

The Pirates of Penzance



"This is my 12th production and for me it was a career highlight. I and all the parents & community were blown away! Such a well-known musical/opera and it lost nothing in this adaptation. I've done the full one before but this version is just the best. Length perfect. CD fantastic"
Balaklava Primary, Australia

"Thank you so much for a wonderful adaptation of 'The Pirates of Penzance'. It went off with a bang. I will be in touch next year for another production."
Coleraine Primary School, Australia

"The show was great the way you culled it back. It was sensitive and fitted together well."
Oakleigh South Primary School, Australia

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You can order *The Pirates of Penzance* at www.bushfirepress.com/pirates

THE PIRATES OF PENZANCE

or

THE SLAVE OF DUTY

by WS Gilbert & Sir Arthur Sullivan

adapted for younger performers

by

Lynne Bartlett, David Billings, Mark Leehy & Kevin O'Mara



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- *APPLICATION FOR PERFORMANCE of this adaptation of **The Pirates of Penzance** should be made to the publisher and acknowledged before rehearsals commence.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT 1

Young FREDERICK is a slave to duty. By an error on the part of his nurse, RUTH, he was apprenticed (indentured) to a band of *pirates* instead of *pilots*. As a slave to duty he serves them to the best of his ability. However, since he turns 21 today, and is out of his indentures, he intends to return to society, and, as a member of society, devote himself to the extermination of the pirates (even though he loves them). Quite a dilemma.

The pirates are not the most successful of raiders and cannot make piracy pay, as they are all orphans and refuse to attack an orphan. Word is out about this weakness and all they encounter claim to be orphans. FREDERICK tries to convince them to return with him, but the PIRATE KING feels that piracy is a more respectable (and honest) profession than the public service. They sail off and leave FREDERICK and RUTH to go their way.

Suddenly, a group of girls arrive. They are MAJOR GENERAL STANLEY's DAUGHTERS. FREDERICK is amazed, as, being at sea all his life, he has never seen a girl except for the older RUTH, who, wishing to marry him, always assured him that she was a beautiful woman. FREDERICK asks if there is not one maiden there who will marry him and rescue him from his position. Enter MABEL, who takes him up on his offer. FREDERICK whisks MABEL away, warning the daughters that the pirates will return soon. The Pirates do exactly that, each one taking a daughter and deciding to immediately marry. However, their plan is halted by the entrance of MAJOR GENERAL STANLEY. He pretends to be an orphan and, as such, in need of the comfort of his daughters in his old age. The pirates take pity on him and leave his daughters to him.

ACT 2

That night, in STANLEY's home, a ruined castle, FREDERICK has assembled a squad of police and their SERGEANT. The police march off and FREDERICK is about to follow when he is stopped by the entrance of a pistol-waving PIRATE KING and RUTH. They tell him that, by a strange paradox, he is still apprenticed to them. He was born in a leap year and, hence, although he is 21, by calendar dates he is really only five-and-a-quarter. They have cleverly appealed to his sense of duty. They exit with him. Now the police arrive, concealing themselves behind furniture.

The pirates arrive to burgle the castle and kill STANLEY whom they have discovered is no orphan. They hide as STANLEY enters. The daughters enter to see why their father is up so late. The pirates reveal themselves, as do the police, and, after a tussle, the pirates have the police overcome. But, when the SERGEANT orders them to yield in Queen Victoria's name, the pirates do so. It seems that, for all their faults, they love their Queen. They are to be taken away when RUTH explains that the pirates are really noblemen who have gone wrong. They are immediately released to take up their place in the House of Peers, with the rest of the Lords. STANLEY gives away his daughters to them, FREDERICK takes MABEL's hand and all ends happily.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY

THE PIRATE KING

SAMUEL (his Lieutenant)

FREDERIC (the Pirate Apprentice)

PIRATE 1

PIRATE 2

SERGEANT OF POLICE

MABEL, EDITH, KATE, and ISABEL (General Stanley's Daughters)

RUTH (a Pirate Maid of all Work)

Chorus of Pirates, Police, and General Stanley's Daughters

SETTING

ACT I - A rocky sea-shore on the coast of Cornwall, England

ACT II - A ruined chapel by moonlight

TIME

Late 1800's

STAGING

The show can be staged in two acts, with an intermission, or (as the running time is approximately 60 minutes) can be performed straight through, without an intermission. In the latter case, the *Intermission music* can be used to strike the set of Act 1 and bring on the set for Act 2.

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

SONGS AND MUSICAL PIECES

Act 1

Overture

Pour the Pirate Sherry - Pirates

When Frederic Was a Little lad - Ruth

Pirate King - Pirate king & Pirates

Climbing Over Rocky Mountain - Daughters, unaccompanied

Recitative - Frederic

Climbing Over Rocky Mountain - General Stanley's Daughters

Recitative - Frederic & Daughters

Recitative - Frederic, Daughters & Mabel

Poor Wand'ring One - Mabel & Daughters

Here's a First Rate opportunity - Pirates & Daughters

Recitative - Samuel, Daughters & General

I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General - General Stanley & Company

Poor Fellow - Pirates, unaccompanied

The Orphan Boy - General Stanley & Company

Instrumental Payout

Act 2

Intermission Music

When the Foeman Bares His steel - Sergeant & Police

Police Theme - Police

A Policeman's Lot Is Not a Happy One - Sergeant & Police

With Cat-Like Tread - Pirates

Recitative - Pirates, Police & General, unaccompanied

Finale: Poor Wand'ring Ones, I Am the Very Model of a Modern Major General, When the Foeman Bares his Steel, Come, Friends Who Plough the Sea

MUSIC

The double CD contains vocal demonstrations and instrumental backing tracks for rehearsal/performance. There is a vocal score in the master book. A separate piano/vocal score is available for hire from the publisher.

VIDEOTAPE

If you intend videotaping your own production please complete an application form from the publisher.

The Pirates of Penzance

or

The Slave of Duty

ACT I

A rocky seashore on the coast of Cornwall. In the distance is a calm sea, on which a schooner is lying at anchor, OP. Rocks and/or a cave can be placed OP. A rocky arch can be placed PS. As the curtain opens groups of pirates are discovered - some drinking, some playing cards. SAMUEL, the Pirate Lieutenant, is going from one group to another, filling the cups from a flask. PIRATES 1 & 2 are MIDSTAGE OP. FREDERIC is seated in a despondent attitude at the back of the stage, PS. RUTH kneels at his feet.

OPENING CHORUS: POUR THE PIRATE SHERRY

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

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

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

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

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

FREDERIC *rises and comes forward with PIRATE KING, who enters OP*

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

ALL: Hurrah!

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

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

FREDERIC: To-day I am out of my indentures, and to-day I leave you for ever.

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

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

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

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

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

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

ALL: Hear, hear!

KING: And a GOOD pirate!

ALL: Yes, yes!

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

PIRATES: What?

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

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

RUTH *rises and comes forward*

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

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

SONG — RUTH
WHEN FREDERIC WAS A LITTLE LAD

RUTH: *(addressing one of the PIRATE groups)*
When Frederic was a little lad he proved so brave and daring,
His father thought he'd 'prentice him to some career seafaring.
I was, alas! his nurs'rymaid, and so it fell to my lot
To take and bind the promising boy apprentice to a pilot —
(spoken to audience) He's the one that steers the ship

(moving to address another group)
I was a stupid nurs'rymaid, on breakers always steering,
And I did not catch the word aright, through being hard of hearing;
Mistaking my instructions, which within my brain did gyrate,
I took and bound this promising boy apprentice to a pirate.
(spoken to audience) That's a different kind of thing entirely

(moving to address another group)
A sad mistake it was to make and doom him to a vile lot.
I bound him to a pirate — you! — instead of to a pilot.

(moving DOWN CENTRE)
Yes I bound him to a pirate — *(to KING)* you! —
(to AUDIENCE) instead of to a pilot.

RUTH: *(going back and kneeling to FREDERIC)* Oh, pardon! Frederic, pardon!

FREDERIC: Rise, sweet one, I have long pardoned you. *(RUTH rises)*

RUTH: The two words were so much alike!

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

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

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

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

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

SAMUEL: Besides, we can offer you but little temptation to remain with us. We don't seem to make piracy pay. I'm sure I don't know why, but we don't.

FREDERIC: I know why - but,

ALL: Yes?

FREDERIC: - but, alas!

ALL: Yes, yes?

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

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

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

ALL: Hear, hear!

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

ALL: Yes, yes?

FREDERIC: - that you are too tender-hearted.

PIRATES *look around at each other in confusion*

SAMUEL: How so?

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

KING: There is some truth in that.

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

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

FREDERIC: Yes, but it has got about, and what is the consequence? (*PIRATES look around at each other in confusion*) Every one we capture says he's an orphan. The last three ships we took proved to be manned *entirely* by orphans, and so we had to let them go.

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

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

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

KING: Oh, he will take you with him.

FREDERIC: (*taking RUTH DOWNSTAGE PS*) Well, Ruth, I feel some difficulty about you. It is true that I admire you very much, but I have been constantly at sea since I was eight years old, and yours is the only woman's face I have seen during that time. I think it is a sweet face.

RUTH: It is - oh, it is!

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

KING: True. (PIRATES *laugh*)

FREDERIC: (*seriously, walking back to PIRATES*) What a terrible thing it would be if I were to marry this innocent person, and then find out that she is, on the whole, plain!

KING: Oh, Ruth is very (*wondering what to say*) ... well ... (*thinking of a way out*) very well indeed.

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

FREDERIC: Do you really think so?

SAMUEL: (*seriously*) We do.

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

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

PIRATES: Rough! Rough!

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

ALL: (*loudly*) Not one!

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

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

RUTH: (EXITS OP *to pack bags*) I'm off to pack me bags!

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

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

KING: REALLY? ... How so?

FREDERIC: By accompanying me back to civilization!

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

SONG — PIRATE KING

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

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

GROUP 1: You are!
GROUP 2: Hurrah for the Pirate King!

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

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

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

KING: When I sally forth to seek my prey
I help myself in a royal way.
I sink a few more ships, it's true,
Than a well-bred monarch ought to do;
But many a king on a first-class throne,
If he wants to call his crown his own,
Must manage somehow to get through
More dirty work than e'er I do,

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

ALL: You are!
Hurrah for the Pirate King!

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

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

ALL EXIT OP *except* FREDERIC. ENTER RUTH, OP, *with packed bags*

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

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

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

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

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

FREDERIC: Ah, but lately?

RUTH: Oh, no; years and years ago.

FREDERIC: What do you think of yourself?

RUTH: I think I am a fine woman.

FREDERIC: Thank you, Ruth. I believe you, for I am sure you would not take advantage of my inexperience. I wish to do the right thing, and if you are really a fine woman, your age shall be no obstacle to our union!

Shakes hands with her. MAJOR-GENERAL STANLEY's DAUGHTERS *are heard in the distance, singing:* 'Climbing over rocky mountain'

FREDERIC: Hark! I hear voices! (*Going PS to investigate*) Who approaches our secret lair?

RUTH: (*aside*) Oh, dear! It is the voices of young girls! (*Walks forward OP and addresses audience*) If he should see them I am lost.

FREDERIC: (*looking off*) By all that's marvellous, a bevy of beautiful maidens!

RUTH: (*aside*) Lost! lost! lost!

FREDERIC: How lovely, how surpassingly lovely are they all! What grace - what delicacy - what refinement! And Ruth -

RUTH (*tiptoeing OFF OP*): Oh-oh - whoops!

FREDERIC: Ruth told me she was beautiful! (*He looks around to see she has gone*)

RECITATIVE—FREDERIC

FREDERIC: Oh, false one
You have deceived me!

FREDERIC *moves* DOWN CENTRE, *addressing the audience with melodramatic seriousness*

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

*He hides in cave or behind rocks as DAUGHTERS ENTER PS, climbing over the rocks and through
arched rock*

**SONG - GIRLS (GENERAL STANLEY'S DAUGHTERS):
CLIMBING OVER ROCKY MOUNTAIN**

ALL: Climbing over rocky mountain,
Skipping rivulet and fountain,
Passing where the weeping willows quiver,

Passing where the willows quiver
By the ever-rolling river,
Swollen with the summer rain, the summer rain

They dance

EDITH: Let us gaily tread the measure,
Make the most of fleeting leisure,
Hail it as a true ally,
Though it perish by-and-by.

Dance

ALL: Every moment brings a treasure
Of its own especial pleasure;
Though the moments quickly die,
Greet them gaily as they fly,
Greet them gaily as they fly.

Dance

KATE: (*looking around*) What a picturesque spot! I wonder where we are!

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

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

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

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

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

EDITH: And who can't set *foot* anywhere. Tails they may, but feet they cannot.

THE GIRLS *laugh*

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

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

ALL: Yes, yes! The very thing!

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

RECITATIVE—FREDERIC & DAUGHTERS

FREDERIC: Stop, ladies, pray!

GIRLS: (*hopping on one foot*) A man!

FREDERIC: I had intended
Not to intrude myself upon your notice
In this effective but alarming costume;
But under these peculiar circumstances,
It is my bounden duty to inform you
That your proceedings will not be unwitnessed!

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

FREDERIC: I am a pirate!

GIRLS: (*recoiling, hopping*) A pirate! Horror!

FREDERIC: Ladies, do not shun me!
This evening I renounce my vile profession;
And, to that end,
Oh, blushing buds of ever-blooming beauty!
I implore your kind assistance.

THE GIRLS *swoon*

EDITH: How pitiful his tale!

KATE: How rare his beauty

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