Cyril, and Florian

Hilarion. Expressive glances
Shall be our lances,
And pops of Sillery
Our light artillery.
We'll storm their bowers
With scented showers
Of fairest flowers
That we can buy!

Chorus. Oh, dainty triolet!
Oh, fragrant violet!
Oh, gentle heigho-let!
(Or little sigh).
On sweet urbanity,
Through mere inanity,
To touch their vanity
We will rely!

Cyril. When day is fading,
 With serenading
 And such frivolity
 We'll prove our quality.
 A sweet profusion
 Of soft allusion
 This bold intrusion
 Shall justify,
 This bold intrusion
 Shall justify.

Chorus. Oh, dainty triolet!
 Oh, fragrant violet!
 Oh, gentle heigho-let!
 (Or little sigh).
 On sweet urbanity,
 Through mere inanity,
 To touch their vanity
 We will rely!

Florian. We'll charm their senses
 With verbal fences,
 With ballads amatory
 And declamatory.
 Little heeding
 Their pretty pleading,
 Our love exceeding
 We'll justify!
 Our love exceeding
 We'll justify!

Chorus. Oh, dainty triolet!
 Oh, fragrant violet!
 Oh, gentle heigho-let!
 (Or little sigh).
 On sweet urbanity,
 Through mere inanity,
 To touch their vanity
 We will rely!

Sops.

Oh, dainty triolet!
Oh, fragrant violet!
Oh, gentle heigho-let!
(Or little sigh).

Alto, Tenor and Bass.

Oh,
dainty
trio-
-let!

Hilarion and Cyril.

Oh, dainty triolet!
Oh, fragrant violet!

Hilarion, Cyril and Florian.

Oh, gentle heigho-let!
(Or little sigh).

Chorus.

Oh,
fragrant

vio-
let!

Sops and Alto.

Oh, dainty triolet!
Oh, fragrant violet!

Tenor and Bass

Oh, dainty tri-
-olet!

All. Oh dainty triolet!
 Oh fragrant violet!

*(Re-enter GAMA, ARAC, GURON, and SCYNTHIUS heavily ironed, followed by
HILDEBRAND)*

RECITATIVE

Gama. Must we, till then, in prison cell be thrust?

Hild. You must!

Gama. This seems unnecessarily severe!

Arac, Guron & Scyn. Hear, hear!

TRIO - Arac, Guron and Scynthus

For a month to dwell
In a dungeon cell:
Growing thin and wizen
In a solitary prison,
Is a poor look out
For a soldier stout,
Who is longing for the rattle
Of a complicated battle -
Yes, is longing for the rattle
Of a complicated battle -
For the rum - tum - tum
Of the military drum
And the guns that go boom! boom!

All. The rum - tum - tum
 Of the military drum,

Rum - tum - tum - tummy tummy tummy tummy tum
Who is longing for the rattle of a complicated battle -
And the rum tum tum
Of the military drum; tum!
Prr, prr, prr, ra - pum - pum!

Hild. When Hilarion's bride
Has at length complied
With the just conditions
Of our requisitions,
You may go in haste
And indulge your taste
For the fascinating rattle
Of a complicated battle -
Yes, the fascinating rattle
Of a complicated battle -
For the rum - tum - tum,
Of the military drum,
And the guns that go boom! boom!

All. The rum - tum - tum
Of the military drum,
Rum - tum - tum - tummy tummy tummy tummy tum!
Who is longing for the rattle
Of a complicated battle
And the rum - tum - tum
Of the military drum; tum!
Prr - prr - prr ra - pum, pum!

But till that time you'll/we'll here remain,
And bail we/they will not entertain,
Should she our/his mandate disobey,
Your/Our lives the penalty will pay!
But till that time you'll/we'll here remain,
And bail we/they will not entertain,
Should she our/his mandate disobey,
Your/Our lives the penalty will pay!
Should she our/his mandate disobey,
Your/Our lives the penalty will pay!

(GAMA, ARAC, GURON, and SCYNTHIUS are marched off.)

END OF PROLOGUE

ACT I

SCENE: - *Gardens in Castle Adamant. A river runs across the back of the stage, crossed by a rustic bridge. Castle Adamant in the distance.*

Girl Graduates discovered seated at the feet of LADY PSYCHE

No: 8 - CHORUS OF GIRLS & SOLOS (Lady Psyche, Melissa and Sacharissa)

Chorus. Towards the empyrean heights
 Of ev'ry kind of lore,
 We've taken several easy flights,
 And mean to take some more.
 In trying to achieve success
 No envy racks our heart,
 And all the knowledge we possess,
 We mutually impart.

SOLO - Melissa

Pray, what authors should she read
Who in Classics would succeed?

SOLO - Psyche

If you'd climb the Helicon,
You should read Anacreon,
Ovid's Metamorphoses,
Likewise Aristophanes,
And the works of Juvenal:
These are worth attention, all;
But, if you will be advised,
You will get them Bowdlerized! ²

Chorus. Ah! we will get them Bowdlerized!

SOLO - Sacharissa

Pray you, tell us, if you can,
What's the thing that's known as Man?

SOLO - Psyche

Man will swear and man will storm -
Man is not at all good form -
Man is of no kind of use -
Man's a donkey - Man's a goose -

² A reference to Thomas Bowdler who produced a "cleaned up" version of Shakespeare in 1818.

Man is coarse and Man is plain -
Man is more or less insane -
Man's a ribald - Man's a rake,
Man is Nature's sole mistake!

Chorus. We'll a memorandum make -
Man is Nature's sole mistake!

And thus to empyrean height
Of ev'ry kind of lore,
In search of wisdom's pure delight,
Ambitiously we soar.
In trying to achieve success
No envy racks our heart,
For all we know and all we guess
We mutually impart!
And all the knowledge we possess,
We mutually impart,
We mutually impart, impart.

(Enter LADY BLANCHE. All stand up demurely)

Blanche. Attention, ladies, while I read to you
The Princess Ida's list of punishments.
The first is Sacharissa. She's expelled!

All. Expelled!

Blanche. Expelled, because although she knew
No man of any kind may pass our walls,
She dared to bring a set of chessmen here!

Sach. *(Crying)* I meant no harm; they're only men of wood!

Blanche. They're men with whom you give each other mate,
And that's enough! The next is Chloe.

Chloe. Ah!

Blanche. Chloe will lose three terms, for yesterday,
When looking through her drawing-book, I found
A sketch of a perambulator!

All. *(Horried)* Oh!

Blanche. Double perambulator ...

All. Oh, oh!³

³ It is not clear exactly when this double exclamation crept into the text

Blanche. ...shameless girl!
That's all at present. Now, attention, pray;
Your Principal the Princess comes to give
Her usual inaugural address
To those young ladies who joined yesterday.

No: 9 - CHORUS OF GIRLS

Girls. Mighty maiden with a mission,
Paragon of common sense,
Running fount of erudition,
Miracle of eloquence,
Altos. We are blind and we would see;
Sops. We are bound, and would be free;
Girls. We are dumb, and we would talk;
We are lame, and we would walk.

(Enter PRINCESS IDA)

Mighty maiden with a mission -
Paragon of common sense;
Running fount of erudition -
Miracle of eloquence, of eloquence!

No: 10 - RECITATIVE & ARIA (Princess)

Ida. Minerva! Minerva!
Oh, hear me:

Oh, goddess wise
That lovest light
Endow with sight
Their unillumin'd eyes.

At this my call,
A fervent few
Have come to woo
The rays that from thee fall,
That from thee fall.

Oh, goddess wise
That lovest light,
That lovest light,

Let fervent words and fervent thoughts be mine,
That I may lead them to thy sacred shrine!
Let fervent words and fervent thoughts be mine,

That I may lead them to thy sacred shrine,
I may lead them to thy sacred shrine, thy sacred shrine!

Ida. Women of Adamant, fair Neophytes -
Who thirst for such instruction as we give,
Attend, while I unfold a parable.
The elephant is mightier than Man,
Yet Man subdues him. Why? The elephant
Is elephantine everywhere but here (*tapping her forehead*),
And Man, whose brain is to the elephant's
As Woman's brain to Man's - (that's rule of three), -
Conquers the foolish giant of the woods,
As Woman, in her turn, shall conquer Man.
In Mathematics, Woman leads the way;
The narrow-minded pedant still believes
That two and two make four! Why, we can prove,
We women - household drudges as we are -
That two and two make five - or three - or seven;
Or five and twenty, if the case demands!
Diplomacy? The wiliest diplomat
Is absolutely helpless in our hands.
He wheedles monarchs - Woman wheedles him!
Logic? Why, tyrant Man himself admits
It's a waste of time to argue with a woman!
Then we excel in social qualities:
Though man professes that he holds our sex
In utter scorn, I venture to believe
He'd rather pass the day with one of you,
Than with five hundred of his fellow-men!
In all things we excel. Believing this,
A hundred maidens here have sworn to place
Their feet upon his neck. If we succeed,
We'll treat him better than he treated us:
But if we fail, why, then let hope fail too!
Let no one care a penny how she looks -
Let red be worn with yellow - blue with green -
Crimson with scarlet - violet with blue!
Let all your things misfit, and you yourselves
At inconvenient moments come undone!
Let hair-pins lose their virtue: let the hook
Disdain the fascination of the eye -
The bashful button modestly evade
The soft embraces of the button-hole!
Let old associations all dissolve,
Let Swan secede from Edgar - Gask from Gask,
Sewell from Cross - Lewis from Allenby!
In other words, let Chaos come again!

(Coming down) Who lectures in the Hall of Arts to-day?

Blanche. I, madam, on Abstract Philosophy.
There I propose considering, at length,
Three points - The Is, the Might Be, and the Must.
Whether the Is, from being actual fact,
Is more important than the vague Might Be,
Or the Might Be, from taking wider scope,
Is for that reason greater than the Is:
And lastly, how the Is and Might Be stand
Compared with the inevitable Must!

Ida. The subject's deep - how do you treat it, pray?

Blanche. Madam, I take three possibilities,
And strike a balance then between the three:
As thus: The Princess Ida Is our head,
The Lady Psyche Might Be, - Lady Blanche,
Neglected Blanche, inevitably Must.
Given these three hypotheses - to find
The actual betting against each of them!

Ida. Your theme's ambitious: pray you bear in mind
Who highest soar fall farthest. Fare you well,
You and your pupils! Maidens, follow me.

Exeunt PRINCESS IDA and maidens. Manet LADY BLANCHE.

No: 10a - EXEUNT FOR PRINCESS IDA & GIRLS

Chorus. And thus to empyrean height
Of ev'ry kind of lore,
In search of wisdom's pure delight,
Ambitiously we soar.
And all the knowledge we possess,
We mutually impart,
We mutually impart, impart.

Blanche. I should command here - I was born to rule,
But do I rule? I don't. Why? I don't know.
I shall some day. Not yet, I bide my time.
I once was Some One - and the Was Will Be.
The Present as we speak becomes the Past,
The Past repeats itself, and so is Future!
This sounds involved. It's not. It's right enough.

No: 11 - SONG (Lady Blanche)⁴

Blanche. Come mighty Must!
 Inevitable Shall!
 In thee I trust.
 Time weaves my coronal!
 Go, mocking Is!
 Go, disappointing Was!
 That I am this
 Ye are the cursed cause!
 Ye are the cursed cause!

 Yet humble second shall be first,
 I wean
 And dead and buried be the curst
 Has Been!

 Oh, weak Might Be!
 Oh, May, Might, Could, Would, Should!
 How pow'rless ye
 For evil or for good!
 In ev'ry sense
 Your moods I cheerless call.
 Whate'er your tense
 Ye are imperfect all.

 Ye have deceiv'd the trust I've shown
 In ye!
 Ye have deceiv'd the trust I've shown
 In ye!
 I've shown in ye!

 Away! The Mighty Must alone
 Shall be!

Exit LADY BLANCHE

*Enter HILARION, CYRIL, and FLORIAN, climbing over wall, and creeping cautiously
among the trees and rocks at the back of the stage.*

No: 12 - TRIO (Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)

All. Gently, gently,
 Evidently
 We are safe so far,
 After scaling
 Fence and paling,
 Here, at last, we are!

⁴ This song was omitted from performance for many years after the death of Bertha Lewis in 1931. However, performances by the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company in the late 1970's did reinstate the number and it is usually included in amateur productions.

Florian. In this college,
Useful knowledge
Ev'rywhere one finds,
And already,
Growing steady,
We've enlarged our minds

Cyril. We learnt that prickly cactus
Has power to attract us
When we fall.

All. When we fall!

Hilarion. That nothing man unsettles
Like a bed of stinging nettles,
Short or tall.

All. Short or tall!

Florian. That bull-dogs feed on throttles -
That we don't like broken bottles
On a wall.

All. On a wall!

Hilarion. That spring-guns breathe defiance!
And that burglary's a science
After all!

All. After all!

Florian. A Woman's college! maddest folly going!
What can girls learn within its walls worth knowing?
I'll lay a crown (the Princess shall decide it)
I'll teach them twice as much in half-an-hour outside it.

Hilarion. Hush, scoffer; ere you sound your puny thunder,
List to their aims, and bow your head in wonder!

They intend to send a wire
To the moon

Cyril & Florian. To the moon;

Hilarion. And they'll set the Thames on fire
Very soon

Cyril & Florian. Very soon;

Hilarion. Then they'll learn to make silk purses
With their rigs

Cyril & Florian. With their rigs.

Hilarion. From the ears of Lady Circe's
Piggy-wigs

Cyril & Florian. Piggy-wigs.

Hilarion. And weasels at their slumbers
They trepan

Cyril & Florian. They trepan;

Hilarion. To get sunbeams from cucumbers
They've a plan

Cyril & Florian. They've a plan.

Hilarion. They've a firmly rooted notion
They can cross the Polar Ocean,
And they'll find Perpetual Motion,
If they can

All. If they can.

These are the phenomena
That ev'ry pretty domina
Is hoping at her Universitee we shall see.
These are the phenomena
That ev'ry pretty domina
Is hoping at her Universitee we shall see!

Cyril. As for fashion, they forswear it,
So they say

Hilarion & Florian. So they say;

Cyril. And the circle - they will square it
Some fine day

Hilarion & Florian. Some fine day;

Cyril. Then the little pigs they're teaching
For to fly

Hilarion & Florian. For to fly;

Cyril. **And they'll practice what they're preaching,**⁵
By and by

Hilarion & Florian. By and by!

⁵ This was originally "And the niggers they'll be bleaching, By and by" but was changed at the time of the 1954 D'Oyly Carte revival for the same reasons as the word "nigger" had been removed from THE MIKADO in 1948. However, the 1965 recording under Sir Malcolm Sargent has "And the Negros they'll be bleaching".

Cyril. Each newly joined aspirant
 To the clan

Hilarion & Florian. To the clan

Cyril. Must repudiate the tyrant
 Known as Man

Hilarion & Florian. Known as Man.

Cyril. They'll mock at him and flout him,
 For they do not care about him
 And they're "going to do without him"
 If they can

All. If they can!

 These are the phenomena
 That ev'ry pretty domina
 Is hoping at her Universitee we shall see.
 These are the phenomena
 That ev'ry pretty domina
 Is hoping at her Universitee we shall see!

 In this college,
 Useful knowledge
 Ev'rywhere one finds,
 And already,
 Growing steady,
 We've enlarged our minds,
 We've enlarged our minds!

Hilarion. So that's the Princess Ida's castle! Well,
 They must be lovely girls, indeed, if it requires
 Such walls as those to keep intruders off!

Cyril. To keep men off is only half their charge,
 And that the easier half. I much suspect
 The object of these walls is not so much
 To keep men off as keep the maidens in!

Florian. But what are these? (*Examining some Collegiate robes*)

Hilarion. (*looking at them*) Why, Academic robes,
 Worn by the lady undergraduates
 When they matriculate. Let's try them on. (*They do so.*)
 Why, see - we're covered to the very toes.
 Three lovely lady undergraduates
 Who, weary of the world and all its wooing - (*pose*)

Florian. And penitent for deeds there's no undoing - (*pose*)

Cyrl. Looked at askance by well-conducted maids - (*pose*)

All. Seek sanctuary in these classic shades!

No: 13 - TRIO (Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)

Hilarion. I am a maiden, cold and stately,
Heartless I, with face divine.
What do I want with a heart, innately?
Every heart I meet is mine!
Every heart I meet is mine, is mine!

All. Haughty, humble, coy, or free,
Little care I what maid may be.
So that a maid is fair to see,
Ev'ry maid is the maid for me!

Dance

Cyrl. I am a maiden, frank and simple,
Brimming with joyous roguery;
Merriment lurks in ev'ry dimple
Nobody breaks more hearts than I!
Nobody breaks more hearts, more hearts than I

All. Haughty, humble, coy, or free,
Little care I what maid may be.
So that a maid is fair to see,
Ev'ry maid is the maid for me!

Dance

Florian. I am a maiden coyly blushing,
Timid am I as a startled hind;
Every suitor sets me flushing,
Every suitor sets me flushing:
I am the maid that wins mankind!

All. Haughty, humble, coy, or free,
Little care I what maid may be.
So that a maid is fair to see,
Ev'ry maid is the maid for me!

Haughty, humble, coy, or free,
Little care I what maid may be.
So that a maid is fair to see,
Ev'ry maid is the maid for me!

Enter PRINCESS IDA, reading. She does not see them.

Florian. But who comes here? The Princess, as I live!
What shall we do?

Hilarion. *(Aside)* Why, we must brave it out!
(Aloud) Madam, accept our humblest reverence.

They bow, then suddenly recollecting themselves, curtsey.

Ida. *(Surprised)* We greet you, ladies. What would you
with us?

Hilarion. *(Aside to CYRIL)* What shall I say? *(Aloud)* We are three students, ma'am,
Three well-born maids of liberal estate,
Who wish to join this University.

*HILARION and FLORIAN curtsey again. CYRIL bows extravagantly, then, being recalled
to himself by FLORIAN, curtseys.*

Ida. If, as you say, you wish to join our ranks,
And will subscribe to all our rules, 'tis well.

Florian. To all your rules we cheerfully subscribe.

Ida. You say you're noblewomen. Well, you'll find
No sham degrees for noblewomen here.
You'll find no sizars here, or servitors,
Or other cruel distinctions, meant to draw
A line 'twixt rich and poor; you'll find no tufts
To mark nobility, except such tufts
As indicate nobility of brain.
As for your fellow-students, mark me well:
There are a hundred maids within these walls,
All good, all learned, and all beautiful:
They are prepared to love you: will you swear
To give the fullness of your love to them?

Hilarion. Upon our words and honours, Ma'am, we will!

Ida. But we go further: Will you undertake
That you will never marry any man?

Florian. Indeed we never will!

Ida. Consider well,
You must prefer our maids to all mankind!

Hilarion. To all mankind we much prefer your maids!

Cyril. We should be dolts indeed, if we did not, seeing how fair -

Hilarion. *(Aside to Cyril)* Take care - that's rather strong!

Ida. But have you left no lovers at your home
Who may pursue you here?

Hilarion. No, madam, none.
We're homely ladies, as no doubt you see,
And we have never fished for lover's love.
We smile at girls who deck themselves with gems,
False hair and meretricious ornament,
To chain the fleeting fancy of a man,
But do not imitate them. What we have
Of hair, is all our own. Our colour, too,
Unladylike, but not unwomanly,
Is Nature's handiwork, and man has learnt
To reckon Nature an impertinence.

Ida. Well, beauty counts for naught within these walls;
If all you say is true, you'll pass with us
A happy, happy time!

Cyril. If, as you say,
A hundred lovely maidens wait within,
To welcome us with smiles and open arms,
I think there's very little doubt we shall!

No: 14 - QUARTET (Princess, Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)

Ida. The world is but a broken toy,
Its pleasure hollow - false its joy,
Unreal its loveliest hue,
Alas!
Its pains alone are true,
Alas!
Its pains alone are true.

Hilarion. The world is ev'rything you say,
The world we think has had its day.
Its merriment is slow.
Alas!
We've tried it, and we know,
Alas!
We've tried it and we know.

All. Unreal its loveliest hue,
Its pains alone are true,

Ida. Alas!

All. The world is but a broken toy,⁶
Its pleasure hollow - false its joy,
Unreal its loveliest hue,

⁶ Originally, the three men sang "The world is but a broken toy,/We freely give it up with joy,/Unreal it's loveliest hue,/Alas!/We quite agree with you,/Alas!/We quite agree with you!" whilst Ida sang the words as reproduced above.

Alas!
Its pains alone are true,
Alas!
Its pains alone are true!

Florian. Unreal its loveliest hue,

3 Men. Unreal its loveliest hue,

Ida.

Un –
real - -
- -
- - its loveliest hue

Cyril & Florian.

A –
las!
Alas!

Hilarion.

Un –
real its loveliest hue
Alas!

All. Alas!
Alas!
Its pains alone are true.

Exit PRINCESS IDA. The three Gentlemen watch her off. LADY PSYCHE enters, and regards them with amazement

Hilarion. I'faith, the plunge is taken, gentlemen!
For, willy-nilly, we are maidens now,
And maids against our will we must remain.

All laugh heartily.

Psyche. *(Aside)* These ladies are unseemly in their mirth.

The gentlemen see her, and, in confusion, resume their modest demeanour.

Florian. *(Aside)* Here's a catastrophe, Hilarion!
This is my sister! She'll remember me,
Though years have passed since she and I have met!

Hilarion. *(Aside to FLORIAN)* Then make a virtue of necessity,
And trust our secret to her gentle care.

Florian. *(To Psyche, who has watched Cyril in amazement)*
Psyche! Why, don't you know me? Florian!

Psyche. *(Amazed)* Why, Florian!

Florian. My sister! *(Embraces her)*

Psyche. Oh, my dear! What are you doing here - and who are these?

Hilarion. I am that Prince Hilarion to whom
Your Princess is betrothed. I come to claim

Her plighted love. Your brother Florian
And Cyril came to see me safely through.

Psyche. The Prince Hilarion? Cyril too? How strange!
My earliest playfellows!

Hilarion. Why, let me look!
Are you that learned little Psyche who
At school alarmed her mates because she called
A buttercup "ranunculus bulbosus"?

Cyril. Are you indeed that Lady Psyche, who
At children's parties, drove the conjuror wild,
Explaining all his tricks before he did them?

Hilarion. Are you that learned little Psyche, who
At dinner parties, brought in to dessert,
Would tackle visitors with "You don't know
Who first determined longitude - I do -
Hipparchus 'twas - B. C. one sixty-three!"
Are you indeed that small phenomenon?

Psyche. That small phenomenon indeed am I!
But gentlemen, 'tis death to enter here:
We have all promised to renounce mankind!

Florian. Renounce mankind!? On what ground do you base
This senseless resolution?

Psyche. Senseless? No.
We are all taught, and, being taught, believe
That Man, sprung from an Ape, is Ape at heart.

Cyril. That's rather strong.

Psyche. The truth is always strong!

No: 15 - SONG (Lady Psyche, with Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)

Psyche. A Lady fair, of lineage high,
Was loved by an Ape, in the days gone by.
The Maid was radiant as the sun,
The Ape was a most unsightly one,
The Ape was a most unsightly one -
So it would not do -
His scheme fell through,
For the Maid, when his love took formal shape,
Express'd such terror
At his monstrous error,
That he stammer'd an apology and made his 'scape,
The picture of a disconcerted Ape.

With a view to rise in the social scale,
He shaved his bristles and he docked his tail,
He grew mustachios, and he took his tub,
And he paid a guinea to a toilet club,
He paid a guinea to a toilet club -
But it would not do,
The scheme fell through -
For the Maid was Beauty's fairest Queen,
With golden tresses,
Like a real princess's,
While the Ape, despite his razor keen,
Was the apiest Ape that ever was seen!

He bought white ties, and he bought dress suits,
He crammed his feet into bright tight boots -
And to start in life on a brand-new plan,
He christen'd himself Darwinian Man!
He christen'd himself Darwinian Man -
But it would not do,
The scheme fell through -
For the Maiden fair, whom the monkey crav'd,
Was a radiant Being,
With brain far-seeing -
While Darwinian Man, though well-behav'd,
At best is only a monkey shav'd!

3 Men. For the Maiden fair, whom the monkey crav'd,

All. Was a radiant being,
With a brain far-seeing -
While Darwinian Man, though well-behav'd,
At best is only a monkey shav'd!

During this, MELISSA has entered unobserved; she looks on in amazement.

Melissa. *(Coming down)* Oh, Lady Psyche!

Psyche. *(Terrified)* What! You heard us then?
Oh, all is lost!

Melissa. Not so! I'll breathe no word!
(Advancing in astonishment to FLORIAN)
How marvelously strange! and are you then
Indeed young men?

Florian. Well, yes, just now we are -
But hope by dint of study to become,
In course of time, young women.

Melissa. *(Eagerly)* No, no, no -
Oh, don't do that! Is this indeed a man?

I've often heard of them, but, till to-day,
Never set eyes on one. They told me men
Were hideous, idiotic, and deformed!
They are quite as beautiful as women are!
As beautiful, they're infinitely more so!
Their cheeks have not that pulpy softness which
One gets so weary of in womankind:
Their features are more marked - and - oh, their chins!
(Feeling FLORIAN's chin)
How curious!

Florian. I fear it's rather rough.

Melissa. *(Eagerly)* Oh, don't apologize - I like it so!

No: 16 - QUINTET (Psyche, Melissa, Cyril, Hilarion and Florian)

Psyche. The woman of the wisest win
May sometimes be mistaken, O!
In Ida's views, I must admit,
My faith is somewhat shaken O!

Cyril. On every other point than this
Her learning is untainted, O!
But Man's a theme with which she is
Entirely unacquainted, O!
-acquainted, O!
-acquainted, O!
Entirely unacquainted, O!

All. Then jump for joy and gaily bound,
The truth is found - the truth is found!
Set bells a-ringing through the air -
Ring here and there and ev'rywhere -

3 Men. And echo forth the joyous sound,

All. The truth is found - the truth is found!

3 Men. And echo forth the joyous sound,

All. The truth is found - the truth is found!
And echo forth the joyous sound,
The truth is found - the truth is found!

Dance

Melissa. My natural instinct teaches me
(And instinct is important, O!)
You're ev'rything you ought to be,
And nothing that you oughtn't, O!

Hilarion. That fact was seen at once by you
In casual conversation, O!
Which is most creditable to
Your powers of observation, O!
-servation, O!
-servation, O!
Your powers of observation, O!

All. Then jump for joy and gaily bound,
The truth is found, the truth is found!
Set bells a-ringing through the air,
Ring here and there and ev'rywhere.

3 Men. And echo forth the joyous sound,

All. The truth is found - the truth is found!

3 Men. And echo forth the joyous sound,

All. The truth is found - the truth is found!
And echo forth the joyous sound,
The truth is found - the truth is found!

*Exeunt PSYCHE, HILARION, CYRIL and FLORIAN, MELISSA going.
Enter LADY BLANCHE.*

Blanche. Melissa!

Melissa. *(Returning)* Mother!

Blanche. Here - a word with you.
Those are the three new students?

Melissa. *(Confused)* Yes, they are.
They're charming girls.

Blanche. Particularly so.
So graceful, and so very womanly!
So skilled in all a girl's accomplishments!

Melissa. *(Confused)* Yes - very skilled.

Blanche. They sing so nicely too!

Melissa. They do sing nicely!

Blanche. Humph! It's very odd.
Two are tenors, one is a baritone!

Melissa. *(Much agitated)* They've all got colds!

Blanche. Colds! Bah! D'ye think I'm blind?
These "girls" are men disguised!

Melissa. Oh no - indeed!
You wrong these gentlemen - I mean - why, see,
Here is an etui dropped by one of them (*picking up an etui*).
Containing scissors, needles, and -

Blanche. (*Opening it*) Cigars!
Why, these are men! And you knew this, you minx!

Melissa. Oh, spare them - they are gentlemen indeed.
The Prince Hilarion (married years ago
To Princess Ida) with two trusted friends!
Consider, mother, he's her husband now,
And has been, twenty years! Consider, too,
You're only second here - you should be first.
Assist the Prince's plan, and when he gains
The Princess Ida, why, you will be first.
You will design the fashions - think of that -
And always serve out all the punishments!
The scheme is harmless, mother - wink at it!

Blanche. (*Aside*) The prospect's tempting! Well, well, well, I'll try -
Though I've not winked at anything for years!
'Tis but one step towards my destiny -
The mighty Must! the inevitable Shall!

No: 17 - DUET (Melissa and Lady Blanche)

Melissa. Now wouldn't you like to rule the roast ⁷
And guide this University?

Blanche. I must agree,
'Twould pleasant be,
(Sing hey, a Proper Pride!)

Melissa. And wouldn't you like to clear the coast,
Of malice and perversity?

Blanche. Without a doubt,
I'll bundle 'em out,
(Sing hey, when I preside!)

Both. Sing hey!
Sing hoity toity! Sorry for some!
Sing marry, come up, and my/her day will come!
Sing Proper Pride
Is the horse to ride,
And Happy-go-lucky, my Lady, O!

⁷ Some editions print 'roast' as here, others print 'roost'. Original material indicates clearly that Gilbert intended 'roast'. To "rule the roast" was a term common in the fifteenth century and implied that whoever controlled the food chain was the dominant force.

Blanche. For years I've writhed beneath her sneers,
Although a born Plantagenet!

Melissa. You're much too meek,
Or you would speak
(Sing hey, I'll say no more!)

Blanche. Her elder I, by several years,
Although you'd ne'er imagine it.

Melissa. Sing, so I've heard
But never a word
Have I e'er believ'd before!

Both. Sing hey!
Sing hoity toity! Sorry for some!
Sing marry, come up, and my/her day will come!
Sing, she shall learn
That a worm will turn.
Sing Happy-go-lucky, my Lady, O!

Exit LADY BLANCHE

Melissa. Saved for a time, at least!

Enter FLORIAN, on tiptoe

Florian. (*Whispering*) Melissa - come!

Melissa. Oh, sir! you must away from this at once -
My mother guessed your sex! It was my fault -
I blushed and stammered so that she exclaimed,
"Can these be men?" Then, seeing this, "Why these -"
"Are men", she would have added, but "are men"
Stuck in her throat! She keeps your secret, sir,
For reasons of her own - but fly from this
And take me with you - that is - no - not that!

Florian. I'll go, but not without you! (*Bell*) Why, what's that?

Melissa. The luncheon bell.

Florian. I'll wait for luncheon then!

Enter HILARION with PRINCESS IDA, CYRIL with PSYCHE, LADY BLANCHE and ladies. Also "Daughters of the Plough" bearing luncheon.

No: 18 - CHORUS OF GIRLS & SOLOS (Blanche and Cyril)

Chorus. Merrily ring the luncheon bell!
Merrily ring the luncheon bell!
Here in meadow of asphodel,

Feast we body and mind as well,
Merrily ring the luncheon

Sopranos⁸

bell! - - - - -
Ring - - - - -
oh - -
ring - - - - -
Oh, - -

Altos

bell! Oh merrily
ring the luncheon
bell, Oh
merrily, merrily, merrily,
merrily

Chorus. Merrily ring the luncheon bell, the luncheon bell!

Blanche. Hunger, I beg to state,
Is highly indelicate.
This is a fact profoundly true,
So learn your appetites to subdue.

All. Yes, yes,
We'll learn our appetites to subdue!

Cyril. Madam, your words so wise,
Nobody should despise,
Curs'd with appetite keen I am
And I'll subdue it -
I'll subdue it -
I'll subdue it with cold roast lamb!

All. Yes - yes -
We'll subdue it with cold roast lamb!

Merrily ring the luncheon bell!
Merrily ring the luncheon bell!
Oh

Sopranos

ring - - - - -
Oh,

Altos

merrily, merrily,
merrily, merrily,

Chorus. Merrily ring the luncheon bell, the luncheon bell!

Ida. You say you know the court of Hildebrand?
There is a Prince there - I forget his name -

Hilarion. Hilarion?

Ida. Exactly - is he well?

⁸ The vocal score designates the split here as 1st and 2nd Sopranos – this is a mistake, it should be Sopranos and Altos

Hilarion. If it be well to droop and pine and mope,
To sigh "Oh, Ida! Ida!" all day long,
"Ida! my love! my life! Oh, come to me!"
If it be well, I say, to do all this,
Then Prince Hilarion is very well.

Ida. He breathes our name? Well, it's a common one!
And is the booby comely?

Hilarion. Pretty well.
I've heard it said that if I dressed myself
In Prince Hilarion's clothes (supposing this
Consisted with my maiden modesty),
I might be taken for Hilarion's self.
But what is this to you or me, who think
Of all mankind with undisguised contempt?

Ida. Contempt? Why, damsel, when I think of man,
Contempt is not the word.

Cyril. (*Getting tipsy*) I'm sure of that,
Or if it is, it surely should not be!

Hilarion. (*Aside to Cyril*) Be quiet, idiot, or they'll find us out.

Cyril. The Prince Hilarion's a goodly lad!

Ida. You know him then?

Cyril. (*Tipsily*) I rather think I do!
We are inseparables!

Ida. Why, what's this?
You love him then?

Cyril. We do indeed - all three!

Hilarion. Madam, she jests! (*Aside to Cyril*) Remember where you are!

Cyril. Jests? Not at all! Why, bless my heart alive,
You and Hilarion, when at the Court,
Rode the same horse!

Ida. (*Horried*) Astride?

Cyril. Of course! Why not?
Wore the same clothes - and once or twice, I think,
Got tipsy in the same good company!

Ida. Well, these are nice young ladies, on my word!

Cyril. (*Tipsy*) Don't you remember that old kissing-song
He'd sing to blushing Mistress Lalage,
The hostess of the Pigeons? Thus it ran:

No: 19 - SONG (Cyril)⁹

During symphony HILARION and FLORIAN try to stop CYRIL. He shakes them off angrily.

Cyril. Would you know the kind of maid
Sets my heart aflame-a?
Eyes must be downcast and staid,
Cheeks must flush for shame-a!
She may neither dance nor sing,
But, demure in everything,
Hang her head in modest way,
With pouting lips, with pouting lips that seem to say,

"Oh kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die of shame-a!"
Please you, that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart aflame-a!
"Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die of shame-a!"
Please you, that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart aflame-a!

When a maid is bold and gay,
With a tongue goes clang-a,
Flaunting it in brave array,
Maiden may go hang-a
Sunflow'r gay and holly-hock
Never shall my garden stock;
Mine the blushing rose of May,
With pouting lips, with pouting lips that seem to say,

"Oh kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die for shame-a!"
Please you, that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart aflame-a!
"Kiss me, kiss me, kiss me, kiss me,
Though I die of shame-a!"
Please you, that's the kind of maid
Sets my heart aflame-a!

⁹ Over the years the habit of halting the action either for applause or, indeed, to grant an encore, has crept into performance. Wherever possible this should be avoided to allow the action to sweep on unchecked through the drama of the Melodrama into the Finale. If it is found necessary to stop, the music should recommence with the play-out – VSP 140, last line, Bar 4 in the current Chappell edition of the vocal score.

MELODRAME

Music continues under the dialogue through to the Finale.

Ida. Infamous creature, get you hence away!

HILARION, Who has been with difficulty restrained by FLORIAN during this song, breaks from him and strikes CYRIL furiously on the breast.

Hilarion. Dog! There is something more to sing about!

Cyril. *(Sobered)* Hilarion, are you mad?

Ida. *(Horried)* Hilarion? Help!
Why, these are men! Lost! lost! betrayed, undone!

Running on to bridge

Girls, get you hence! Man-monsters, if you dare
Approach one step, I -- Ah!

Loses her balance and falls into the stream

Psyche. Oh! Save her, sir!

Blanche. It's useless, sir - you'll only catch your death!

HILARION springs in.

Sach. He catches her!

Melissa. And now he lets her go!
Again she's in his grasp -

Psyche. And now she's not,
He seizes her back hair!

Blanche. *(Not looking)* And it comes off!

Psyche. No, no! She's saved! - she's saved! - she's saved! - she's saved!

HILARION is seen swimming with PRINCESS IDA in one arm. They are brought to land.

No: 20 - FINALE, ACT I (Princess Ida, Hildebrand, Melissa, Lady Psyche, Blanche, Cyril, Hilarion, Florian, Arac, Guron, Scynthius and Chorus of Girls and Men)

Girls. Oh joy! our chief is sav'd
And by Hilarion's hand;
The torrent fierce he brav'd,
And brought her safe to land!
For his intrusion we must own
This doughty deed may well atone!

Ida. Stand forth ye three,
Who-e'er ye be,
And hearken to our stern decree!

Cyril & Florian.
Have mercy, O Lady
disregard your
oaths!

Hilarion.
Have
mer -
cy!

Ida. I know no mercy, men in women's clothes!
The man whose sacrilegious eyes
Invade our strict seclusion, dies.
Arrest the coarse intruding spies!

They are arrested by the "Daughters of the Plough"

Girls. Have mercy, O lady - disregard your oaths.

Ida. I know not mercy, men in women's clothes!

CYRIL & FLORIAN are bound

SONG - Hilarion

Hilarion. Whom thou has chain'd must wear his chain,
Thou canst not set him free,
He wrestles with his bonds in vain
Who lives by loving thee!
If heart of stone for heart of fire,
Be all thou hast to give,
If dead to my heart's desire,
Why should I wish to live?

Cyril & Florian.
Have
mercy, O
lady!

Girls.
Have
mer -
cy!

Hilarion. No word of thine - no stern command
Can teach my heart to rove,
Then rather perish by thy hand,
Than live without they love!
A loveless life apart from thee
Were hopeless slavery,
Were hopeless slavery,
If kindly death will set me free,
Why should I fear to die?

Girls. Have mercy!

Hilarion. If kindly death

Girls. Have mercy!

Hilarion. Will set me free,
If kindly death will set me free,
Why should I fear,
Why should I fear to die?

He is bound by two of the attendants, the three gentlemen are marched off.

Enter MELISSA.¹⁰

Melissa. Madam, without the castle walls
An armed band
Demand admittance to our halls
For Hildebrand!

All. Oh, horror!

Ida. Deny them!
We will defy them!

All. Too late - too late!
The castle gate
Is battered by them!

The gate yields. Soldiers rush in. ARAC, GURON, and SCYNTHIUS are with them, but with their hands handcuffed.

Men. Walls and fences scaling,
Promptly we appear;
Walls are unavailing,
We have enter'd here.
Female execration,
Stifle if you're wise,
Stop your lamentations,
Dry your pretty eyes -
Stop your lamentations,
Dry your pretty, pretty

Girls.

Rend the air with wailing.
Shed the shameful tear!
Man has enter'd here.
Walls are unavailing.

Men.

eyes!

¹⁰ This is an odd stage direction because at no previous point is there a corresponding direction that Melissa exits.

Rend the air with
wail -
-
ing.
Shed the
shameful tear!
Man has
enter'd here.
Walls are una -
vailing.

Man
has - - - - en -
- - - - - ter'd -
- - - - - here!

Walls and fences scaling,
Promptly we appear;
Walls are unavailing,
We have enter'd here.
Female execration,
Stifle if you're wise,
Stop your lamentations,
Dry your pretty eyes -
Stop your lamentations,
Dry your pretty, pretty eyes!

Female execration,
Stifle if you're wise,
Stop your lamentations,
Dry your pretty eyes!

Enter HILDEBRAND

RECITATIVE

- Ida. Audacious tyrant, do you dare
To beard a maiden in her lair?
- Hild. Since you inquire,
We've no desire
To beard a maiden here, or anywhere!
- Soldiers. No, no. We've no desire
To beard a maiden here or anywhere!
No, no, no, no!

SOLO - Hildebrand

- Hild. Some years ago,
No doubt you know
(And if you don't I'll tell you so)
You gave your troth
Upon your oath
To Hilarion my son.
A vow you make
You must not break,
(If you think you may, it's a great mistake),
For a bride's a bride
Though the knot were tied
At the early age of one!
- A vow you make
You must not break,
(If you think you may, it's a great mistake),
For a bride's a bride

Though the knot were tied
At the early age of one!

And I'm a peppery kind of King,
Whose indisposed for parleying
To fit the wit of a bit of chit,
And that's the long and the short of it!

Soldiers. For he's a peppery kind of King,
Whose indisposed for parleying
To fit the wit of a bit of chit,
And that's the long and the short of it!

Hild. If you decide
To pocket your pride
And let Hilarion claim his bride,
Why, well and good,
It's understood
We'll let bygones go by -
But if you choose
To sulk in the blues
I'll make the whole of you shake in your shoes.
I'll storm your walls,
And level your halls,
In the winking of an eye!

But if you choose
To sulk in the blues
I'll make the whole of you shake in your shoes.
I'll storm your walls,
And level your halls,
In the winking of an eye!

For I'm a peppery Potentate,
Who's little inclined his claim to bate,
To fit the wit of a bit of a chit,
And that's the long and the short of it!

Soldiers. For he's a peppery Potentate,
Who's little inclined his claim to bate,
To fit the wit of a bit of a chit,
And that's the long and the short of it!

TRIO - Arac, Guron & Scynthius

All 3. We may remark, though nothing can
Dismay us,
That if you thwart this gentleman,
He'll slay us.
We don't fear death, of course - we're taught
To shame it;

But still upon the whole we thought
We'd name it.

To each other

Scynthus. Yes!

Guron. Yes!

Arac. Yes!

All 3. Better p'r'aps to name it.

Our interests we would not press
With chatter,
Three hulking brothers more or less
Don't matter;
If you'd pooh-pooh this monarch's plan
Pooh-pooh it,
But when he says he'll hang a man,
He'll do it.

To each other

Scynthus. Yes!

Guron. Yes!

Arac. Yes!

All 3. Devil doubt he'll do it.

Ida. Be reassured, nor fear his anger blind,
His menaces are idle as the wind.
He dares not kill you - vengeance lurks behind!

3 Knights. We rather think he dares, but never, never mind!

Hild.
I
rather
think I
dare, but
never, never mind!

Enough of
parley
- - - - as a
special boon -
We give you 'till tomorrow after -
noon;

3 Knights.
No!
No!
No!
never, never mind!
No,
no,
never, never mind!
No! no! never, never mind!

Hild. Release Hilarion, then,
And be his bride
Or you'll incur the guilt of fratricide!

Ida. To yield at once to such a foe
With shame we're rife;
So quick! away with him, although
He sav'd my life!
That he is fair, and strong, and tall
Is very evident to all,
Yet I will die,
Yet I will die, before I call myself his

Ida.
wife! - - - - -
- - - - -

That
he is
fair and
strong and
tall,

Is - - - - -
- - - - -
very
evi -
dent to
all

Yet
I will
die, will die before I call
Myself his wife!

All Others.
Oh, yield at once, 'twere better so,
Than risk a strife!
And let the Prince Hilarion go.
He saved thy life!

Hi -
la-rion's
fair,
and
strong and tall,

A
worse mis -
for -
tune
might befall.

It's
Not so dreadful after all,
To be his wife!

Ida. Though I am but a girl
Defiance thus I hurl
Our banners all
On outer wall
We fearlessly unfurl,

Girls.

Tho' she is but a girl,
Defiance thus to hurl,
Our banners all
On outer wall
We fearlessly unfurl.

Men.

Tho' but a girl,
Defiance to hurl,
Their banners all ¹¹
On outer wall
They fearlessly unfurl.

Men. Their banners all –

Girls. Our banners all –

Men. On outer wall –

Girls. On outer wall –

All. They/We fearlessly unfurl.

Ida.

To yield at once to such a foe
With shame we're rife;
So quick! away with him, although
He sav'd my life!
That he is fair, and strong, and tall
Is very evident to all,
Yet I will die,
Will die, before I call myself his wife!

The Rest.

Oh, yield
at once, 'twere
better so, Oh, yield
Oh, yield at
once! Hilarion's fair and strong and tall!
A worse misfortune might befall!
It's not
so dreadful after all, to be his wife!

Girls (later with Ida & Psyche).

Defiance, defiance,
Defiance thus we hurl.
Defiance, defi –
ance, Defiance,
Defiance,
Defiance thus we hurl.

Men.

Their banners all on outer wall
They fearlessly, fearlessly unfurl.
Their banners all on outer wall
They fearlessly unfurl.
Their banners
They fearlessly unfurl.

All. Defiance,
Defiance!

PRINCESS IDA stands, surrounded by girls kneeling. HILDEBRAND and soldiers stand on built rocks at back and sides of stage. Picture.

END OF ACT I

¹¹ Note that the current Chappell edition of the vocal score has the men singing "Our banners all". The original vocal score, libretto and prompt book as approved by Gilbert have "Their banners all" and "They fearlessly unfurl."

ACT II

SCENE: - Outer Walls and Courtyard of Castle Adamant. MELISSA, SACHARISSA, and ladies discovered, armed with battleaxes.

No: 21 – CHORUS & SOLO (Melissa)

- Chorus. Death to the invader!
 Strike a deadly blow,
 As an old Crusader
 Struck his Paynim foe!
 Let our martial thunder
 Fill his soul with wonder,
 Tear his ranks asunder,
 Lay the tyrant low!
- Death to the invader!
 Strike a deadly blow,
 As an old Crusader
 Struck his Paynim foe!
- Melissa. Thus our courage, all untarnish'd,
 We're instructed to display;
 But to tell the truth unvarnish'd,
 We are more inclined to say,

 "Please you, do not hurt us,"
- All. "Do not hurt us, if it please you!"
- Melissa. "Please you let us be."
- All. "Let us be - let us be!"
- Melissa. "Soldiers disconcert us."
- All. "Disconcert us, if it please you!"
- Melissa. "Frighten'd maids are we!"
- All. "Maids are we, maids are we!"
- Melissa. Please you,
- All. Do not hurt us;
- Melissa. Please you,
- All. Let us be.
- Mel & Cho. Frighten'd maids are we, frighten'd maids are we!

Melissa. But 'twould be an error
To confess our terror,
So in Ida's name,
Boldly we exclaim:

Mel & Cho. Death to the invader!
Strike a deadly blow,
As an old Crusader
Struck his Paynim foe!

Flourish.

Enter PRINCESS IDA, armed, attended by BLANCHE and PSYCHE.

Ida. I like your spirit, girls! We have to meet
Stern bearded warriors in fight to-day;
Wear naught but what is necessary to
Preserve your dignity before their eyes,
And give your limbs full play.

Blanche. One moment, ma'am,
Here is a paradox we should not pass
Without inquiry. We are prone to say
"This thing is Needful - that, Superfluous" -
Yet they invariably co-exist!
We find the Needful comprehended in
The circle of the grand Superfluous,
Yet the Superfluous cannot be brought
Unless you're amply furnished with the Needful.
These singular considerations are -

Ida. Superfluous, yet not Needful - so you see
The terms may independently exist.
(To Ladies) Women of Adamant, we have to show
That women, educated to the task,
Can meet Man, face to face, on his own ground,
And beat him there. Now, let us set to work;
Where is our lady surgeon?

Sach. Madam, here!

Ida. We shall require your skill to heal the wounds
Of those that fall.

Sach. *(Alarmed)* What, heal the wounded?

Ida. Yes!

Sach. And cut off real live legs and arms?

Ida. Of course!

Sach. I wouldn't do it for a thousand pounds!

Ida. Why, how is this? Are you faint-hearted, girl?
You've often cut them off in theory!

Sach. In theory I'll cut them off again
With pleasure, and as often as you like,
But not in practice.

Ida. Coward! Get you hence,
I've craft enough for that, and courage too,
I'll do your work! My fusiliers, advance!,
Why, you are armed with axes! Gilded toys!
Where are your rifles, pray?

Chloe. Why, please you, ma'am,
We left them in the armoury, for fear
That in the heat and turmoil of the fight,
They might go off!

Ida. "They might!" Oh, craven souls!
Go off yourselves! Thank heaven I have a heart
That quails not at the thought of meeting men;
I will discharge your rifles! Off with you!

Exit CHLOE.

Where's my bandmistress?

Ada. Please you, ma'am, the band
Do not feel well, and can't come out today!

Ida. Why, this is flat rebellion! I've no time
To talk to them just now. But, happily,
I can play several instruments at once,
And I will drown the shrieks of those that fall
With trumpet music, such as soldiers love!
How stand we with respect to gunpowder?
My Lady Psyche - you who superintend
Our lab'ratory - are you well prepared
To blow these bearded rascals into shreds?

Psyche. Why, madam –

Ida. Well?

Psyche. Let us try gentler means.
We can dispense with fulminating grains
While we have eyes with which to flash our rage!
We can dispense with villainous saltpeter
While we have tongues with which to blow them up!

We can dispense, in short, with all the arts
That brutalize the practical polemist!

Ida. (*Contemptuously*) I never knew a more dispensing chemist!
Away, away - I'll meet these men alone
Since all my women have deserted me!

*Exeunt all but PRINCESS IDA, singing refrain of "Please you, do not hurt us",
pianissimo.*

Melissa.¹² Please you,

All. Do not hurt us;

Melissa. Please you,

All. Let us be.

Mel & Cho. Frighten'd maids are we, frighten'd maids are we!

Ida. So fail my cherished plans - so fails my faith -
And with it hope, and all that comes of hope!

No: 22 - SONG – Princess Ida¹³

Ida. I built upon a rock,
But ere Destruction's hand
Dealt equal lot
To Court and cot,
My rock had turn'd to sand!
I leant upon an oak,
But in the hour of need,
Alack-a-day,
My trusted stay
Was but a bruise-ed reed!
A bruise-ed reed!

Ah faithless rock,
My simple faith to mock!
Ah trait'rous oak,
Thy worthlessness to cloak,
Thy worthlessness to cloak!

I drew a sword of steel
But when to home and hearth
The battle's breath
Bore fire and death,
My sword was but a lath!

¹² See VSP 182, bars 2 – 9 of the current Chappell vocal score.

¹³ At some point – presumably in the 1920's, the order of this, and Gama's subsequent song, was reversed, necessitating a corresponding re-ordering of the dialogue. This change was not authorised by either Gilbert or Sullivan and therefore the format followed in this edition of the libretto should be followed.

I lit a beacon fire,
 But on a stormy day
 Of frost and rime,
 In wintertime,
 My fire had died away,
 Had died away!

Ah, coward steel,
 That fear can un-anneal!
 False fire indeed,
 To fail me in my need,
 To fail me in my need!

PRINCESS IDA Sinks upon a rock.

The musical score is for a piano introduction. It is in 3/4 time and marked 'Allegro agitato'. The piece begins with a piano (*p*) dynamic and features a series of triplets in the right hand. A crescendo (*cres.*) leads to a section marked *f* (forte), where the right hand plays chords. The score concludes with a final chord.

Enter CHLOE and all the Ladies¹⁴

Chloe. Madam, your father and your brothers claim
 An audience!

Ida. What do they do here?

Chloe. They come
 To fight for you!

Ida. Admit them!

Blanche. Infamous!
 One's brothers, ma'am, are men!

Ida. So I have heard.
 But all my women seem to fail me when

¹⁴ Immediately after Ida's song in the first edition of the vocal score, are the eight bars of melodrama shown above. It is not clear whether this was intended as underscore for the entrance of the Girls, or for the entrance of Gama, but the presence of the music in the score indicates that it was probably used during the initial production.

I need them most. In this emergency,
Even one's brothers may be turned to use.

Gama. (*Entering, pale and unnerved*) My daughter!

Ida. Father! Thou art free!

Gama. Aye, free!
Free as a tethered ass! I come to thee
With words from Hildebrand. Those duly given
I must return to blank captivity.
I'm free so far.

Ida. Your message.

Gama. Hildebrand
Is loth to war with women. Pit my sons,
My three brave sons, against these popinjays,
These tufted jack-a-dandy featherheads,
And on the issue let thy hand depend!

Ida. Insult on insult's head! Are we a stake
For fighting men? What fiend possesses thee,
That thou has come with offers such as these
From such as he to such an one as I?

Gama. I am possessed
By the pale devil of a shaking heart!
My stubborn will is bent. I dare not face
That devilish monarch's black malignity!
He tortures me with torments worse than death,
I haven't anything to grumble at!
He finds out what particular meats I love,
And gives me them. The very choicest wines,
The costliest robes - the richest rooms are mine.
He suffers none to thwart my simplest plan,
And gives strict orders none should contradict me!
He's made my life a curse! (*Weeps*)

Ida. My tortured father!

No: 23 - SONG (King Gama with Chorus of Girls

Gama. Whene'er I spoke ¹⁵
Sarcastic joke
Replete with malice spiteful,
This people mild
Politely smil'd,
And voted me delightful!

¹⁵ Some editions of the vocal score and libretto present this line as "Whene'er I poke". First editions of the vocal score, libretto and the official prompt book all have "spoke".

Now, when a wight
Sits up all night
Ill-natur'd jokes devising,
And all his wiles
Are met with smiles
It's hard, there's no disguising!

Ah! Oh, don't the days seem lank and long
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong,
And isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

Chorus. Oh, isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

Gama. When German bands
From music stands
Play'd Wagner imperfectly -
I bade them go -
They didn't say no,
But off they went directly!

The organ boys
They stopp'd their noise,
With readiness surprising,
And grinning herds
Of hurdy-gurds
Retired apologising!

Ah! Oh, don't the days seem lank and long
When all goes right and nothing goes wrong,
And isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

Chorus. Oh, isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

Gama. I offer'd gold
In sums untold
To all who'd contradict me -
I said I'd pay
A pound a day
To anyone who kick'd me -

I've brib'd with toys
Great vulgar boys
To utter something spiteful,
But, bless you, no!
They would be so

Confoundedly politeful!

Ah! In short, these aggravating lads,
They tickle my tastes, they feed my fads,
They give me this and they give me that,
And I've nothing whatever to grumble at!

Chorus. Oh, isn't your life extremely flat
With nothing whatever to grumble at!

GAMA Bursts into tears and falls sobbing on a seat.

Ida. My poor old father! How he must have suffered!
Well, well, I yield!

Gama. *(Hysterically)* She yields! I'm saved, I'm saved! *(Exit)*

Ida. Open the gates - admit these warriors,
Then get you all within the castle walls. *(Exit)*

The gates are opened and the Girls mount the battlements as HILDEBRAND enters with Soldiers. ARAC, GURON and SCYNTHIUS also enter.

No: 24 - Chorus of Ladies and Soldiers

Men. When anger spread his wing,
And all seems dark as night for it,
There's nothing but to fight for it,
But ere you pitch your ring,
Select a pretty site for it,
(This spot is suited quite for it,)
And then you gaily sing,
And then you gaily sing:

"Oh I love the jolly rattle
Of an ordeal by battle,
There's an end of tittle-tattle
When your enemy is dead.
It's an arrant molly-coddle
Fears a crack upon his noddle
And he's only fit to swaddle
In a downy feather-bed!

Men.

"Oh I love the jolly rattle
Of an ordeal by battle,
There's an end of tittle-tattle
When your enemy is dead.
It's an arrant molly-coddle
Fears a crack upon his noddle
And he's only fit to swaddle

Ladies.

For a fight's the kind
of thing
That I love to look
upon,
So let us sing,
Long live the King
And his son Hi -

In a downy feather-bed!

-larion!

All. For a fight's the kind of thing
That I love to look upon,
So let us sing,
Long live the King
And his son Hilarion!

During this, HILARION, FLORIAN, and CYRIL are brought out by the "Daughters of the Plough". They are still bound and wear the robes. Enter GAMA.

Gama. Hilarion! Cyril! Florian! dressed as women!
Is this indeed Hilarion?

Hilarion. Yes, it is!

Gama. Why, you look handsome in your women's clothes!
Stick to 'em! Men's attire becomes you not!
(To CYRIL and FLORIAN) And you, young ladies, will you please to pray
King Hildebrand to set me free again?
Hang on his neck and gaze into his eyes,
He never could resist a pretty face!

Hilarion. You dog, you'll find, though I wear woman's garb,
My sword is long and sharp!

Gama. Hush, pretty one!
Here's a virago! Here's a termagant!
If length and sharpness go for anything,
You'll want no sword while you can wag your tongue!

Cyril. What need to waste your words on such as he?
He's old and crippled.

Gama. Aye, but I've three sons,
Fine fellows, young and muscular, and brave,
They're well worth talking to! Come, what d'ye say?

Arac. Aye, pretty ones, engage yourselves with us,
If three rude warriors affright you not!

Hilarion. Old as you are, I'd wring your shrivelled neck
If you were not the Princess Ida's father.

Gama. If I were not the Princess Ida's father,
And so had not her brothers for my sons,
No doubt you'd wring my neck - in safety too!
Come, come, Hilarion, begin, begin!
Give them no quarter - they will give you none.
You've this advantage over warriors

Who kill their country's enemies for pay, -
You know what you are fighting for - look there!
(Pointing to Ladies on the battlements)

*HILARION, FLORIAN, and CYRIL are led off.*¹⁶

No: 25 - SONG (Arac, Guron, Scynthus and Chorus)

Arac. This helmet, I suppose,
Was meant to ward off blows,
It's very hot
And weighs a lot,
As many a guardsman knows,
As many a guardsman knows,
As many a guardsman knows,
As many a guardsman knows,
So off, so off that helmet goes.

Others. Yes, yes, yes,
So off that helmet goes!

(Giving their helmets to attendants)

Arac. This tight-fitting cuirass
Is but a useless mass,
It's made of steel,
And weighs a deal,
This tight-fitting cuirass
Is but a useless mass,
A man is but an ass
Who fights in a cuirass,
So off, so off goes that cuirass.

Others. Yes, yes, yes,
So off goes that cuirass!

(Removing cuirasses)

Arac. These brassets, truth to tell,
May look uncommon well,
But in a fight
They're much too tight,
They're like a lobster shell,
They're like a lobster shell!

Others. Yes, yes, yes,
They're like a lobster shell.

(Removing their brassets)

¹⁶ This stage direction is not in early editions of the libretto. It was presumably added to allow Hilarion, Cyril and Florian to change out of their women's robes.

Arac. These things I treat the same (*indicating leg pieces*)
(I quite forget their name.)
They turn one's legs
To cribbage pegs -
Their aid I thus disclaim,
Their aid I thus disclaim,
Though I forget their name,
Though I forget their name,
Their aid, their aid I thus disclaim!

Others. Yes, yes, yes,

All. Their aid we/they thus disclaim!

They remove their leg pieces and wear close-fitting shape suits.

Enter HIALRION, FLORIAN, and CYRIL

Desperate fight between the three Princes and the three Knights, during which the Ladies on the battlements and the Soldiers on the stage sing the following chorus

No: 26 - CHORUS DURING THE FIGHT

Chorus. This is our duty plain towards
Our Princess all immaculate,
We ought to bless her brothers' swords,
And piously ejaculate:
Oh, Hungary!
Oh, Hungary!
Oh, doughty sons of Hungary!
May all success
Attend and bless
Your warlike ironmongery!

Hilarion! Hilarion! Hilarion!

But if our hearts assert their sway,¹⁷
(And hearts are all fantastical)
We shall be more disposed to say
These words enthusiastical:
Hilarion!
Hilarion!
O prosper, Prince Hilarion!
In mode complete
May you defeat
Each meddlesome Hungarian!

Hilarion! Hilarion! Hilarion!

¹⁷ This second verse appears in some early editions of the libretto. Whether it was ever performed is unclear.

*By this time, ARAC, GURON, and SCYNTHIUS are on the ground, wounded -
HILARION, CYRIL and FLORIAN stand over them.*

Ida. *(Entering through gate and followed by Ladies.)*

Hold! stay your hands! - we yield ourselves to you!
Ladies, my brothers all lie bleeding there!
Bind up their wounds - but look the other way.
(Coming down) Is this the end? *(Bitterly to Lady Blanche)*
How say you, Lady Blanche -
Can I with dignity my post resign?
And if I do, will you then take my place?

Blanche. To answer this, it's meet that we consult
The great Potential Mysteries; I mean
The five Subjunctive Possibilities -
The May, the Might, the Would, the Could, the Should.
Can you resign? The Prince May claim you; if
He Might, you Could - and if you Should, I Would!

Ida. I thought as much! Then to my fate I yield -
So ends my cherished scheme! Oh, I had hoped
To band all women with my maiden throng,
And make them all abjure tyrannic Man!

Hild. A noble aim!

Ida. You ridicule it now;
But if I carried out this glorious scheme,
At my exalted name Posterity
Would bow in gratitude!

Hild. But pray reflect -
If you enlist all women in your cause,
And make them all abjure tyrannic Man,
The obvious question then arises, "How
Is this Posterity to be provided?"

Ida. I never thought of that! My Lady Blanche,
How do you solve the riddle?

Blanche. Don't ask me -
Abstract Philosophy won't answer it.
Take him - he is your Shall. Give in to Fate!

Ida. And you desert me. I alone am staunch!

Hilarion. Madam, you placed your trust in Woman - well,
Woman has failed you utterly - try Man,
Give him one chance, it's only fair - besides,
Women are far too precious, too divine,
To try unproven theories upon.

Experiments, the proverb says, are made
On humble subjects - try our grosser clay,
And mould it as you will!

Cyril. Remember, too
Dear Madam, if at any time you feel
A-weary of the Prince, you can return
To Castle Adamant, and rule your girls
As heretofore, you know.

Ida. And shall I find
The Lady Psyche here?

Psyche. If Cyril, ma'am,
Does not behave himself, I think you will.

Ida. And you Melissa, shall I find you here?

Melissa. Madam, however Florian turns out,
Unhesitatingly I answer, No!

Gama. Consider this, my love, if your mama
Had looked on matters from your point of view
(I wish she had), why where would you have been?

Blanche. There's an unbounded field of speculation,
On which I could discourse for hours!

Ida. No doubt!
We will not trouble you. Hilarion,
I have been wrong - I see my error now.
Take me, Hilarion - "We will walk this world
Yoked in all exercise of noble end!
And so through those dark gates across the wild
That no one knows!" Indeed, I love thee - Come!

No: 27 – FINALE ACT II

Ida. With joy abiding,
Together gliding
Through life's variety,
In sweet society,
And thus enthroning
The love I'm owning,
On this atoning
I will rely!

Chorus. It were profanity
For poor humanity
To treat as vanity
The sway of Love.

In no locality
Or principality
Is our mortality
It's sway above!

Hilarion. When day is fading,
 With serenading
 And such frivolity
 Of tender quality -
 With scented showers
 Of fairest flowers,
 The happy hours
 Will gaily fly!
 The happy hours will gaily fly!

Chorus. It were profanity
 For poor humanity
 To treat as vanity
 The sway of Love.
 In no locality
 Or principality
 Is our mortality
 It's sway above!

1st Sops.

In no locality
Or principality
Is our mortality
It's sway above!

Others.

It's
sway
a -
-bove!

Ida & Hilarion.

With scented showers
Of fairest flowers
The happy hours
Will gaily fly!

Others.

It's
sway
a -
-bove!

All. In no locality
 Or principality
 Is our mortality
 Above the sway of love!

Curtain