

TOP GALLANT

A Musical in Two Acts

Act I

Book, music and lyrics  
by Paul Wolf

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Scene 6  
Outside the Jack Rose Tap  
The next morning

*[MUSIC: SAILORS' DANCE REPRISE (I)]*

WOOLSEY plays an accordion. SUSANNA flirts with SAILORS. HARBOR WOMEN and SAILORS renew their acquaintanceship.

SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN

*(sing, by turns)*

MOONSHINER! BUG BITER!  
HIGH AN' MIGHTY! HOLY MOLY!  
I'M A YANKEE -- HIP HIP HIP!  
AIN'T I A YANKEE -- YIP YIP YIP! HURRAH!

SCULLY, CLARABELLE, ZAK and PEARL  
improvise a jig.

MADNESS, MURDER! YOHO MAMA!  
MAYHEM, MADCAP! WHERE'S MY PAPA!  
RUN AN' FETCH THE SHERIFF  
-- FER TO BLAME ME ON MY MAMA AN' MY PA!

*(laughter from all sides)*

TOBY walks by the far end of the JACK ROSE TAP. He carries the SHIP MODEL.

SCULLY

*(spies TOBY)*

Hey . . . ! Hey . . . ! Look, a young squirt.

PENNY

A Johnny Newcome!

GREEN COOKEE

He's trying to get to the island -- at low tide!

WOOLSEY

*(calls to TOBY)*

Wait until high tide -- that way you can *swim* to the island!

ANNELLE

He's a young lad.

VERA

Come 'ere, hon'!

What do we have here!

ZAK  
*(captures TOBY)*

BUTTONS steals the SHIP MODEL.

Hey!

TOBY

ZAK grabs the SHIP MODEL. He passes it around.

SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN

Very handsome! / A sharp ship! / Sleek lines! / Will it go!

DOUBLE DUTY

There was a young lad who wanted his ship! --

TOBY

-- my ship! --

ZAK

-- there was a young lad who wanted his ship! --

TOBY

-- hey! That's mine!

TOBY chases the SHIP MODEL. SCULLY grabs it and sets it on a stool.

SCULLY

My boy, what is your name?

TOBY

Toby.

GREEN COOKEE

Toby.

*(to OLD PEGLEG)*

Now what do you suppose this is, really?

OLD PEGLEG  
*(examines SHIP MODEL)*

It's a kinardly.

GREEN COOKEE

A what?

OLD PEGLEG

A kinardly. Kinardly tell what kind of ship this is. A ship so thin, with so many sails . . . would go straight to the bottom. Or straight to heaven.

*[MUSIC: I'LL SAIL NO MORE ON ENGLAND'S SHORE]*

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

*(sings, loudly; offstage)*

I'LL SAIL NO MORE ON ENGLAND'S SHORE,  
THE SAILORS ARE SLOW AS THE DICK . . . ENS!  
GOOD CAPTAIN, HE HAS COME ASHORE  
TO FIND HIM SOME FRESH PICK . . . INS!

DOUBLE DUTY

A pig . . . with his pizzle . . . caught in the garden gate!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

*(enters)*

THE MAIDS ARE SWEET IN LONDON STREET!  
THEIR KISSES ARE AS TART AS A VIX . . . EN'S!  
I'LL SAIL NO MORE ON ENGLAND'S SHORE,  
THE SAILORS ARE SLOW AS THE DICK . . . ENS!

*(speaks; fierce)*

Who owns the world's bloody fastest ship -- owns the world!

SWAIN DAWKINS

Captain Mardocke!

ZAK

Hear! Hear!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Ladies of the harbor . . . flowerpot sailors . . . first mate, Swain Dawkins . . . meanest mate that walked a poop-deck . . . *and* my Susanna! You meet someone . . . you either make love to them . . . or you kill them!

SUSANNA

Piss . . . and vinegar. Mardocke . . . what are you doing here?

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

*Captain* Mardocke . . . is not likely to visit . . . the *men* . . . ! Now . . . is he? The women . . .

*(pulls expensive bracelet from his pocket)*

what shimmers . . . what burns . . . I'll buy.

*(puts bracelet on SUSANNA; tries to steal a kiss)*

She's dainty.

BUTTONS grabs for the bracelet.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Buttons, my gal!

*(restrains BUTTONS, who tries to cry out but is voiceless)*

We be jealous?

*(shows BUTTONS bracelet; BUTTONS opens her mouth in awe)*

Like a moth to the flame. No, she is a bird. Called by sailors, a Booby. When her tail is down, her head is asleep, like any Booby. A great Booby!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE spots TOBY.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Oh, my . . . give 'im a whistle. How do I like my children . . . ! Sweet and tender, madam.

SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN nervously laugh. TOBY edges toward the stool. CAPTAIN MARDOCKE notices the SHIP MODEL.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Whose ship is that!

TOBY

It's mine, sir.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

And who might you be?

TOBY

Toby.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

And what is the name of your little ship?

TOBY

The name, sir?

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

The name! I say, you must be an innocent lad . . . you're takin' a likin' to somethin' . . . you don't even know what it is! He don't know the name of his own ship!

*(squats on stool, steadies TOBY, examines SHIP MODEL)*

What's this, I can't make it out. Stop shaking. It's scratched on here . . .

SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN crowd around.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Hell's hole, *I* can't read! I can see the eye of a storm at midnight. But not print, you understand. A hand, here. Somebody! The name!

SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN search for someone who can read. SUSANNA steps forward.

SUSANNA

*(studies SHIP MODEL)*

"Top . . .

*(pauses, with effort)*

Gallant."

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

-- Top Gallant!

SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN buzz approvingly at SUSANNA's reading skill.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

*(to himself)*

My God!

*(a beat; grabs TOBY)*

Boy, are you light-fingered?

TOBY

What do you mean, sir?

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Getting a-hold of your story is like trying to nail a piece of jelly to the mast. Where did you get this ship!

TOBY

I didn't . . . steal it, sir. I found it.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

I'm something of a liar myself.

TOBY

Please, sir. You're hurting me, sir!

*(wrenches free)*

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

A will of iron, I see . . . the chap known as the iron beetle!

TOBY

It was in the sand. Washed up, sir. It's from my father.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

*(to himself)*

Your father!

*(chokes; a beat; raises voice)*

Top Gallant! Aye, it is a fine ship. A stout ship!

TOBY breaks away from CAPTAIN MARDOCKE. He runs with TOP GALLANT a short distance.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

*(rises)*

Boy! Boy!

VERA

Come back, hon'!

TOBY hesitates, then runs toward town.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Young fool.

*(glowering; a few beats)*

Listen up! We set sail in a week. My ship, Black Bess, lies off the back of the island. Last voyage out, I took 40 . . . *partially* sober men. I returned with 31!

GREEN COOKEE

Black Bess! Finest ship that split a sail! --

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

-- Black Bess . . . is a mud horse on her last legs!

*(to HARBOR WOMEN)*

We need sailors . . . fresh sailors! All manner of topmen! Whoever walks from home, point them to me. We're slamming to Rio de Janeiro.

*(to VERA)*

Ever been to Rio! Of course, you have. That's where you're from. The streets of Rio smell like twenty thousand drowned cats!

*[MUSIC: SAILORS' DANCE REPRISE (II)]*

WOOLSEY plays an accordion. SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN resume merrymaking.

SAILORS and HARBOR WOMEN

*(sing, by turns)*

MOONSHINER! BUG BITER!

UP FROM DAVY JONES'S LOCKER!

I'M A YANKEE -- HIP HIP HIP!

AIN'T I A YANKEE -- YIP YIP YIP! HURRAH!

SCULLY, CLARABELLE, ZAK and PEARL  
improvise a jig.

*(cont.)*

MAN PROPOSES! GOD DISPOSES!  
HIGH AN' MIGHTY! HOLY MOLY!  
YOKELS WHINE AN' WHISTLE  
-- HANG ME BY THE HIGHEST THISTLE! AN' HURRAH!

*(laughter from all sides)*

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Susanna!

*(takes SUSANNA aside)*

Do you know the boy?

SUSANNA

Captain?

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

The boy, Toby.

SUSANNA

Of course, not.

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Take a shine to him. I want that boat, Top Gallant.

*(touches SUSANNA's bracelet)*

I've always taken care of you . . .

SUSANNA

You want a toy boat?

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE

Keep your tongue tucked in.

*(shows dagger)*

If you fail, my love . . . you'll have the devil to pay.



Scene 7  
 Harbor side of Deacon's Yard  
 The same morning

*[MUSIC: IF THE DEVIL MEET A LAD. Light  
 drumming (improvised; offstage)]*

JOURNEYWORKER appears, half-visible, high  
 up in the shadows of DEACON'S YARD.

JOURNEYWORKER

*(sings)*

IF THE DEVIL MEET A LAD  
 WHO'S TRUE 'N TRUE,  
 HE WILL DANCE . . .  
 HE WILL DANCE!

TOBY enters carrying TOP GALLANT.

HE SAY, I TAKE A LIKIN'  
 TO THE LIKES O' YOU!  
 TAKE YOUR CHANCE . . .  
 TAKE YOUR CHANCE!

TOBY walks fearfully, as if being followed.

WHERE THE WIND BLOWS MAD  
 LIKE A WILD BANSHEE,  
 SO THE DEVIL CHASE HIM THERE  
 -- 'TWEEN YOU AN' ME!

TOBY urgently seeks a place to hide.

HE ESCAPE THROUGH A CRACK  
 IN THE FLOOR OF THE SEA!  
 HE WILL PRANCE . . .  
 HE WILL PRANCE!

TOBY hides.

*(light drumming continues)*

IF THE DEVIL MEET A SAILOR  
 'TWEEN BLUE 'N BLUE,  
 ONE MORE CHANCE . . .  
 ONE MORE CHANCE!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE enters, as if searching  
for someone.

JOURNEYWORKER

*(cont.)*

CRY THE DEVIL, HALLO  
AN' A LULLYBYE LOO!  
HOW HE RANTS . . .  
HOW HE RANTS!

*(drumming swells)*

TOBY bursts from his hiding place and runs.

HE WILL DANCE HIS DANCE  
-- IF HE RUN FROM IT --  
HE WILL THROW HIM IN THE PIT  
FER THE HELL OF IT!

*(loud drumming continues)*

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE grabs for TOP  
GALLANT. TOBY narrowly escapes.

THE DEVIL KEEP HIM THERE --  
WILL HE ESCAPE FROM IT!

TOBY exits.

*(drumming abruptly stops)*

SEE HIM DANCE . . .  
SEE HIM DANCE!

CAPTAIN MARDOCKE searches for TOBY. He  
exits.