



# THE MIKADO

**Or, The Town of Titipu**

**An entirely new and original Japanese Opera in Two Acts**

**Written by W. S. Gilbert**

**Composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan**

*First produced at the Savoy Theatre, London on Saturday 14th March 1885  
under the personal direction of the authors.*

**Privately Published by Ian C. Bond at HAYNES, Western Australia, 6112 - © 2018**

**DRAMATIS PERSONAE**

**THE MIKADO OF JAPAN.**

**NANKI-POO (his Son, disguised as a wandering minstrel, and in  
love with Yum-Yum).**

**KO-KO (Lord High Executioner of Titipu).**

**POOH-BAH (Lord High Everything Else).**

**PISH-TISH (a Noble Lord).**

**Three Sisters - Wards of Ko-Ko:**

**YUM-YUM**

**PITTI-SING**

**PEEP-BO**

**KATISHA (an elderly Lady, in love with Nanki-Poo).**

**Chorus of Schoolgirls, Nobles, Guards, and Coolies.**

**ACT I. - Courtyard of Ko-Ko's Official Residence.**

**ACT II. - Ko-Ko's Garden**

NB. This libretto follows the original first-night performance of the opera. Subsequent major alterations made by Gilbert and Sullivan are printed in **green**. Ad libs, traditional performance business and other changes are printed in **blue**. Copious footnotes are provided.

The numbering of the musical pieces follows the current Chappell edition of the vocal score.

## ACT I.

***SCENE:** Courtyard of KO-KO'S Palace in Titipu. Japanese nobles discovered standing and sitting in attitudes suggested by native drawings.*

### No:1 - CHORUS OF NOBLES.

Chorus.        If you want to know who we are,  
                    We are gentlemen of Japan:  
                    On many a vase and jar -  
                    On many a screen and fan,  
                    We figure in lively paint:  
                    Our attitude's queer and quaint -  
                    You're wrong if you think it ain't, oh!

                    If you think we are worked by strings,  
                    Like a Japanese marionette,  
                    You don't understand these things:  
                    It is simply Court etiquette.  
                    Perhaps you suppose this throng  
                    Can't keep it up all day long?  
                    If that's your idea, you're wrong, oh!  
                    Oh! If that's your idea, you're wrong.

                    If you want to know who we are,  
                    We are gentlemen of Japan:  
                    On vase and jar -  
                    On screen and fan,  
                    On many, many, many, many a jar -

                    Oh! Oh! Oh! Oh!  
                    On vase and jar -  
                    On screen and fan!

***Enter NANKI-POO in great excitement. He carries a native guitar on his back and a bundle of ballads in his hand.***

### RECIT. - NANKI-POO.

Nanki.        Gentlemen, I pray you tell me  
                    Where a gentle maiden dwelleth,  
                    Named Yum-Yum, the ward of Ko-Ko?  
                    In pity speak, oh speak I pray you!

Pish.<sup>1</sup>        Why, who are you who ask this question?

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

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<sup>1</sup> This line was later designated to 'A Noble'. Later again, when the original Pish-Tush found his line in the Act Two madrigal too low, the new character of Go-To was created to sing the line in the madrigal and also this line.

## No:2 - SONG and CHORUS - NANKI-POO

- Nanki. A wandering minstrel I -  
A thing of shreds and patches,  
Of ballads, songs and snatches,  
And dreamy lullaby!
- My catalogue is long,  
Through every passion ranging,  
And to your humours changing  
I tune my supple song -  
I tune my supple song!
- Are you in sentimental mood?  
I'll sigh with you,  
Oh, willow, willow! <sup>2</sup>  
On maiden's coldness do you brood?  
I'll do so, too -  
Oh, willow, willow!  
I'll charm your willing ears  
With songs of lovers' fears,  
While sympathetic tears  
My cheeks bedew -  
Oh, willow, willow!
- But if patriotic sentiment is wanted,  
I've patriotic ballads cut and dried;  
For where'er our country's banner may be planted,  
All other local banners are defied!  
Our warriors, in serried ranks assembled,  
Never quail - or they conceal it if they do -  
And I shouldn't be surprised if nations trembled  
Before the mighty troops of Titipu!
- Chorus. We shouldn't be surprised if nations trembled,  
Trembled with alarm,  
Before the mighty troops of Titipu!
- Nanki. And if you call for a song of the sea,  
We'll heave the capstan round,  
With a yeo heave ho, for the wind is free,  
Her anchor's a-trip and her helm's a-lee,  
Hurrah for the homeward bound!
- Chorus. Yeo-ho - heave-ho -  
Hurrah for the homeward bound!

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<sup>2</sup> This phrase appears in early editions of the libretto and in Sullivan's autograph manuscript, but not in any edition of the vocal score. This would seem to indicate that it was changed to the more familiar "Oh, sorrow, sorrow!" at some point during the first few performances

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

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

Nanki. A wandering minstrel I -  
A thing of shreds and patches,  
Of ballads, songs and snatches,  
And dreamy lullaby -

Nanki.  
  
And dreamy  
Lul - la -  
Lul - la -  
By -  
Lullaby!

Chorus.  
  
Of  
Dreamy  
Lul - la -  
By -  
Lullaby!

*Enter PISH-TISH.<sup>3</sup>*

Pish. And what may be your business with Yum-Yum?

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

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<sup>3</sup> Pish-Tush was originally on stage during the opening as he was allocated a solo line. See note at the foot of page 1.

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

**No:3 - SONG - PISH-TUSH and CHORUS.**

Pish. Our great Mikado, virtuous man,  
When he to rule our land began,  
Resolved to try  
A plan whereby  
Young men might best be steadied.

So he decreed, in words succinct,  
That all who flirted, leered or winked  
(Unless connubially linked),  
Should forthwith be beheaded -  
Beheaded, beheaded, beheaded -  
Should forthwith be beheaded!

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

Chorus. And you are right,  
And we are right,  
And all is right -  
Is right as right can be!

Pish & Chorus. And all is right as right can be!  
Right as right can be!

Pish. This stem decree, you'll understand,  
Caused great dismay throughout the land!  
For young and old  
And shy and bold  
Were equally affected.

The youth who winked a roving eye,  
Or breathed a non-connubial sigh,  
Was thereupon condemned to die -  
He usually objected -  
Objected, objected, objected,  
He usually objected!

And you'll allow, as I expect,  
That he was right to so object.  
And I am right,

And you are right,  
And everything is quite correct!

Chorus. And you are right,  
And we are right,  
And everything  
Is quite, is quite correct!

Pish & Chorus. And everything is quite correct -  
All is quite correct!

Pish. And so we straight let out on bail  
A convict from the county jail,  
Whose head was next  
On some pretext  
Condemned to be mown off,

And made him Headsman, for we said,  
“Who's next to be decapited  
Cannot cut off another's head  
Until he's cut his own off -  
His own off - his own off - his own off -  
Until he's cut his own off”.

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

Chorus. And you are right,  
And we are right,  
And all is right - too-looral-looral-lay!

Pish & Chorus. And I/You am/are right  
And you/we are right,  
And all is right!

***Exeunt Chorus. Enter POOH-BAH.***

Nanki. Ko-Ko, the cheap tailor, Lord High Executioner of Titipu! Why, that's the highest rank a citizen can attain!

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

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

Pooh. Don't mention it. I am, in point of fact, a particularly haughty and exclusive person, of pre-Adamite ancestral descent. You will understand this when I tell you that I can trace my ancestry back to a protoplasmal primordial atomic globule. Consequently, my family pride is something inconceivable. I can't help it. I was born sneering. But I struggle hard to overcome this defect. I mortify my pride continually. When all the great officers of State resigned in a body because they were too proud to serve under an ex-tailor, did I not unhesitatingly accept all their posts at once?

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

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

Nanki. And it does you credit.

Pooh. But I don't stop at that. I go and dine with middle-class people on reasonable terms. I dance at cheap suburban parties for a moderate fee.<sup>4</sup> I accept refreshment at any hands, however lowly. I also retail State secrets at a very low figure. For instance, any further information about Yum-Yum would come under the head of a State secret. *(NANKI-POO takes his hint, and gives him money. Aside.)* Another insult and, I think, a light one! *(turning to PISH TUSH.)* Do you want it?<sup>5</sup>

#### **No:4 – SONG - POOH-BAH with NANKI-POO and PISH-TUSH.**

Pooh. Young man, despair,  
Likewise go to,  
Yum-Yum the fair  
You must not woo.  
It will not do:  
I'm sorry for you,  
You very imperfect ablutioner!  
This very day  
From school Yum-Yum  
Will wend her way,  
And homeward come,  
With beat of drum  
And a rum-tum-tum,  
To wed the Lord High Executioner!

And the brass will crash,  
And the trumpets bray,

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<sup>4</sup> Here Rutland Barrington (the original Pooh-Bah) gave an example of a dancing Pooh-Bah. A note in Helen D'Oyly Carte's libretto confirms that Gilbert did not object to this.

<sup>5</sup> One of numerous Barrington ad libs.

And they'll cut a dash  
On their wedding day.  
She'll toddle away, as all aver,  
With the Lord High Executioner!

Nanki & Pish. And the brass will crash,  
And the trumpets bray,  
And they'll cut a dash  
On their wedding day.

All Three. She'll toddle away, as all aver,  
With the Lord High Executioner!

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

And the brass will crash,  
And the trumpets bray,  
And they'll cut a dash  
On their wedding day.  
She'll toddle away, as all aver,  
With the Lord High Executioner!

Nanki & Pish. And the brass will crash,  
And the trumpets bray,  
And they'll cut a dash  
On their wedding day.

All Three. She'll toddle away, as all aver,  
With the Lord High Executioner!

***Exit PISH-TUSH.***

**No: 4a - RECIT. - NANKI-POO and POOH-BAH.**

Nanki. And I have journeyed for a month, or nearly,  
To learn that Yum-Yum, whom I love so dearly,  
This day to Ko-Ko is to be united!

Pooh. The fact appears to be as you've recited:  
*(spoken.) Good morning!* <sup>6</sup>  
But here he comes, equipped as suits his station;  
*(spoken.) Got any more money?*

Nanki. *(spoken.) No! Certainly not!*

Pooh. He'll give you any further information.

*Exeunt POOH-BAH and NANKI-POO. Enter Chorus of Nobles.*

**No:5 – CHORUS – with Solo – KO-KO.**

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

*Enter KO-KO attended.*

**SOLO - KO-KO.**

Ko-Ko. Taken from the county jail  
By a set of curious chances;  
Liberated then on bail,  
On my own recognizances;  
Wafted by a favouring gale  
As one sometimes is in trances,  
To a height that few can scale,  
Saved by long and weary dances;  
Surely, never had a male  
Under such like circumstances  
So adventurous a tale,  
Which may rank with most romances.

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

---

<sup>6</sup> More Barrington ad libs

To the noble Lord,  
The noble Lord,  
The Lord High Executioner!

Ko-Ko. Gentlemen, I'm much touched by this reception. I can only trust that by strict attention to duty I shall ensure a continuance of those favours which it will ever be my study to deserve. <sup>7</sup>Gentlemen, I expect my three beautiful wards, Yum0Yum, Peep-Bo, and Pitti-Sing, in a few minutes. If you will kindly receive them with a show of abject deference, I shall feel obliged to you. I know how painful it must be to noblemen of your rank to have to humiliate yourselves before a person of my antecedents, but discipline must be observed. **If I should ever be called upon to act professionally, I am happy to think that there will be no difficulty in finding plenty of people whose loss will be a distinct gain to society at large.**

**No: 5a - SONG - KO-KO with CHORUS OF MEN.<sup>8</sup>**

Ko-Ko. As some day it may happen that a victim must be found,  
I've got a little list - I've got a little list  
Of society offenders who might well be underground,  
And who never would be missed - who never would be missed!  
There's the pestilential nuisances who write for autographs -  
All people who have flabby hands and irritating laughs -  
All children who are up in dates, and floor you with 'em flat -  
All persons who in shaking hands, shake hands with you like that -  
And all third persons who on spoiling tête-à-têtes insist -  
They'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed!

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

Ko-Ko. There's the banjo<sup>9</sup> serenader, and the others of his race,  
And the piano-organist - I've got him on the list!  
And the people who eat peppermint and puff it in your face,  
They never would be missed - they never would be missed!  
Then the idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone,  
All centuries but this, and every country but his own;  
And the lady from the provinces, who dresses like a guy,  
And who "doesn't think she waltzes, but would rather like to try";  
And that singular anomaly, the lady novelist - <sup>10</sup>  
I don't think she'd be missed - I'm sure she'd not be missed!

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<sup>7</sup> The passage of dialogue "Gentlemen, I expect - - - must be observed." Was performed whilst the song was performed later in the act. When the song moved to this position, the passage was deleted and replaced by the text shown in green.

<sup>8</sup> As originally performed, "As someday it may happen" was sung later in Act One as No.11 – see page 24.

<sup>9</sup> This was originally performed as "the nigger serenade", but this and another reference in the Mikado's song in Act Two were re-written in 1948. Somehow, however, the original version managed to slip into the 1957 HMV recording under the baton of Sir Malcolm Sargent.

<sup>10</sup> This line is traditionally updated to a topical reference.

Chorus. He's got her on the list - he's got her on the list;  
And I don't think she'll be missed - I'm sure she'll not be missed!

Ko-Ko.<sup>11</sup> And that Nisi Prius nuisance, who just now is rather rife,  
The Judicial humorist - I've got him on the list!  
All funny fellows, comic men, and clowns of private life -  
They'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed.  
And apologetic statesmen of a compromising kind,  
Such as - What d'ye call him - Thing'em-bob, and likewise -Never-mind,  
And 'St - 'st - 'st - and What's-his-name, and also You-know-who -  
The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to you.  
But it really doesn't matter whom you put upon the list,  
For they'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed!

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

*Enter POOH-BAH.*

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

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

Ko-Ko. Suppose we say as Private Secretary.

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

Ko-Ko. Exactly - as the city will have to pay for it. That is your advice.

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

Ko-Ko. Oh! But you said just now "Don't stint yourself, do it well".

Pooh. As Private Secretary.

Ko-Ko. And now you say that due economy must be observed.

Pooh. As Chancellor of the Exchequer.

Ko-Ko. I see. Come over here, where the Chancellor can't hear us. *(They cross the stage.)*  
Now, as my Solicitor, how do you advise me to deal with this difficulty?

Pooh. Oh, as your Solicitor, I should have no hesitation in saying "Chance it--"

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<sup>11</sup> Since the disbanding of the old D'Oyly Carte Opera Company in 1982 it has become traditional for this last verse to be rewritten with current topical references.

- Ko-Ko. Thank you. (*Shaking his hand.*) I will.
- Pooh. If it were not that, as Lord Chief Justice, I am bound to see that the law isn't violated.
- Ko-Ko. I see. Come over here where the Chief Justice can't hear us. (*They cross the stage.*) Now, then, as First Lord of the Treasury?
- Pooh. Of course, as First Lord of the Treasury, I could propose a special vote that would cover all expenses, if it were not that, as Leader of the Opposition, it would be my duty to resist it, tooth and nail. Or, as Paymaster General, I could so cook the accounts that, as Lord High Auditor, I should never discover the fraud. But then, as Archbishop of Titipu, it would be my duty to denounce my dishonesty and give myself into my own custody as first Commissioner of Police.
- Ko-Ko. That's extremely awkward.
- Pooh. I don't say that all these distinguished people couldn't be squared; but it is right to tell you that they wouldn't be sufficiently degraded in their own estimation unless they were insulted with a very considerable bribe.
- Ko-Ko. The matter shall have my careful consideration. But my bride and her sisters approach, and any little compliment on your part, such as an abject grovel in a characteristic Japanese attitude, would be esteemed a favour.
- <sup>12</sup>Pooh. Grovels is an extra.
- Ko.Ko. Throw in a grovel Pooh-Bah. You'll be grossly insulted, as usual.
- Pooh. No money, no grovel!

*Exeunt together. Enter procession of Yum-Yum's schoolfellows, heralding YUM-YUM, PEEP-BO, and PITTI-SING.*

### **No: 6 - CHORUS OF GIRLS.**

- Chorus. Comes a train of little ladies  
From scholastic trammels free,  
Each a little bit afraid is,  
Wondering what the world can be!
- Is it but a world of trouble -  
Sadness set to song?  
Is its beauty but a bubble  
Bound to break ere long?
- Are its palaces and pleasures  
Fantasies that fade?  
And the glory of its treasures

---

<sup>12</sup> This exchange started as a Grossmith/Barrington ad lib. The last line, "No money, no grovel.", became a standard of performance tradition.

Shadow of a shade?  
And the glory of its treasures  
Shadow of a shade?

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

### **No:7 - TRIO - YUM-YUM, PEEP-BO, and PITTI-SING, with CHORUS OF GIRLS.**

The Three. Three little maids from school are we,  
Pert as a school-girl well can be,  
Filled to the brim with girlish glee,  
Three little maids from school!

Yum-Yum. Everything is a source of fun. (*Chuckle.*)<sup>13</sup>

Peep-Bo. Nobody's safe, for we care for none! (*Chuckle.*)

Pitti-Sing. Life is a joke that's just begun! (*Chuckle.*)

The Three. Three little maids from school!

All (*dancing*). Three little maids who, all unwary,  
Come from a ladies' seminary,  
Freed from its genius tutelary-

The Three (*suddenly demure*). Three little maids from school!

Yum-Yum. One little maid is a bride, Yum-Yum-

Peep-Bo. Two little maids in attendance come-

Pitti-Sing. Three little maids is the total sum.

The Three. Three little maids from school!

Yum-Yum. From three little maids take one away.

Peep-Bo. Two little maids remain, and they-

Pitti-Sing. Won't have to wait very long, they say-

The Three. Three little maids from school!

All (*dancing*). Three little maids from school!  
Three little maids who, all unwary,

---

<sup>13</sup> The chuckle is traditionally more of a hiss behind the hand or the fan.

Come from a ladies' seminary,  
Freed from its genius tutelary-

The Three (*suddenly demure*). Three little maids from school!

*Enter KO-KO, POOH-BAH and PISH-TUSH.*

Ko-Ko. At last, my bride that is to be! (*About to embrace her.*)

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

Ko-Ko. Well, that was the idea. <sup>14</sup>I'm certainly not going to kiss you after them!

Yum. (*aside to PEEP-BO*). It seems odd, <sup>15</sup>doesn't it?

Peep. It's rather peculiar.

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

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

Ko-Ko. Oh, it's quite usual, I think. Eh, Lord Chamberlain? (*Appealing to POOH-BAH.*)

Pooh. I have known it done. (*KO-KO embraces her.*)

Yum. Thank goodness that's over! (*Sees NANKI-POO and rushes to him.*) Why that's never you?

*The three Girls rush to him and shake his hands, all speaking at once.*<sup>16</sup>

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

Peep. And have you got an engagement? Yum-Yum's got one, but she doesn't like it, and she'd ever so much rather it was you! I've come home for good, and I'm not going back anymore!

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

---

<sup>14</sup> Another Grossmith ad lib

<sup>15</sup> Traditionally Yum-Yum says "It seems odd, don't it?".

<sup>16</sup> Certainly, during the 1960's and up until the time at which the old D'Oyly Carte Opera Company disbanded in February 1982, it was customary for the girls to jump up and down in front of Nanki-Poo, and replace the subsequent lines by chanting "Oh! It's Nanki-Poo, and we've been to school, and we're not going back anymore." Ko-Ko, in exasperation, would jump up and down in time with the girls, with his back to the audience.

*These three speeches are spoken together in one breath.*

Ko-Ko. I beg your pardon. Will you present me?

Yum. Oh, this is the musician who used -

Peep. Oh, this is the gentleman - who used -

Pitti. Oh, it is only Nanki-Poo who used -

Ko-Ko. One at a time, if you please.

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

Pitti. On the Marine Parade.

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

Nanki. Sir, I have the misfortune to love your ward, Yum-Yum.

<sup>17</sup>Ko-Ko. (*alarmed, turning away*) Yum-Yum!

Nanki. (*kneeling.*) Oh, I know I deserve your anger!

Ko-Ko (*turning back.*) Anger! not a bit, my boy. Why I love her myself. Charming little girl, isn't she? Pretty eyes, nice hair. Taking little thing, altogether. Very glad to hear my opinion backed by a competent authority. Thank you very much. Good-bye. (*To PISH-TUSH.*) Take him away. (*PISH-TUSH removes him.*)

Pitti. (*who has been examining POOH-BAH*). I beg your pardon, but what is this? Customer come to try on?

Ko-Ko. That is a Tremendous Swell.

Pitti. (*prodding POOH-BAH with fan. He flicks his fan open.*)<sup>18</sup> Oh, it's alive. (*She starts back in alarm.*)

Pooh. Go away, little girls. Can't talk to little girls like you. Go away, there's dears.

Ko-Ko. Allow me to present you, Pooh-Bah. These are my three wards. The one in the middle is my bride-elect.

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

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

---

<sup>17</sup> A piece of performance tradition. Nanki-Poo, having knelt, is not immediately seen by Ko-Ko when he turns back. When he does see him, Ko-Ko lies on his back on the floor with his legs crossed, looking up directly into Nanki-Poo's face. At "Very glad" Nanki-Poo stands and pulls Ko-Ko back onto his feet.

<sup>18</sup> This stage business was a Jessie Bond/Barrington ad lib approved by Gilbert.

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

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

Pooh. *(aside to KO-KO).* Well, I shan't mean it. *(with a great effort.)* How de do, little girls, how de do? *(Aside.)* Oh, my protoplasmal ancestor!

Ko-Ko. That's very good. *(Girls indulge in suppressed laughter.)*

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

Ko-Ko. *(aside to girls).* Don't laugh at him, he can't help it - he's under treatment for it. *(Aside to POOH-BAH.)* Never mind them, they don't understand the delicacy of your position.

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

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

***KO-KO retires and goes off.***

**19No:8 - QUARTET & CHORUS OF GIRLS - YUM-YUM, PEEP-BO, PITTI-SING, and POOH-BAH.**

Yum., Peep, & Pitti. So please you, Sir, we much regret  
 If we have failed in etiquette  
 Towards a man of rank so high-  
 We shall know better by and by.

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

Pitti. And don't, in girlhood's happy spring,  
 Be hard on us,  
 Be hard on us,  
 If we're inclined to dance and sing.  
 Tra la la la la. *(Dancing.)*

---

<sup>19</sup> This was originally a quintet with Pish-Tush sharing Pooh-Bah's line – this version can be found in the Dover vocal score (VSP 80). Although the designation in early vocal scores changed from Quartet to Quintet, Pish-Tush's line remained well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this case, in performance, Pish-Tush re-enters after the removal of Nanki-Poo.

The Three

But youth, of course, must have its  
fling,  
So pardon us,  
And don't, in girlhood's happy spring,  
Be hard on us,

Tra la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la la la la!

Pooh. I think you ought to recollect  
You cannot show too much respect  
Towards the highly titled few;  
But nobody does, and why should you?

Pish. That youth at us should have its fling,  
Is hard on us,  
Is hard on us;

Pooh. To our prerogative we cling-  
So pardon us,  
So pardon us,

Both. If we decline to dance and sing.  
Tra la la la la, (*Dancing.*)

The Three

But youth, of course, must have its fling,  
So pardon us,  
And don't, in girlhood's happy spring,  
Be hard on us,

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

All. Tra la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la,

Chorus of Girls

Tra la la la la la, Tra la la  
la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la  
la  
la la la, Tra la la  
la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la  
la  
la la

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

Tra la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la la la la la la la la la!

Pooh., and Pish.

Tra la la  
la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la la  
la la la, Tra la la  
la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la la la la la, Tra la la  
la la

Tra la la la la la la la la,  
Tra la la!

*Exeunt all but YUM-YUM.*

Yum. How pitiable is the condition of a young and innocent child brought from the gloom of a ladies' academy into the full-blown blaze of her own marriage ceremony; and with a man for whom I care nothing! True, he loves me; but everybody does that. Yes, I am indeed beautiful! Sometimes I sit and wonder, in my artless Japanese way, why it is that I am so much more attractive than anybody else in the whole world. Can this be vanity? No! Nature is lovely and rejoices in her loveliness. I am a child of Nature and take after my mother<sup>20</sup>.

**(Original No:9) - SONG-YUM-YUM.<sup>21</sup>**

Yum. The sun, whose rays  
Are all ablaze  
With ever-living glory,  
Does not deny  
His Majesty-  
He scorns to tell a story!  
He don't exclaim,  
"I blush for shame,  
So kindly be indulgent."  
But, fierce and bold,  
In fiery gold,  
He glories effulgent!

I mean to rule the earth,  
As he the sky-  
We really know our worth,  
The sun and I!  
I mean to rule the earth,  
As he the sky-  
We really know our worth,  
The sun and I!

Observe his flame,  
That placid dame,  
The moon's Celestial Highness;  
There's not a trace  
Upon her face  
Of diffidence or shyness:  
She borrows light  
That, through the night,

---

<sup>20</sup> This was traditionally delivered as "me muvver."

<sup>21</sup> This number and the last 4 lines of the preceding dialogue were moved to Act Two a few days after the opening night as Leonora Braham, the original Yum-Yum, found the pressure of the original order in Act One too exhausting – see footnote on page 42.

Mankind may all acclaim her!  
And, truth to tell,  
She lights up well,  
So I, for one, don't blame her!

Ah, pray make no mistake,  
We are not shy;  
We're very wide awake,  
The moon and I!  
Ah, pray make no mistake,  
We are not shy;  
We're very wide awake,  
The moon and I!

*Enter NANKI-POO.*

- Nanki. Yum-Yum, at last we are alone! I have sought you night and day for three weeks, in the belief that your guardian was beheaded, and I find that you are about to be married to him this afternoon!
- Yum. Alas, yes!
- Nanki. But you do not love him?
- Yum. Alas, no!
- Nanki. Modified rapture! But why do you not refuse him?
- Yum. What good would that do? He's my guardian, and he wouldn't let me marry you!
- Nanki. But I would wait until you were of age!
- Yum. You forget that in Japan girls do not arrive at years of discretion until they are fifty.
- Nanki. True; from seventeen to forty-nine are considered years of indiscretion.
- Yum. Besides-a wandering minstrel, who plays a wind instrument outside tea-houses, is hardly a fitting husband for the ward of a Lord High Executioner.
- Nanki. But- (*Aside.*) Shall I tell her? Yes! She will not betray me! (*Aloud.*) What if it should prove that, after all, I am no musician?
- Yum. There! I was certain of it, directly I heard you play!
- Nanki. What if it should prove that I am no other than the son of his Majesty the Mikado?
- Yum. The son of the Mikado! But why is your Highness disguised? And what has your Highness done? And will your Highness promise never to do it again?
- Nanki. Some years ago I had the misfortune to captivate Katisha, an elderly lady of my father's Court. She misconstrued my customary affability into expressions of

affection, and claimed me in marriage, under my father's law. My father, the Lucius Junius Brutus of his race, ordered me to marry her within a week or perish ignominiously on the scaffold. That night I fled his Court, and, assuming the disguise of a Second Trombone, I joined the band in which you found me when I had the happiness of seeing you! (*Approaching her.*)

Yum. (*retreating*). If you please, I think your Highness had better not come too near. The laws against flirting are excessively severe.

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

Yum. Still, that don't make it right. To flirt is capital.

Nanki. It is capital!

Yum. And we must obey the law.

Nanki. Deuce take the law!

Yum. I wish it would, but it won't!

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

Yum. Happy indeed!

Nanki. If it were not for the law, we should now be sitting side by side, like that. (*Sits by her.*)

Yum. Instead of being obliged to sit half a mile off, like that. (*Crosses and sits at other side of the stage.*)

Nanki. We should be gazing into each other's eyes, like that. (*Gazing at her sentimentally.*)

Yum. Breathing sighs of unutterable love-like that. (*Sighing and gazing lovingly at him.*)

Nanki. With our arms around each other's waists, like that. (*Embracing her.*)

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

Nanki. If it wasn't for the law.

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

Nanki. Not for worlds!

Yum. Being engaged to Ko-Ko, you know!

Nanki. Being engaged to Ko-Ko!

**22No:9 - DUET-YUM-YUM and NANKI-POO.**

Yum.           Were I not to Ko-Ko plighted,  
I would say in tender tone,  
“Lov’d one, let us be united -  
Let us be each other’s own!”  
I would say, “Oh, gentle stranger,  
Press me closely to thy heart,  
Sharing ev’ry joy and danger,  
We will never, never part!”

Both.           “We will never, never part!”

Yum.           But as I’m engaged to Ko-Ko,  
To express my love, *con fuoco*,  
Would distinctly be no *gioco*,  
And for yam, I should get *toco*,

Nanki.         Toco,

Yum.           Toco,

Nanki.         Toco,

Yum.           Toco,

Nanki.         Toco,

Yum.           Toco,

Nanki.         Toco,

Yum.           Toco,

Both.           Toco!

Yum.           So I will not say, “Oh stranger,  
Press me closely to thy heart,  
Sharing ev’ry joy and danger,  
We will never, never part,  
We will never, never part!”

Clearly understand I pray,  
This is what I’ll never say,  
This, oh this, oh this, oh this,  
This is what I’ll never, never say!

---

<sup>22</sup> This is the original version of the duet, at twice the length. It was truncated for the same reasons that “The sun whose rays” was moved into act two. The full version of this Duet can be found in the Dover vocal score (VSP 90).

Nanki.           Were you not to Ko-Ko plighted,  
I should thrill at words like those,  
Joy of joys is love requited,  
Love despised is woe of woes.  
I would merge all rank and station,  
Worldly sneers are nought to us,  
And, to mark my admiration,  
I would kiss you fondly thus- (*Kisses her.*)

Both.            I/He would kiss you/me fondly thus - (*Kissing.*)

Nanki.           But as you're engaged to Ko-Ko,  
To embrace you thus, *con fuoco*,  
Would distinctly be no *gioco*,  
And for yam I should get *toco*,

                  Toco,

Yum.            Toco,

Nanki.           Toco,

Yum.            Toco,

Nanki.           Toco,

Yum.            Toco,

Nanki.           Toco,

Yum.            Toco,

Both.            Toco!

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

Both.            This, oh this, oh this, oh this, this.

Nanki.           Is what I'll never do!

Yum.            He'll never do!

Nanki.           I'll never do!

Yum. He'll never do!  
Nanki. Oh, this,  
Both. This (*Kissing.*)  
Is what I'll/he'll never, never do!

*Exeunt in opposite directions.*

Nanki. Were you not to Ko-Ko plighted,  
I would say in tender tone,  
"Loved one, let us be united -  
Let us be each other's own!"  
I would merge all rank and station,  
Worldly sneers are nought to us,  
And, to mark my admiration,  
I would kiss you fondly thus - (*Kisses her.*)

Both. I/He would kiss you/me fondly thus - (*Kiss.*)

Yum. But as I'm engaged to Ko-Ko,  
To embrace you thus, *con fuoco*,  
Would distinctly be no *gioco*,  
And for yam I should get *toco* -

Nanki. Toco,

Yum. Toco,

Nanki. Toco,

Yum. Toco,

Nanki. Toco,

Yum. Toco,

Nanki. Toco,

Yum. Toco,

Both. Toco!

Nanki. So, In spite of all temptation,  
Such a theme I'll not discuss,  
And on no consideration  
Will I kiss you fondly thus - (*Kissing her.*)  
Will I kiss you fondly thus -

Let me make it clear to you,  
This is what I'll never do!

This, oh this, oh this, oh this,  
This is what I'll never, never do!

Both. This, oh this, oh this, oh this, this.

Nanki. Is what I'll never do!

Yum. He'll never do!

Nanki. I'll never do!

Yum. He'll never do!

Nanki. Oh, this,

Both. This (*Kissing.*)

*Exeunt in opposite directions.*

*<sup>23</sup>Enter KO-KO.*

Ko-Ko. (*looking after YUM-YUM.*) There she goes! To think how entirely my future happiness is wrapped up in that little parcel! Really, it hardly seems worthwhile! Oh, matrimony! - (*Enter POOH-BAH and PISH-TUSH.*) Now then, what is it? Can't you see I'm soliloquizing? You have interrupted an apostrophe, sir!

Pish. I am the bearer of a letter from his Majesty the Mikado.

Ko-Ko. (*taking it from him reverentially.*) A letter from the Mikado! What in the world can he have to say to me? *Take a seat.*<sup>24</sup> (*Reads letter.*) Ah, here it is at last! I thought it would come sooner or later! The Mikado is struck by the fact that no executions have taken place in Titipu for a year, and decrees that unless somebody is beheaded within one month the post of Lord High Executioner shall be abolished, and the city reduced to the rank of a village!

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

Ko-Ko. Yes – somebody will have to suffer. Send the Recorded to me. (*Exit PISH-TUSH.*) I expected something of this sort! I knew it couldn't go on! Well, they've bought it on themselves, and the only question is, who shall it be? Fortunately, there will be no difficulty in pitching upon somebody whose death will be a distinct gain to society at large.

---

<sup>23</sup> This is the scene as originally presented during the first performances in 1885. Obviously at that time Pooh-Bah did not enter until after Ko-Ko's song, in which case the traditional business described in the next footnote would not have been performed. In modern performances of the original scene, Pooh-Bah and Pish-Tush would remain seated on stage and possibly sing the refrain of the song with Ko-Ko.

<sup>24</sup> This was another Grossmith/Barrington gag that has become part of performance tradition. Ko-Ko and Pish-Tush sit cross legged and Ko-Ko dons a pair of huge spectacles. Because of his bulk, Pooh-Bah has difficulty sitting and after circling on the spot a bit like a cat settling into its bed, he lands on the floor with a terrific bump, causing Ko-Ko and Pish-Tush to jump.

**(Original No:11) - SONG - KO-KO.**

Ko-Ko. As it seems to be essential that a victim must be found,  
I've got a little list - I've got a little list  
Of social offenders who might well be underground,  
And who never would be missed - who never would be missed!  
There's the income tax commissioners with all their prying clerks -  
And vulgar little street boys who are rude in their remarks -  
All persons with presentiments – a very wholesome rule;  
All next door neighbours everywhere and boys at home from school -  
All men who bit their nails – all people who revoke at whist -  
They'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed!

As a victim must be found,  
If you'll only look around -  
There are criminals at large,  
And enough to fill a barge,  
Whose swift decapitation  
Would be hailed with acclamation  
If accomplished by the nation  
At a reasonable charge.

<sup>25</sup>There's the banjo serenader, and the others of his race,  
And the piano-organist - I've got him on the list!  
And the people who eat peppermint and puff it in your face,  
They never would be missed - they never would be missed!  
Then the idiot who praises, with enthusiastic tone,  
All centuries but this, and every country but his own;  
And the lady from the provinces, who dresses like a guy,  
And who "doesn't think she waltzes, but would rather like to try";  
And that singular anomaly, the lady novelist -  
I don't think she'd be missed - I'm sure she'd not be missed!

As a victim must be found,  
If you'll only look around -  
There are criminals at large,  
And enough to fill a barge,  
Whose swift decapitation  
Would be hailed with acclamation  
If accomplished by the nation  
At a reasonable charge.

And that Nisi Prius nuisance, who just now is rather rife,  
The Judicial humorist - I've got him on the list!  
All funny fellows, comic men, and clowns of private life -  
They'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed.

---

<sup>25</sup> This was originally performed as “the nigger serenade”, but this and another reference in the Mikado’s song in Act Two was re-written in 1948. Somehow, however, the original version managed to slip into the 1957 HMV recording under the baton of Sir Malcolm Sargent.

And apologetic statesmen of a compromising kind,  
Such as - What d'ye call him - Thing'em-bob, and likewise -Never-mind,  
And 'St - 'st - 'st - and What's-his-name, and also You-know-who -  
The task of filling up the blanks I'd rather leave to you.  
But it really doesn't matter whom you put upon the list,  
For they'd none of 'em be missed - they'd none of 'em be missed!

As a victim must be found,  
If you'll only look around -  
There are criminals at large,  
And enough to fill a barge,  
Whose swift decapitation  
Would be hailed with acclamation  
If accomplished by the nation  
At a reasonable charge.

***Enter PISH-TUSH and POOH-BAH***

- Ko-Ko. Yes. There is no help for it, I shall have to execute somebody at once. The only question is, who shall it be?
- Pooh. Well, it seems unkind to say so, but as you're already under sentence of death for flirting, everything seems to point to you.
- Ko-Ko. To me? What are you talking about? I can't execute myself.
- Pooh. Why not?
- Ko-Ko. Why not? Because, in the first place, self-decapitation is an extremely difficult, not to say dangerous, thing to attempt; and, in the second, it's suicide, and suicide is a capital offence.
- Pooh. That is so, no doubt.
- Pish. We might reserve that point.
- Pooh. True, it could be argued six months hence, before the full Court.
- Ko-Ko. Besides, I don't see how a man can cut off his own head.
- Pooh. A man might try.
- Pish. Even if you only succeeded in cutting it half off, that would be something.
- Pooh. It would be taken as an earnest of your desire to comply with the Imperial will.

<sup>26</sup>Ko-Ko. No. Pardon me, but there I am adamant. As official Headsman, my reputation is at stake, and I can't consent to embark on a professional operation unless I see my way to a successful result.

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

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

Pish. I am afraid that, unless you can obtain a substitute --

Ko-Ko. A substitute? Oh, certainly-nothing easier. (*To POOH-BAH.*) Pooh-Bah, I appoint you Lord High Substitute.

Pooh. I should be delighted. Such an appointment would realize my fondest dreams. But no, at any sacrifice, I must set bounds to my insatiable ambition!

### **No:10 - TRIO – KO-KO, POOH-BAH and PISH-TUSH.**

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

Ko-Ko. My brain it teams  
With endless schemes  
Both good and new  
For Titipu -  
For Titipu;  
But if I flit,  
The benefit  
That I'd diffuse  
The town would lose!  
Now every man  
To aid his clan  
Should plot and plan  
As best he can.

---

<sup>26</sup> Here the second part of the 'sitting' business occurs. Ko-Ko and Pish-Tush get up, much to Pooh-Bah's discomfiture, as he now also has to get up. This he does by rolling over onto all fours and pushing himself up gradually so that by the words "awkward position", his rear is sticking up in the air towards the audience.

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

Ko-Ko.  
 My brain it teams  
 With endless schemes  
 Both good and new  
 For Titipu -  
 For Titipu;  
 But if I flit,  
 The benefit  
 That I'd diffuse  
 The town would lose!  
 Now every man  
 To aid his clan  
 Should plot and plan  
 As best he can.

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

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

Ko.Ko. And so,  
 Although  
 I'm ready to go,  
 Yet recollect  
 'Twere disrespect  
 Did I neglect  
 To thus effect  
 This aim direct,  
 So I object-

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

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

Ko-Ko.  
  
So I object –  
So I object –  
  
So I object,  
  
So I object,  
  
So I object,  
So I object -

Pooh.  
  
I must decline –  
I must decline –  
  
I must decline –  
  
I must decline,  
  
I must decline,  
I must decline -

Pish.  
  
I'd take your  
share, But I don't much  
care, I'd take your  
share, But I don't much  
care, I'd take your  
share, But I don't much  
care, much care,  
I don't much care,  
I don't much care –

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

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

A dull, dark dock,  
A life-long lock,  
A short, sharp shock,  
A big black block!

To sit in solemn silence in a pestilential prison,  
An awaiting the sensation  
From a cheap and chippy chopper on a big black block!

*Exeunt POOH and PISH.*

Ko-Ko. This is simply appalling! I, who allowed myself to be respited at the last moment, simply in order to benefit my native town, am now required to die within a month and that by a man whom I have loaded with honours! Is this public gratitude? Is this –

*Enter NANKI-POO, with a rope in his hands.*

Ko-Ko. Go away, sir! How dare you? Am I never to be permitted to soliloquize?

Nanki. Oh, go on-don't mind me.

Ko-Ko. What are you going to do with that rope?

Nanki. I am about to terminate an unendurable existence.

Ko-Ko. Terminate your existence? Oh, nonsense! What for?

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

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

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

Ko-Ko. No, no, don't do that. This is horrible! *(Suddenly.)* Why, you cold-blooded scoundrel, are you aware that, in taking your life, you are committing a crime which – which - which is - Oh! *(Struck by an idea.)* Substitute!

Nanki. What's the matter?

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

Nanki. Absolutely!

Ko-Ko. Will nothing shake your resolution?

Nanki. Nothing.

Ko-Ko. Threats, entreaties, prayers-all useless?

Nanki. All! My mind is made up.

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

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

Ko-Ko. You don't? Observe: you'll have a month to live, and you'll live like a fighting-cock at my expense. When the day comes there'll be a grand public ceremonial-you'll be the central figure-no one will attempt to deprive you of that distinction. There'll be a procession-bands-dead march-bells tolling-all the girls in tears-Yum-Yum distracted-then, when it's all over, general rejoicings, and a display of fireworks in the evening. You won't see them, but they'll be there all the same.

Nanki. Do you think Yum-Yum would really be distracted at my death?

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

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

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

Nanki. True.

Ko-Ko. Life without Yum-Yum-why, it seems absurd!

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

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

Nanki. (*suddenly*). I won't be of their number!

Ko-Ko. Noble fellow!

Nanki. I'll tell you how we'll manage it. Let me marry Yum-Yum to-morrow, and in a month you may behead me.

Ko-Ko. No, no. I draw the line at Yum-Yum.

Nanki. Very good. If you can draw the line, so can I. (*Preparing rope.*)

Ko-Ko. Stop, stop-listen one moment-be reasonable. How can I consent to your marrying Yum-Yum if I'm going to marry her myself?

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

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

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

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

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

### **No:11 – FINALE ACT I.**

*Enter Chorus, POOH-BAH and PISH-TUSH.*

Chorus. With aspect stern  
And gloomy stride,  
We come to learn  
How you decide.

Don't hesitate  
Your choice to name,  
A dreadful fate  
You'll suffer all the same.  
A dreadful fate  
You'll suffer all the same.

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

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

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

Ko-Ko. (*presenting him*). 'Tis Nanki-Poo!

All. Hail, Nanki-Poo!

Ko-Ko. I think he'll do?

All. Yes, yes, he'll do!

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

*Enter YUM-YUM, PEEP-BO and PITTI-SING.*

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

Ko-Ko. *(to NANKI-POO)*. Take her –

*<sup>27</sup>KO-KO reaches for YUM-YUM but passes PITTI-SING to NANKI-POO by mistake.*

Ko-Ko. *(spoken to PITTI-SING)*. Not you silly.

*(to NANKI-POO)*. Take her – she's yours!

*Exit KO-KO.*

### **ENSEMBLE.**

Nanki-Poo. The threatened cloud has passed away,

Yum-Yum. And brightly shines the dawning day;

Nanki-Poo. What though the night may come too soon,

Yum-Yum. There's yet a month of afternoon!

---

<sup>27</sup> This is a traditional piece of business which appears to have emanated from a Jessie Bond gag during the original production (1885). Although it never achieved print in any libretto it was written into the 1914 D'Oyly Carte Prompt Book and was certainly still included in performances by the company up until the time of their disbandment in 1982.

Peep-Bo, Nanki-Poo, Pooh-Bah and Pish-Tush.

Then let the throng  
Our joy advance,  
With laughing song  
And merry dance,

All Six.        Then let the throng  
                  Our joy advance,  
                  With laughing song  
                  And merry dance,  
                  With laughing song  
                  And merry dance,  
                  With laughing song -

Chorus.        With joyous shout and ringing cheer,  
                  Inaugurate their brief career!

Pitti-Sing.     A day, a week, a month, a year-

Yum.            Or far or near, or far or near,

Pooh.           Life's eventime<sup>28</sup> comes much too soon,

Pitti-Sing.     You'll live at least a honeymoon!

Yum-Yum and Pitti-Sing.

Then let the throng our joy advance,

With laughing song and merry dance,

---

<sup>28</sup> Vocal scores have always printed this word as "eventide".

Peep-Bo, Nanki-Poo, Pooh-Bah and Pish-Tush.

Then let the throng  
Our joy advance,  
With laughing song  
And merry dance,

Yum-Yum and Pitti-Sing.

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

All Six. Then let the throng  
Our joy advance,  
With laughing song  
And merry dance,  
With laughing song  
And merry dance,  
With laughing song -

Chorus. With joyous shout and ringing cheer,  
Inaugurate their brief career!

### **SOLO - POOH-BAH.**

<sup>29</sup>Pooh. As in three weeks you've got to die,  
If Ko-Ko tells us true,  
'Twere empty compliment to cry  
"Long life to Nanki-Poo!"  
But as you've got three weeks to live  
As fellow citizen,  
This toast with three times three we'll give -

"Long life to you -  
Long life to you -  
Long life to you, 'till then."

As in a month you've got to die,  
If Ko-Ko tells us true,  
'Twere empty compliment to cry  
"Long life to Nanki-Poo!"  
But as one month you have to live  
As fellow-citizen,  
This toast with three times three we'll give-

"Long life to you -  
Long life to you -  
Long life to you - till then!"

***Exit POOH-BAH.***

---

<sup>29</sup> This is the original version using "Three weeks". This persisted in the vocal score through many reprints of the original edition so it is not clear when this was changed in performance.

Chorus. May all good fortune prosper you,  
May you have health and riches too,  
May you succeed in all you do!  
Long life to you-till then!

*(Dance.)*

*Enter KATISHA melodramatically*

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

Chorus. Why, who is this whose evil eyes  
Rain blight on our festivities?

Kat. I claim my perjured lover, Nanki-Poo!  
Oh, fool! to shun delights that never cloy!

Chorus. Go, leave thy deadly work undone!

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

Chorus. Away, away! ill-favoured one!

Nanki. *(aside to Yum-Yum)*. Ah!  
'Tis Katisha!  
The maid of whom I told you. *(About to go.)*

Kat. *(detaining him)*. No!  
You shall not go,  
These arms shall thus enfold you!

### **SONG-KATISHA.**

Kat. *(addressing NANKI-POO)*. Oh fool, that fleest  
My hallowed joys!  
Oh blind, that seest  
No equipoise!  
Oh rash, that judgest  
From half, the whole!  
Oh base, that grudgest  
Love's lightest dole!  
Thy heart unbind,  
Oh fool, oh blind!  
Give me my place,  
Oh rash, oh base!

Thy heart unbind,  
Give me my place.  
Oh fool, oh blind!

Oh rash, oh base!

Thy heart unbind.  
Give me, give me my place!

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

Kat. (*addressing YUM-YUM*). Pink cheek, that rulest  
Where wisdom serves!  
Bright eye, that foulest  
Heroic nerves!  
Rose lip, that scornest  
Lore-laden years!  
Smooth tongue, that warnest  
Who rightly hears!  
Thy doom is nigh.  
Pink cheek, bright eye!  
Thy knell is rung,  
Rose lip, smooth tongue!

Thy doom is nigh.  
Thy knell is rung,  
Pink cheek, bright eye!  
Rose lip, smooth tongue!

Thy doom is nigh.  
Thy knell, thy knell is rung!

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

Kat.

Thy doom is nigh,  
Thy knell is rung, Thy knell,  
Thy knell is rung!

Chorus.

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

Chorus. If true her tale, thy knell is rung,  
thy knell is rung!

Pitti-Sing. Away, nor prosecute your quest-  
From our intention, well expressed,  
You cannot turn us!  
The state of your connubial views  
Towards the person you accuse  
Does not concern us!

For he's going to marry Yum-Yum-

All. Yum-Yum!

Pitti. Your anger pray bury,  
For all will be merry,  
I think you had better succumb-

All. Cumb-cumb!

Pitti. And join our expressions of glee.  
  
On this subject I pray you be dumb-

All. Dumb-dumb.

Pitti. You'll find there are many  
Who'll wed for a penny-  
The word for your guidance is "Mum" -

All. Mum-mum!

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

All. On this subject we pray you be dumb – dumb – dumb.  
We think you had better succumb – cumb – cumb!  
You'll find there are many  
Who'll wed for a penny,  
Who'll wed for a penny -  
There are lots of good fish in the sea!  
There are lots of good fish in the sea!  
There's lots of good fish, good fish in the sea!  
There's lots of good fish, good fish in the sea, in the sea, in the sea, in the sea,  
in the sea!

### **SOLO-KATISHA.**

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

Oh, faithless one, this insult you shall rue!  
In vain for mercy on your knees you'll sue.  
I'll tear the mask from your disguising!

Nanki. *(aside)*. Now comes the blow!

Kat. Prepare yourselves for news surprising!

Nanki. (*aside*). How foil my foe?

Kat. No minstrel he, despite bravado!

Yum. (*aside, struck by an idea*). Ha! ha! I know!

Kat.<sup>30</sup> He is the son of your –

***NANKI-POO, YUM-YUM, and Chorus, interrupting, sing Japanese words, to drown her voice.***

All.<sup>31</sup> O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!

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

All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!

Kat. I'll spoil -

All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!

Kat. Your gay gambado!  
He is the son =

All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!

Kat. Of your -

All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to!

Kat. The son of your -

All. O ni! bikkuri shakkuri to! oya! oya!

### **ENSEMBLE.**

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

---

<sup>30</sup> This line was originally allocated to Nanki-Poo but seems to have been reallocated by the time of the original production as it is allocated to Yum-Yum in the earliest prompt book. The original designation remains in the autograph manuscript and persisted in early editions of the vocal score.

<sup>31</sup> **This section often catches companies out – even the professionals get it wrong. Note that the chorus enter on the second beat of the bar – this was presumably written specifically to accommodate Gilbert's 'fan' business in that the company snap their fans open on the down beat. This is a musical section that should be rehearsed from the outset of rehearsals and, if possible, with fans. The autograph manuscript bears this out and has no annotation to indicate otherwise.**

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

Kat. Prepare for woe,  
Ye haughty lords,  
At once I go  
Mikado-wards.

All. Away you go,  
Collect your hordes;  
Proclaim your woe  
In dismal chords.

Yum. We do not head their dismal sound,

Nanki. For joy reigns everywhere around.

Yum. We do not heed their dismal sound,

Both. For joy reigns everywhere around.

Yum & Nanki.

The echoes of our festival  
Shall rise triumphant over all!

Yum.

Shall rise triumphant,

Yum & Nanki.

Triumphant over all!  
Shall rise triumphant over all!

Chorus.

We'll hear no more, ill-omened owl,  
To joy we soar despite your scowl!

Nanki.

Shall rise triumphant over all!

Chorus.

To joy we soar,  
To joy we soar despite your scowl!

Kat. My wrongs with vengeance shall be crown'd!

All. We do not heed their dismal sound,  
For joy reigns everywhere around!  
We do not heed their dismal sound,  
For joy reigns everywhere around!

Kat.

My wrongs with vengeance shall be  
crown'd,  
My wrongs with vengeance will be  
crown'd!

The Rest.

We do not heed their dismal  
sound,  
For joy reigns everywhere  
around!

***KATISHA rushes furiously up-stage, clearing the crowd away right and left, finishing on steps at the back of the stage.***

**END OF ACT I.**

## ACT II.

*SCENE. - Ko-Ko's Garden. YUM-YUM discovered seated at her bridal toilet, surrounded by maidens, who are dressing her hair and painting her face and lips, as she judges of the effect in a mirror.*

### **No:1 - SOLO-PITTI-SING and CHORUS OF GIRLS.**

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

### **SOLO-PITTI-SING.**

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

Chorus.<sup>32</sup>      Braid the raven hair-  
                  Weave the supple tress-  
                  Deck the maiden fair  
                  In her loveliness-  
                  Paint the pretty face-  
                  Dye the coral lip-  
                  Emphasize the grace  
                  Of her ladyship!  
                  Art and nature, thus allied,  
                  Go to make a pretty bride.

---

<sup>32</sup> Traditionally, during this chorus whilst Peep-Bo is arranging Yum-Yum's hair, Pitti-Sing slyly takes the mirror off the stand and amuses herself by making faces. She is caught in the act by her sisters.

Art and nature, thus allied,  
Go to make a pretty bride.

*Exeunt PITTI-SING, PEEP-BO, and Chorus.*<sup>33</sup>

Yum. Yes, I am indeed beautiful! Sometimes I sit and wonder, in my artless Japanese way, why it is that I am so much more attractive than anybody else in the whole world. Can this be vanity? No! Nature is lovely and rejoices in her loveliness. I am a child of Nature and take after my mother<sup>34</sup>.

**No:2 - SONG-YUM-YUM.**<sup>35</sup>

Yum. The sun, whose rays  
Are all ablaze  
With ever-living glory,  
Does not deny  
His Majesty-  
He scorns to tell a story!  
He don't exclaim,  
"I blush for shame,  
So kindly be indulgent."  
But, fierce and bold,  
In fiery gold,  
He glories effulgent!

I mean to rule the earth,  
As he the sky-  
We really know our worth,  
The sun and I!  
I mean to rule the earth,  
As he the sky-  
We really know our worth,  
The sun and I!

Observe his flame,  
That placid dame,  
The moon's Celestial Highness;  
There's not a trace  
Upon her face  
Of diffidence or shyness:  
She borrows light  
That, through the night,  
Mankind may all acclaim her!  
And, truth to tell,

---

<sup>33</sup> As originally performed with "The sun whose rays" in Act One, Pitti-Sing and Peep-Bo did not exit with the chorus.

<sup>34</sup> See footnote 20 on page 17.

<sup>35</sup> This number was moved to Act Two during the rehearsal the morning after the opening night as Leonora Braham, the original Yum-Yum, found the pressure of the original order in Act One too exhausting.

She lights up well,  
So I, for one, don't blame her!

Ah, pray make no mistake,  
We are not shy;  
We're very wide awake,  
The moon and I!  
Ah, pray make no mistake,  
We are not shy;  
We're very wide awake,  
The moon and I!

***Enter PITTI-SING and PEEP-BO.***

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

Peep. The happiest girl indeed, for she is indeed to be envied who has attained happiness in all but perfection.

Yum. In "all but" perfection?

Peep. Well, dear, it can't be denied that the fact that your husband is to be beheaded in a month is, in its way, a drawback. *It does seem to take the top off it, you know.*<sup>36</sup>

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

Peep. At all events, he will find it a drawback.

Pitti. Not necessarily. Bless you, it all depends!

Yum. *(in tears)*. I think it very indelicate of you to refer to such a subject on such a day. If my married happiness is to be - to be-

Peep. Cut short.

Yum. Well, cut short - in a month, can't you let me forget it? *(Weeping.)*

***Enter NANKI-POO, followed by PISH-TUSH.***<sup>37</sup>

Nanki. Yum-Yum in tears-and on her wedding morn!

Yum. *(sobbing)*. They've been reminding me that in a month you're to be beheaded! *(Bursts into tears.)*

Pitti. Yes, we've been reminding her that you're to be beheaded. *(Bursts into tears.)*

---

<sup>36</sup> It seems that almost the entire cast of MIKADO was prone to ad libbing. This was another which was approved by Gilbert and added to the official libretto in 1907.

<sup>37</sup> See footnote on page 1. Some editions allocate the dialogue and madrigal to a new character, GO-TO. However, the vocal score was never amended and the piece should be performed by Pish-Tush.

Peep. It's quite true, you know, you are to be beheaded! (*Bursts into tears.*)

Nanki. (*aside*). Humph! Now, some bridegrooms would be depressed by this sort of thing! (*Aloud.*) A month? Well, what's a month? Bah! These divisions of time are purely arbitrary. Who says twenty-four hours make a day?

Pitti. There's a popular impression to that effect.

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

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

Pitti. Silly little cuckoo! <sup>38</sup>

***Exit PEEP-BO.***

Yum. (*still sobbing*). Yes. How time flies when one is thoroughly enjoying oneself!

Nanki. That's the way to look at it! Don't let's be downhearted! There's a silver lining to every cloud.

Yum. Certainly. Let's - let's be perfectly happy! (*Almost in tears.*)

Pish. By all means. Let's - let's thoroughly enjoy ourselves.

Pitti. It's-it's absurd to cry! (*Trying to force a laugh.*)

Yum. Quite ridiculous! (*Trying to laugh.*)

***All break into a forced and melancholy laugh.***

---

<sup>38</sup> Another Jessie Bond ad lib approved by Gilbert in 1908. It was, however, removed in 1914 after his death.

**No:3 - MADRIGAL - YUM-YUM, PITTI-SING, NANKI-POO, and PISH-TUSH**

- Yum.           Brightly dawns our wedding day;
- All.            Joyous hour, we give thee greeting!  
                  Whither, whither art thou fleeting?  
                  Fickle moment, prithee stay!  
                  Fickle moment, prithee stay!
- Pish.           What though mortal joys be hollow?
- Pitti.           Pleasures come if sorrows follow:
- All.            Though the tocsin sound, ere long,  
                  Ding dong! Ding dong!  
                  Yet until the shadows fall  
                  Over one and over all,
- Yum.           Sing a merry madrigal-
- All.            Sing a merry madrigal,  
                  Sing a merry madrigal!  
                  Fal-la-fal-la! etc. (*Ending in tears.*)
- Yum.           Let us dry the ready tear,
- All.            Though the hours are surely creeping  
                  Little need for woeful weeping,  
                  Till the sad sundown is near.  
                  Till the sad sundown is near.
- Pish            All must sip the cup of sorrow-
- Pitti.           I to-day and thou to-morrow;
- All.            This the close of every song-  
                  Ding dong! Ding dong!  
                  What, though solemn shadows fall,  
                  Sooner, later, over all?
- Yum.           Sing a merry madrigal-
- All.            Sing a merry madrigal,  
                  Sing a merry madrigal!  
                  Fal-la-fal-la! etc. (*Ending in tears.*)

***Exeunt PITTI-SING and PISH-TUSH.***

*NANKI-POO embraces YUM-YUM. Enter KO-KO. NANKI-POO releases YUM-YUM.*

Ko-Ko. Go on-don't mind me.

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

Ko-Ko. Never mind, I must get used to it. Only please do it by degrees. Begin by putting your arm round her waist. (*NANKI-POO does so.*) There; let me get used to that first.

Yum. Oh, wouldn't you like to retire? It must pain you to see us so affectionate together!

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

Nanki. Like that? (*He does so, with her lips against his cheek*)<sup>39</sup>. *KO-KO much affected.*)

Ko-Ko. Like that. (*turning YUM-YUM's head away.*) I am much obliged to you. Now-kiss her! (*He does so. KO-KO writhes with anguish.*) Thank you - it's simple torture!

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

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

Nanki. & Yum. What do you mean?

Ko-Ko. (*to Yum-Yum.*) My child-my poor child! (*Aside.*) How shall I break it to her? (*Aloud.*) My little bride that was to have been?

Yum. (*delighted.*) Was to have been?

Ko-Ko. Yes, you never can be mine!

<sup>40</sup>Nanki. & Yum. (*simultaneously, in ecstasy*) What!/I'm so glad!

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

Nanki. & Yum. Buried alive!

Ko-Ko. Buried alive. It's a most unpleasant death.

Nanki. But whom did you get that from?

---

<sup>39</sup> This is another piece of traditional business approved by Gilbert in 1908. YUM-YUM rests her head on NANKI-POO's shoulder with her lips close to his cheek and gazing into his eyes. KO-KO turns YUM-YUM's head away.

<sup>40</sup> Again, approved by Gilbert in 1908.

Ko-Ko. Oh, from Pooh-Bah. He's my Solicitor.

Yum. But he may be mistaken!

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

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

Ko-Ko. Not yet. You see, flirting is the only crime punishable with decapitation, and married men never flirt. *(Retires up-stage with his back to the audience.)*<sup>41</sup>

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

Yum. Darling –

Ko-Ko. *(turning thinking YUM-YUM is addressing him.)* Yes? *(Disappointedly turning back.)* Oh.

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

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

Yum. It-it makes a difference, doesn't it?

Nanki. It does make a difference, of course.

Yum. You see-burial alive-it's such a stuffy death!

Nanki. I call it a beastly death.<sup>42</sup>

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

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

**No:4 – TRIO. - YUM-YUM, NANKI-POO, and KO-KO.**<sup>43</sup>

Yum. Here's a how-de-do!  
If I marry you,  
When your time has come to perish,

---

<sup>41</sup> Again, a traditional piece of business to facilitate KO-KO's business below.

<sup>42</sup> This later became "I call it a beast of a death." In the 1887 libretto and that is how it is more usually performed.

<sup>43</sup> Arguably one of the most popular and most encoored numbers in the entire Savoy series, this number has become the vehicle for seemingly endless and outrageous encores.

Then the maiden whom you cherish  
Must be slaughtered, too!  
Here's a how-de-do!  
Here's a how-de-do!

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

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

### **ENSEMBLE**

Yum. & Nanki.

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

Ko-Ko.

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

Yum.            Here's a how-de-do!  
Nanki.          Here's a how-de-do!  
Ko-Ko.         Here's a how-de-do!  
All.             For is what he/I says/say is true,  
                  I/he cannot, cannot marry you!  
                  Here's a pretty, pretty state of things!  
                  Here's a pretty how-de-do!

*Exit YUM-YUM.<sup>44</sup>*

Ko-Ko. (*going up to Nanki-Poo*). My poor boy, I'm really very sorry for you.  
Nanki.         Thanks, old fellow. I'm sure you are.  
Ko-Ko.         You see I'm quite helpless.  
Nanki.         I quite see that.  
Ko-Ko.         I can't conceive anything more distressing than to have one's marriage broken off  
                  at the last moment. But you shan't be disappointed of a wedding-you shall come  
                  to mine.  
Nanki.         It's awfully kind of you, but that's impossible.  
Ko-Ko.         Why so?  
Nanki.         Today I die.  
Ko-Ko.         What do you mean?  
Nanki.         I can't live without Yum-Yum. This afternoon I perform the Happy Despatch.  
Ko-Ko.         No, no-pardon me-I can't allow that.  
Nanki.         Why not?  
Ko-Ko.         Why hang it all, you're under contract to die by the hand of the Public Executioner  
                  in a month's time! If you kill yourself, what's to become of me? Why I shall have  
                  to be executed in your place!  
Nanki.         It would certainly seem so!

*Enter POOH-BAH.*

Ko-Ko.         Now then, Lord Mayor, what is it?

---

<sup>44</sup> This is traditionally the cue for a series of encores which have over the decades introduced various bits of comic business.

Pooh. The Mikado and his suite are approaching the city and will be here in ten minutes.

Ko-Ko. The Mikado! He's coming to see whether his orders have been carried out!

Pooh. Yes, and you'll be carried out too, old chap.<sup>45</sup>

Ko-Ko. *(To Nanki-Poo.)* Now look here, you know - this is getting serious - a bargain's a bargain, and you really mustn't frustrate the ends of justice by committing suicide. As a man of honour and a gentleman, you are bound to die ignominiously by the hands of the Public Executioner.

Nanki. Very well, then - behead me.

Ko-Ko. What, now?

Nanki. Certainly; at once.

Pooh. Chop it off **Ko-Ko!** Chop it off! **He don't want it!**<sup>46</sup>

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

Pooh. Still, as Lord **High Bluebottle – I mean**<sup>47</sup> Executioner--

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

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

Ko-Ko. *(springing up suddenly).* Must it? I'm not so sure about that!

Nanki. What do you mean?

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

---

<sup>45</sup> Another Barrington? ad lib. Apparently, Gilbert did not approve but it did make it into the libretto of the 1908 revival, which Gilbert directed. It then disappeared again.

<sup>46</sup> The text in blue probably emanated from one of Rutland Barrington's ad libs. Although it doesn't appear in any printed libretto, it has become part of performance tradition.

<sup>47</sup> Another Barrington ad lib authorised for the 1908 revival.

Nanki. But where are they?

Ko-Ko. There they are. They'll all swear to it - won't you? (*To POOH-BAH.*)

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

Ko-Ko. Why not! You'll be grossly insulted, as usual.

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

Ko-Ko. It will be a ready-money transaction.

Pooh. (*Aside.*) Well, it will be a useful discipline. (*Aloud.*) Very good. Choose your fiction, and I'll endorse it! (*Aside.*) Ha! ha! Family Pride, how do you like that, my buck?

Nanki. But I tell you that life without Yum-Yum - -

Ko-Ko. Oh, Yum-Yum, Yum-Yum! Bother Yum-Yum! Here, Commissionaire (*to POOH-BAH*), go and fetch Yum-Yum. (*Exit POOH-BAH.*) Take Yum-Yum and marry Yum-Yum, only go away and never come back again. (*Enter POOH-BAH with YUM-YUM.*) Here she is. Yum-Yum, are you particularly busy?

Yum. Not particularly.

Ko-Ko. You've five minutes to spare?

Yum. Yes.

Ko-Ko. Then go along with his Grace the Archbishop of Titipu; he'll marry you at once.

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

Ko-Ko. Now, don't ask any questions, but do as I tell you, and Nanki-Poo will explain all.

Nanki. But one moment - - <sup>48</sup>

Ko-Ko. Not for worlds. Here comes the Mikado, no doubt to ascertain whether I've obeyed his decree, and if he finds you alive I shall have the greatest difficulty in persuading him that I've beheaded you. (*Exeunt NANKI-POO and YUM-YUM, followed by POOH-BAH.*)<sup>49</sup> Close thing that, for here he comes!

***Exit KO-KO.***

---

<sup>48</sup> The band parts indicate that the first 12 bars (VSP 144) *pp* are played as underscore to Ko-Ko's next speech.

<sup>49</sup> Traditionally Pooh-Bah uses his ample stomach to bump Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum off stage.

*March. - Enter procession, heralding MIKADO, with KATISHA.*

**No:5 - Entrance of MIKADO and KATISHA.**

*("March of the Mikado's troops.")*

Chorus. <sup>50</sup> Miya sama, miya sama,  
On n'm-ma no maye ni  
Pira-Pira suru no wa  
Nan gia na  
Toko tonyare tonyare na?

Miya sama, miya sama,  
On n'm-ma no maye ni  
Pira-Pira suru no wa  
Nan gia na  
Toko tonyare tonyare na?

**DUET - MIKADO and KATISHA.**

Mik. From every kind of man  
Obedience I expect;  
I'm the Emperor of Japan -

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

Mik. My morals have been declared  
Particularly correct;

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

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

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

Kat. Except his daughter-in-law elect!  
As tough as a bone,

---

<sup>50</sup> This is a genuine 19<sup>th</sup> Century war song of the Imperial Japanese army. Translation: "Your majesty, your majesty, what is it that flutters in front of the stallion". A second verse not used by Gilbert translates: "Do you not know that it is the imperial banner of silken brocade, signifying our intention to defeat the enemies of the Crown."

With a will of her own,  
Is his daughter-in-law elect!

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

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

All. Bow – Bow -  
To his daughter-in-law elect!

### **No:6 - SONG - MIKADO and CHORUS.**

Mik. A more humane Mikado never  
Did in Japan exist,  
To nobody second,  
I'm certainly reckoned  
A true philanthropist.

It is my very humane endeavour  
To make, to some extent,  
Each evil liver  
A running river  
Of harmless merriment.

My object all sublime  
I shall achieve in time -  
To let the punishment fit the crime -  
The punishment fit the crime;  
And make each prisoner pent  
Unwillingly represent  
A source of innocent merriment!  
Of innocent merriment!

All prosy dull society sinners,  
Who chatter and bleat and bore,  
Are sent to hear sermons  
From mystical Germans  
Who preach from ten till four.  
The amateur tenor, whose vocal villainies  
All desire to shirk,  
Shall, during off-hours,  
Exhibit his powers  
To Madame Tussaud's waxwork.

<sup>51</sup> The lady who dyes a chemical yellow  
Or stains her grey hair puce,  
Or pinches her figure,  
Is painted with vigour  
With permanent walnut juice.

The idiot who, in railway carriages,  
Scribbles on window-panes,  
We only suffer  
To ride on a buffer  
In Parliamentary trains.

My object all sublime  
I shall achieve in time -  
To let the punishment fit the crime -  
The punishment fit the crime;  
And make each prisoner pent  
Unwillingly represent  
A source of innocent merriment!  
Of innocent merriment!

Chorus. His object all sublime,  
He will achieve in time -  
To let the punishment fit the crime -  
The punishment fit the crime;  
And make each prisoner pent  
Unwillingly represent  
A source of innocent merriment!  
Of innocent merriment!

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

The billiard sharp who any one catches,

---

<sup>51</sup> Until 1948 the 3<sup>rd</sup> line of this couplet was performed as "Is blacked like a nigger". By this time however, the term had become unacceptable and the writer A P Herbert was asked by Rupert D'Oyly Carte to provide an alternative. In addition to the familiar version above, Herbert provided two other alternatives:

"The lady who dyes a chemical yellow/Or stains her grey hair green,/Is taken to Dover/And painted all over/A horrible ultramarine."

"The lady who dyes a chemical yellow/Or stains her grey hair puce,/Is made to wear feathers/In all the worst weathers/And legibly labelled 'Goose'."

His doom's extremely hard -  
He's made to dwell -  
In a dungeon cell  
On a spot that's always barred.

And there he plays extravagant matches  
In fitless finger-stalls  
On a cloth untrue  
With a twisted cue  
And elliptical billiard balls!

My object all sublime  
I shall achieve in time -  
To let the punishment fit the crime -  
The punishment fit the crime;  
And make each prisoner pent  
Unwillingly represent  
A source of innocent merriment!  
Of innocent merriment!

Chorus. His object all sublime,  
He will achieve in time -  
To let the punishment fit the crime -  
The punishment fit the crime;  
And make each prisoner pent  
Unwillingly represent  
A source of innocent merriment!  
Of innocent merriment!

*Enter POOH-BAH, KO-KO, and PITTI-SING. All kneel*<sup>52</sup>

*POOH-BAH hands a paper to KO-KO.*

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

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

Ko-Ko. Yes. The Coroner has just handed me his certificate.

Pooh. I am the Coroner. *(KO-KO hands certificate to MIKADO.)*

Mik. And this is the certificate of his death. *(Reads.)* "At Titipu, in the presence of the Lord Chancellor, Lord Chief Justice, Attorney-General, Secretary of State for the Home Department, Lord Mayor, and Groom of the Second Floor Front - -"

Pooh. They were all present, your Majesty. I counted them myself.

---

<sup>52</sup> Another piece of traditional business – Ko-Ko and Pitti-Sing fall easily to their knees, but due to his size Pooh-Bah find this too difficult and simply bends double.

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

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

Mik. Describe it.

**No:7 - TRIO and CHORUS - KO-KO, PITTI-SING, POOH-BAH and CHORUS.**

Ko-Ko. The criminal cried, as he dropped him down,  
In a state of wild alarm -  
With a frightful, frantic, fearful frown,  
I bared my big right arm.  
I seized him by his little pig-tail,  
And on his knees fell he,  
As he squirmed and struggled,  
And gurgled and guggled,  
I drew my snickersnee!  
My snickersnee!

Oh, never shall I  
Forget the cry  
Or the shriek that shrieked he,  
As I gnashed my teeth,  
When from its sheath  
I drew my snickersnee!

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

Pitti. He shivered and shook as he gave the sign  
For the stroke he didn't deserve;  
When all of a sudden his eye met mine,  
And it seemed to brace his nerve;  
For he nodded his head and kissed his hand,  
And he whistled an air, did he,  
As the sabre true  
Cut cleanly through  
His cervical vertebrae!  
His vertebrae!

When a man's afraid,  
A beautiful maid  
Is a cheering sight to see;  
And it's oh, I'm glad

That moment sad  
Was soothed by sight of me!

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

Pooh. Now though you'd have said that head was dead  
(For its owner dead was he),  
It stood on its neck, with a smile well-bred,  
And bowed three times to me!  
It was none of your impudent off-hand nods,  
But as humble as could be;  
For it clearly knew  
The deference due  
To a man of pedigree!  
Of pedigree!

And it's oh, I vow,  
This deathly bow  
Was a touching sight to see;  
Though trunkless, yet  
It couldn't forget  
The deference due to me!

Chorus. This haughty youth,  
He speaks the truth  
Whenever he finds it pays:  
And in this case  
It all took place  
Exactly as he says!

All. Exactly, exactly, exactly, exactly as he says!

*Exeunt Chorus.*

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

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

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

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

Kat. That's not true.

Pooh. No!

Kat.<sup>53</sup> You hold that I am not beautiful because my face is plain. But you know nothing; you are still unenlightened. Learn, then, that it is not in the face alone that beauty is to be sought. My face is unattractive!

Pooh. It is.

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

Pooh. Allow me!

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

Ko-Ko. Large.

Kat. Large? Enormous! But think of its delicate internal mechanism. It is fraught with beauty! As for this tooth, it almost stands alone. Many have tried to draw it but in vain.<sup>54</sup> I took this young man in hand and endeavoured to teach him my theory, but he was dull, and it took time. My theory is not learnt in a moment. It takes years to master. Just as the light was about to break upon this young man's darkened soul, he fled.

Ko-Ko. And yet he fled!

Mik. And is now masquerading in this town, disguised as a Second Trombone.

Ko-Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. A Second Trombone!

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

Kat. Nanki-Poo.

Mik. Nanki-Poo.

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

Mik. Gone abroad! His address.

---

<sup>53</sup> This is the original extended version of the Katisha, Pooh-Bah, Ko-Ko exchange as presented in early performances.

<sup>54</sup> These final lines are present in the licence copy but it is not clear if they were ever used in performance. The lines are actually very similar to those spoken by Delia Spiff in act one of Gilbert's 1881 comedy FOGGERTY'S FAIRY when she refers to Foggerty – "He admired me. I can't imagine what he saw in me to admire, but he saw something. I attracted him; he grew attentive. I fascinated him; he grew sentimental. I was coy; he proposed to me. I accepted him; he grew indifferent. I sang to him; he wearied of me. I danced before him; he fled!"

Ko-Ko. <sup>55</sup> Knightsbridge!

Kat. (*who is reading the certificate of death*). Ha!

Mik. What's the matter?

Kat. See here-his name-Nanki-Poo-beheaded this morning. Oh, where shall I find another? Where shall I find another?

***KO-KO, POOH-BAH, and PITTI-SING fall on their knees head to the floor.*** <sup>56</sup>

Mik. (*looking at paper*). Dear, dear, dear! This is very tiresome. (*To Ko-Ko.*) My poor fellow, in your anxiety to carry out my wishes you have beheaded the heir to the throne of Japan!

Ko-Ko. (*rising.*) I beg to offer an unqualified apology. (*bows down*)

Pooh. (*rising.*) I desire to associate myself with that expression of regret. (*bows down*)

Pitti. (*rising.*) We really hadn't the least notion - (*KO-KO and POOH-BAH both rise and push PITTI-SING back down.*)

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

Ko-Ko. (*getting up.*) We are infinitely obliged to your Majesty - -

Pitti. (*getting up.*) Much obliged, your Majesty.

Pooh. (*getting up.*) Very much obliged, your Majesty.

Mik. Obligated? not a bit. Don't mention it. How could you tell?

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

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

Ko-Ko. It might have been on his pocket-handkerchief, but Japanese don't use pocket-handkerchiefs! Ha! ha! ha!

---

<sup>55</sup> Knightsbridge was, of course, the home of the Japanese Exhibition in 1885. It has become traditional to use a town, village or district name relevant to the venue in which a performance is taking place.

<sup>56</sup> This has become a cue for a deal of slapstick business over the years which probably started with George Grossmith, Jessie Bond and Rutland Barrington during the first production. The Mikado is studying the certificate; Ko-Ko and Pitti-Sing fall immediately to their knees but Pooh-Bah, due to his bulk has trouble getting down and as he does so, overbalances, rolls completely over Pitti-Sing and Ko-Ko, realises he is on the wrong side, so rolls back, but ends up on his back. Pitti-Sing tickles his tummy and then, with a great effort, Pooh-Bah rolls right side up, crashing into Pitti-Sing as he does so and causing her to crash into Ko-Ko. Ko-Ko leans across and hits Pooh-Bah with his fan. Pooh-Bah goes to retaliate but realises the Mikado is watching him and so bows back down.

Mik. <sup>57</sup>Ha! ha! ha! (*To Katisha.*) I forget the punishment for compassing the death of the Heir Apparent.

***KO-KO, PITTI-SING and POOH-BAH kneeling again with their heads to the floor.***

Ko-Ko., Pooh-Bah, and Pitti. (*rising.*) Punishment. (*bowing down head to floor.*)

Mik. Yes. Something lingering, with boiling oil in it, I fancy. Something of that sort. I think boiling oil occurs in it, but I'm not sure. I know it's something humorous, but lingering, with either boiling oil or –

Kat. Melted lead!

Mik. Melted lead. <sup>58</sup> Come, come, don't fret - I'm not a bit angry.

Ko-Ko. (*rising in abject terror.*) If your Majesty will accept our assurance, we had no idea -  
- (*back down*)

Mik. Of course - -

Pitti. (*rising.*) I knew nothing about it. (*back down.*)

Pooh. (*rising.*) I wasn't there. (*back down.*)

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

Ko-Ko., Pitti., and Pooh. (*rising.*) No! (*back down.*)

Mik. Or not knowing - -

Ko-Ko. (*rising.*) No! (*back down.*)

Mik. Or having no notion - -

Pitti. (*rising, in a very high squeak.*) No! (*back down.*)

Mik. Or not being there - -

Pooh. (*rising, in a very deep voice.*) No! (*back down.*)

Mik. There should be, of course - -

Ko-Ko., Pitti., and Pooh. (*rising, hopefully.*) Yes!

Mik. But there isn't.

---

<sup>57</sup> Another piece of traditional business here. Ko-Ko starts to laugh nervously. The Mikado begins to laugh. It becomes quite raucous, the Mikado digging Ko-Ko in the ribs with his fan. Without thinking, Ko-Ko reciprocates. His dignity offended, the Mikado lets out a roar and snaps his fan open causing Ko-Ko, Pitti-Sing and Pooh-Bah to fall to their knees again.

<sup>58</sup> Pooh-Bah collapses from the kneeling position to flat on the floor with a terrific groan.

Ko-Ko., Pitti., and Pooh. (*disappointedly.*) Oh! (*back down.*)

Mik. That's the slovenly way in which these Acts are always drawn. However, cheer up, it'll be all right. I'll have it altered (*all rise expectantly.*) next session.

<sup>59</sup>Ko-Ko., Pitti-Sing., and Pooh. What's the good of that? (*back down.*)

Mik. Now, let's see about your execution – will after luncheon suit you? Can you wait till then?

Ko-Ko., Pitti., and Pooh. (*getting up.*) Oh, yes - we can wait till then!

Mik. Then we'll make it after luncheon.

<sup>60</sup>Pooh. I don't want any lunch.

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

**No:8 - GLEE - PITTI-SING, KATISHA, KO-KO, POOH-BAH, and  
MIKADO,**

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

Ko-Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. Is B more worthy?

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

**ENSEMBLE:**

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

Ko-Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. If I were Fortune - which I'm not -  
B should enjoy A's happy lot,

---

<sup>59</sup> This line is thought to have been an ad lib from the original production which has been accepted into the performance tradition although it has never appeared in printed editions of the libretto.

<sup>60</sup> Another Rutland Barrington ad lib.

And A should die in miserie -  
That is, assuming I am B.

Mik. and Kat. But should A perish?

Ko-Ko., Pooh., and Pitti. That should be  
(Of course, assuming I am B).

**ENSEMBLE:**

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

***Exeunt MIKADO and KATISHA.***

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

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

Pitti. Corroborative detail indeed! Corroborative fiddlestick!

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

Pooh. But how about your big right arm?

Pitti. Yes, and your snickersnee!

Ko-Ko. Well, well, never mind that now. There's only one thing to be done. Nanki-Poo hasn't started yet-he must come to life again at once. (*Enter NANKI-POO and YUM-YUM prepared for a journey.*) Here he comes. Here, Nanki-Poo, I've good news for you-you're reprieved.

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

Ko-Ko. Nonsense! A terrible thing has just happened. It seems you're the son of the Mikado.

Nanki. Yes, but that happened some time ago.

Ko-Ko. Is this a time for airy persiflage? Your father is here, and with Katisha!

Nanki. My father! And with Katisha!

Ko-Ko. Yes, he wants you particularly.

Pooh. So does she.

Yum. Oh, but he's married now.

Ko-Ko. But, bless my heart! What has that to do with it?

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

Yum. You see our difficulty.

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

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

Ko-Ko. I marry Katisha!

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

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

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

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

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

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

**No:9 – DUET - NANKI-POO and KO-KO. (With YUM-YUM, PITTI-SING, and POOH-BAH.)**

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

The flowers that bloom in the spring.

All. Tra la la la, etc.

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

All. Tra la la la, Tra la la la, etc.

*Dance and exeunt NANKI-POO, YUM-YUM, POOH-BAH, PITTI-SING, and KO-KO.*

*Enter KATISHA.*

**No:10 - RECITATIVE and SONG.-KATISHA.**

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

**SONG.**

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

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

<sup>61</sup>Hearts do not break!  
If I mistake  
Why sleep, and wake  
To life-long gloom?  
If love betrayed  
Can kill a maid  
As poets have said,  
Where is thy tomb?  
Where is thy tomb?  
Oh, life-long gloom,  
Dark Demon, whom  
In dread I shun  
Go, loathly one!  
Come, haven sure,  
Come grave obscure -  
Oh, life-long gloom,  
Dark Demon, whom  
In dread I shun  
Go, loathly one!  
Come, relatively cheerful tomb -  
Come, relatively cheerful tomb!

<sup>62</sup>Ko-Ko. (*entering and approaching her timidly*). Katisha!

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

Ko-Ko. Katisha-behold a suppliant at your feet! Katisha - mercy!

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

Ko-Ko. (*suddenly, and with great vehemence*). Here!-Here!

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<sup>61</sup> This second verse appears in the licence copy but appears to have been deleted before the first performance. However, it was included in performances by the D'Oyly Carte Opera Company in 1992 and so I have included it here.

<sup>62</sup> Traditionally this has become another scene of slapstick comedy.

Kat. What!!!

Ko-Ko. (*with intense passion*). Katisha, for years I have loved you with a white-hot passion that is slowly but surely consuming my very vitals! <sup>63</sup> Ah, shrink not from me! If there is aught of woman's mercy in your heart, turn not away from a love-sick suppliant whose every fibre thrills at your tiniest touch! True it is that, under a poor mask of disgust, I have endeavoured to conceal a passion whose inner fires are broiling the soul within me! But the fire will not be smothered - it defies all attempts at extinction, and, breaking forth, all the more eagerly for its long restraint, it declares itself in words that will not be weighed-that cannot be schooled-that should not be too severely criticised. Katisha, I dare not hope for your love-but I will not live without it! *Darling!*<sup>64</sup>

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

Ko-Ko. I do-accept my love, or I perish on the spot!

*<sup>65</sup> KO-KO pretends to stab himself, using his fan – KATISHA screams – KO-KO opens the fan with a grin on his face.*

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

Ko-Ko. You know not what you say. Listen!

### <sup>66</sup> No:11 - SONG-KO-KO.

Ko-Ko. On a tree by a river a little tom-tit  
Sang "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"  
and I said to him, "Dicky-bird, why do you sit  
Singing Willow, titwillow, titwillow?"  
"Is it weakness of intellect, birdie?" I cried,  
"Or a rather tough worm in your little inside?"  
With a shake of his poor little head, he replied,  
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

He slapped at his chest, as he sat on that bough,  
Singing "Willow, titwillow, titwillow!"  
And a cold perspiration bespangled his brow,  
Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!  
He sobbed and he sighed, and a gurgle he gave,  
Then he plunged himself into the billowy wave,

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<sup>63</sup> Traditionally at this point Katisha advances menacingly towards Ko-Ko who backs away.

<sup>64</sup> Possibly a Grossmith ad lib which stuck.

<sup>65</sup> Another piece of performance tradition.

<sup>66</sup> Some productions over the decades have mistakenly treated this number as a comedy song. Gilbert, however, was a master of stagecraft, and knew when to give his audience a rest from laughter. The song should be sung simply, observing all the note values, and with absolute seriousness. After all, Ko-Ko is singing for his life.

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

Now I feel just as sure as I'm sure that my name  
Isn't Willow, titwillow, titwillow,  
That 'twas blighted affection that made him exclaim  
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"  
And if you remain callous and obdurate, I  
Shall perish as he did, and you will know why,  
Though I probably shall not exclaim as I die,  
"Oh, willow, titwillow, titwillow!"

*During this song, KATISHA has been greatly affected, and at the end is almost in tears.*

Kat. (*whimpering*). Did he really die of love?

Ko-Ko. He really did.

Kat. All on account of a cruel little hen?

Ko-Ko. Yes.

Kat. Poor little chap!

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

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

Ko-Ko. His devotion was something extraordinary.

Kat. (*still whimpering*). Poor little chap! And-and if I refuse you, will you go and do the same?

Ko-Ko. At once.

Kat. No, no - you mustn't! Anything but that! (*Falls on his breast.*) Oh, I'm a silly little goose!

Ko-Ko. (*making a wry face*). You are!

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

Ko-Ko. Hate you? Oh, Katisha! is there not beauty even in bloodthirstiness?

Kat. My idea exactly.

## **No:12 - DUET-KATISHA and KO-KO.**

- Kat.           There is beauty in the bellow of the blast,  
                  There is grandeur in the growling of the gale,  
                  There is eloquent outpouring  
                  When the lion is a-roaring,  
                  And the tiger is a-lashing of his tail!
- Ko-Ko.         Yes, I like to see a tiger  
                  From the Congo or the Niger,<sup>67</sup>  
                  And especially when lashing of his tail!
- Kat.           Volcanoes have a splendour that is grim,  
                  And earthquakes only terrify the dolts,  
                  But to him who's scientific  
                  There's nothing that's terrific  
                  In the falling of a flight of thunderbolts!
- Ko-Ko.         Yes, in spite of all my meekness,  
                  If I have a little weakness,  
                  It's a passion for a flight of thunderbolts!
- Both.          If that is so,  
                  Sing derry down derry!  
                  It's evident, very,  
                  Our tastes are one.  
                  Away we'll go,  
                  And merrily marry,  
                  Nor tardily tarry  
                  Till day is done!
- Ko-Ko.         There is beauty in extreme old age -  
                  Do you fancy you are elderly enough?  
                  Information I'm requesting  
                  On a subject interesting:  
                  Is a maiden all the better when she's tough?
- Kat.           Throughout this wide dominion  
                  It's the general opinion  
                  That she'll last a good deal longer when she's tough.
- Ko-Ko.         Are you old enough to marry, do you think?  
                  Won't you wait till you are eighty in the shade?  
                  There's a fascination frantic  
                  In a ruin that's romantic;  
                  Do you think you are sufficiently decayed?

---

<sup>67</sup> The Congo and the Niger are in West Africa where there are no tigers, although it is reasonable to expect that a "cheap tailor" may not know that. The nearest tigers to Japan are to be found in Russia's Siberian forests and north-eastern areas of China and Korea. Tigers have, however, featured in Japanese printed silk and tapestry for many centuries.

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

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

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

Sing derry down derry!  
We'll merrily marry,  
Nor tardily tarry  
Till day is done!

*Exeunt together.*

*<sup>68</sup>Flourish. Enter the MIKADO, attended by PISH-TUSH and Court.*

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

Pish. Your Majesty, all is prepared.

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

*<sup>69</sup>Enter KO-KO, KATISHA, POOH-BAH, and PITTI-SING. They throw themselves at the MIKADO's feet*

Kat. Mercy! Mercy for Ko-Ko! Mercy for Pitti-Sing! Mercy even for Pooh-Bah!

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<sup>68</sup> The flourish does not appear in Sullivan's autograph manuscript, or in the early editions of the vocal score. As with the Overture, he presumably delegated an assistant (under his direction) to provide this – Hamilton Clarke or Alfred Cellier. The Dover vocal and full scores provides an alternative (VSP 234). For both the traditional and new fanfares - see appendix 1.

<sup>69</sup> Contemporary drawings of the original production clearly show both Katisha and Pish-Tush on their knees in this scene. However, I have never seen this in any modern production.

Mik. I beg your pardon, I don't think I quite caught that remark.

<sup>70</sup>Pooh. Mercy even for Pooh-Bah.

Kat. Mercy! My husband that was to have been is dead, and I have just married this miserable object. <sup>71</sup>

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

<sup>72</sup>Ko-Ko. (*rising.*) We were married before the Registrar. (*back down.*)

Pooh. (*rising.*) I am the Registrar. (*back down.*)

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

***Enter NANKI-POO and YUM-YUM. They kneel.***

Nanki. The Heir Apparent is not slain.

Mik. Bless my heart, my son!

Yum. And your daughter-in-law elected!

Kat. (*seizing Ko-Ko.*) Traitor, you have deceived me!

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

Ko-Ko. Your Majesty, it's like this: It is true that I stated that I had killed Nanki-Poo - -

Mik. Yes, with most affecting particulars.

Pooh. Merely corroborative detail intended to give artistic verisimilitude to a bald and - -

Ko-Ko. Will you refrain from putting in your oar?

Pooh. Narrative!!

Ko-Ko. (*To Mikado.*) It's like this: When your Majesty says, "Let a thing be done," it's as good as done - practically, it is done - because your Majesty's will is law. Your Majesty says, "Kill a gentleman," and a gentleman is told off to be killed. Consequently, that gentleman is as good as dead - practically, he is dead - and if he is dead, why not say so?

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

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<sup>70</sup> Yet another Rutland Barrington ad lib.

<sup>71</sup> Another piece of performance tradition here as Katisha prods Ko-Ko with her foot causing him to roll completely over. He then immediately rolls back to his original position.

<sup>72</sup> This became another Grossmith/Barrington ad lib: "Ko-Ko. We were married after lunch before the registrar. Pooh. I am the after luncheon registrar."

## No:13 – FINALE ACT II.

- Pitti. For he's gone and married Yum-Yum -
- All. Yum-Yum!
- Pitti. Your anger pray bury,  
For all will be merry,  
I think you had better succumb-
- All. Cumb-cumb.
- Pitti. And join our expressions of glee!
- Ko-K On this subject I pray you be dumb -
- All. Dumb-dumb!
- Ko-Ko. Your notions, though many,  
Are not worth a penny,  
The word for your guidance is "Mum" -
- All. Mum-Mum!
- Ko-Ko. You've a very good bargain in me.
- All. On this subject, we pray you be dumb -  
Dumb-dumb!  
We think you had better succumb -  
Cumb-cumb!  
You'll find there are many  
Who'll wed for a penny,  
Who'll wed for a penny,  
There are lots of good fish in the sea -  
There are lots of good fish in the sea!  
There's lots of good fish -  
Good fish in the sea -  
There's lots of good fish -  
Good fish in the sea, in the sea, in the sea, in the sea!
- <sup>73</sup>Nanki. The threatened cloud has passed away,
- Yum. And brightly shines the dawning day;
- Nanki. What though the night may come too soon,
- Yum. We've years and years of afternoon!

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<sup>73</sup> Sullivan's autograph indicates that the original intention had been for the finale to commence here, whilst the original prompt book has the reprise of "For he's gone and married Yum-Yum" handwritten, presumably at some stage after the opening night.

Yum., Pitti., Peep., Nanki., Pooh., & Pish.

Then let the throng  
Our joy advance,  
With laughing song  
And merry dance,  
Then let the throng  
Our joy advance,  
With laughing song  
And merry dance,  
With laughing song,  
And merry dance.  
With laughing song.

All. With joyous shout  
With joyous shout and ringing cheer,  
Inaugurate  
Inaugurate our/their new career!  
With joyous shout and ringing cheer  
Inaugurate our/their new career!  
With joyous shout and ringing cheer  
Inaugurate our/their new career!  
With laughing song and merry dance,  
With laughing song and merry dance,  
With song and dance!

**CURTAIN.**

**Traditional D'Oyly Carte Fanfare:**

FANFARE.

The image shows a piano arrangement of the traditional D'Oyly Carte Fanfare. It is written in 2/4 time and has a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The piece is labeled 'FANFARE.' and consists of six measures. The right hand plays a melody of eighth and quarter notes, while the left hand provides a rhythmic accompaniment of eighth notes.

**New Fanfare suggested in the Dover score:**

234

Moderato ♩ = 116

**Fanfare**

*New Fanfare orchestration and arrangement by E. Jones*

The image shows a piano arrangement of a new fanfare. It is written in 2/4 time and has a key signature of two flats. The tempo is marked 'Moderato' with a quarter note equal to 116 beats per minute. The piece is titled 'Fanfare' and is noted as a 'New Fanfare orchestration and arrangement by E. Jones'. The score consists of two systems of music. The first system has a dynamic marking of 'f' (forte) and features a melody in the right hand with eighth and quarter notes, and a bass line in the left hand with eighth notes and rests. The second system continues the melody and bass line.