

Barnaby Rudge – A Musical

by

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Music by Bill Scott**

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This script is published by

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Barnaby Rudge – A Musical

PART 1

1. London street.

(A gathering of malcontents and ruffians has assembled in an outbreak of disaffection and mischief. Egging them on are Gashford, the manipulative Secretary to Lord George Gordon, Ned Dennis, the sinister Newgate hangman and Maypole Hugh, a sullen half-gypsy who works as an ostler at The Maypole Inn on the outskirts of London.)

Gashford There's something in the air
 in the City,
 I was walking out tonight
 when it hit me,
 there's a stirring in the streets
 where the hordes of people meet
 and it's palpable, this heat
 in the City.

Dennis There's something going 'round
 in the City,
 there's a whisper underground,
 it's not pretty,
 it's nothing I could name
 but it's trouble all the same,
 and there's going to be some pain
 in the City.

Chorus In the City things can move so fast
 and carry you along,
 before you know what's happening
 you're surging in the throng;
 in the City you can spread a word
 contagiously like plague,
 and where the people gather
 you can jack-up the malaise.

Gashford There's a radical or two
 in the City,
 convictions to pursue
 without pity,
 there's a fundamental slant
 to their reasonings and rants
 but the cause must be advanced
 in the City.

Hugh There's a rabble to be roused
 in the City,
 and those to goad them on,
 grim and gritty,
 there's a mob that's on the move
 and though you may not approve
 it's too late to douse the fuse
 in the City.

Chorus In the City there's a multitude
 that's easy to incite,
 for faith or race or motherland
 the cause is always right;
 in the City you can always find
 your sanction in the crowd,
 whilst silent ones avert their eyes
 and keep their faces bowed.

Gashford There's a storm about to fall
 in the City,
 and brothers it will fall
 very quickly,
 for the law is no constraint,
 if you're not for us, then against
 and we'll act without restraint
 in the City .

Chorus In the City there's a multitude
 that's easy to incite,
 for faith or race or motherland
 the cause is always right;
 in the City you can always find
 your sanction in the crowd,
 whilst silent ones avert their eyes
 and keep their faces bowed;

 whilst silent ones avert their eyes
 and keep their faces bowed
 in the City!

(Exit Gashford, Dennis, Hugh and the mob chanting a drunken mantra. From out of their midst, a hooded figure edges forward. He is dressed shabbily for the road with a dark neckerchief tightly bound around his head, part concealing an ugly scar rising from his cheekbone.)

Rudge It's right they call this Town 'The Smoke',
 it's tailor-made for ghosts like me
 to haunt its nooks and alleyways
 and in the smoke, invisibly!

 without the sun, no shadow falls,
 without the light, no silhouette,
 this gloom is my custodian
 and I will cheat the gallows yet!

 "stay your hand Rudge!" I hear my conscience cry,
 but still the hapless victim dies,
 he tries to sound his warning bell
 but Rudge has sent him down to hell . . .

 Oh yes this hand has dealt the stroke
 that placed me at the Law's behest,
 I sent my master to his doom
 by spleen and greed I was possessed;

I couldn't tell the time nor date,
a lifetime now it seems to me,
and ever since, beyond the law
I've roamed the land incessantly;

"stay your hand Rudge!" I hear my conscience cry,
but still the hapless victim dies,
he tries to sound his warning bell
but Rudge has sent him down to hell . . .

Now something draws me back again,
the news that trouble brews ahead,
or is there a more simple need,
my lack of meat, my lack of bread?

oh yes, for Rudge this is a risk,
there's one at least still hunts for me,
but others whom I might 'persuade'
to serve my needs more readily;

"Leave them be Rudge!" I hear my conscience cry,
a wife abandoned to her fate,
a brat whom I have never seen,
a life that cannot be redeemed;

"stay your hand Rudge!" I hear my conscience cry,
but still the hapless victim dies,
he tries to sound his warning bell
but Rudge has sent him down to hell,
to hell, to hell, to hell, to hell!

but now the spectre leaves 'The Smoke'
revisits somewhere more remote,
an Inn not far from where I left
my victim lying, back in time . . .

(Rudge looks around warily and exits at the approach of Emma Haredale and Edward Chester, two young lovers who are forced by family circumstances to conceal their attachment.)

Emma Is there no justice in this life,
 Oh Edward fate is so unkind,
 how can our loving be sustained,
 when will it be our place and time?

Edward Emma our love will never wane,
 forbidden love will yet survive,
 our hearts will see us through the pain,
 forbidden love one day will thrive;

Emma Isn't it bad enough
 we must meet secretly,
 isn't it sad enough
 to act deceptively,
 this situation's not of our making
 this situation's so heartbreaking

Edward deception is our only course,
and deception fills us with remorse,
Emma driven to extremities,
 reviving old enmities,
 but what can we do,
 must love be subdued?

Edward There is some secret feud
 between our families
Emma some old bad blood it seems,
 it's all a mystery
Both their mutual loathing so clear,
 so destructive to those they hold dear;

Emma Why is Sir John so set
 to mar our happiness,

Edward and why does Haredale seek
 to add to our distress;
Both their simmering feud seems to mean
 the end of our hopes and our dreams;

Edward deception is our only course,
and deception fills us with remorse,
Emma our love pursued so furtively,
 Instead of assertively,
 but what can we do,
 must love be subdued?

 must love,
 must love,
 must love be subdued?

 must love,
 must love,
 must love be subdued?

2. In the bar of the Maypole Inn, Epping Forest.

(John Willet, the Landlord, regales his customers whilst his son, Joe, serves refreshments.)

Willet Look at this weather
 see how it rains,
 falling in torrents,
 filling the drains,

 but there's no weather
 can dampen our cheer,
 the wind and rain
 can't reach us here;

All it's England's glory,
 a traveller's rest,
 home-brewed beer

and fare of the best;
 it's England's glory,
 welcoming lights
 beam in the darkness,
 cheery and bright.

All Come now good landlord,
 mix us some punch,
 come now good landlord,
 fix us some lunch;

 come now good landlord
 pull up a chair,
 give us a story,
 banish our cares;

 it's England's glory,
 taverns and inns,
 raising the spirits,
 resting the limbs;
 it's England's glory,
 the public house,
 nothing to stop you
 getting quite soused.

Willet my hearth is yours,
 make yourselves warm,
 safe in my keeping,
 safe from the storm;
 welcome my locals,
 passing trade too,

(Enter Rudge)

 and now good sir,
 a welcome to you;

 it's England's glory,

taverns and inns,
 raising the spirits,
 resting the limbs;
 it's England's glory,
 the public house,
 nothing to stop you
 getting quite soused.

(Willet's regulars and guests disperse around the bar but his attentions are fixed upon Rudge who reacts sulkily.)

Rudge There is a house about a mile away,
 I'm told 'The Warren' is its name,
 I have some questions of this place;

Joe ask me and you ask in vain!

(Willet, who has been eavesdropping, approaches the stranger and elbows his son aside dismissively.)

Willet when your views is wanted, they will be sought sir,
 a boy must be guided as to his proper place,
 when I think your opinion's worth aught sir,
 be sure that I will seek it, it won't go to waste!

(He turns to address the stranger. Joe, humbled and embarrassed, goes into the recess of the bar and busies himself in work.)

Now sir, had you addressed your enquiries to me
 rather than that son of mine,
 you would have sated your curiosity,
 about The Warren and the basest of crimes;

Rudge Well then sir, if you're the man who knows,-
 pray be so good as to tell me about it!

(As Willet becomes pre-occupied in relating the story of the murders, unobserved by the others, Rudge becomes distinctly uncomfortable as the bell seems to echo in his head.)

That house is not a happy place,
it's owner Haredale is a driven man,
sworn to avenge a crime so base,
his brother murdered by a callous hand;

I was on duty that same night,
my job to sound the fatal knell,
an old man died, it was his right,
I was called to toll his passing bell;

Oh Lord preserve me from that bell,
it tolls inside my head,
brings terror to my ears,
I swear it's tolling comes from hell,
filled my soul with dread
for two and twenty years;

It was a dark and stormy night,
my mind was filled with shades and ghouls,
inside the church was cold and stark,
imagination made me a fool;

I took the rope with trembling hands,
and just about to take a pull,
another bell began to clang,
it tolled a message oh so cruel;

Oh Lord preserve me from that bell,
it tolls inside my head,
brings terror to my ears,
I swear it's tolling comes from hell,
filled my soul with dread
for two and twenty years;

the hand that rang alarm is dead,
his bell-rope severed by the murderer
and whilst the Warren's owner bled,
his steward Rudge tried to interfere;

his corpse found later in a pond,
known only by what he wore,
and Reuben Haredale's cash-box gone,
his bloodstains still upon that floor;

Oh Lord preserve me from that bell,
it tolls inside my head,
brings terror to my ears,
I swear it's tolling comes from hell,
filled my soul with dread
for two and twenty years;

The felon sought without success
remains to this day on the run
and Reuben Haredale's orphaned child,
a full-grown woman has become;

and each year on this very night,
the anniversary of this affair,
her father's ghost comes into sight,
his fatal bell hangs in the air;

Oh Lord preserve me from that bell,
it tolls inside my head,
brings terror to my ears,
I swear it's tolling comes from hell,
filled my soul with dread
for two and twenty years.

(Rudge looks around him, disturbed and fretting, but pretending to be unmoved by what he has heard.)

Rudge A strange tale to take into the dark,
 boy! my reckoning, and make it sharp!

(Joe brings him the bill with a defiant look. Rudge throws a few coins at the table and pushes past Joe roughly, saying no word of farewell to anyone.)

Joe Degraded like this and in my own home,
 I will not take it - the seeds are sown!

I don't know how to deal with
the taunting and the jibes,
the lectures and the sermons,
the endless diatribes;

Willet he bridles every time I speak,
 he needs to toe the line,
 he needs to learn self-discipline,
 like father taught me mine;

Both give me respect,
 give me respect,
 give me respect, give me respect
 if you want to connect;

things could be better, things could be good,
if only he listened, if only he would,
not much to ask, to be respected,
the only way to stay connected.

Joe He seems set to humiliate,
 to make me look a fool,
 makes me feel so infantile,
 his arbitrary rules;

Willet he sees I love him heaven knows,
 it's never been neglect,
 but every home must have its laws

and those he must respect;
 give me respect,
 Both give me respect,
 give me respect, give me respect
 if you want to connect.

Things could be better, things could be good,
 if only he listened, if only he would,
 it's not much to ask, to be respected,
 the only way to stay connected;

give me respect, give me respect!

(Suddenly, their deliberations are interrupted by a familiar voice. Enter Gabriel Varden, a locksmith of Clerkenwell, who, red-faced and breathless, seats himself by the fire.)

Varden Thank the stars for this haven,
 I never was so pleased,
 I've had such a turn tonight,
 it's hard to be believed;

not fifteen minutes since,
 upon the London Road,
 a surly oaf rode into me
 and sundry threats bestowed!

and when I asked to see his face
 his look left me appalled,
 I knew he was a villain,
 his countenance told all;

he warned me of the peril
 wherein my life was placed,
 a violent death at his own hand,
 then rode away in haste.

Joe I knew he was a villain,

I knew he was no good,

Willet hold your tongue sir, quiet there,
I will be understood!

(Joe retreats angrily to a corner of the bar)

Willet A man did leave this house tonight,
not many minutes since,
a stranger bound for London town,
his scar would make you wince;

he could have been a highwayman
intent on base pursuits,
asking questions left and right,
a coarse, uncivil brute!

I'd say you had a lucky turn,
surviving this affray,
come now Varden, raise your glass,
to the one that got away!

Varden It would take more than such as he
to daunt an honest soul,
but I will take another glass,
then homeward I will roll;

(Exit Willet. Varden walks over to take a seat beside Joe.)

Varden Now Joe, to see you down like this,
it makes my heart so very sore,
my Dolly's of an age with you,
her spirit's tender just like yours;

she is my princess and my prize,
she's more to me than life itself,
that sparkle in her eyes,

come, pledge a tumbler to her health!

Both the brightest eyes you ever saw,
the peak of femininity,
the most vivacious qualities
encapsulate in Dolly V.

Joe With great respect I dare to speak,
her features are so fine and fair,
she stands so high in my regard,
to breath her name I hardly dare;

(aside)
in my position, dare I hope,
she looks with kindly eye on me?
her beauty far beyond my scope,
a star in a distant galaxy!

Both the brightest eyes you ever saw,
the peak of femininity,
the most vivacious qualities
encapsulate in Dolly V.

Whenever I am down at heart,
when tribulations get to me,
the panacea's close at hand,
I just imagine Dolly V!

imagine Dolly V....

3. London Street

(On a darkened stage we meet Barnaby Rudge, a simpleton or "mooncalf", tumbling and rolling on the ground, chasing his shadow one moment and trying to escape it the next.)

Barnaby To meet a merry fellow
come here – over here,
can you see him follow close

then disappear?
 he's as tall as a church steeple
 then as short as midget-people,
 he is a merry fellow over here;

he will trick me and beguile me
 all day through – over here,
 we have such pranks and capers,
 over here,
 he's in front and then behind
 and he stops . . . when he's a mind
 he hides away in darkness over here;

(Suddenly, there is a scuffle offstage. A masked and cloaked figure struggles with Edward Chester, thrusting a knife. The victim falls and is robbed. The robber spots Barnaby and strides towards him raising his knife, but pauses as he is about to strike, hesitates and then makes off. Terrified, Barnaby cries for help. Enter Gabriel Varden, making his way home from the Inn.)

Varden What's to do here, how's this - what Barnaby . . .
 Barnaby - do you recognise me?

Barnaby (nodding repeatedly in fantastic exaggeration)
 There is blood upon him, quick - come see . . .

Varden how came it there - is he robbed?

Barnaby (imitating the thrust of a knife)
 steel, steel, steel - and then he dropped
 the other went that way into town

Varden (kneeling to examine the prostrate form)
 Barnaby, he is not dead but he has a bad wound . . .
 he is faint from loss of blood,
 we must bring him to bed,
 your mother lives close by . . .

Barnaby I can't touch him - he is bloody!
 I can't stand its sight and smell;
 but I know that I have seen him,
 though his name I couldn't tell.

Varden I will cover all his wounds up
 with my greatcoat and its hood,
 for the sake of those who love him,
 help me if you would!

(Exit Varden and Barnaby carrying the prostrate figure.)

4. At The Golden Key

(At The Golden Key, Varden's home and workshop, his daughter Dolly is alone, thinking about Joe Willet whom she hopes is in love with her.)

Dolly The last time that I saw Joe,
 I looked into his eyes
 and saw it undeniably,
 it could not be disguised;

 a glance that intimated
 a longing so acute,
 and yet no word forthcoming,
 a love that must be mute;

 for the want of a word
 things remain as they are,
 for the want of a word
 Joe must love from afar,
 it seems so absurd
 for the want of a word . . .

(Enter Varden with Joe – Dolly is momentarily confused and turns away in embarrassment.)

Varden Dolly – where is your mother now? (warily looking around)

still sound asleep I hope . . . er trust,
 after last night's episode
 catch up on her rest she must;

Dolly oh what a chapter of events,
 it still seems like an awful dream,
 young Mr Edward could be dead
 if you had not reached the scene!

Varden a simple locksmith such as I
 is ill-equipped for such a scene,
 I'm more at home with locks and bolts
 and occupations more serene;

(Enter Martha, Varden's long-suffering wife.)

Martha You had no business being there,
 no business there at all,
 your visit to that...public house
 has brought you to this brawl!

I'm a martyr to the hedonist
 who rules within these walls,
 a victim of this shameless bon-viveur;
 he could represent his nation
 in those gastronomic halls,
 in a choice 'twixt these and a wife he would leave her!

Oh it's mortal how a lady
 can be set aside like this,
 for the contents of a glass
 and a tantalising dish.

I'm a martyr to the tavern,
 to the public house and inn,
 and any place that dishes up viands,
 and my martyrdom exacerbated

when at last he's in,
to my supplications he will not respond;

Oh it's mortal how a lady
can be set aside like this,
for a tumbler of spirits
and a little broiled fish;

I'm a Tory and a Protestant,
I say my prayers each night
and I keep all my misfortunes to myself,
but his genius for the good life
renders me an oversight,
each night I sit and suffer on the shelf;

Oh it's mortal how a lady
can be set aside like this,
for the company of cronies
and the tippie of his wish;

I'm a victim of the publican,
the landlord and the chef,
an army of purveyors of fine-fare,
I'm the life-mate of this gourmet
who had might as well be deaf,
for he never seems to hear what I must bear!

Oh it's mortal how a lady
can be set aside like this
but please don't get the notion,
please don't get the notion,
please don't get the notion
that there's anything amiss . . . !

(Exit Martha in tears.)

Varden (wearily)

Now Joe, a chore I must complete,
 one hour more before I sleep;
 Dolly – light Joe to the door,
 then off to bed – don't dally more!

(Exit Varden. Dolly leads Joe to the door. They reflect upon the awful situation of their friends, Emma and Edward.)

Joe Isn't it complicated
 Edward's dealt this wound,
 we're both implicated,
 I see a crisis loom,
 this situation's none of their making
 this situation's so heartbreaking;

Both deception – Edward feels so ashamed,
 deception – Emma thinks she's to blame,
 their love pursued furtively
 instead of assertively,
 but what can they do,
 must love be subdued?

Dolly we have so often
 acted as their go-betweens,
 helping to keep their hopes
 alive by any means,
 their love alone keeps them believing,
 their hearts are dismayed by deceiving;

Both deception is their only course,
 deception fills them with remorse,
 driven to extremities,
 reviving old enmities,
 but what can they do,
 must love be subdued;

(Dolly goes back into the house leaving Joe alone outside.)

Joe Isn't it sad I must
 love Dolly secretly,
 isn't it sad enough
 how fate is treating me,
 the situation's some of my making,
 the situation's so heartbreaking;

 deception - love can't be revealed,
 deception - it must be concealed,
 until I can break away
 my feelings are kept at bay,
 what else can I do,
 love must be subdued . . .

 must love,
 must love,
 must love be subdued?

 must love,
 must love,
 must love be subdued?

(exit Joe sadly)

5. The house of Mary Rudge, Southwark.

(Mary Rudge, Barnaby's mother, anxiously addresses her son who is still in a high state of agitation over the previous night's events.)

Mary Barnaby son, your wounded friend calls you,
 his fever is easing but still he's in pain,
 he talks of a message for you to deliver,
 a note to The Warren in Miss Emma's name;

 be careful my love should you leave the house,
 the streets are in turmoil and dark forces stir,
 go help Mr. Edward and do all his bidding,

to wait until daybreak is what I'd prefer.

(Exit Barnaby to tend to Edward)

It is a feeling in my bones,
a deep foreboding in my heart,
it is a shadow in my mind
that makes my world so very dark;

I try to keep it to myself,
no-one must comprehend my fears,
it is a figment from my past
that emanates across the years;

after all these years,
of simplicity and peace,
after all these years
my darkest demons are unleashed.

I couldn't say what brings the chill,
what intuitions are at play,
something stirs this sense of dread
that lingers night and day;

beneath it all, my deepest fear,
I hardly dare to contemplate,
that him I love and those who care
entangle in my looming fate;

after all these years,
of simplicity and peace,
after all these years,
my darkest demons are unleashed,
my darkest demons are unleashed.

(Suddenly, Mary hears a soft tapping at the door. After a few moments, the tapping is repeated more urgently.)

Mary And at this hour, who can it be
 that calls so unexpectedly?

(She hesitates to open the door but hears a voice telling her to “make haste”. The door is opened and Mary cries out . . .)

My God – it cannot be!

(All at once, Varden arrives on the scene to find a startled Mary staring at the stranger he had encountered in the dark near the Maypole Inn. Rudge makes to get away and Varden attempts to apprehend him but Mary restrains him.)

Do not touch him on your life,
he is armed, he has a knife,
no! please do not pursue him in the dark;
he is a creature of the night,
lives in shadows out of sight,
upon his face he wears the killer’s mark.

(Varden allows himself to be drawn back into the house.)

Varden Who is he Mary, this vile man,
 I don’t pretend to understand,
 you seem to know him, what’s his business here?
 ’twas he confronted me last night,
 when the storm was at its height,
 what’s between you and what is it you fear?

Mary I know I ask a lot of you,
 my neighbour and my friend,
 a heart as good as yours
 I would unwillingly offend;

 but I must ask one favour more,
 no-one must learn of this episode,
 your silence I must ask
 or I will sink beneath the load;

after all these years,
 years of benevolence and trust,
 after all these years,
 implore your secrecy I must . . .

Varden Neighbour, tonight I will enter this compact,
 a covenant that is a burden to me,
 forgive my suspicions but I must be frank,
 I fear for your part in this mystery;

 plainly I tell you, though we are old friends,
 I'm loath to leave Edward tonight in your charge,
 I fear for his safety whilst this shadow stalks,
 I fear for yours too with this phantom at large.

(Exit Varden. Mary chains and locks the door and stands alone, softly sobbing.)

6. The Maypole Inn

(A guest has arrived in the form of Sir John Chester, Edward's father. Willet cannot find Hugh, the ostler, who is needed to attend to Chester's horse.)

Willet Sir John! a warmest welcome sir,
 so rare a visit – unannounced?
 the name of 'Chester' so esteemed,
 your presence, sir, exalts my house!

 Hugh, make haste you worthless tyke,
 here's a horse for you to tend,
 get your Gypsy hide out here,
 he'll be asleep you can depend.

(Enter Hugh. He is swarthy, powerfully built, unkempt and wears a scowl on his face. Chester looks at him carefully with a faint look of surprise on his otherwise imperturbable countenance.)

 Hang him, here he is at last,

I keep him out of pity sir,
 he was abandoned as a child,
 an insolent, unruly cur!

(Hugh's facial expression reveals his contempt for his master. He slouches slowly and deliberately in defiance of his orders.)

Chester Willet, warm your cleanest room,
 I'll want some dinner presently;
 Mr Haredale joins me soon
 on matters of some urgency!

(Exit Willet. Unaware of Chester's presence, Hugh recalls his harsh upbringing. Chester realises that this is his illegitimate love-child whom he has never seen before.)

Hugh Feed the beasts and stone the crows,
 earn your meagre victuals,
 tend the hacks and dodge the blows,
 these my daily rituals;

 didn't get the best of starts
 in my life and that's the truth,
 always fending for myself,
 through infancy and youth;

 but they shall never humble me
 with scorn and jibes and mockery,
 for there's a flint and there's a spark
 awaiting in my darkened heart.

 My mother was a gypsy jade,
 long ago condemned and hanged,
 I don't know who my father is
 but I will live to see him damned;

 and that sums up my pedigree,
 my bloodline and descent,

no mother's love, no father's hand,
no warming sentiments;

but they shall never humble me
with scorn and jibes and mockery,
for there's a flint and there's a spark
awaiting in my darkened heart;

for there's a flint and there's a spark
awaiting in my darkened heart.

(Exit Hugh)

Chester I can see her in his face,
I can see her in his look,
God damn her gypsy heart,
the one that I forsook;

I knew she was with child,
denied that it was mine,
that look upon her face,
so proud and so resigned;

a Romany fling was my desire
but see how my fortune has conspired,
but mark my words he'll wriggle and grope
like her at the end of a Romany rope.

She was a gypsy that is all
and she died within a noose,
she was a gypsy that is all,
her sins came home to roost;

but he must never know,
or it could lead to worse,
when gypsy blood is stirred
it is inclined to curse . . .

a Romany fling was my desire,
 but see how my fortune has conspired,
 but mark my words, he'll wriggle and choke
 like her at the end of a Romany rope.

I will make Hugh my spy!
 the agent of my schemes,
 I'll pay in coin and grog,
 we'll make a first-rate team . . .

but in time he will revert
 to his tinker-mother's ways
 and I have no doubt at all
 where he will end his days!

(Enter Geoffrey Haredale, owner of 'The Warren'. He is a stern and honest man who despises Chester's urbane, dispassionate and superior 'front'. Chester is fully aware of Haredale's contempt, which he returns more subtly.)

Chester Good evening Haredale,
 why man let it be,
 already I sense your hostility,
 let us lay down
 our discords of old,
 you will see why as events unfold;

Haredale Chester, I've come here
 at your request,
 being with you does not suit me best,
 spare me your greetings,
 the cordial mask,
 let us discharge this odious task;

Chester it's strange how chance
 binds our destinies,
 this time the bonds are our families;

I have a son
 you have a niece
 they are 'attached', now this must cease!

No need to hide your
 antipathy,
 mutual interest
 binds you to me;

Haredale self preservation
 must mask our hate,
 self preservation
 solely dictates;

Both this is a devil's pact,
 we hazard our souls,
 this is a devil's pact
 and we'll pay the toll;
 no time for brooding
 on the rights and wrongs,
 this is a devil's pact,
 to hell it belongs.

Chester do not renege nor
 repudiate,
 it's signed and sealed
 and now it's too late;

Haredale We have a bargain,
 we have a deal,
 we sign a pact
 and give it our seal;

Both this is a devil's pact,
 we hazard our souls,
 this is a devil's pact
 and we'll pay the toll;

no time for brooding
on the rights and wrongs,
this is a devil's pact,
to hell it belongs.

(Haredale leaves but lingers outside the door, pensively.)

Haredale (to himself)
I feel I am bespoiled,
my soul cries 'blasphemy',
this man is a canker,
now he has infected me;

he stole the woman
I wanted as my wife,
squandered her money
and then destroyed her life;

she died still young,
broken and bereft,
no sparkle in those eyes,
no trace of spirit left;

and now her little boy,
a handsome, full-grown man,
this Edward now returns
to claim my Emma's hand;

of course I love my niece,
she is my hope and joy,
but my collusion means
she cannot wed this boy.

(Exit Haredale – moments later, Edward Chester approaches his father's door. He has been waiting in the shadows, having learned from Willet that his father had met with Haredale. Edward knocks and enters.)

Chester Well now Ned,
 what brings you here?
 you look quite tired my boy,
 your wound still smarts I fear;

Edward my wound is not this scar
 that heals about my ribs,
 the pain is in my heart
 and sleeping it forbids;

 this meeting you have held,
 her guardian, cold and harsh,
 I guess you now collude
 to sunder us apart?

Chester Oh – most undoubtedly,
 that is my sole design,
 this match must be dissolved
 or you're no son of mine.

Edward I cannot fathom sir
 what lies behind this scheme!
 what can you hold against
 attainment of my dream?

Chester because that's what it is my boy,
 mere dream and not what's real;
 (pauses)
 to try to make you understand,
 my plans must be revealed;

 your mother married me,
 a fortune to her name,
 but now that has been spent
 and yet we live the same!

 You have been sustained

in privilege and ease,
 accommodated, educated,
 pampered as you please;

but now the debtors whine,
 I must have my return,
 it's your turn to marry money Ned
 and both our livings earn.

Edward A mere fortune-hunter
 is what you mean for me,
 a life of leisure, not of love,
 to live cold-heartedly?

forgive me if I say it sir,
 I will not take this tack,
 I will preserve my self-respect
 despite your devil's pact!

Chester Then find yourself a roof sir,
 and find a different tack,
 go to hell for all I care
 but do not venture back!

7. London Street

(In the shadows of the backstreet, Rudge prowls, muffled and ominous. He intercepts Mary Rudge who is hurrying home with her sparse shopping.)

Stranger Hear me,
 that in the form of a ghost,
 one with his shadow on your door,
 this spectre that you fear the most,
 the one that shakes you to the core,
 now let me in - or fear the worst!

(As Rudge forces Mary into her house, Barnaby is upstairs sleeping restlessly.)

Mary Oh do not wake my sleeping boy,
 he sleeps so fitfully at best,
 his restless spirit ever-spry,
 let my poor mooncalf have his rest;

 your presence here is most profane,
 they think you dead and in the ground;
 have you no dignity, no shame,
 your presence – evil so profound!

Rudge no, do not preach morality,
 a ghost will hardly feel remorse!
 do not use words like “shame” to me,
 to worse deeds still I have recourse . . .
 (slyly)

 the boy is mine then I presume?
 born at the hour the deed was done;
 born whilst another met his doom,
 a life snuffed out as his begun;

 now – I will see my ‘darling’ son,
 it’s only right he knows his sire;
 I will just tell him I have come
 to take him off where I desire!

Mary Oh my dear god please help me now,
 you cannot be so far depraved,
 the boy is simple, not endowed
 with wits enough to be your knave;

Rudge then hear me wife – and listen well,
 I lack for all necessities,
 you will supply me with my wants
 to ward off these extremities;

 I will leave off your imbecile
 should your purse be at my behest;

now give me what you have concealed
or I will see my brat is blessed!

(Rudge takes and empties Mary's purse and leaves her alone, sinking in grief into a chair.)

8. At The Warren

(Dolly is alone in the garden reading a letter from her parents.)

Dolly My father tells me things are tense
 and trouble looms in London town,
 it seems the men in parliament
 will pass this law – the streets resound!

 it brings to Catholics some relief,
 and gives them rights they are denied;
 but those who are opposed to this,
 take to the streets - an angry tide;

 troubling thoughts, troubling times,
 men with missions and designs,
 I wish it were not so,
 I wish I might see more of Joe.

 And dearest Emma's of this faith,
 her uncle too a devotee,
 if trouble flares what is their fate,
 and they call this Christianity?

 Troubling thoughts, troubling times,
 men with missions and designs,
 I wish it were not so,
 I wish I might see more of Joe.

 They tell me to bide safely here
 beyond the town's extremities,
 they say one spark could light the fuse,

turn neighbours into enemies;

(Enter Joe)

Joe Willet, what grave times are these,
it seems our world disintegrates,
the troubles spill onto the streets,
these rioters and reprobates;

Joe

(distractedly)
come Dolly, things are not so bad,
protesters march and chant
and yet no blood is shed,
they have good men amongst their ranks;

but I have come to say goodbye,
my troubles are much nearer home!
I've quit the Maypole, left for good,
I'm going to make my way alone . . .

too many times
I have skirted the issue
but now I must say
I'm going to miss you;

too many times
I have held back from saying,
I've procrastinated,
delaying, delaying . . .

so now Dolly Varden it's my declaration
no-one is higher in my estimation,
to me you're the zenith of earthly creation,
my apex, my peak, my heart's culmination.

Saying goodbye
for now and forever,
to one whom I worship

and love beyond measure;

is breaking my heart
 but I must bear its breaking,
 no more indecision,
 no more hesitating . . .

so now Dolly Varden it's my declaration
 no-one is higher in my estimation,
 to me you're the zenith of earthly creation,
 my apex, my peak, my heart's culmination.

Think of me Dolly,
 I know you can't love me,
 your grace and your beauty
 are above me;

my fate is to go
 seek my fortune wherever,
 I once thought our destinies
 could be together . . .

Dolly (piqued)
 if this is your mind, your stern resolution,
 I bid you goodbye, forgive my confusion,
 best not delay, your destiny's waiting,
 best get away, no more hesitating . . .

(Joe looks intently into Dolly's eyes but she stares angrily over his shoulder. Exit Joe sadly.)

Dolly all his fine words are belied by his actions,
 how can he love me in a meaningful fraction
 if he can just walk out on all that has meaning?
 to imagine he loved me...must have been dreaming.

(Dolly breaks down and exits sobbing, passing Emma and Edward as they enter.)

Emma Oh Edward, how is this to be,
 can things endure for you and me?
 you have my promise – have my word,
 my heart will never be deterred!

 Now that you've left your father's house,
 his means and measures you renounce,
 what happens now, where will it end,
 when will I see your face again?

(Enter Haredale, taking Emma by the arm and glaring at Edward.)

Haredale This is well done of you indeed,
 it should be no surprise to me,
 you come from heartless, hollow stock,
 just a chip off the old block!

 you secretly invade my home,
 my niece encounter all alone,
 her trusting nature compromised,
 her reputation jeopardised!

 Deception – you should be ashamed,
 deception – you alone to blame,
 darken not my door again,
 from all contact you'll refrain,
 love must be subdued
 and never renewed!

Edward The fault sir is not mine but yours,
 your accusations I abjure,
 your cold and sullen temper forced
 this secret and repugnant course;

 with all your stern and solemn ways
 you have brought darkness to our days

but neither yours nor others' powers
shall sever bonds as strong as ours!

Edward you entered a most shameful pact
and with one who won't deny the fact,
Emma and such dark, malignant means
 shall never part us from our dreams.

(Edward takes Emma's hand and presses it to his lips and, returning Haredale's steady look, withdraws.)

9. A London street

(Lord George Gordon is with his secretary, Gashford. They are planning a demonstration at Westminster. Gordon is slightly feverish but Gashford is cold and calculating.)

Gordon This is a blessed day
 for our holy cause,
 we will not let them
 repeal these laws!

I know my time has come,
I must take centre-stage,
it is the will of God,
his holy war we wage;

with forty thousand souls at our command,
parliament must bend to our demands;
with forty thousand souls at our command,
the papists will be thwarted or be damned!

This is a blessed day
for our great crusade,
London town awaits
our imminent parade;

we will take the streets,
we will take the squares,

we will take the parks
and the thoroughfares;

with forty thousand souls at our command,
the great ones will be taught to understand;
with forty thousand souls at our command,
our cause will be espoused throughout the land:

Gashford This is a blessed day
for our country sir,
were it not for you
the people would not stir;

the name of 'Gordon' sir,
will earn immortal fame,
you are the chosen one,
your cause will be sustained;

with forty thousand souls at our command,
the Commons and the Lords will not withstand,
the Penal Laws restated and upheld,
the anti-Christ's of Rome again will be repelled.

Gordon It is a heavy load to bear!
I'm weary, I must rest;
for all those souls who wait out there,
I must be at my best;

but Gashford you must promise me,
our cause is right and is just,
no violence mars our victory,
in peaceful means we trust;

Gashford my lord you must retire and sleep,
tomorrow is to be your day,
our cause will take a giant leap,
without disturbance or affray;

Gordon without disturbance or affray;

Gashford Without disturbance or affray....

(Exit Gordon.)

without disturbance or affray,
our 'cause' will never be enhanced,
my lord's naivety I pray
will melt away as we advance!

I mean to settle some old scores,
Haredale, an old adversary,
a Papist just as I was once,
always thought the worst of me;

he figureheads 'the Cause' my Lord
but I'm its talons and its jaws!

(Enter Hugh and a motley band of London's low-life.)

Now, down to business,
you're right on cue,
Christian stalwarts
and Maypole Hugh,
eager for action,
ready to fight,
each with a reason
to set London alight;

(Enter Ned Dennis, the hangman.)

talking of talons,
talking of jaws,
enter the hangman
who warrants our laws;
welcome Ned Dennis,
none will dispute -

prince of the gallows
our foremost recruit!

(Dennis leads the mob in a macabre dance, celebrating the hangman's 'art'.)

Dennis working 'em off,
 working 'em off,
 letting 'em swing
 'til they've 'ad enough,
 priming my rope,
 greasing my trap,
 there ain't no 'ope
 of bringing 'em back!

 Might be an urchin,
 might be a toff,
 it makes no difference,
 working 'em off;
 don't mind their status,
 don't mind their class,
 I'm their hiatus,
 fastidious;

 working 'em off,
 working 'em off,
 letting 'em swing,
 'til they've 'ad enough,
 priming my rope,
 greasing my trap,
 there ain't no 'ope
 of bringing 'em back!

 Working, working 'em off,
 working, working 'em off,
 working 'em off,
 working 'em off;

working, working 'em off,
working, working 'em off
working 'em off,
working 'em off.

I got the fervour,
I got the zeal,
I gets their wardrobes,
I'm dressed to kill!
I knows the angles,
I knows the necks,
see how they dangles,
plumb line correct!

Working 'em off,
working 'em off,
ain't in my nature
to go all soft;
in my own fashion
I can act nice,
call it compassion
to drop 'em precise!

Working, working 'em off,
working, working 'em off,
working 'em off,
working 'em off;

working, working 'em off,
working, working 'em off,
working 'em off,
working 'em off;

working 'em off!

(Gashford and his henchmen proceed to incite the assembled mob)

Gashford If the sorrows of men
 could be shaped into a fist,
 Hugh if the faintest of hearts
 could be tempered to resist,
 Dennis 'blessed be the humble
 for they shall be raised'
 All and the forces of chaos
 unleashed in great waves;

let the people's anger break and darken out the sun,
 let their dormant passions rise, rise up, the time has come!
 let their anger blast, let the hot ash rain,
 let the great ones know at last the multitude's domain;

Dennis If the scruples of men
 could be fashioned in fire,
 Hugh and the lowliest wretch
 by hatred inspired,
 Gashford and the cause be espoused
 in the breasts of the poor,
 All let the great ones know fear
 for the flame is at their doors!

let the city shatter as they pillage and they curse,
 let the burning fill the skies and let the fire disperse;
 let the buildings crash so they understand
 the fiery message in the sky, a message to the damned!

Let the people's anger break and darken out the sun,
 let their dormant passions rise, rise up, the time has come!
 let their anger blast, let the hot ash rain,
 let the great ones know at last the multitude's domain;

let the anger blast, let the hot ash rain,
 let the anger blast, let the hot ash rain,
 let the great ones know at last the multitude's domain!

(Exit Gashford, Dennis, Hugh and the mob. Enter Varden warily, watching them disperse.)

Varden The Town is unsettled,
 and passions run high,
 authority wavers
 as law is set by;

(Enter Haredale)

Haredale a messenger brought me
 your note honest sir,
 urged me with haste
 to meet with you here;

Varden I have sent for you sir
 as my conscience demands
 but confiding in you
 I betray an old friend;

 there are things I have seen
 I can no longer hide,
 in unburdening now
 my conscience presides;

 the shade that you seek is alive and at large,
 I have seen him myself and I know it is he,
 my duty to Mary I'd like to discharge
 but I cannot stay silent whilst evil walks free!

 It was he I encountered
 who threatened my life,
 he that robbed Edward
 at the point of a knife,

 he who killed Reuben?
 I leave you to judge,

your servant, your stalwart,
t'was your steward Rudge!

(Suddenly the hubbub of the mob can be heard drawing close chanting "one race, one creed" and "God save Lord George Gordon". Haredale has no time to dwell upon Varden's stunning revelation and prepares to confront the horde.)

Haredale These are dangerous times
 for one of my faith,
 but I will persevere
 as my conscience dictates;

 my thanks to you Varden
 for bringing this news,
 but now I must go
 to sustain my pursuit:

 the mob is approaching, now leave whilst you may,
 a papist like me is their favourite prey,
 and I will not run from such rabble for sure,
 go quickly my friend – you can help me no more!

(Varden steps aside but waits for his friend. Enter Gordon, Gashford and Chester at the head of a large gathering, all but Chester wearing the now - familiar blue cockades.)

Chester Well, my dearest fellow!
 what luck to find you here,
 let me introduce you
 to our celebrated peer;

 this is Lord George Gordon,
 the lynch-pin of the cause,
 and this, my lord, is Haredale,
 who hates your penal laws!

 you must remember Gashford,
 our friend of former days,

our erstwhile school fellow,
now what a part he plays;

Gashford Sir John is over-kindly,
 I humbly serve my lord,
 whatever are my merits
 they are ready at his word;

Haredale (contemptuously)
 oh yes, you know your place,
 obsequiously serving,
 oh yes, still avert your eyes,
 your talents self-preserving!

(looking directly at Gordon)

For shame my lord!

False priests, false prophets,
claiming their words are patriotic,
all law and order gone to the dogs,
spreading the word to the mob;

false tongues, false preachers,
claiming to speak as God's creatures,
giving consent to murder and rob,
spreading the word to the mob;

manipulating multitudes,
poisoning minds and attitudes,
pressing the proletariat,
blessing the scum and sewer rats;
raising the rabble to fever pitch,
crazing contagion - see them itch,
daring the damned, cutting them loose,
preparing the pack for the noose!

False claims, false leaders, false aims, false Caesars!

(The crowd becomes restive, pressing forward towards Haredale. A stone is thrown which hits him on the side of his head but he strikes Gashford to the ground. The mob surges angrily but Varden, seeing the danger, shields Haredale and guides him away to a nearby alley).

Gordon (to the crowd)
 It is best to let him go,
 no more blood must be shed;
 (to Gashford)
 take a moment to recover,
 I will make my way ahead.

(Exit Gordon and Chester. Gashford remains with Dennis, Hugh and the mob.)

Hugh The streets are in ferment,
 by the hour our numbers swell,
 for the motives of some I cannot vouch
 but they gather and gawk pell-mell!

Gashford They want for leadership,
 my Lord has yet to show,
 sow the seeds whilst we have the chance
 for the Town's about to blow!

 I vow to unleash vengeance
 upon that papist's head,
 vow to ruin Haredale,
 and then – his niece to wed!

END OF SAMPLE SCRIPT