

TOPSYTURVEYDOM
an entirely original musical extravaganza
written by W.S. Gilbert
music composed by Alfred Cellier

First performed at the Criterion Theatre, 21 March 1874.

NOTE.

I have taken the text of this play from the version published in Oxford ("printed at the University Press and to be had of no booksellers") in 1931. It seems that the editor of this book, Charles Plumptre Johnson, took the text from the handwritten Licence Copy now held in the British Library. Johnson added some very basic punctuation, which I have elaborated a little. I have also added some stage directions which seemed to me essential: I have put these in square brackets, as opposed to the directions given in the Johnson text, which are in round brackets.

My description at the start of Scene 2 comes from the internal logic of the text; the detail about the chandelier is mentioned in reviews of the original production. The production details which follow this Note come from an advertisement in *The Era* published at the time of the first production. There are some discrepancies between this and the text itself, including the spelling of the play's title: the advert has *Topsyturveydom*, while Johnson (and the Licence Copy) has *Topsyturvydom*.

The opening lines of the play refer to the General Election which was held in January 1874, just two months before the play's premiere.

- Andrew Crowther.

MR SATIS (M.P. for Ballotville)	.	.	Mr J. Clarke
KING PATATRA (of Topsyturveydom)	.	.	Mr F. Dewar
CRAPOLEE (his Prime Minister)	.	.	Mr E.W. Garden
WILKINS (a footman)	.	.	Mr Smith
QUOP	.	.	Miss Montgomery
CRAMBO	.	.	Miss C. Brabant
SERAPE (the Queen's Mother)	.	.	Miss Hughes (Mrs Gaston Murray)
TIPTO (the Queen's Grandmother)	.	.	Miss F. Holland
TIDDYICKLE (the Queen's Great-Grandmother)	.	.	Miss Dolly Wood
Topsyturvey Courtiers, etc.			

SCENE 1: Mr Satis's Library

SCENE 2: The King's Reception Room in Topsyturveydom.

SCENE 1

[*The Library of Mr SATIS, M.P. for Ballotville. SATIS discovered alone.*]

SATIS: Liberal gains, 32; Conservative gains 85; Conservative balance, 53: representing 106 votes on a division. Well, that's a state of things that will please some and displease others, but I'm quite satisfied. Nothing like a contented mind. I should have been just as pleased if the balance had been the other way. Whatever is, is for the best. The only drawback to this state of things is that everybody is in such a perfectly satisfactory condition that there's nothing left to improve. Here am I, a Member of Parliament, burning to benefit my fellow-

countrymen - and I can't find a fellow-countryman who wants benefiting. Everything's been done for everybody. A Member who wants to do good is actually reduced to making fishery laws and protecting sea gulls.

[Enter SERVANT.]

SERVANT: Gentleman to see you, sir.

SATIS: Who is he?

SERVANT: Can't say, sir. I think, from his standing on his head and wiping his head on the doormat and blowing his boots with his pocket-handkerchief, he must be a foreigner.

SATIS: Foreigner? Nonsense! Some member of the late Government who don't know whether he's on his head or his heels. Tip him right side up and show him in.

(Enter CRAPOLEE. [Exit SERVANT.])

CRAPOLEE: Good morning. Mr Satis, I think.

SATIS: I don't think I have the pleasure.

CRAPOLEE: No. How should you? I am a stranger from Topsy-turvydom, a country where everything is conducted on principles the very reverse of those that hold good here. I am travelling incog. in order to ascertain whether I can find anything worth introducing into my own country.

SATIS: And I suppose you've found a great deal?

CRAPOLEE: Well, I can't say I have. To tell you the truth, although everything here is the exact opposite of everything there, yet there isn't as much difference as you may think. Was your election keenly contested?

SATIS: Very. Party spirit ran mountains high.

CRAPOLEE: Much liquor drunk?

SATIS: Lots. Party spirit ran rivers deep.

CRAPOLEE: Any bribery?

SATIS: Awful. Thousands upon thousands.

CRAPOLEE: Of course he'll petition?

SATIS: Who?

CRAPOLEE: The rejected candidate.

SATIS: There isn't one. I was returned unopposed.

CRAPOLEE: You said the election was keenly contested.

SATIS: So it was - by the electors. You don't understand. I went in on the new principle. Under the Ballot Act, members can't bribe electors - but there's nothing whatever to prevent electors bribing members.

CRAPOLEE: Dear me, that never struck me.

SATIS: Directly it became known that I intended to stand for the borough, a deputation waited on me, asking me to come forward in the Liberal interest. I temporized. Then came a deputation urging me to stand as a Conservative. I evaded the point. The Liberals presented me with a piece of plate. I inclined to their views. The Conservatives trumped it with 500 sovereigns in a gold vase. I began to think there was a good deal to be said on either side. The Liberals sent me a schooner yacht. It occurred to me that after all there was nothing like unrestricted progress. Matters were getting serious when the Conservatives took a more decided step. They bought me a Mansion in a Park, found me a coat of arms and a genealogical tree, and made me a County Family on the spot. That decided me. As a County Family I was bound to support the reaction. So I'm a Conservative.

CRAPOLEE: You haven't much to complain of.

SATIS: That's it. That's my grievance. I've actually nothing to complain of. Our army rules the dry land - our navy rules the waves -

everyone is wealthy and happy. We've no poor - the arts and sciences are duly honoured. Literature is at its zenith, social life is as perfect as human ingenuity can make it, and we're all at peace with the world. Nothing remains to be done. Even the sea gulls have been attended to.

CRAPOLEE: And no one would have thought of legislating for sea gulls until the men and women of these islands had had everything possible done for them. You should pay us a visit. We begin with the seagulls and leave poverty, vice, ignorance and misery to take their chance.

SATIS: I should like to go above everything.

CRAPOLEE: Don't be sanguine. Extremes meet, and the difference may not be so great as you suppose. In my country, all the people are born at an advanced age and gradually grow younger until they become infants. My people are born astonishingly wise and gradually forget everything, until at last their minds are a perfect blank, like those of some of your old people. Folly is honoured, wisdom is despised - disreputable wealth is courted, honest poverty condemned.

SATIS: Nothing of that kind here.

CRAPOLEE: And true beauty consists in making yourself as ugly and unnatural as you can. All the men are women.

SATIS: That's awkward.

CRAPOLEE: No - for all the women are men, so it comes to the same thing in the end. If you like to come and judge for yourself, say the word and we're off.

SATIS: I do say the word.

CRAPOLEE: But stop - there's one drawback. In this absurd country of yours, people walk on the floor with their heads towards the ceiling.

SATIS: Well, that is the general rule.

CRAPOLEE: Well, in mine that's reversed - you'll have to walk on the ceiling with your head towards the floor. You don't object to that?

SATIS: My dear sir, in my country's cause I object to nothing.

CRAPOLEE: Then we'll away to the far distant clime -

SATIS: Where everything is done by the rule of sheer contrairy-

CRAPOLEE: Where pretty's plain, ridiculous sublime -

SATIS: Where fair is foul, black is white, and Bill is Mary!

Duet. [- CRAPOLEE & SATIS.]

CRAPOLEE: True beauty we hate and despise,
And ugliness only we follow, sir:
A man, to look well in our eyes,
Must be quite the reverse of Apollo, sir.

SATIS: That's very annoying to me:
To my parents I wish to be dutiful,
But, visiting such a countree,
I begin to be sorry I'm beautiful!

CRAPOLEE: You won't like our Government much:
We never insist upon wit for 'em -
We only give places to such
As have proved themselves wholly unfit for 'em!

BOTH: Then away to that far distant clime,
Where everything's done by contrairy:
Where folly is reckoned sublime,
And every Bill is a Mary!

SCENE 2

[The KING's Reception Room in Topsy-turvydom. There is a window, with an inverted landscape visible through it. A chandelier sprouts from the middle of the floor, and chairs and tables hang upside-down from the flies.]

Enter QUOP and CRAMBO.]

QUOP: To-morrow our Monarch attains his majority. Born at the age of 80, he is now 59, and the event is to be celebrated with the usual tokens of rejoicing. Is all prepared for the auspicious occasion?

CRAMBO: Everything! The streets are to be draped in black, medicines are to be served out gratuitously to the poor, tenpence in the pound will be put upon the Income Tax, and all the operating theatres of the hospitals will be thrown open to the public.

QUOP: It is well. In a country where folly is honoured, the coming of age of as bad a king as Imprimis the Inverted cannot be too magnificently celebrated. Let all the fountains run with the finest water, and if the fog is thick enough we'll have a display of fireworks to-morrow morning.

CRAMBO: Aged sir, your arrangements are characterized by your well-known imbecility.

QUOP: It is well. Nothing now remains but for you to see that all my instructions are systematically disregarded. Do you understand?

CRAMBO: Sir, believe me that my greatest pleasure consists in thwarting all your arrangements.

QUOP: My old, old enemy!

CRAMBO: My hated foe!

QUOP: Our Monarch approaches.

(KING enters.)

QUOP: Monster, away!

CRAMBO: Horrible monarch - avert those execrable eyes!

KING: Approach. These marks of undisguised loathing fill me with pleasurable emotion.

QUOP: They should do so, for you are indeed a detested sovereign.

KING: It gives me the sincerest pleasure to think I am.

CRAMBO: Are you not weak, vacillating, and pusillanimous?

KING: I hope so. I hope so.

QUOP: Cruel - yet cowardly?

KING: I would fain believe that I am.

QUOP: Hideous beyond expression, and an abject donkey too?

KING: I hope I am an ass.

CRAMBO: Believe me, sire, you are. Born at the age of 80 with every science at your finger-tips, you are now barely 60 years of age, and in those twenty years you have learned to forget everything you ever knew.

KING: Such commendation from a sage of your venerable years is indeed to be valued.

QUOP: It is true that we have some reputation as men of folly, but although we have devoted the last 60 years to the study of frivolity we have scarcely reached the depth of gibbering idiotcy which you, young as you are, have already attained.

KING: Come, come! Compliment, carried beyond a certain point, becomes fulsome. My Royal Mother expressed a wish to speak to me this evening. Tell her that I am prepared to see her whenever she likes.

[Exeunt QUOP and CRAMBO.]

Can I trust the honied utterances of these sages, or are they to be classed with the sickening flatteries of professed courtiers? No, I feel

that I have deserved my people's hate. Yes, I am indeed a detested monarch.

Song. [- KING.]

I do not prize a pauper's lot:
He has his cares, I find.
The Lunatic I envy not,
Nor seek I to be blind.
Let others court the convict's fate -
For that I'll never sigh:
Give me my people's honest hate,
And I'll contented die.

I envy not the invalid,
Or those that suffer pain.
I'm very, very well indeed,
But still I don't complain.
Disease I don't desiderate -
For that I'll never sigh:
Give me my people's honest hate,
And I'll contented die.

(Enter SERAPE.)

KING: My mother!

SERAPE: My son! I have always been a careless and injudicious mother to you, and I am about to propose a most imprudent step. You are now of age, and it's high time you began to think of taking a wife. Several old and hideous princesses who are enormously poor have proposed for your hand, and I think it high time you began to think of making one of them unhappy.

KING: Mama, I'm not young enough to marry yet. I am barely 60; and at 55 or even 50, that will be time enough to think of that. Sixty is the age for enjoyment. Let me kick up my heels a little longer, and then I promise to marry.

SERAPE: Your sound common sense is simply disgusting. You are as sensible as your grandmother.

KING: Poor Grandmama! Come, I'm not as wise as she is. No, hang it all - poor old Grandmama! It's a most melancholy thing, but I'm very much afraid her head is affected. Mark my words, that poor old thing is gradually going sensible. Why, she's in full possession of all her faculties!

SERAPE: Here she comes - reading a scientific book, as usual. My dear son, there's nothing for it but a Commission de Sanatico Inquirendo! She's not fit to be at large!

(TIPTO enters, reading.)

TIPTO: "Let A.M.P. be a quadrant of the elliptic meridian. Then V.M.E., perpendicular to the elliptic, determines - "

SERAPE: Newton's *Principia*! I thought so! Mother, I'm ashamed of you!

TIPTO: I'm very sorry - I didn't know you were here.

SERAPE: Haven't I told you over and over again that I won't allow you to read such sensible works?

TIPTO: I must have some amusement.

SERAPE: Amusement! Didn't I give you, on your last birthday, a complete set of Bradshaw from the beginning - three hundred and seventy-two volumes?

TIPTO: I hate Bradshaw. It's too disjointed.

KING: This is getting serious. Grandma, for the credit of the family you really must give up your childish amusements. The Digamma and the Square of the Hypotenuse are all very well for babies of 75, but at your advanced age we are justified in looking for something like triviality in your tastes. Do we ever see you with a Noah's Ark? Never! Does one ever see you with a doll, or indeed engaged in any pursuit adapted to your age and position in society? Once for all, unless I see a decided change I shall be compelled to place you in a Sane-House!

[*Exeunt KING and SERAPE.*]

TIPTO: I'm very sorry I'm so wise, but I can't help it. I'm sure I try to forget all the learning I was born with, but I can't forget it. There must be something wrong with my head. I've been trying all day long to forget Xerxes, but I can't; the more I try to forget him, the more I remember him!

Ballad. [- TIPTO.]

Oh, sad is her state and beyond all apologies,
Blank is her future and doleful her chaunt
Who, born with her head full of dates and chronologies,
Tries all she can to forget 'em, and can't.

From the first of the year to the last of December
With crying and sobbing my eyelids are wet:
I always forget that I mustn't remember,
But never remember I ought to forget.

[*Exit TIPTO. Enter CRAPOLEE and SATIS.*]

CRAPOLEE: Here we are at last, in the palace of our monarch, King Imprimis the Inverted.

SATIS: But I thought you told me I should have to walk on my head.

CRAPOLEE: No, not exactly. I told you you'd have to walk on the ceiling with your head towards the floor. And so you have - [*points upwards*] that's the floor.

SATIS: No, no, that's the ceiling.

CRAPOLEE: The floor, I assure you!

SATIS [*pointing down*]: No, *this* is the floor.

CRAPOLEE: No, *that* is the ceiling.

SATIS: But I tell you -

[*Enter Chorus of Topsy-Turvy Courtiers.*]

CRAPOLEE: Hush, our most popular King approaches.

Chorus.

Fiends dissect our Royal Master,
Tear asunder limb from limb:
May all kinds of black disaster
Now accumulate for him.

SATIS: Halloa, this must be a revolutionary song.

CRAPOLEE: Oh, no - it's the National Anthem.

[*Enter KING, to the groans and hisses of the Courtiers.*]

SATIS: Why do they groan at him?

CRAPOLEE: That's our way of expressing approbation - he's very popular.

SATIS: Well, I've known popular ministers in England greeted with the same sound.

[KING approaches them; exeunt Courtiers.]

KING: Who have we here?

CRAPOLEE: This is a stranger from a strange country situated on the other side of the globe, in Latitude -

SATIS: Cut it short! The country's pretty well-known - it's England.

KING: England? Never heard of it.

CRAPOLEE: It's a barbaric region where everything is done on inverted principle. In that country, babies are born young and ignorant, and grow gradually old and wise; ugly is pretty, pretty is ugly - and all the men are women.

KING: That's awkward!

CRAPOLEE: No, for all the women are men, so it comes to the same thing in the end. We call their country Upsidownia.

SATIS: Well, and we call your country Topsyturnydom.

KING: Oh, and what can I do for you?

SATIS: Well, in the first place, I shall be glad to know why you keep all your chairs and tables up there [pointing].

KING: Up there? You mean down there.

SATIS: I mean up there.

KING: No, down on the floor.

SATIS: Not at all - up on the ceiling.

KING: In our country, we call that chair "down".

SATIS: My friend, I wish you would call that chair down, as I should like to sit on it. That is down which is towards the earth.

KING: Exactly.

SATIS: Very good. And that is up which is away from the earth.

KING [amused]: No doubt.

SATIS: What are you laughing at?

KING: Do you know where the earth is?

SATIS: Of course - under my feet.

KING: Oh, no - open that window.

[They go to window and look out. KING indicates the ground above them.]
Look there.

SATIS: Now, that's one of the most remarkable things I've seen for a long time. Now, that's all up with us in England.

CRAPOLEE: It will be all up with you here if you ridicule our institutions. In those chairs and tables our guardian spirits dwell.

SATIS: Spirits in chairs and tables? This is without exception the very maddest people on the face of the earth! Then I really am standing head downwards! It sounds awkward, but it's easy enough when you come to try it.

KING: Now, how shall we entertain you? What do you say to a ballet?

SATIS: A ballet by all means.

KING: A ballet of oldest inhabitants - youngest of them only 65. You don't see ballet-girls of 65 every day of your life.

SATIS: No, but I see them quite often enough at our theatres.

CRAPOLEE: They're waiting, ready to come in - if you'll only say the word.

SATIS: No, no - not for worlds. But I tell you what I should like. As a practical legislator, I should particularly like to be present at the deliberations of the collective wisdom of a country that is so unlike

our own.

KING: The collective wisdom?

SATIS: Yes. I mean I should like to be present at a sitting of the House.

KING: Oh, I know what you mean. It's an odd request: we only admit the most learned and intellectual men in the kingdom into our House.

SATIS: Oh, so do we. This place is not so topsy-turvy, after all!

KING: Poor devils!

SATIS: Poor devils?

KING: Yes, they're all inventors and writers and men of science - in fact, paupers.

SATIS: Do you mean to say you entrust the making of your laws to paupers?

KING: My dear sir! These people don't make our laws.

SATIS: But I asked to see -

KING: The House -

SATIS: Yes - the House of Commons.

KING: Oh, I beg your pardon. You asked to see the collective wisdom of our country. I thought you meant the workhouse. Our Parliament is composed principally of wealthy donkeys who are elected partly because they are wealthy and partly because they are donkeys.

SATIS: In my country, Members are elected because they represent most faithfully the opinions of their constituents.

KING: Oh, in my country seats are bought and paid for.

(Exit [KING & CRAPOLEE].)

SATIS: Well, this certainly is the most preposterously outrageous country I ever was in all my life! Positively there isn't one redeeming feature in it.

(Enter SERAPE & TIPTO [the latter holding a baby].)

Yes, there is!

SERAPE *[seeing SATIS]*: Why, whose child is this?

TIPTO *[to SATIS]*: My poor little fellow, where's your nurse? Does your mama know you've left home, my little man?

SERAPE: It's disgraceful that infants should be permitted to wander all over the palace. I've a great mind to whip you, sir.

TIPTO: No, no, it's not his fault - he's strayed away from his nurse. He's quite bald - he must be very young. It was a pooty tiddy ickle sing it was.

SATIS: I'm not a tiddy ickle sing and I've not strayed away from my nurse. I'm not as old as I look, but I beg to say I'm fifty-two.

SERAPE: Fifty-two! I shouldn't have thought of whipping you if I had known you were fifty-two.

SATIS: Well, no, I hope not.

SERAPE: I took you for seventy-four.

SATIS: The deuce you did! And who are you when you're at home?

SERAPE: You're an impertinent fellow.

SATIS: And for a good-looking woman you've as unpleasant a manner as need be.

SERAPE: A good-looking woman! I, a good-looking woman!

SATIS: Well?

SERAPE: I'll be revenged for this! Mind, you've insulted me before witnesses. I beg to state that I'm an ugly, uncomfortable, ill-tempered, malicious person, and you've dared to call me good-looking! Why, you're as handsome a man as need be! You call *me* good-looking, you tall, manly,

freshfaced, regular-featured, agreeable-looking fellow! The king shall hear of this, so prepare for the worst!

(Exit [SERAPE].)

SATIS: What is she talking about?

TIPTO: Oh, you shouldn't have called her good-looking!

SATIS: But she is good-looking.

TIPTO: Yes, poor thing, unfortunately - though I oughtn't to talk, for I'm much prettier than she is. She is decidedly pretty, but she don't know it. How often one finds a really pretty and attractive woman who will have it she is hideous in spite of the evidence of her looking-glass!

SATIS: Well, I never met one myself.

TIPTO: I can't understand it - can you?

SATIS: No, I'll be hanged if I can.

TIPTO: I hate such vanity. Now, I'm not like that. I'm pretty and I know it.

SATIS: You are, and I know it.

TIPTO: Well, it may be true, but it's not for you to say so.

SATIS: But it's so obvious: you are - very pretty.

TIPTO: Oh, go on, pray. Tell me I'm lovely, exquisite, delicious! Oh, I can bear it.

SATIS: So you are - you're all that and a great deal more. Surely you're not angry with me for saying that?

TIPTO: No, I like you for it. You are honest and outspoken. Strange as it may appear, I had much rather you said "beautiful" than "absolutely hideous".

SATIS: Oh, it don't appear at all strange.

TIPTO: I can't understand why an ugly old man like you can care to talk to a beautiful girl like me, when there are so many hideous old ladies about who would give their ears for a flirtation with you.

SATIS: But I don't like hideous old ladies.

TIPTO: You don't!

SATIS: I like pretty girls.

TIPTO: How strange!

SATIS: It's an odd taste, but the prettier they are, the more I like 'em.

TIPTO: But you'll soon get tired of me, for I'm not only beautiful but I'm unfortunately very clever and well-informed. Are you well-informed?

SATIS: No, I'm a Member of Parliament.

TIPTO: Oh, I'm so dreadfully learned. I try to forget, but I can't. I've been trying all day to forget Xerxes -

SATIS: Haven't you forgotten him yet?

TIPTO: I don't know - I'll try. No, Xerxes - I remember him just as well as ever. The more I try to forget, the more I seem to remember.

SATIS: Then try to forget me.

TIPTO: Oh, I never can forget you. Besides, it isn't necessary, for you are not useful information, are you?

SATIS: No, upon my soul I'm not.

(Baby heard.)

Holloa! Whose is that?

TIPTO: Mine.

SATIS: Yours? I didn't know you were married.

TIPTO: No more I am. I'm a widow.

SATIS: A widow? Dear me! - recently?

TIPTO: Oh dear, no! My husband died years and years ago.
 SATIS: Oh, but you said that [*indicating baby*] was yours.
 TIPTO: So it is.
 SATIS: Your daughter?
 TIPTO: No - my mother.
 SATIS: I thought the acid lady who is going to be revenged was your mother.
 TIPTO: Oh, no - my daughter.
 SATIS: Then I suppose the King is this lady's husband, and you're his sister?
 TIPTO: Oh, no - you're quite wrong. I'm his grandmother, and baby is his great-grandmother.
 SATIS: I'm getting confused. So this is your mother?
 TIPTO: This is my mother.
 SATIS: She's young to be a mother.
 TIPTO: Young? She's in her seventy-fifth year. People in my country are born old and grow young.
 SATIS: Oh, I forgot. Then you will get gradually younger?
 TIPTO: Yes. Alas! In the course of nature I can't hope to live much longer. I can't conceal from myself that I'm rapidly growing young. My hair, which was once white as snow, is now a beautiful dark brown; and my complexion, which (though I say it) was once as yellow as parchment, is now painfully fresh and beautiful. In a few years I shall be a mere girl: childhood will rapidly follow, and, if I survive that period, one or other of the diseases of infancy will probably carry me to my grave.
 SATIS: Then if I marry you, in a few years you'll be a baby?
 TIPTO: Yes, perhaps with a large family of old gentlemen. Who knows?
 SATIS: How do you account for it?
 TIPTO: It's the climate.
 SATIS: The climate! Then if you come with me to England you'll leave off growing young, and we shall grow old together!
 TIPTO: Yes, and when we grow too old we can come back here and grow young again. But you don't seriously wish to marry me?
 SATIS: But I do seriously want to marry you.
 TIPTO: But we love one another - and people who love each other never marry here. People in this country only marry those they hate, and wretchedness is the invariable result.
 SATIS: Yes, I should think so.
 TIPTO: They like to be wretched - but I'm such a strange girl that I prefer happiness. Love-making is delightful; but the idea of marriage - oh, it's too dreadful! You can't know what it is - I'll tell you.

Ballad. [- TIPTO.]
 Grows the little brook in going,
 Now a river broad and deep,
 Ever flowing - ever flowing,
 Strong as life and still as sleep;
 Smooth and silent in its current
 As it moves through changing scenes:
 Checked, it swells into a torrent -
 This is love when in its teens.

 Grows the river yet in going,
 Till the river is a sea -

Mighty tempests ever blowing,
Hidden rocks upon your lee,
All the imps of strife and riot
Ride exulting on the breeze:
Farewell peace and farewell quiet -
This is marriage, if you please.

(Exit [TIPTO]. Enter KING and CRAPOLEE [with COURTIER].)

KING: Mr. Satis, I have a communication of a very painful nature to make to you.

SATIS: Sir, I am all attention.

CRAPOLEE: Nerve yourself and prepare for the worst. Serape has told all.

KING: It appears, from a communication I have just received from my Royal Mother, that you have expressed yourself towards her in terms of the fiercest dislike.

SATIS: Sir, I cannot deny it. Your Royal Mother insulted me grossly. My good friend, I don't want to harrow up your feelings as a son, but between ourselves your Royal Mother is a wild-cat.

KING: She is!

SATIS: You don't mind my mentioning it?

KING: No, no - it is delightful to hear her spoken of in such terms. Your feelings do you honour, and I am overjoyed to tell you that she has admitted to me, with a display of emotion that affected me to tears, that your hatred of her is earnestly reciprocated. My dear friend - that charming woman detests you! Bring in the bride!

(Enter SERAPE.)

SATIS: The bride?

KING: Take her and be unhappy! Curse ye both!

SATIS: But, I say, this won't do! I'm not going to marry a woman I hate!

KING: Not marry a woman you hate!

SERAPE: Oh, the faithless monster! You don't mean to tell me that all this time you've been trifling with the worst feelings of my imperfect nature?

SATIS: Oh, bother your feelings! I'm thinking of my own just now. Why, I love your grandmother!

KING: You love Tipto?

SATIS: Madly - and she loves me frantically. In fact, we love each other overwhelmingly.

KING: Prepare to die!

CRAPOLEE: Hold, sire! A more fearful scheme of revenge suggests itself to me. But no, it involves lingering torture - it is too horrible.

SERAPE: No punishment can be too fearful for a man who, by cunning insult and insidious abuse, gains your trusting mother's hate - and then despises it.

KING: True! Your scheme?

CRAPOLEE: It is this. He loves your grandmother and your grandmother loves him - let him marry her and spend a lifetime of uninterrupted bliss!

ALL: Oh, horror!

KING: It shall be done! Bring out the fiery untamed Grandmama!

(Enter TIPTO.)

Take her, and may a grandson's heartfelt blessing pursue you wherever

you go!

Finale.

SERAPE: Monster, let this thought arrest you:
You have taught me to detest you!
Hate and scorn in me are rife -
Make me wretched, then, for life!

KING: It is too late! Lead them away -
My vengeance shall not falter:
They shall be tied up to-day -
Take them - take them to the altar!

ALL: It is too late, etc.

CURTAIN.