

A Topsy Turvy Mikado

Houston 2019

Audition Pieces

Dialogue

You will be auditioning for the actor who originally created the role in the Opera. Page numbers refer to the Schirmer edition of the Score / libretto.

An insight into the actors' characters can be gained either by simple Google search or by watching the Mike Leigh film "Topsy Turvy". For instance Grossmith is alleged to have had a drug problem, Leonora Braham an alcohol problem and Jessie Bond an unhealed leg wound affecting her ability to kneel.

Anyone auditioning for the role of W. S. Gilbert is recommended to watch Jim Broadbent's excellent interpretation in the film Topsy Turvy.

Abbreviations for Actors names playing the role are as follows:-

Actor	Character	Abbreviation
W. S. Gilbert	Himself	Gilb
Richard Temple	Mikado	Temp
Durward Lely	Nanki Poo	Lely
George Grossmith	Ko Ko	Gros
Rutland Barrington	Poo Bah	Barr
Frederick Bovill	Pish Tush	Bovi
Rudolph Lewis & Grossmith's understudy	A noble	Lewi
Leonora Braham	Yum Yum	Brah
Jessie Bond	Pitti Sing	Bond
Sybil Grey	Peep Bo	Grey
Rosina Brandham	Katisha	Bran

W. S. Gilbert Himself Actor!

This role will be played out of sight from the sound booth at the rear of the auditorium using a microphone in the style of the Director in the stage version of the Musical "A Chorus Line!

Gilb Barrington! Barrington!!
 Where the devil is Barrington? Barrington!!!!
 How can I expect this rehearsal to run smoothly if people miss their entrances?

Barr	I'm dreadfully sorry Mr Gilbert but Mr Wilhelm wanted me to try on the shoes I am to wear in the performance.
Gilb	That's all very well but such fittings must not interrupt the flow of the rehearsal. Do us all the honour of not missing another entrance Barrington. I will be having words with Wilhelm about this after the rehearsal. Now start this scene again from Lely's preceding your entrance.

Gilb Grossmith!!

Gros Yes, Mr Gilbert.

Gilb Please be very careful how you handle that sword.
 Remember that was the sword which fell from the wall of my study and was partially instrumental in the creation of this Opera. I would also be obliged, as would the gentlemen of the chorus, if, when swinging it around, you could avoid decapitating any of them.

Men *Laughter*

Gilb Now continue with the dialogue.

Gilb Leonora, Jessie, Sybil. Would you and the ladies' chorus be good enough to come onstage.
 Mr Teruhiko, would you and Miss Suzuki also come onstage, please? Thank you Mr Teruhiko. Would you be good enough to ask Miss Suzuki to demonstrate once again to the ladies how to walk and stand correctly.
 Now ladies, please watch this very carefully as it is my aim to faithfully recreate the style, manners and art of Japanese culture onstage in this production.
 It must not be the sort of burlesque mis-representation one might have the misfortune to see in some of the more disreputable theatres in Soho.

Teru *Asks Miss Suzuki (in Japanese) to demonstrate.
 All ladies copy her.*

After demonstration

Gilb Ladies. Would you please prepare for your entrance. Mr Teruhiko. We are all very grateful to you and Miss Suzuki for taking the time to come to the Savoy to give us the benefit of your expertise. I have arranged for a carriage to be at the stage door to take you back to Kensington. Thank you once again for your invaluable assistance. Sullivan? May we continue with the Ladies' entrance, please?

Gilb Leonora,

Brah Yes Mr Gilbert.

Gilb You recall the other day mentioning to me that you were concerned you had rather too much to sing in Act 1 and wondered if I might be able to spread the load a little?

Brah Yes Mr Gilbert.

Gilb I think I have found a solution. Might I suggest that we move "The sun whose Rays" and its preceding speech to immediately follow the number just sung by Jessie and the ladies' chorus.

Brah That would be wonderful Mr Gilbert. Thank you so much Mr Gilbert.

Gilb I will write out the alteration and let you see it at the end of the rehearsal when I am giving general notes to the Company. Jessie, Sybil.

Bond)

Grey) Yes Mr Gilbert

Gilb That will mean that you both exit stage right after "Braid the Raven Hair" and then re enter following "The Sun whose Rays" – can you make a note of that, please?

Bond)

Grey) Yes Mr Gilbert

Gilb Good. Then would you be so good as to pick up the dialogue from "Yes, everything seems to smile" as if that alteration had been made?

Gilb Thank you Temple.

Before we move on to the finale I want thank you all for all your hard work today. The production is really taking shape. Sir Arthur and I are very appreciative of all the hard work

you are putting into it. Now remember, we need you here bright and early at 10 o'clock tomorrow to get into costume and makeup to give Mr Wilhelm and his staff to make any last minute adjustments so that we can start the costume rehearsal promptly at noon. I have arranged for carriages to be at the stage door to take you all home so get a good night's sleep and I will see you in the morning.

Oh, and Temple

Temp	Yes Mr Gilbert.
Gilb	I've been thinking about your song in Act 2
Temp	Yes Mr Gilbert.
Gilb	It goes against my better judgement but, in view of the impassioned appeal made by your colleagues earlier this evening, I am prepared to reinstate it and let the audience be the judge of who is right – you and the company – or me!
All	<i>general cheering and applause</i>
Temp	Thank you Mr Gilbert. Nothing could possibly be more satisfactory.

Richard Temple Mikado Bass

Temp All this is very interesting, and I should really have liked 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.

Gros Indeed? Had he any reason to be dissatisfied with his position?

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

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

Bran That's not true. 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. 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. 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.

Gros Large.

Bran 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.

Gros And yet he fled!
Temp And is now masquerading in this town disguised as a second
 trombone.
Gros)
Barr) A second trombone!
Bond)
Temp Yes; would it be troubling you too much if I asked you to
 produce him? He goes by the name of Nanki Poo.
Gros Oh, no; not at all – only –
Temp Yes?
Gros It's rather awkward, but in point of fact, he's gone abroad!
Temp Gone abroad? His address?
Gros Knightsbridge!
Bran Ha!
Temp What's the matter?
Bran See here – his name – Nanki Poo – beheaded this morning.
 Oh where shall I find another! Where shall I find another!

The next three speeches are spoken together in one breath

Gros) But I assure you we had no idea -----
Barr) But indeed, we didn't know -----
Bond) We really hadn't the least notion -----

Temp 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.
Gros We are infinitely obliged to your Majesty ----
Temp Obliged? Not a bit. Don't mention it. How could you tell?
Barr No, of course we couldn't know that he was the Heir
 Apparent.
Bond It wasn't written on his forehead, you know.
Gros It might have been on his pocket handkerchief, but Japanese
 don't use pocket handkerchiefs! Ha! Ha! Ha!
Temp Ha! Ha! Ha! I forget the punishment for compassing the
 death of the Heir Apparent.

Said together

Gros)

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

Gros If your Majesty will accept our assurance, we had no idea -
 Temp Of course you hadn't. 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, or
 not knowing or having no notion. There should be, of course,
 but there isn't. That's the slovenly way in which these Acts
 are drawn. However, cheer up, it'll be alright. I'll have it
 altered next session.

Gros What's the good of that?
 Temp Now let's see – will after luncheon suit you? Can you wait
 till then?

Said together

Gros)
 Barr) Oh yes – we can wait till then
 Bond)
 Temp Then we'll make it after luncheon. I'm really very sorry for
 you all, but its an unjust world, and virtue is triumphant only
 in theatrical performances.

Durward Lely Nanki Poo Tenor

Lely 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 to be married to him this
 afternoon!

Brah Alas, yes!
 Lely But you do not love him?
 Brah Alas, no!
 Lely Rapture! (*over excited exclamation!*)
 Gilb Lely!
 Lely Yes Mr Gilbert?
 Gilb I've told you before not to get over excited saying that line!
 Now modify it.

Lely Yes Mr Gilbert.
Modified rapture!
But why do you not refuse him?

Brah But what good would that do? He's my guardian, and he wouldn't let me marry you!

Lely But I would wait until you were of age!

Brah You forget that in Japan girls do not arrive at years of discretion until they are fifty.

Lely True: from seventeen to forty nine are considered years of indiscretion.

Brah 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.

Lely But – shall I tell her? Yes! She will not betray me. What if it should prove that, after all, I am no musician!

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

Lely What if it should prove that I am no other than the son of his Majesty the Mikado?

Brah 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?

Lely 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.

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

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

Brah Still that don't make it right. To flirt is illegal and we must obey the law.

Lely Deuce take the law!

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

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

Brah Happy indeed!

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

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

Lely We should be gazing into each other's eyes. Like that.

Brah Breathing vows of unutterable love, love like.
 Lely With our arms round each other's waists like that.
 Brah Yes, if it wasn't for the law.
 Lely If it wasn't for the law.
 Brah As it is, of course, we couldn't do anything of the kind.
 Lely Not for worlds!
 Brah Being engaged to Ko Ko, you know!

George Grossmith Ko Ko Patter baritone - understudy only
 – see notes for Rudolph Lewis

Gros 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 public----- Go away, sir! How dare you? Am I never to be permitted to soliloquise?
 Lely Oh, go on – don't mind me.
 Gros What are you going to do with that rope?
 Lely I am about to terminate an unendurable existence.
 Gros Terminate your existence? Oh, nonsense! What for?
 Lely Because you are going to marry the girl I adore.
 Gros And do you suppose that I am likely to stand quietly by while you deliberately take your life?
 Lely Please yourself: you can withdraw if you prefer it.

Gros	Withdraw if I prefer it! Are you aware, sir, that I am Lord High Executioner of this city, and, in that capacity, it is my duty to prevent unnecessary bloodshed?
Lely	I know nothing about your capacity. I only know that I die today.
Gros	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.
Lely	That's absurd. If you attempt to raise an alarm, I instantly perform the Happy Despatch with this dagger.
Gros	No, no, don't do that. This is horrible! Why, you cold-blooded scoundrel, are you aware that, in taking your life, you are committing a crime from which civilization recoils in horror? - a crime which is, in its essence, unmanly, cowardly, and impious? Are you aware that in depriving yourself of an existence which – which – which is – Oh!
Lely	What's the matter?
Gros	Is it <i>absolutely certain</i> that you are resolved to die?

Lely	Absolutely
Gros	Will <i>nothing</i> shake your resolution?
Lely	Nothing.
Gros	Threats, entreaties, prayers - all useless?
Lely	All! My mind is made up.
Gros	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!
Lely	I don't see how that would benefit me.
Gros	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.
Lely	Do you think Yum Yum would really be distracted at my death?
Gros	I am convinced of it. Bless you, she's the most tender hearted little creature alive.
Lely	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.
Gros	Oh, I don't think you could forget Yum Yum so easily, and, after all, what is more miserable than a love blighted life?
Lely	True
Gros	Life without Yum Yum – why it seems absurd!
Lely	And yet there are a good many people in the world who have to endure it.
Gros	Poor devils, yes! You are quite right not to be of their number.
Lely	I won't be of their number!
Gros	Noble fellow!
Lely	I'll tell you how we'll manage it. Let me marry Yum Yum tomorrow, and in a month you may behead me.
Gros	No, no, I draw the line at Yum Yum
Lely	Very good. If you can draw the line, so can I.

Gros	Stop, stop – listen one moment – be reasonable. How can I consent to your marrying Yum Yum if I’m going to marry her myself?
Lely	My good friend, she’ll be a widow in a month, and you can marry her then.
Lely	My good friend, she’ll be a widow in a month, and you can marry her then.
Gros	That’s true, of course, I quite see that, but, dear me, my position during the next month will be most unpleasant – most unpleasant.
Lely	Not half so unpleasant as my position at the end of it.
Gros	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 to be disturbed
Lely	Trust me, she shall never learn the truth from me.

Rutland Barrington Pooh Bah Baritone

Lely Ko Ko, the cheap tailor, Lord High Executioner of Titipu!
Why, that’s the highest rank a citizen can attain!

Gilb Barrington! Barrington!! Where the devil is Barrington? How can I expect this rehearsal to run smoothly if people miss their entrances?

Barr I’m dreadfully sorry Mr Gilbert but Mr Wilhelm wanted me to try on the shoes I am to wear in the performance.

Gilb	That’s all very well but such fittings must not interrupt the flow of the rehearsal. Now start this scene again from Lely’s line preceding your entrance.
Barr	Yes Mr Gilbert.
Lely	Ko Ko, the cheap tailor, Lord High Executioner of Titipu! Why, that’s the highest rank a citizen can attain!
Barr	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.
Lely	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!

Barr	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?
Bovi	And the salaries attached to them? You did.
Barr	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 Buck Hounds, Groom of the backstairs, 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!
Lely	And it does you credit
Barr	But I don't stop at that. I go and dine with middle-class people on reasonable terms. I dance at cheap suburban parties for a moderate fee. I accept refreshment at any hands, however lowly. I also retail Sate secrets at a very low figure. For instance, any further information about Yum Yum would come under the heads of a State secret. Another insult, and I think, a light one.

Frederick Bovill Pish Tush Baritone

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

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

Gros A letter from the Mikado? What in the world can he have to say to me? Ah, here it is at last! I thought it would come. 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 will be abolished, and the city reduced to the rank of a village!

Bovi But that will involve us all in irretrievable ruin!
 Gros Yes – somebody will have to suffer. Send the Recorder to me. I expected something of this sort! I knew it couldn't go on. Well they've brought it upon 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.

Gilb	Grossmith! What the dickens was that all about? Are you, in some way, dissatisfied with my words?
Gros	No Mr Gilbert, but I thought you might be interested to hear a version I had penned.
Gilb	I realise you think of yourself as something of an author Grossmith but, as I have spent a considerable amount of time writing the libretto, I would be grateful if, in future, you would be so good as sing to what I have written and not some cockamayne gibberish from your own feeble imagination!!
Gros	Of course, Mr Gilbert. I'm sorry Mr Gilbert.
Gilb	Good! Let's hear no more about it then. Barrington! Will you continue from your entrance with Bovill
Barr	This is very uncomfortable news.
Gros	Yes, There's no help for it, I shall have to execute somebody. The only question is, who shall it be?
Barr	Well, it seems unkind to say so, but as you're already under sentence of death for flirting, everything seems to point to <i>you</i> .
Gros	To me? What are you talking about? I can't execute myself, Recorder!
Barr	Why not?
Gros	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.
Barr	That is so, no doubt.
Bovi	We might reserve that point.
Barri	True, it could be argued six months hence, before the full Court
Gros	Besides I don't see how a man <i>can</i> cut off his own head.
Barr	A man might try

Bovi	Even if you only succeeded in cutting it half off, that would be something.
Barr	It would be taken as an earnest of your desire to comply with the Imperial will.
Gros	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.
Barr	This professional conscientiousness is highly creditable to <i>you</i> , but it places us in a very awkward position.
Gros	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!
Bovi	I am afraid that, unless you can obtain a substitute ----
Gros	A Substitute? Oh, certainly – nothing easier. Pooh Bah, I appoint you my substitute.
Barr	I should like it above all things. Such an appointment would realize my fondest dreams. But no, at any cost I must set bounds to my insatiable ambition.

Rudolph Lewis A noble Lord Baritone
This will be played by whoever is cast to understudy Grossmith. He will, in fact take Grossmith's place when he is taken ill onstage towards the end of the dialogue section preceding the Act 1 Finale and will continue into the Act 1 Finale until his exit after "She's yours!"

Gilb Lewis! Lewis!
Lewi Yes Mr Gilbert
Gilb Grossmith is unwell. Will you please take his place for the rest of the Act?
Lewi Yes Mr Gilbert. Of course Mr Gilbert
Gilb Lely. Please continue from your line commencing "My good friend"
Lely Yes Mr Gilbert.
 My good friend, she'll be a widow in a month, and you can marry her then.
Lewi That's true, of course, I quite see that, but, dear me, my position during the next month will be most unpleasant – most unpleasant.
Lely Not half so unpleasant as my position at the end of it.

Lewi 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 to be disturbed

Lely	Trust me, she shall never learn the truth from me.
------	--

Leonora Braham Yum Yum Soprano

Lely 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 to be married to him this afternoon!

Brah Alas, yes!

Lely But you do not love him?

Brah Alas, no!

Lely Rapture! (*over excited exclamation!*)

Gilb Lely!

Lely Yes Mr Gilbert?

Gilb I’ve told you before not to get over excited saying that line! Now modify it.

Lely Yes Mr Gilbert. Modified rapture! But why do you not refuse him?

Brah But what good would that do? He’s my guardian, and he wouldn’t let me marry you!

Lely But I would wait until you were of age!

Brah You forget that in Japan girls do not arrive at years of discretion until they are fifty.

Lely	True: from seventeen to forty nine are considered years of indiscretion.
Brah	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.
Lely	But – shall I tell her? Yes! She will not betray me. What if it should prove that, after all, I am no musician!
Brah	There, I was certain of it, directly I heard you play!
Lely	What if it should prove that I am no other than the son of his Majesty the Mikado?
Brah	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?

Lely	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.
Brah	If you please, I think your Highness had better not come too near. The laws against flirting are excessively severe.
Lely	But we are quite alone, and nobody can see us.
Brah	Still that don't make it right. To flirt is illegal and we must obey the law.
Lely	Deuce take the law!
Brah	I wish it would, but it won't.
Lely	If it were not for that, how happy we might be!
Brah	Happy indeed!
Lely	If it were not for the law, we should now be sitting side by side, like that.
Brah	Instead of being obliged to sit half a mile off, like that.
Lely	We should be gazing into each other's eyes. Like that.
Brah	Breathing vows of unutterable love, love like.
Lely	With our arms round each other's waists like that.
Brah	Yes, if it wasn't for the law.
Lely	If it wasn't for the law.
Brah	As it is, of course, we couldn't do anything of the kind.
Lely	Not for worlds!
Brah	Being engaged to Ko Ko, you know!

Jessie Bond

Pitti Sing Mezzo Soprano

Brah	Yes, everything seems to smile upon me. I am to be married today to the man I love best, and I believe I am the very happiest girl in Japan.
Grey	The happiest girl indeed, for she is indeed to be envied who has attained happiness in all but perfection.
Brah	In "all but" perfection?
Grey	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.

Bond	I don't know about that. It all depends!
Grey	At all events, <i>he</i> will find it a drawback.
Bond	Not necessarily. Bless you, it all depends.
Brah	I think it very indelicate of you to refer to such a subject on such a day. If my married happiness <i>is</i> to be – to be –
Grey	Cut short.
Brah	Well, cut short – I a month, can't you let me forget it?
Lely	Yum Yum in tears – and on her wedding morn!
Brah	They've been reminding me that in a month you're to be beheaded!
Bond	Yes, we've been reminding her that you're to be beheaded!
Grey	It's quite true you know, you <i>are</i> to be beheaded!
Lely	Humph! How some bridegrooms would be depressed by this sort of thing. A month? Well, what's a month? Bah! These divisions of time are purely arbitrary. Who says twenty four hours make a day?
Bond	There's a popular impression to that effect.

Sybil Grey

Peep Bo

Mezzo Soprano

Brah	Yes, everything seems to smile upon me. I am to be married today to the man I love best, and I believe I am the very happiest girl in Japan.
Grey	The happiest girl indeed, for she is indeed to be envied who has attained happiness in all but perfection.
Brah	In "all but" perfection?
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Lely	Humph! How some bridegrooms would be depressed by this sort of thing. A month? Well, what's a month? Bah! These divisions of time are purely arbitrary. Who says twenty four hours make a day?
Bond	There's a popular impression to that effect.
Lely	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!
Grey	And at that rate, this interview has already lasted four hours and three quarters!

Rosina Brandram Katisha Contralto

Gros Katisha!

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

Gros Katisha – behold a suppliant at your feet! Katisha – mercy!

Bran Mercy? Had you mercy on him? See here, you! You have slain mylove. 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, 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 when his education was on the point of completion? Oh, where shall I find another?

Gros Here – here!

Bran What!!!

Gros	Katisha, for years I have loved you with a white hot passion which is slowly but surely consuming my very vitals! Ah, shrink not from me! If there is aught of woman's mercy in your heart, turn not away from a love sick suppliant whose every fibre thrills at your tiniest touch! True it is that, under a poor mask of disgust, I have endeavoured 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 – which should not be too severely criticised.
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	Katisha, I dare not hope for your love, - but I will not live without it!
Bran	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!
Gros	I do – accept my love, or I perish on the spot!
Bran	Go to! Who knows so well as I that no one every yet died of a broken heart!
Gros	You know not what you say. Listen!

Bran Did he really die of love?
Gros He really did.
Bran All on account of a cruel little hen?
Gros Yes
Bran Poor little chap!
Gros It's an affecting tale, and quite true. I knew the bird intimately.
Bran Did you? He must have been very fond of her.
Gros His devotion was something extraordinary
Bran Poor little chap! And – if I refuse you, will you go and do the same?
Gros At once.
Bran No, no – you mustn't! Anything but that! Oh, I'm a silly little goose!
Gros You are!
Bran And you won't hate me because I'm just a little teeny weeny bit blood thirsty, will you?
Gros Hate you? Oh Katisha! Is there not beauty even in blood thirsty - ness?
Bran My idea exactly!

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