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Dramatic Publishing

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

or

The Slave of Duty

by

WS GILBERT AND SIR ARTHUR SULLIVAN

adapted for younger performers

by

LYNNE BARTLETT, DAVID BILLINGS,
MARK LEEHY and KEVIN O'MARA



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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LYNNE BART LETT, DAVID BILLINGS,
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The Pirates of Penzance or The Slave of Duty's original production was first produced at the Opéra Comique on April 3, 1880.

* * * *

For Charlotte and Olivia – L.B.

For my children who live by the fourth commandment
for the third millenium:

“Humour thy father and thy mother” – D.B.

For Sandra – M.L.

For Dr. Percy Jones and Brian Fitz ger ald – K.O'M.

IMPORTANT BILLING AND CREDIT REQUIREMENTS

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PRODUCTION NOTES

STAGING: The show can be staged in two acts, with an intermission, or (as the running time is approximately sixty minutes) can be performed straight through, without an intermission. In the latter case, the *intermission music* can be used to strike the set of Act I and bring on the set for Act II.

This adaptation is intended to faithfully represent the original intent of Gilbert and Sullivan. Changes have been made to original dialogue, melodies, keys and arrangements only to enable the work to be done by young performers.

The Pirates of Penzance is a timeless social satire of everything from royalty and politicians to the public service, the ruling classes, slavery to duty and institutions, pomposity...and the heroic nature of serious opera. It is over the top and we encourage you to perform it that way. Be melodramatic, be outrageous...and have as much fun as possible!

SONGS AND MUSICAL PIECES:

Act I

Overture

Pour the Pirate Sherry Pirates
When Frederic Was a Little Lad Ruth
Pirate King Pirate King & Pirates
Oh False One! - Recitative. Frederic
Climbing Over Rocky Mountain. Daughters,unaccompanied
Stop, Ladies Pray! - Recitative. Frederic
Climbing Over Rocky Mountain General Stanley's Daughters

Poor Wand'ring One Mabel & Daughters
 Here's a First Rate Opportunity Pirates & Daughters
 There Father Is a Major-General-Recitative. Samuel, Daughters
 & General
 ModernMajor-General
 General Stanley & Company
 Poor Fellow Pirates,unaccompanied
 Orphan Boy General Stanley & Company
 Act I Payout - Instrumental

Act II

Intermission Music

When the Foeman Bares His Steel. Sergeant & Police
 Police Theme Police
 A Po lice man's Lot Is Not a Happy One. Sergeant & Police
 With Cat-Like Tread Pirates
 Recitative Pirates, Police & General, unaccompanied
 Finale: Poor Wand'ring Ones, I Am the Very Model of a
 Modern Major-General, When the Foe man Bares His Steel,
 Come, Friends Who Plough the Sea

SOLOISTS:

If strong soloists are not available, the lead can be strengthened by adding the chorus., e.g., for "When Frederic Was a Little Lad" and "Pirate King," the pirates could join in for the whole song; for "Poor Wand'ring One," the daughters could join in for the whole song; for "I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major-General," everyone could join in; for "When the Foeman Bares His Steel" and "A Policeman's Lot Is Not a Happy One;" Sergeant and Police could sing the whole song...and so forth.

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

or

The Slave of Duty

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY

THE PIRATE KING

SAMUEL, his lieutenant

FREDERIC, the pirate apprentice

PIRATE 1

PIRATE 2

SERGEANT OF POLICE

MABEL, EDITH, KATE and ISABEL, General Stanley's
daughters

RUTH, a pirate maid of all work

Chorus of Pirates, Police and General Stanley's daughters

SETTING: ACT I – A rocky sea shore on the coast of
Cornwall, England.

ACT II – A ruined chapel by moonlight.

TIME: Late 1800s.

ACT I

(SONG #1 OVERTURE)

SCENE: *A rocky seashore on the coast of Cornwall. In the distance is a calm sea, on which a schooner is lying at anchor, R. Rocks and/or a cave can be placed R. A rocky arch can be placed L.*

AT RISE: *Groups of pirates are discovered—some drinking, some playing cards. SAMUEL, the pirate lieutenant, is going from one group to another, filling the cups from a flask. PIRATES 1 and 2 are MIDSTAGE R. FREDERIC is seated in a despondent attitude at the back of the stage, L. RUTH kneels at his feet.*

(SONG #2: OPENING CHORUS: “POUR THE PIRATE SHERRY”)

ALL.

Pour, O pour the pirate sherry;
Fill, O fill the pirate glass;
And, to make us more than merry
Let the pirate bumper pass.

SAMUEL.

For today our pirate 'prentice
Rises from indentures freed;
Strong his arm, and keen his scent is
He's a pirate now indeed!

ALL.

Here's good luck to Fred'ric's ventures!
Fred'ric's out of his indentures.

SAMUEL.

Two and twenty, now he's rising,
And alone he's fit to fly,
Which we're bent on signalizing
With unusual revelry.

ALL.

Here's good luck to Fred'ric's ventures!
Fred'ric's out of his indentures.
Here's good luck to Fred'ric's ventures!
Fred'ric's out of his indentures.
Pour, O pour the pirate sherry;
Fill, O fill the pirate glass;
And, to make us more than merry
Let the pirate bumper pass.

(FREDERIC rises and comes forward with PIRATE KING, who enters R.)

KING. Yes, Frederic, from today you rank as a full-blown member of our band.

ALL. Hurrah!

FREDERIC *(holding up hands, bashfully)*. My friends, I thank you all, from my heart, for your kindly wishes. If only I could repay them as they deserve! *(Walks DL.)*

KING *(following, suspiciously)*. What do you mean?

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

KING (*throwing hands up, horrified*). But this is quite unaccountable; why, a keener hand at scuttling a P&O liner never hauled a bowline.

PIRATE 1 (*to PIRATE 2*). What's "indentures"?

PIRATE 2 (*answering him*). You know...false teeth—my grandpa puts them in a glass when he goes to bed.

ALL (*slightly revolted*). Errr...

PIRATE 2 (*to PIRATE 1*). Thank you for sharing that.

KING (*going to him*). This is not a time for jesting. Frederic's indentures are his bond— (*brightening*) and he is a man of honour!

ALL. Hear, hear!

KING. And a GOOD pirate!

ALL. Yes, yes!

FREDERIC (*humbly*). Yes, I have done my best for you. And why? (*PIRATES look puzzled.*) It was my duty under my indentures, and... (*dignified*) I am the SLAVE of DUTY. (*Walking to KING.*) As a child I was apprenticed to your band...but it was through an error—

PIRATES. What?

FREDERIC (*holding hand up to silence them*). —no matter, the mistake was ours, not yours...and I was through honour bound by it.

SAMUEL (*going to FREDERIC*). An error? What error?

(*RUTH rises and comes forward.*)

FREDERIC. I cannot tell you; it would reflect upon my well-loved Ruth.

RUTH (*melodramatically*). Nay, dear master, my mind has long been gnawed by the clawing tooth of mystery. Better have it out at once.

(SONG #3: “WHEN FREDERIC WAS A LITTLE LAD”)

RUTH (*addressing one of the PIRATE groups*).

When Frederic was a little lad he proved so brave and daring,

His father thought he'd 'prentice him to some career seafaring.

I was, alas! his nurs'rymaid, and so it fell to my lot To take and bind the promising boy apprentice to a pilot—

(*Spoken to audience.*) He's the one that steers the ship
(*Moving to address another group.*)

I was a stupid nurs'rymaid, on breakers always steering,

And I did not catch the word aright, through being hard of hearing;

Mistaking my instructions, which within my brain did gyrate,

I took and bound this promising boy apprentice to a pirate.

(*Spoken to audience.*) That's a different kind of thing entirely

(*Moving to address another group*)

A sad mistake it was to make and doom him to a vile lot.

I bound him to a pirate—you!—instead of to a pilot.

(*Moving DC.*)

Yes I bound him to a pirate— (*To KING.*) you!—

(*To AUDIENCE.*) instead of to a pilot.

(*Going back and kneeling to FREDERIC. Spoken.*) Oh, pardon! Frederic, pardon!

FREDERIC. Rise, sweet one, I have long pardoned you.

RUTH (*rises*). The two words were so much alike!

FREDERIC. They were. They still are. But this afternoon my obligation ceases. (*To PIRATES.*) Individually, I love you all with affection unspeakable—

ALL (*recoiling in horror*). ERRRRR...

FREDERIC. —but, collectively, I look upon you with disgust. Oh! pity me, my beloved friends, for such is my sense of duty that, once out of my indentures, I shall feel bound to devote myself to your extermination!

ALL. Poor lad—poor lad! (*All weep. PIRATE 1 blows nose on handkerchief.*)

KING. Well, Frederic, if in conscience you feel it is your duty to destroy us, we cannot blame you. Always act in accordance with your conscience, my boy.

SAMUEL. Besides, we can offer you but little temptation to remain with us. We don't seem to make piracy pay.

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

FREDERIC. I know why—but,

ALL. Yes?

FREDERIC. —but, alas!

ALL. Yes, yes?

FREDERIC. —but, alas! I mustn't tell you; it wouldn't be right.

KING. Why not, my boy? (*Taking out watch and chain.*)

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!

FREDERIC. Well, then, it is my duty, as a pirate, to tell you...

ALL. Yes, yes?

FREDERIC. —that you are too tenderhearted. (*PIRATES look around at each other in confusion.*)

SAMUEL. How so?

FREDERIC. Well, for instance, you make a point of never attacking a weaker party than yourselves, and when you attack a stronger party you always get thrashed.

KING. There is some truth in that.

FREDERIC. Then, again, you make a point of never attacking an orphan!

SAMUEL. Of course: we are orphans ourselves, and know what it is.

FREDERIC. Yes, but it has got about, and what is the consequence? (*PIRATES look around at each other in confusion.*) Everyone 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.

SAMUEL. But, hang it all! You wouldn't have us absolutely merciless?

FREDERIC. 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 (*to FREDERIC*). 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.

FREDERIC (*taking RUTH DL*). 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. I think it is a sweet face.

RUTH. It is—oh, it is!

FREDERIC. I say I THINK it is. But as I have never had an opportunity of comparing you with other women, it is just possible I may be mistaken.

KING. True. (*PIRATES laugh.*)

FREDERIC (*seriously, walking back to PIRATES*). 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 (*wondering what to say*) ...well... (*thinking of a way out*) very well indeed.

(*SAMUEL laughs and is silenced by the KING's stern eye.*)

FREDERIC. Do you really think so?

SAMUEL (*seriously*). We do.

FREDERIC. Then I will not be so selfish as to take her from you. (*Hands RUTH to KING.*)

KING. No, Frederic, this must not be. We are rough men—

PIRATES. Rough! Rough!

KING. who lead a rough life— (*PIRATES make "rough" sounds*) —but— (*holding up hand to "silence" them*) I think I am right in saying there is not one here who would rob thee of this treasure.

ALL (*loudly*). Not one!

KING (*looking around at PIRATES*). No, I thought there was n't. (*To FREDERIC.*) Keep thy love, Frederic. (*Hands her back to FREDERIC.*)

FREDERIC. You're very kind, I'm sure.

RUTH (*EXITS R to pack bags*). I'm off to pack me bags!

KING. Well, it's the top of the tide, and we must be off.

Farewell, Frederic. (*Melodramatically.*) When your process of extermination begins, let our deaths be as swift and painless as you can make them.

FREDERIC. I will! I swear it!... Of course, you could make this extermination unnecessary.

KING. REALLY?... How so?

FREDERIC. By accompanying me back to civilization!

KING. No, Frederic, it cannot be. I don't think much of our profession, but, compared to respectability, it is...at least...honest. No, Frederic, I shall live and die a Pirate King.

(SONG #4: "PIRATE KING")

KING.

Oh, better far to live and die
Under the brave black flag I fly,
Than play a sanctimonious part
With a pirate head and a pirate heart.
Away to the cheating world go you,
Where pirates all are well-to-do;
But I'll be true to the song I sing,
And live and die a Pirate King.

For I am a Pirate King!
And it is, it is a glorious thing
To be a Pirate King!
For I am a Pirate King!

GROUP 1.

You are!

GROUP 2.

Hurrah for the Pirate King!

KING.

And it is, it is a glorious thing
To be a Pirate King.

ALL.

It is!
Hurrah for the Pirate King!
Hurrah for the Pirate King!

(PIRATES link right elbows and dance around to the right, then link left elbows and dance back to the left.)

KING.

When I sally forth to seek my prey
I help myself in a royal way.
I sink a few more ships, it's true,
Than a well-bred monarch ought to do;
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 e'er I do,

For I am a Pirate King!
And it is, it is a glorious thing
To be a Pirate King!
For I am a Pirate King!

ALL.

You are!

Hurrah for the Pirate King!

KING.

And it is, it is a glorious thing

To be a Pirate King.

ALL.

It is!

Hurrah for the Pirate King!

Hurrah for the Pirate King!

(ALL EXIT R except FREDERIC. ENTER RUTH, R, with packed bags.)

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

FREDERIC. Ruth, I will be quite frank with you. You are very dear to me, as you know, but I must be cautious. You are considerably older than I, and a lad of twenty-one usually looks for a wife of seventeen.

RUTH (*putting down bags and looking out to AUDIENCE*). Alas, I am forty-seven...but I would still make a fine wife.

FREDERIC. Ruth, tell me candidly and without reserve: compared with other women, are you beautiful?

RUTH (*bashfully*). I have been told so, dear master.

FREDERIC. Ah, but lately?

RUTH. Oh, no; years and years ago.

FREDERIC. What do you think of yourself?

RUTH. I think I am a fine woman.