

TOP GALLANT

A Musical in Two Acts

Act II

Book, music and lyrics
by Paul Wolf

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Scene 10
Black Bess upper/main decks
Later that night

*[MUSIC: TOP GALLANT WILL BE MINE
REPRISE (II)]*

The set turns. Torches appear. TOBY leaps from the sea wall onto the HUGE SHIP's lower deck, out of sight. On the side of the ship, the name "BLACK BESS" becomes visible. SHANGHAIED PRISONERS, including TWO YOUNG MEN and other YOUNG MEN, frantically load BLACK BESS. There are shouts in every direction.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(on upper deck)

Ready to make a run for the Carolinas! --

RAWLINGS

(on main deck)

-- clear the main deck! --

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

-- Black Bess! She sails at midnight! --

REEVES

(on main deck)

-- lay that rope! --

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

-- dance, my mateys! --

RAWLINGS

-- load those casks! --

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

-- a taste of hard work, get on board, mateys! --

REEVES

-- hoist the fores'l!

NICK enters the upper deck, pushed forward by SPARROW. CAPTAIN MARDOCKE jabs a finger at NICK and points to the main deck.

NICK

(struggles)

Get off!

SPARROW

Get down!

SPARROW shoves NICK onto the tumultuous main deck with SHANGHAIED PRISONERS.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(to SPARROW)

Have you captured the boy, Toby!

SPARROW

No!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Have you found Top Gallant!

SPARROW

No!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

This cock-billed thing . . . Top Gallant . . . ! Sent to me from hell! I'll not set sail without her. Get out!

SPARROW exits to the main deck.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(sings)

FIND FOR ME TOP GALLANT!
PUT AN END TO THIS MYST'RY!
CAPTURE ME THE BOY!
ALL THE REST WILL BE HIST'RY!

MASTER OF ALL THIS,
SHE WILL BE MINE!

Spotlight focuses on CAPTAIN MARDOCKE on the upper deck.

SHE'LL BE MINE, I'LL PURSUE THE EARTH!
SHE'LL BE MINE, IF IT PLEASE ME!
SHE'LL BE MINE!

[MUSIC continues as UNDERSCORE]

On the main deck, NICK overcomes SPARROW. SHANGHAIED PRISONERS put up a cry. They mutiny. RAWLINGS and REEVES enter the upper deck.

RAWLINGS

The prisoners are escaping! Captain --

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

-- over my dead body!

NICK and SHANGHAIED PRISONERS leap over the side of the main deck. They land on the sea wall and run off.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(points at NICK)

Stop him! --

SPARROW

-- don't let them escape! --

REEVES

-- head them off!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE, SPARROW, RAWLINGS and REEVES rush to the side of the ship. They descend the gangway to the sea wall and exit. Cries of pursuit fade in the distance.

[MUSIC segues]

Scene 11
 Black Bess lower/main decks
 Very late that night

*[MUSIC: WHEN YOU REACH FOR THE SUN
 (WOMEN and MEN offstage) segues from TOP
 GALLANT WILL BE MINE REPRIS (II)]*

TOBY climbs from behind a bulkhead on the lower deck. *(A few beats of MUSIC precede dialogue)*

TOBY
 Top Gallant! Where are you? Top Gallant! Ohhh . . .

TOBY sinks in despair among some barrels. Darkness grows. *(Several beats)*

VOICE OF CHRISTOPHER MATHIAS
(sings; offstage)
 TOBY, TOBY, YES, IT'S ME, TOBY . . .
 MY SON, TOBY, DO YOU KNOW IT IS ME?

The lower deck begins to take on a warm light. TOBY tosses and turns.

TOBY, TOBY, MY DEAR SON, TOBY,
 YOU RUN, YOU RUN FARTHER AND FARTHER STILL . . .

WHEN YOU REACH FOR THE SUN,
 THEN YOU'LL KNOW WHY YOU RUN!
 TOBY, TOBY, HEAR ME NOW, TOBY,
 RUN FAR, RUN FAR TO THE END OF THE WORLD!

TOBY
(rises)
 Father . . . ? Father? Where are you? Father!

VOICE OF CHRISTOPHER MATHIAS
(sings)
 TOBY, TOBY, MY DEAR SON, TOBY . . .

Loud banging is heard.
 TOBY, TOBY, TOBY . . .

SUSANNA
(offstage)
 Toby . . . ! Toby!

More loud banging. A barrel falls. SUSANNA enters.

SUSANNA

Toby! Where have you been! I've been looking for you everywhere!

TOBY

Top Gallant . . . I was chasing Top Gallant! I found it! It was at the Jack Rose Tap! But it's disappeared --

SUSANNA

-- the whole town is after you, Toby! You must get out! It's too dangerous!

TOBY

My father! My father was here!

SUSANNA

How could he be here! --

TOBY

-- no . . . no! I heard his voice! I've got to find him!

SUSANNA

Come with me! I know a place where you can hide.

TOBY

No! --

SUSANNA

-- Toby! Don't you see!

(pulls TOBY toward storage cabin)

Captain Mardocke will stop at nothing! He will hunt you down if you cross him!

(pushes TOBY through cabin door)

We should be safe here.

TOBY

No! Susanna . . . ! Did you steal it? Did you steal Top Gallant!

SUSANNA

Toby . . . ! Captain Mardocke --

TOBY

-- it's all I have. You took Top Gallant! Why!

SUSANNA

He's hunting for you! Toby --

TOBY

-- no! You're lying! Why!

SUSANNA

Toby, I want to tell you the truth . . . for once.

(a beat; tries to soften blow)

I'm afraid something terrible has happened to your father. Toby . . . Captain Mardocke . . .

TOBY

. . . no! . . .

SUSANNA

I'm being *honest* with you, Toby. You must *believe . . . me!*

TOBY

Nooooooooooooo!

[MUSIC: WHERE YOU ARE (WOMEN offstage)]

TOBY

(sings)

NO . . . NO . . .

I CAN FEEL 'IM STRONG!

FATHER, HE AIN'T NO PRETENDER --

AN' IF I HEAR 'IM I AIN'T WRONG!

(exits storage cabin, moves to side rail)

I'LL KEEP RUNNIN' AN' KEEP LOOKIN'

AN' SEARCHIN'!

TOBY

(climbs from side rail to mast's rigging)

I MUST FIND FATHER!

CLOSE TO DANGER!

SOMEWHERE HERE!

I MUST FIND HIM

SOMEHOW!

HE IS NEAR!

SUSANNA

(sings; tries to restrain TOBY)

TOBY, DON'T YOU KNOW!

THE CAPTAIN'S SOMEONE

WE SHOULD FEAR!

TOBY, DON'T YOU SEE

THE DANGER!

ALL AROUND US HERE!

TOBY

(climbs rigging)

I KNOW FATHER'S NEAR WHEN WE'RE APART!

DOES MY FATHER HEAR WHAT'S IN MY HEART?

TOBY

(cont.; climbs perilously higher)

DOES FATHER HEAR THE WIND,
SHE TELLS HIM WHAT SHE KNOWS?
DOES FATHER HEAR THE WAVES,
THEY TELL HIM WHERE HE GOES?

HOW MY HEART WILL FOLLOW,
I WILL FOLLOW WHERE YOU ARE!

I KNOW I OVERHEAR YOU
AND I HEAR YOU NOW,
THERE'S GONNA COME A DAY
WHEN WE WILL TAKE A VOW.

IF HEAVEN CATCHES FIRE
WE'LL FIND A SHOOTING STAR!
WHERE THE SUN IS RISING
I'LL COME RUNNING WHERE YOU ARE!

(drops down)

NO . . . NO . . . NO . . .

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(offstage; distant shout)

Prepare to cast off, mateys!

SUSANNA

-- oh, God . . .

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Rawlings! Reeves!

SUSANNA

-- he's here! Come, Toby!

(pulls TOBY into storage cabin)

SUSANNA barricades the door. Loud pounding is heard. *(Several beats)* The door crashes open.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(enters)

The wind blew me in.

(to TOBY)

Miss Nancy . . . where . . . is . . . Top Gallant?

SUSANNA

No!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(to SUSANNA)

My black little heart.

(pushes SUSANNA to the deck)

You've filled my life with confusion.

SUSANNA

(hurt)

Ohhh!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(approaches TOBY)

Come, my love. I've almost never killed a fly.

TOBY bolts. CAPTAIN MARDOCKE blocks his exit.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

He tries to fetch by Captain --

(grabs TOBY)

SUSANNA

-- Mardocke! You're going too far!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(circles TOBY's neck with hand)

Top Gallant . . . ! Where . . . *is she?*

SUSANNA

Captain! --

TOBY breaks free. He fearfully unsheathes SUSANNA's knife from beneath his shirt.

SUSANNA

Toby . . . *no!* Where did you get that knife . . . !

TOBY dodges a blow from CAPTAIN MARDOCKE.

SUSANNA

Toby! You cannot . . . *save* your father's life! Toby . . . !

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE grabs for TOBY. TOBY escapes the storage cabin and climbs to the main deck.

Captain! . . . please . . . don't! --

SUSANNA

-- you wretched . . . scamp --

(*chases*)

TOBY dodges behind some barrels.

Toby!

SUSANNA
(*struggles to follow*)

TOBY looks up. TOP GALLANT is visible. It is lodged in the highest rigging of BLACK BESS.

Oh!

TOBY

Top Gallant . . . !

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE
(*follows TOBY's gaze to TOP GALLANT*)

[*UNDERSCORE: SIGHTING OF TOP GALLANT (Several beats)*]

Unholy God . . . the thing is haunted.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE
(*stunned, stares upward*)

Thou art the terror . . . of slow-moving sailor men.

(*unsheathes dagger, raises to TOP GALLANT*)

I need a boy . . . !

(*a beat; shouts*)

. . . to climb the main royals . . .

(*to TOBY, threatening*)

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE and TOBY circle with knives drawn.

SUSANNA
(*reaches main deck*)

No . . . ! Lay off the boy. For the love of God!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE lunges for TOBY.

No!

SUSANNA

SUSANNA tries to drag the dagger from CAPTAIN MARDOCKE. He strikes at SUSANNA, wounding her.

SUSANNA

Oh!

(falls)

TOBY

Susanna!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE stalks TOBY. He strikes, knocking TOBY's knife across the deck. TOBY scrambles to retrieve the knife. CAPTAIN MARDOCKE grabs a pistol from a strongbox. Advancing, CAPTAIN MARDOCKE gestures toward the rope-rigging stretching up the mast to TOP GALLANT.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Boy . . .

TOBY drops the knife. He gazes up at TOP GALLANT. CAPTAIN MARDOCKE motions TOBY to the side rail. TOBY climbs from the side rail onto the mast's rigging. On the rigging opposite, on the same mast, CAPTAIN MARDOCKE stiffly climbs a few rungs.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

(calls over the side of BLACK BESS)

Sparrow! A hand here!

TOBY climbs higher. CAPTAIN MARDOCKE climbs a few more rungs to a point halfway below TOBY. CAPTAIN MARDOCKE points his pistol.