

LONDON GENTLEMEN

by

Book & Lyrics by John Gehl - Music by John Webber

A young girl is rescued from the notorious procuress Mother Needham in a daring raid by 18th-century London's greatest artists and thinkers. They are left exhilarated and determined to embark on further secret adventures in an 18th century precursor to the #MeToo movement, ...

Your Name
Your Address
Your phone number
Your e-mail address

Agent's address and
phone number

CHARACTERS

HENNY #1 an eighteen-year-old country girl desperate for work in London.

WILLIAM HOGARTH #2 the renowned 18th century London painter, engraver, social critic, and philosopher.

JANE HOGARTH #3 the artist's wife.

SAMUEL JOHNSON #4 the most celebrated scholar of the age and the creator of the first English-language dictionary.

ESTER THALE #5 a friend of Dr Johnson. (A dancer's role.)

OLIVER GOLDSMITH #6 Irish comic playwright ("She Stoops to Conquer") and novelist ("The Vicar of Wakefield"). Also known as "Nolly."

ALEXANDER POPE #7 author of the classic poem "The Rape of the Lock." Pope is a short man with a bent spine.

HENRY FIELDING #8 novelist and author of "Tom Jones" and other works.

DAVID GARRICK #9 the foremost actor of 18th century England.

JONATHAN SWIFT #10 author of "Gulliver's Travels" and "Tale of a Tub"

MOTHER NEEDHAM #11 a notorious London procuress.

CHARACTER #12 Mother Needham's Girls (chorus)

SETTING

The main action takes place in William Hogarth's elegant artist's studio and later at the exterior of Mother Needham's bawdy house. There are several other quick scenes, involving lighting changes and props but not requiring sets.

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ACT ONE SCENE 1 INTRODUCTION

NO 1 OVERTURE

HOGARTH'S STUDIO

(in front of curtain)

NO 2 CAST OF CHARACTERS

WILLIAM HOGARTH

A SIMPLE STORY WE SHALL TELL TO PUT YOU IN A MOOD
 THAT'S SWELL
 A STORY OF HOW GREAT THINKERS CAN BE COAXED TO FIGHT
 LIKE HELL
 OUR STORY THUS WILL TURN OUT WELL BUT WE FINE LADS
 WILL SCREAM AND YELL
 AND EVEN PUT ASIDE OUR CLAIMS AS DRINKERS
 TO SAVE A MAIDEN FROM STRAITS UNSAVORY
 WHO ARE THESE GENTLEMEN, YOU MAY ASK
 WHO RELUCTANTLY ASSUMED THE TASK
 OF RESCUING A MAIDEN FROM A VICIOUS TROLL
 WHEN BECKONED BY A LADY GOOD
 WE FIRST HAVE HOGARTH THAT WOULD BE ME
 AND HIS GOOD WIFE JANE

JANE HOGARTH

THAT WOULD BE ME?
 WE WILL PROD OUR GENTLE MEN TO GO AGAINST THE GRAIN
 AND LAY DOWN BOOKS THEN PICK UP ARMS
 AND THUS TURN THEIR FINE WORDS TO ROBUST DEEDS

WILLIAM HOGARTH

COMES NOW A MAN OF KNOWLEDGE LEGENDARY

JANE HOGARTH

HIS SKILLS NOT MEDICAL BUT LITERARY DOCTOR SAMUEL
 JOHNSON WILL GUIDE THE TROOP
 AND KEEP THEM MENTALLY PREPARED TO SWOOP

SAMUEL JOHNSON

THAT WOULD BE ME

SAMUEL JOHNSON (Continued)

WILLIAM HOGARTH, JANE
HOGARTH, SAMUEL JOHNSON

NEXT COMES OUR LITTLE ALEXANDER POPE
WHOSE WITS WILL HELP HIS FELLOWS COPE
SO THAT THEY CAN RISE TO THE OCCASION
AND PREPARE THEMSELVES TO LAUNCH AN INVASION

ALEXANDER POPE
THAT WOULD BE I. THE PROPER STUDY OF MANKIND IN MAN.

WILLIAM HOGARTH, JANE
HOGARTH, SAMUEL JOHNSON,
ALEXANDER POPE

AND NOW COMES THE GREAT DEAN SWIFT
WHOSE SATIRE GIVES US ALL A GIFT
AND WHOSE WITS WHEN CALLED TO ACTION
SUPPORT THE EFFORT TO CREATE DISTRACTION

JONATHON SWIFT
YES, IT IS I, JONATHON SWIFT
WHEN A TRUE GENIUS APPEARS IN THIS WORLD
YOU WILL KNOW HIM BY THIS SIGN
THAT THE DUNCES ARE IN CONF'RACY AGAINST HIM

WILLIAM HOGARTH, JANE
HOGARTH, SAMUEL JOHNSON,
ALEXANDER POPE, JONATHON
SWIFT

AND GARRICK THEN WHO STRUTS UPON THE STAGE
LIKE HAMLET IN DARK AND DUSKY RAGE
AGAINST THE FORCES THAT AFFLICT US ALL
SINCE ADAM'S FIRST UNTIMELY FALL

DAVID GARICK
THAT WOULD INDEED BE ME
I AM PROUD TO STRUT ON STAGE OR OFF
BUT COMES NOW HENRY FEILDING SQUIRE

WILLIAM HOGARTH, JANE
HOGARTH, SAMUEL JOHNSON,
ALEXANDER POPE, JONATHON
SWIFT, DAVID GARICK

WHO SAID IT TAKES ADVERSITY
TO LEARN IF YOU'RE HONEST OR NOT
AND LOVE AND SCANDAL TO SWEETEN YOUR TEA

HENRY FIELDING
FINALLY WE COME UPON GOLDSMITH, OLLIE
OUR FAVORITE BOY A BOY CALLED NOLLIE
WHO SET OUR GENTLEMEN OF TO SAVE A LASS
WHOSE ONLY SIN WAS TO BE HUNGRY

OLIVER GOLDSMITH
THE FOCUS OF OUR DRAMA'S PASSIONS
IS OUR LITTLE HENNY WHOSE PLIGHT FASHIONS
AND DIRECTS THE COURSE OF THESE EVENTS
WHICH OUR STORY NOW TO YOU PRESENTS

ACT ONE Scene 1A

HENNY

Mr Hogarth, do you really have no food at all for me in this great big house --this fine, elegant establishment? I am so incredibly hungry! I must have some food!

HOGARTH

Stop pestering me for food. I didn't bring you here to watch you feed your face. I brought you here to attend to the guests who will be convening here shortly to discuss what can be done to improve the condition of the wretched poor who clutter all of our doorsteps. A person such as myself needs the courage of a lion to leave his house in the morning to pay a simple visit to a friend, I should rather say, lions worth of courage -- one lion's worth of courage to leap over some wretch snoring on my own doorstep; a second to take me over the different wretch or wretches-plural on the doorstep of the home I am visiting; and then another leap as I depart that home on the conclusion of my visit; and yes, then leap again -- this makes four leaps -- as I arrive again at my doorstep. Of course, I may well have been murdered by now. I remind you again: This is London. In every doorstep lies a potential murderer. Four doorsteps! I could be murdered four times! ... Besides, I already gave you a biscuit just two or so hours ago. Many girls such as yourself are not so lucky.

NO 3 LION'S COURAGE

I NEED A LION'S COURAGE TO LEAP OVER THE POOR
 AND NOT FALL INTO THEIR SOUP
 A LION'S AGILITY I LEAP HIGH IN THE AIR
 AND LANDING ON SOLID GROUND DON'T HAVE NEED TO REGROUP

YES A LION'S COURAGE IS A GOOD THING TO HAVE
 WHEN YOU'RE LEAPING AROUND
 OR WHEN YOU FIND NO APPEAL
 IN DIVING INTO SOME POOR VAGRANT'S POT OF SOUP

BETTER TO FEEL THE LION'S STRENGTH
 COURSING THROUGH YOUR VEINS
 BETTER TO KNOW YOU'D GO TO ANY LENGTHS
 TO KEEP YOURSELF FROM LANDING IN THE SOUP

FOR WITH THE TALENT TO FLY OVER THE POOR --
 YOU CAN KEEP YOUR HEAD HELD HIGH
 AND PLAN YOUR DAY WITH ABSOLUTE CONFIDENCE
 AND CARRY JUST A SINGLE UMBRELLA UNLESS IT'S RAINING
 REALLY HARD

HOGARTH

Yes, and I gave you a biscuit in the park, did I not? I had just two. I gave you one, although I like to eat two when I go on one of my walks. And because I gave you one, I had just one for myself. I'm hungry now myself, on account of my generosity to you.

HENNY

I'm sorry, sir. I know the feeling. I am still very, very hungry. Extremely hungry. I feel I might faint, sir

HOGARTH

Hungry, but still quite the charmer. Why is that?

HENNY

Perhaps because I am still so hungry! Don't you have have any food in this gigantic house? Oh, sir, I am still so hungry!

HOGARTH

Oh, I believe you, it's not a question of doubting what you've told me. Have you read a paper by K.T.McKernan on the history and meaning of doubt?

HOGARTH (Continued)

HOGARTH (Continued)

HENNY

No sir, I have not.

HOGARTH

When we're not so busy I'll give you the reference. Very interesting indeed. But for now I need to remind you that hunger is everywhere. I believe many girls are hungry. Boys are hungry too. Alas, that is the way of the world. But by the time you finish the work I brought you here for, my wife may be able to find food for you. You have to understand, the kitchen is my wife's domain.

But you have to understand: Many, many, MANY girls and boys are hungry. That is why I am an artist. But stay here until I return. I have some other business to attend to.

ACT ONE SCENE 1B

HENNY

NO1C 4 THE WAY OF THE WORLD

I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT THE WAY OF THE WORLD
 MEANS FOR ME TO BE HUNGRY, FOR ME TO BE POOR
 BUT HIM TO BE WEALTHY, AND FED LIKE A BULL ...
 I THINK SOMETHING'S WRONG WITH WHAT I'VE BEEN TOLD

I'VE BEEN TOLD THAT THE WAY OF THE WORLD
 IS CRUEL AND COLD, AND I THINK THIS MAY BE TRUE ...
 OTHERS ABOVE ME ARE MEANT TO BE WEALTHY
 AND EAT ENOUGH FOOD TO FEED A BATTALION, SO I'VE BEEN
 TOLD

BUT WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE THIS WAY
 WHY MUST WE SUFFER THE WAY OF THE WORLD
 IF IT'S GOING BE SUCH A BEASTLY WAY
 AS THOUGH THERE'S A WAR AGAINST US AND WE DON'T KNOW
 IT
 WHY DOES IT HAVE TO BE THIS WAY
 WHY MUST WE SUFFER THE WAY OF THE WORLD?

HENNEY

Sir, but I have no place to live.

HOGARTH

Yes, thousands of young girls are in that very same predicament. I will certainly point that problem out in my satirical engravings. Don't worry yourself. You have good looks, intelligence, and high spirits. Your future is assured, I feel certain. Take my word for it.

HENNY

Thank you sir. You are a lovely person, and a very cheerful, good-looking, mature man. I like you.

(They dance together sweetly -- more like a curtsy than a dance.)

HOGARTH

I'm a much older man. I will not encroach on you. I wish I were twenty or thirty years younger. Then I would pounce.

HOGARTH (Continued)

HOGARTH (Continued)

HENNY

My feelings are mixed sir. I'm a young girl. Although extremely hungry, I respect your position.

HOGARTH

I know. I love young girls. However, I think we should part.

ACT ONE SCENE 1C

(JANE HOGARTH appears from the rear.)

JANE

What in Jesus name is going on? I don't like what I am seeing and hearing. "You love young" girls indeed

HOGARTH

You have never come to my studio at this time of day.. Never! And you were supposed to be visiting your sister today!

JANE

I'll ask you again. What is going on with you and this child? And how much longer are you going to show me disrespect? Forever, I suppose.

HENNY

He has the greatest respect for you, ma'am.

JANE

How dare you speak to me?

HENNY

I'm so sorry, ma'am.

JANE

(softening)

It's almost tea time,. Did you have breakfast this morning?... You may speak now.

HENNY

No ma'am. Not today.

JANE

For the love of God. How do young people stay alive these days! ... Well, go downstairs and tell Sarah I want her to slice you a nice piece of ham from last night. And drink some tea. Then, when you've finished the ham and tea, come back up here and do whatever it is that Mr. Hogarth wants, providing it's decent. Go now.

HENNY

(curtseys)

HENNY *(Continued)*

Yes ma'am. Thank you ma'am.

(HENNY exits to the rear.)

ACT ONE SCENE 1D

HOGARTH

She's just a sweet young girl who has come here to make her life in London. I needed her to help with this poverty group I am having today; and perhaps also serve as as a model. She's hungry, it appears; at least that's what she claims. Thank you for giving her a piece of ham.

JANE

And what kind of life will that 'sweet young girl' have in London? How will she get food? Where did you meet her?

HOGARTH

Walking besides the park. I greeted her with a gesture of civility. She returned my good wishes in a most courteous and civil fashion. We started walking side by side. Not actually side by side, of course, I made sure of that . She walked, respectfully, a half step behind.

JANE

And why was she in the park? Where was she going?

HOGARTH

Jane, how should I know where the girl was going? I suppose she was looking for food.

JANE

In the park? Did she find food in the park? On the branch of a tree, I suppose.

HOGARTH

No, of course not. I gave her one of my buns. The gesture left me rather hungry, but I took pity on her. She seemed dazed and confused, like a sheep grazing for food. As I mentioned, I gave her one of my two buns, leaving me with only one. it left me feeling quite wanting another bun.

JANE

You always chat the young girls up.

HOGARTH

Every man does that, confronted with a young girl.

JANE

She confronted you? She stopped you for sex?

HOGARTH

No, no. Of course not. I didn't say that. She didn't stop me. It was I who stopped her!

JANE

You dare tell me that!

HOGARTH

You misunderstand. Are you trying to misunderstand?

JANE

No, I'm trying to understand why you married me, if you prefer to spend your time around tarts and pimps and gamblers.

HOGARTH

I rarely gamble.

JANE

Lovely. Then our fortune is safe, if you don't plan to gamble it all away.

HOGARTH

Not our fortune, my fortune, thank you very much. It's my paintings have made the Hogarths rich.

JANE

Yes. But when we eloped, I loved you so much, all those years ago. In spite of my father, who taught you how to paint and how to do your satirical engravings. My father wanted me to reject your courtship.

HOGARTH

Do you still love me, Jane?

JANE

Of course I still love you. We're married... We live together as man and wife.

NO 5 LIVING TOGETHER

LIVING TOGETHER IS
 A WAY OF KNOWING, GROWING,
 SLOWLY BUILDING A DREAM.
 LIVING TOGETHER IS
 A TIME FOR HOPING, HOPING,
 ROPING UP A CLIFF.

HOGARTH

WHATEVER LOVE IS
 IS WHAT I HAVE AND WANT,
 I KNOW MORE ABOUT IT THAN
 A FRENCH SAVANT.
 I WANT IT, NEED IT
 HOLD IT SO DEAR,
 GIVE ME SOME TIME AND
 I'LL MAKE MYSELF CLEAR.

HOGARTH

Jane, you touch my heart.

JANE

And yet you still have your fondness for tarts.

ACT ONE SCENE 1E

HOGARTH

Oh for God's sake, Jane. Why do you go on and on and on about tarts? They're just women and girls.

JANE

I just wonder what my father would have thought about his son-in-law's fascination with common prostitutes.

HOGARTH

Ah, yes. Yes indeed. What would your father the great celebrity artist Sir James Thornhill have thought? He would have thought that whores have no money to commission formal portraits, and no families to pose with them -- and so they should just drown themselves in the Thames and go straight to hell... But life is more than your father's society portraits, Jane ... even though I've done a few society portraits myself, just for the money, as your father did -- your father, who didn't want me in his family, who fell ill with venom when we eloped.

JANE

You never miss a chance to sneer at my father's memory, God rest his soul. Even though he taught you all he knew about the making of art.

HOGARTH

Yes, all HE knew about art. But I have long since surpassed him as an artist. I may have begun life bringing food to my own father in debtor's prison, and I may have been a pupil in your father's art academy, but on my own I've become a man of substance and distinction. I'm a far greater artist than your father was.

JANE

Yes, you've surpassed him. I acknowledge that. That you're a great artist, Billy, I have no do\$ubt. But, God help us, tell me why you think of nothing but tarts.

HOGARTH

That's not true, not true at all. I also think of drunks, and muggers, and pickpockets, and jailers, and murderers.

HOGARTH (Continued)

I think of the people in the streets and in the taverns, and I think of people in their kitchens and bedrooms. I am an artist, Jane. I think of other things than tarts. I seek knowledge and experience. I think always of my art, and always of life. I live the artist's life.

HOGARTH

NO 6 THE ARTIST'S LIFE

THE ARTIST'S LIFE IS THE BLOOD IN HIS VEINS
 IT HAS CHOSEN HIM -- NOT VICE VERSA,
 IT IMPRISONS HIM IN CHAINS,
 AND HE TURNS IT TO ART BUT FOR ARTISTIC INERTIA.

JANE

(SINGING)

THE ARTIST LIVES NEAR THE HOME OF THE DEVIL,
 A LEVEL BELOW, WHERE FOUL CREATURES ROAM,
 A PLACE WHERE LECHERS AND WOMEN TOGETHER REVEL,
 A LEVEL FAR FROM HEALTH AND SANITY OF HOME.

TOGETHER

WE DISAGREE HERE, SURELY!
 WE HAVE TWO VISIONS OF LIFE!

JANE

ONE OF US SEEKS THE NOBLE --
 HOGARTH
 ONE OF US SEEKS THE TRUE --

TOGETHER

WE BEST DISCUSS THIS ISSUE
 SOME OTHER TIME.
 ON THAT WE DO AGREE.

ACT ONE SCENE 1F

JANE

How nice that you assure me that you have such pure and moral motives for tramping through the slums and parks and every other place where tarts hang out. I feel so comforted.

(HENNY returns from the downstairs kitchen.))

Well, dear child. You're back with us. Did you get the ham I sent you downstairs for?

HENNY

Ma'am, thank you, yes I came to say that a Mr. Ralph Lozon from downstairs hurt his foot and can't climb the stairs -- do you know the gentleman I mean?
--

JANE

Of course I know who you mean. Ralph is my footman. Kind, loyal, competent man. A remarkable man. I will keep him.

HENNY

He told me to tell you that the gentlemen have arrived here and are waiting in the downstairs foyer.

HOGARTH

What?! Oh dear Lord, we can't keep them waiting in the downstairs foyer. These are the greatest men in London and the greatest of this century, along with myself of course. Jane, please greet them for me. Henny, you stay with me while Miss Jane is gone to fetch my guests.

(Exit JANE to greet the guests.))

(ACT ONE Scene 2A)

NO 7 TRANSITION

HOGARTH

Henny, my child, this is an important assignment for you. If you perform it well I will give you a good recommendation for your employment search. I wish you well, dear girl. I really do. But don't dwell on our meeting earlier today in the park. Forget it ever happened.

HENNY

Yes, sir, thank you sir. You're very kind to me.

HOGARTH

Yes, I am. Now here is what I want you to do: stay with my guests and be sure their needs are met. Their glasses must never be empty. Do you understand?

HENNY

Yes, sir, I know what empty means.. I feel empty almost always.

HOGARTH

Clever girl. Brilliant girl. Fill their glasses when they become half-empty. I want to see full glasses and happy guests. Let me tell you who these guests of mine are: There is first of all the greatest scholar in England and the world, Dr. Samuel Johnson: He is writing a dictionary of the whole English language. Think of that! An extraordinary man. Bless my soul, a dictionary, can you imagine such a thing. Who would ever use it?

HOGARTH

privately to Henny

He twitches and shakes and blinks like an idiot.

(HOGARTH comically pantomimes Johnson's twitching, shaking, blinking.)

But pay him no mind: his twitching and shaking and blinking are part and parcel of his genius... And you will be serving my very good friend the novelist Henry Fielding. Do you know what a 'novel' is, my child? It is a thing quite new to the world. My friend is charting the way for others to follow.

HOGARTH (*Continued*)

HOGARTH (Continued)

HENNY

I have heard of novels, sir.

HOGARTH

You've heard of them! Good for you. Clever girl, clever, clever girl. Also accepting my invitation is another author, Oliver Goldsmith, one who writes both novels and plays. Have you heard of his play, "She Stoops to Conquer"?

HENNY

No, sir. I have not.

HOGARTH

A comical masterpiece. A shy young man stammers horribly any time he is near a woman of quality, a woman suitable for marriage. Can you guess how the shy young man's problem is solved and how he wins the quality lady after many comical misadventures? Can you guess?... But I shouldn't tell you because you might want to go to the theater and see the play yourself.

HENNY

I won't, sir. I will want to, but I won't go. I've never been to a theater, sir, not ever.

HOGARTH

You need to cure that neglect, and visit the theater as often as possible. There is much amusement to be found, much wit. Also much depravity, of course. Stay clear of the depravity, you're too young to enjoy it. But one has to experience the good and the bad together, isn't that right? Actually, both the good and the bad are better that way, isn't that right?

HENNY

Yes, sir.

HOGARTH

Did you enjoy our leftover ham?

HENNY

The ham was lovely, sir. Do you always eat so well, sir?

HENNY (Continued)

HOGARTH

Yes, I do. But you should not ask me a question like that, it's inappropriate. I'm an artist of consequence, and you are... you are... just a girl. Anyway, Dr Goldsmith may want to fondle your breasts. It relaxes him. I'm sure you'll be a good sport about it... He's had some medical training in Ireland. That is no doubt the basis for his interest in women's breasts..

And then there is David Garrick, a dear friend and the greatest actor of the English stage. And finally there is little Alexander Pope, who wrote "The Rape of the Lock" and other charming verses. That little fellow can rhyme anything with anything.

HENNY

No painters, sir? No engravers?

HOGARTH

I am the painter and I am the engraver. None other is needed, because none other is worthy of this assemblage of London's most distinguished personages. Oh, I forgot Dean Jonathan Swift, who has given us the remarkable "Gulliver's Travels." You must read it, he's an absolutely brilliant man, who thinks better of horses than he does of humans. I think he has a point. Oh, now here they are. Stand up. Stand up! Stand up!

ACT ONE SCENE 2B

(HENNY and HOGARTH stand; enter JOHNSON, POPE, FIELDING, GOLDSMITH, GARRICK, and SWIFT, who arrange themselves in seats set out for them around the room, but who will individually stand again and move around as the discussion proceeds.)

HOGARTH

(Speaking)

Yes, welcome to all. I am honored that you've come today, and honored and humbled that you are my friends. Henny, our serving girl today, will bring you your drinks of ale. Of course, tea for you, Dr Johnson. Ale for the rest of you. If you have any special requests -- such as the imported gin that is destroying the very heart and soul of England -- just tell our girl Henny as she comes 'round to you.

(HENNY begins to serve the gentlemen. JANE exits to return downstairs to supervise her staff in the kitchen.)

DR JOHNSON

Why are we here today, Mr Hogarth? Do you have a question for us?

HOGARTH

The question is London, sir. What do you see when you think of London?

DR JOHNSON

(obviously amused)

When I think of London, sir, I think of life!

HOGARTH

You think of life? Rather than injustice? What do you mean by life?

DR JOHNSON

I mean people. Bookstores. Laughter. Games. Shopping. People drinking coffee, people drinking tea. I mean people in London engaged in London living, leading London lives. That is what I mean by life.

DR JOHNSON

NO 8 LONDON LIVING

LONDON LIVING LONDON LIFE,
 LONDON JOY
 IN A LONDON RIFE WITH
 ABOUNDING PLEASURE,
 OF COURSE WITH A MEASURE
 OF TROUBLE AND STRIFE

LONDON LIVING LONDON LIFE,
 LONDON FOG
 LONDON FOG CAN'T BE CUT WTH A KNIFE
 IN A LONDON FILLED WITH
 ABOUNDING PLEASURE,
 AND ALSO WITH TREASURE
 IF YOU CAN HANDLE A KNIFE.

TIRED OF LONDON?
 THEN YOU'RE TIRED OF LIFE!
 FOR LIVING IN LONDON OFFERS
 ALL THAT LIFE AFFORDS --
 AND GIVES TO LONDONERS
 ALL OF LIFE'S REWARDS.

LONDON IS LIVING, LONDON IS JOY
 LONDON IS HEAVEN
 FOR GIRL AND FOR BOY
 LIVING IN LONDON MAKES YOU
 BREAK INTO DANCE
 LIVING IN LONDON MAKES YOUR FEET
 WANT TO PRANCE!

Though not myself a dancer
 I often feel the need to prance.

FIELDING

Then why not prance, Dr Johnson?

SWIFT

And why not dance?

ACT ONE SCENE 2C

*(his friend Hester Thrale appears,
and they dance as in a dream)*

DR JOHNSON

I don't know the steps! ... Ah, Mrs Hester
Thrale!... Would you care to use this occasion to give
me a little lesson?

REPRISE, LONDON LIVING

DR JOHNSON

In short, London is a place, sir, not a question. I would refer you to my dictionary but I am only up to the letter 'm' -- and 'question' of course begins with 'q' -- so it falls off the known universe, as it were. But it will not evade my capture forever. It will in due time come into my grasp. What questions do you have about London?

GARRICK

Sir, let me speak for my good friend Hogarth. One question would be: How is it that we -- and other gentlemen like us, many of them our friends -- can be leading London to world greatness ... while the city itself is a teeming cesspool of moral degradation?

DR JOHNSON

Oh, people are simply taking their pleasures. London is not just a Palace of the Mind, it is a Palace of Pleasure. A palace of fornication and drinking and mindless amusements. Keep your mind at ease. Carry two handkerchiefs, one for show and one for blow. Each has its purpose.

POPE

Mindless amusements indeed! I agree wholeheartedly. Amusements are the happiness of those incapable of thought. What they are is time-wasters for mindless and worthless people who spend their days and nights in taverns.

SWIFT

Ah. Taverns bring about much misery, much insanity. A tavern is a place where madness is sold in a bottle.

FIELDING

That certainly is true, Dean Swift. Men stagger from one tavern to another and then another and then yet another, before finally staggering home to their wives. I don't know what the answer is to this depraved situation. It is bad men who are spending all their days and nights in taverns. And it is easier to make good men wise, than to make bad men good.

FIELDING (Continued)

GARRICK

And surely card-playing is just as bad as tavern-going. I think we all agree, good fellows, that everything without exception can be done to destructive excess --the drinking of ale and even the playing of cards. Cards, which were intended to amuse, can be used instead to enslave the minds of those who pick them up.

HOGARTH

Dr Johnson, why do you suppose this condition exists?

DR JOHNSON

The mind is never satisfied with the objects immediately before it, but is always breaking away from the present moment, and losing itself in dreams of future felicity... The natural flights of the human mind are not from pleasure to pleasure in the present but from hope to hope in some unknown future.

JOHNSON & THE OTHER GENTLEMEN

NO 9 - IN SOME UNKNOWN FUTURE

IN SOME UNKNOWN FUTURE WE'LL FIND JOY
OUR HOPES WILL LEAD US TO FELICITY.
OUR MINDS WILL SMILE AT OUR DUPLICITY
THE FUTURE WILL SAVE US -- OR WE'LL BE LOST.

IN SOME UNKNOWN FUTURE WE'LL GRASP AT FALLING SNOW
WE'LL TOUCH THE SKY AND HOLD IT IN OUR DREAM
THE PRESENT WILL JUST GRIND AND DISAPPOINT
THE UNKNOWN FUTURE WILL PROVIDE THE GLEAM.

NEVER WILL WE SEEM TO LOSE OUR WAY
NEVER WILL WE FAIL TO HAVE OUR SAY
WE WILL ALWAYS BE FINE GENTLEMEN BORN FREE
LOOKING TO FIND TOMORROW UNDER ANY NEARBY TREE

ACT ONE SCENE 2D

HOGARTH

(calling over to GOLDSMITH, who is whispering to HENNY and holding her close; the two have moved away from the other.)

Dr Goldsmith, why are you so silent today?... Dr Goldsmith! Dr Goldsmith! Nolly, can't you hear us? You need to come closer!

GARRICK

Poor Nolly is, I'm afraid, an idiot. In fact, that's exactly what Reynolds has called him: an inspired idiot. I think that's very apt, because our friend Nolly's "She Stoops to Conquer" is very droll, very droll.

FIELDING

Very droll indeed. I've never laughed so much.

DR JOHNSON

Forgive me, Mr Fielding, but I have learned never to heed one writer's comments about the works of another unless the two are in two different rooms and cannot hear a single word the other says.

SWIFT

That is an excellent observation, Dr Johnson. However, in the present case, our room here is very large and in any case it's evident that our friend Goldsmith can no longer hear us, because as you can see he has moved as far away from us as he can get -- and he seems quite entranced by that young girl Henny.

FIELDING

She may be ready to go on the streets.

FIELDING

Mr Garrick, is there any kind of actress other than wanton? As the leading man of London theater, you of all men should know.

GARRICK

NO 10 - ACTRESSES

NONE ARE MORE FUN THAN ACTRESSES
 WHO STRUT THEMSELVES ON STAGE OR MATTRESSES.
 WITH SUNNY DISPOSITIONS
 AND PROVOCATIVE POSITIONS
 THEIR GOAL IS ALWAYS GIVING PEOPLE FUN.

NONE ARE MORE CHARMING THAN
 LADIES OF THE STAGE
 IN LOVE OR WARS THEY ALWAYS WIN
 WHATEVER WARS THEY WAGE.
 LIKE LAWYERS OR PHYSICIANS
 THEY ARE MASTERFUL TECHNICIANS
 WHO DO NOT LEAVE THE FIELD
 UNTIL THE WAR IS WON.

ACTRESSES! THEY'RE SO VERY KIND AND VERY SWEET
 THEY SWEEP MEN OFF THEIR FEET!
 ACTRESSES! MAY THEY LIVE ON FOREVER!
 AS MOST OF THEM DO -- WHILE PRETENDING WHEN THEY'RE
 FIFTY-FIVE
 THAT THEY ARE STILL JUST TWENTY-TWO!

ACTRESSES! WHEN GENTLEMEN THEY MEET
 THEY DO GIVE THOSE GENTLEMEN A TREAT!
 ACTRESSES! MAY THEY LIVE ON FOREVER!
 IF NOT IN THE MIRROR AT LEAST ON THE STREET.

GARRICK

A quicker answer to your question would be: wantonness
 reigns ... thank God.

SWIFT

Let's not thank God for wantonness. Let us credit
 womanhood -- God's greatest creature, whether wanton
 or otherwise engaged.

FIELDING

Then God bless womanhood. [Glasses raised by all
 except far-away GOLDSMITH.]

HOGARTH

Mr Goldsmith, if you can hear us, raise your glass.

FIELDING

(laughing)

If you can not hear us, continue seducing that poor sweet girl.

ACT ONE SCENE 2E

(GOLDSMITH and HENNY remain seated and in close conversation. After a bit, they returns to the others.)

GOLDSMITH

I confess I haven't been listening. I hope you will forgive me, all of you, but especially Mr Hogarth, our gracious host. I have been in deep consultation with the lovely young lady, Henny, to whom I have been offering my advice -- as a physician and as a man of the world. Again, my apologies to all for my inattention. I will return to your good company after I accompany the girl to her destination. It is not far away. I shall return soon.

HENNY

Mr Hogarth, I should like to thank you and your lovely wife for the kindness you have shown me, but I must leave you now, to pursue my dreams. God bless you.

HOGARTH

Godspeed to you both. Dr Goldsmith, we will look forward to your return both to our company and to your more usual state of exuberance. Perhaps when you do we will, once more, enjoy your dancing on the table, Dr Goldsmith. Again, sir, Godspeed.

(They exit EXCEPT Swift, Garrick, Pope & Henny.)

ACT ONE SCENE 2F

HENNY

NO 11 - IN PURSUIT OF MY DREAMS

IN PURSUIT OF MY DREAMS I'LL DO ANYTHING
I'LL TAKE ON COLD I'LL TAKE ON HEAT,
I'LL DO AS I'M TOLD OR MAYBE CHEAT
I'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES FOR ME TO EAT.

IN PURSUIT OF MY DREAMS I'LL DO EVERYTHING,
I'LL SHOVEL COAL, I'LL SHOVEL PEAT
I'LL DRINK CHAMPAGNE, I'LL CHEW ON MEAT,
ANYTHING LORD -- BUT LET ME EAT!

FOR HEAVEN MUST PROTECT ME
IF I'M TO LAST THE DAY
CHANCES ARE I'LL SURELY DIE
IF FORTUNE FAILS TO COME MY WAY

POPE

What will become of the poor girl?

SWIFT

Nothing good, Mr Pope.

GARRICK

Something bad.

POPE

Oh dear. Oh dear.

ACT TWO Scene 1A

FIELDING

(to all)

When do you think Goldsmith will return?

HOGARTH

I have no idea. There is no predicting Nolly... Perhaps he won't come back to us at all. Maybe he went off with the young girl for good. I wouldn't be surprised.

POPE

If Mr Goldsmith is unpredictable, it means he's just a man, and no one should expect clockwork of a human. Man is not a timepiece, but a conundrum; in fact, he is the glory, jest, and riddle of the world.

GARRICK

Mr Pope, are you quoting us from one of your own verses? Should you be doing that?

SWIFT

Mr Garrick, he's not quoting his own verse, he's merely alluding to it; there's no sin in that. He is just strutting on the stage, such as an actor would do... I have heard you described as the greatest actor of our times. Don't you ever strut upon the stage?

GARRICK

No, I never do any such thing. Acting is not the business of strutting but the business of understanding -- understanding the minds and souls and modes of speech of those whom we portray.

SWIFT

So whom are you portraying now?

GARRICK

I am portraying myself. But I could portray anyone at all.

FIELDING

Could you portray our friend and comrade Nolly Goldsmith?

FIELDING (Continued)

GARRICK

Indeed. Anyone at all. I would think about Nolly until I knew everything about him, and then I would act accordingly. I would become Oliver Goldsmith.

HOGARTH

Well, David, do that for us now.

GARRICK

What do you mean to say?

HOGARTH

I mean to say that we are worried sick about him. My friend, why don't you make yourself become him -- so that you can tell us where he is, and what he is doing, and when he will return.

FIELDING

One doesn't have to be an actor to do that. Mr Goldsmith is no doubt somewhere tugging that girl Henny.

DR JOHNSON

Mr Fielding, even in jest you should not cast cynical aspersions on one of our great comrades, although it is perhaps acceptable to laugh at his foibles. Mr Goldsmith is a great man. There is no kind of literature the poor man has not attempted and adorned. I'm sure he'll return to us soon.

SWIFT

And will the girl be with him on his return?

FIELDING

Perhaps not. Perhaps not.

SWIFT

Why not?

FIELDING

Because London is London! It can devour its women and children. Babies of gin-soaked mothers are thrown away to death by drowning, with scores of tiny bodies found floating in the Thames, along with dead cats.

FIELDING (Continued)

And young girls are forced to choose between starving or selling their bodies on the streets. I often wish to leave London and go elsewhere. London is so exhausting, so immensely tiring.

DR JOHNSON

Sir, don't yield to such temptations. When a man is tired of London he is tired of life, for there is in London all that life can afford. Where have you thought of going?

FIELDING

To the clean air of the countryside.

DR JOHNSON

Going to the country would be a tragic mistake. To see life you should remain in London. In London you will see as much of life as the world can offer.

GARRICK

Yes. But I'm reminded of John Gay's "Beggar's Opera", a charming and intriguing piece, featuring highwaymen, whores, and corrupt politicians. A veritable guidebook on contemporary London. That's the problem we face.

ACT TWO SCENE 1B
(*GOLDSMITH returns.*)

FIELDING

The prodigal child returns to the adulation of us all! We are so happy to see you back, Dr Goldsmith! We have been very worried about you. Why has your return taken so long?

GOLDSMITH

I was caught without umbrella in a dreadful thunderstorm. I had to go to my lodgings for a change of clothes.

SWIFT

What of the girl? Is she with you?

GOLDSMITH

No, she is not. She had other ideas. She seemed frantic... I have no notion where she is. I had to tell you this; Maybe she went to Mother Needham's. She was desperate for food and shelter. She could be anywhere.

SWIFT

What sort of ideas did the girl have?

GOLDSMITH

She didn't tell me, but she is a country girl who's come to London to improve her life. She has been very hungry since arriving in London. Her life in the city is clearly not what she expected. She is hungry all the time. She doesn't want to starve here. She wants to live a fine life, with elegant things. That is not possible for ordinary girls.

SWIFT

Mr Hogarth, don't you have any regular work for the girl? You had her working for you today. Can you not give her employment?

HOGARTH

No, Dean Swift, I can not, and that's what I told the girl right from the start.

HOGARTH (Continued)

Today was a special circumstance in honor of the visit of you distinguished gentlemen. I have no openings for her, nor does anyone I know.

GARRICK

Does all this mean that Henny has chosen to walk the streets?

GOLDSMITH

I hope not. I suggested an alternative...

GARRICK

The alternative being what?

GOLDSMITH

As I hinted to you, I gave her my recommendation to Mother Needham, who is probably less vicious than her reputation. Those things are sometimes quite exaggerated. Mother Needham could provide food and shelter for the girl.

SWIFT

I've heard of this woman. She is said to being very ugly ugly to her girls, working them 'till they're exhausted to the bone. She sometimes imprisons the new girls to bend their wills.

ACT TWO SCENE 1C
 (ENTER JANE with ESTER THRALE.)

HOGARTH

Welcome, Mrs Thrale! We are so pleased that you stopped by to see us. Gentlemen, I had invited Dr Johnson's dear friend Ester Thrale to join us, but she has pressing obligations elsewhere. However, she wanted to stop by just briefly, to cheer us on. Welcome again, Mrs Thrale!

(ALL raise their glasses.)

JANE

I'm back again to bring ale to Mr Goldsmith. [She pours ale into his mug.]

And I'll soon have a new pot of tea for you, Dr Johnson -- it's hard to keep up with you, sir, you love your tea so much. I've never seen the likes! I'm going to fill in for Henny now, since she deserted you gentlemen.

GOLDSMITH

Thank you, Madam!

JANE

You are very kind. Where is our Henny then?

GOLDSMITH

She may have entered a kind of home.

JANE

A convent? I didn't imagine Henny was devout. Is Henny Devout.

GOLDSMITH

Perhaps not. The home she's joined is, I believe, non-denominational.

JANE

What is its name?

GOLDSMITH

I'm not sure. I can't remember.

SWIFT

Nolly, if you keep drinking ale in excess, you'll lose what little is left of your memory.

GOLDSMITH

That must be the problem, then. It must be the drink. I will stop drinking some day soon. That will be the solution.

There is a silence as the gentlemen look at one another. HOGARTH seems devastated. JANE joins him downstage as the other gentlemen remain where they are, in conversation the viewers cannot hear.

ACT TWOSCENE 1D

JANE

Billy, you look just dreadful. What can I do?

HOGARTH

Nothing. This is all my fault, all my fault. I feel I am going mad.

JANE

Have some ale, Billy. Put this sad business behind you.

HOGARTH

I have lost my mind. If the girl's at Mother Needham's, Needham's friend Colonel Charteris will rape that poor sweet girl! That is what that monster does, it is his specialty!

JANE

Billy, you can't right every wrong. Get back to your work. But the rest of you: take action!

JANE

NO 12 TAKE ACTION

TAKE ACTION!
PUT ASIDE YOUR PRECIOUS ALE
AND SHOW THE WAY
PUT YOUR WITS NOW TO AVAIL
AND YOU WILL SAVE THE DAY!

TAKE ACTION!
HOLD YOUR HEADS UP HIGH
AND FIND A WAY
TAKE THE LESSONS FROM YOUR BOOKS
AND MAKE THEM PAY!

FOR NOW IS THE TIME WHEN WISDOM WILL MATTER
IF WISDOM CAN TURN INTO STRENGTH
DON'T LET YOUR FORCES SCATTER
PUSH YOUR COURAGE TO ANY LENGTH
TAKE ACTION!

*(NOW TO Hogarth's guests, whom he
rejoins.)*

ACT TWOSCENE 1E

DR JOHNSON

The girl's imprisonment shall not not stand! It is time to turn thoughts into action! Jane Hogarth is right: that girl Henny is one of our own. Gather around me now. I am forming a war council. We gentlemen are called to save that girl! We must be single-minded now and do just that!

GENTLEMEN

NO 13 LONDON GENTLEMEN

LONDON GENTS MAY HAVE THEIR SINS
 TOO MUCH ALE AMONG THEM
 ROSY GIRLS THEY LATER RUE
 BUT STILL THEY SHOUT "CHERCHEZ LA FEMME"

LONDON GENTS MAY HAVE THEIR FAULTS
 TOO MUCH GIN AMONG THEM
 ROSY DREAMS AND CRAZY SCHEMES
 THAT SOMETIMES TURN AGAINST THEM

BUT OH! ON SOME DISTANT SUNBURNT SHORE
 THEY WILL FIND A WRONG THAT
 MUST BE RECTIFIED,
 A TRUTH THAT MUST BE RECOGNIZED,
 A CAUSE THAT CALLS FOR WAR!
 THEN LONDON GENTS WILL
 RISE TO THE OCCASION!
 RISE TO THE OCCASION!
 AND DO THEIR VERY, VERY BEST AND MORE.

DR JOHNSON

Gather around me, gather around. I am forming our war council.

FIELDING

A war council? Who is our enemy, sir?

DR JOHNSON

We have many enemies -- pestilence, disease, ignorance, and the wantonness growing every day, destroying a whole generation.

SWIFT

Sir, how can we fight all these enemies? They are everywhere and they are relentless, yet there are only a few of us.

DR JOHNSON

We shall fight them wherever we can, Dean Swift.

GARRICK

And will we win?

DR JOHNSON

Of course we will win, sir, but only in those places where we fight. We will use our fists and we will crush them. We will find the missing girl, return her to safety, and write her lesson plans, based on our different areas of experience -- a word for which I have already provided expositions in my dictionary. Words like 'success' and 'victory' I have yet to deal with.

FIELDING

Dr Johnson, if I may say so, this project will be hard to organize.

DR JOHNSON

No, sir, it will be simplicity itself. I will remain here in Mr Hogarth's house, to operate Command Central. Dr Goldsmith will remain here with me at Headquarters, and stay out of further trouble. We have as company Mr Hogarth, who will also stay out of trouble --unless he provokes it through his art works. That is certainly possible.

FIELDING

And the rest of us?

DR JOHNSON

The rest of you are warriors, so you must prepare for combat. Do you have your horses ready?

SWIFT

No, I will require a carriage.

HOGARTH

I can provide one.

POPE

May I ride with you, Dean Swift?

SWIFT

I would be delighted, sir.

GARRICK

And I, Dr Johnson?

DR JOHNSON

Mr Garrick, you and Mr Fielding will mount your horses and scour the countries east of London, making enquiries about the girl.

GARRICK

If we don't find her, sir?

DR JOHNSON

Then try the north. Or the south. I leave that up to you. That will be completely within your own discretion. Consult my dictionary for the full meaning of the word 'discretion.' It's in there.

FIELDING

But if we still don't find her, we keep looking for her?

DR JOHNSON

Exactly. Well-said. You are becoming an EXCELLENT detective -- another word well-explicated in my dictionary.

FIELDING

Dr Johnson, you are setting us out on a long and arduous journey.

DR JOHNSON

Exactly. And so you needs must saddle up at once and begin that journey.

GARRICK

I see many difficulties ahead.

DR JOHNSON

So do I. But nothing will ever be attempted if all objections must first be overcome. Saddle up and be on your way!

FIELDING

We must be steadfast. We must urge ourselves on!

no 14 SADDLE UP

FIELDING, GARRICK

SADDLE UP!
BE AS COURAGEOUS
AS THE HORSE YOU'RE RIDING.
DON'T QUESTION THINGS
DON'T FILL YOUR MIND WITH DOUBT
LET FLY YOUR WINGS
AND LET YOUR COURAGE BE ABIDING!

SADDLE UP!
BE AS OUTRAGEOUS
AS THE FOE WE'RE FIGHTING
DON'T COMPROMISE
LET VIC'TRY BE A ROUT!
AND NOT UNTIL YOU'VE REACHED IT SHALL YOU SUP.

ACT TWO SCENE 2

(Night: FIELDING and GARRICK are riding side-by-side on a country road. Garrick's horse comes to an abrupt halt. I think the horse should probably be made entirely of mettles rods, except for its head, which should be more realistic.)

GARRICK

He's thrown a shoe. Oh dear Lord. We're in the middle of nowhere. What should I do?

FIELDING

Give him a stern talking to.

GARRICK

You're joking.

FIELDING

I've been known to make jokes.

GARRICK

This is no time to make one. It's almost midnight.

FIELDING

Shall I wait an hour and tell my joke just before one o'clock?

GARRICK

Sir, we're not in a Henry Fielding novel!

FIELDING

No, I shouldn't think so. I wouldn't have written us into this predicament.

FIELDING (Continued)

GARRICK

Well, what should we do? I'm a city man, not a country squire.

FIELDING

I never would have known. All right, tie up yor horse where he'll have plenty to feed on, and then climb p here with me on Solitde and we'll be on or way.

GARRICK

His name is Solitude?

FIELDING

Only if he answers to that name when I call him. Come on, let's be on our way. Hop up behind me. We're not making much progress with our search, and it's going to get even harder.

(GARRICK gets behind on the horse, looking extremely uncomfortable.)

GARRICK

Especially for me.

(FIELDING and GARRICK)

NO 15 SADDLE UP!

(They ride off further into the night.)

(continued, more forlornly)

SADDLE UP!
BE AS STEADFAST AS A HANGMAN HANGING!
DON'T QUESTION THINGS
DON'T FILL YOUR MIND WITH DOUBT
LET FLY YOUR WINGS,
LET WINNING BE A ROUT!

SADDLE UP!
BE AS OUTRAGEOUS AS THE FOE WE'RE FIGHTING
DON'T ARGUE THINGS
THE TIME FOR ARGUMENT IS GONE
PUSH SCRUPLES OUT:
LET WINNING BE A ROUT!

TOTAL VIC'TRY MUST BE OUR GOAL
FOR THAT IS WHY WE SADDLE UP
VIC'TRY WILL FILL OUR DINNER BOWL
BUT NOT UNTIL WE'E REACHED IT SHALL WE SUP!

ACT TWOSCENE 3

(EXTERIOR, AFTERNOON. On the street outside of Mother Needham's establishment in London.)

SWIFT

Did you talk to this Mother Needham person?

POPE

No, I asked to speak to her, but was told she was not available.

SWIFT

Who told you this?

POPE

Some kind of servant woman, I suppose. Very tall, at least to me. Not a kind person.

SWIFT

Why do you say she was unkind? What did she say to you?

POPE

She called me a hunchback worm!

SWIFT

Your back isn't hunched, Mr. Pope. Not really. Not extremely. I've seen worse.

POPE

But you think me a worm?

SWIFT

I didn't say that. The woman said that. Do you feel like a worm?

SWIFT (Continued)

POPE

Sometimes. Not always.

SWIFT

There you go then. You're not a worm. What did the woman look like?

POPE

She was sinister-looking and very ugly. She could have been an old witch of some denomination.

SWIFT

Well, we'll come to the house again this afternoon. This time I'll try to get in myself.

POPE

Why? Because I'm a worm?

SWIFT

I just told you that you aren't a worm. I gave you my assurances.

POPE

Then why do you want to return here. To see the ugly old witch?

SWIFT

To find the missing girl.

POPE

Oh, the girl. The girl. I'd actually forgotten the girl. The old crone confused and distracted me with her accusations of my wormness. In my confusion I even forgot to shout at her and tell her I am not a worm.

POPE (Continued)

SWIFT

Regrettable, Mr Pope. But you're not a worm. No more than many people I have known.

POPE

I know that, Dean Swift. And I thank you for that. And that ugly old witch may go to hell.

SWIFT

Give her no further thought.

POPE

All right. But I'm not a worm.

SWIFT

I've already told you that.

POPE

And I believe you. I'm not a worm.

POPE

NO 16 I'M NOT A WORM

I'M NOT A WORM I'M A POET
A CERTAIN KIND OF SCHOLAR
A CERTAIN KIND OF LOVER
I'M A MAN!

I CAN WRITE FINE VERSES, I CAN SOAR.
I CAN BEST MY BETTERS WITH A ROAR,
CAN SILENCE MY FOES WITH A -- SNORE, DRAWER, FLOOR,
WHORE, FOUR,
BORE -- SILENCE MY FOES WITH A --
WAIT, I'LL NEED TO THINK ON'T SOME MORE!
I'LL CLOSE WITH A RHYME, FOR SURE.

ACT TWO Scene 4A

(CUT TO INTERIOR, HOGARTH'S
STUDIO, DAYLIGHT.)

NO 28 TRANSITION

JANE

Where are your gentlemen friends?

HOGARTH

(at his easel)

Most of them have ridden off in search of that girl
Henny.

JANE

I could use her in the kitchen. I need another helper.

HOGARTH

You should have told me that earlier. It's too late
now.

JANE

Why? What happened to her?

HOGARTH

Oliver Goldsmith took her God knows where and left her
there.

JANE

And where is Dr Goldsmith now?

HOGARTH

Behind our house, relieving himself in our privy.

JANE

And where is Dr Johnson?

HOGARTH

He's waiting at the privy, poor man. Twitching in his
normal mode, but even worse. He must really need to
go.

JANE

All that tea he drinks! I'm not surprised. I'm just
surprised he doesn't spend all his days relieving
himself.

JANE (Continued)

HOGARTH

Indeed. He never drinks ale. That is why he is so intelligent. Or so he thinks.

JANE

No, I think that is why he stammers and blinks like a madman. That much tea is not good for a sane person... Nor that much ale. Mr Goldsmith drinks more ale than any man alive.

ACT I

ACT TWO SCENE 4B

(CUT TO: DR JOHNSON pounding
outside on door of privy)

DR JOHNSON

Come out! Come out at once! You've been in there
forever. Come out!

GOLDSMITH

(from inside the privy)

I can't. I'm still exerting myself.

DR JOHNSON

Yes you can. Finish your business and come out, you
beastly man!

GOLDSMITH

I cant, I can't.

DR JOHNSON

I beg you, I beg you, I BEG YOU!!!... Please.

(GOLDSMITH leaves the privy to be
replaced by DR JOHNSON)

OLIVER GOLDSMITH

NO 17 I FEEL MUCH BETTER

I FEEL MUCH BETTER NOW
THE CLOUDS HAVE PASSED
I SEE THE SKY AGAIN
I HEAR THE LARK!
I FEEL MUCH BETTER!

ACT TWO SCENE 4C

(DR JOHNSON and OLIVER GOLDSMITH
re-enter Hogarth's studio.)

HOGARTH

Good morning, gentlemen. I hope you slept well last night.

JANE

Dr Johnson, you look very fit and jolly this morning. Did you have a nice walk?

DR JOHNSON

No, madam, my fitness and jollity are derived from my use of your sturdy and excellent privy. I feel much relieved now and much jollier than before.

JANE

Sir, I have never imagined great gentlemen such as you relieving yourselves.

DR JOHNSON

It's just as well, Mrs Hogarth, that you do not imagine it, but we do indeed relieve ourselves with some regularity, if that is possible. Otherwise our brains would explode.

HOGARTH

Good gentlemen, please protect your brains for our sake and for the world's.

DR JOHNSON

You're too kind, sir. What are you painting today?

HOGARTH

In my head I'm working on dozens of scenes. On my easel I'm painting a scene for my new subscription series to be called "A Harlot's Progress."

GOLDSMITH

Was it inspired by our missing girl?

DR JOHNSON

Do we know for certain that she is a harlot?

HOGARTH

No to both questions. I can never remember where inspirations come from, and we do not know for certain that she is a harlot -- only that she seems to have made some unsavory acquaintances. I'm afraid Dr Goldsmith allowed her to be seduced by a certain Mother Needham, without realizing the consequences of that careless action.

GOLDSMITH

I am very sorry for any part I may have had in allowing that to happen. I hope that all of you will forgive me. I should stop drinking ale. Eventually I will. Perhaps tomorrow I might do that

JANE

I'm sure we all forgive you, sir. The main thing now is to find the poor girl.

GOLDSMITH

I wanted to go out with the search party but Dr Johnson wouldn't let me.

DR JOHNSON

Since I am commander-in-chief, assisted by Mr Hogarth, you must trust my judgement. I'm sure I'll have work for you to do before all this affair is over. But for now I must focus on my own grave responsibility as the commander.

DR JOHNSON

NO 18 COMMANNER IN CHIEF

I AM COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
WHICH GIVES ME THE BELIEF
THAT I'M IN CHARGE
I'M NOT SURE WHAT MY TOTAL MISSION IS
BUT I AM CERTAIN IT IS LARGE

I AM COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF
WHICH GIVES ME SOME RELIEF
KNOWING THAT THE REAL WORK
IS FOR OTHERS
I'M NOT SURE WHAT THEY'LL DO:
BUT I'M CERTAIN THEY'LL COME THROUGH --

FOR THEY RESPECT THEIR LEADER
AND EVEN HOLD HIM IN REAL AWE.
THEY KNOW WHAT HE'S THEIR LEADER
BY THE THRUST OF HIS JAW.
YES, I AM THEIR COMMANDER,
AND I WILL LEAD THEM TO DO THEIR VERY BEST
FOR I'VE ALWAYS KNOWN HOW TO TAKE A Test.

JANE

Dr Johnson, I've been horribly negligent toward you.
Would you like to have another pot of tea?

DR JOHNSON

Yes indeed. It's good for the soul. Tea's proper use
is to amuse the idle, relax the studious, and aid the
digestion of those who do not exercise and are
incapable of abstinence. I belong in all those
categories.

DR JOHNSON

NO 19 THE PROPER USE OF TEA.

NOTHING IS MORE WONDERFUL THAN TEA,
NOT EVEN HISTORY, NOT EVEN THEE.
LOVE IS A MYSTERY, BUT TEA IS REAL
NOTHING CAN CAPTURE HOW IT MAKES ME FEEL!

NOTHING IS MORE MAGICAL THAN TEA,
NOT EVEN WHISKEY, NOT EVEN ALE.
LOVE IS MYSTERIOUS BUT TEA CAN NEVER FAIL,
WITH TEA IN HIS BELLY A SAILOR WILL SAIL.

GOLDSMITH

Sir, what are you doing in your role as commander-in-chief?

DR JOHNSON

I am waiting, and I am in charge. I am engaged in watchful waiting. That is my role, and I will fulfill it with the same diligence that is evidenced by my scholarship and by the patience evidenced by the many years I've devoted to the construction of my encyclopedic Dictionary of the English language! A scholar must know how to wait, as must a leader, and both must also know how to POUNCE! I know how to pounce, and will pounce when the time comes!

HOGARTH

When will that time come to pounce?

DR JOHNSON

Soon, sir, very soon. Stay at the ready. Then we will pounce. All of us. And then I'll get back to my Dictionary.

JANE

God bless you, sir.

DR JOHNSON

Of course He will. Our cause is just, and I am the commander-in-chief! Admittedly co-commander, with Mr Hogarth, but all the same. I am commander-in-chief

ACT TWO SCENE 5

(Cut by lighting to: EXTERIOR,
NIGHT. -- FIELDING and GARRICK
remain lost in the countryside.)

GARRICK

Where are we, Mr Fielding?

FIELDING

Lost, Mr Garrick.

GARRICK

But we were lost two hours ago.

FIELDING

Well, we are wonderfully consistent. We are still
lost.

GARRICK

I take little comfort in our consistency. I am
exhausted beyond belief. My bones are aching. I hate
this countryside that you claim to love so much. I
hate being lost.

FIELDING

Then you will also hate hearing about Tom Jones.

GARRICK

Your novel?

FIELDING

My horse. Our horse -- the same horse which has nobly
been bearing your weight as well as mine, through all
this mud and muck. The horse I sometimes call Solitude
and sometimes call Tom Jones. Tom, too, is exhausted
beyond belief. I hope he is not dying. I fear he is.

GARRICK

That would be a catastrophe for all three of us! I
include Tom Jones, even though he is but a brute
animal. What is Mr Jones's immediate problem, other
than dying?

FIELDING

He is stuck in the mud. So are we, sir. I think we need to treat Tom as we did when we had to abandon his stable mate -- find a place to graze on the land, and wish him fond farewell.

GARRICK

But what of us? I'm not a country lad like you, I can't eat the grass to stay alive.

FIELDING

Oh, neither can I, I must admit. Well, let us find a way to return to town, to see what progress our comrades have made.

GARRICK

By walking all the way to London!

FIELDING

By hitching a ride from one of the farmers who graciously cart their cows milk each morning to town for sale to city dwellers -- people such as you who may never have seen a cow that was not in a book for children. The word 'hitch' can be found in the great Dictionary being authored by our friend Dr Samuel Johnson, whom we will see again very soon.

GARRICK

Not soon enough, sir. Wait, be careful where you're walking! Careful, careful. You're avoiding the mud puddles but you're about to step in ... Oh, too late, too late!

(FIELDING stumbles into the mud puddle, or something worse.)

FIELDING

Oh dammit, dammit, dammit, why am I here? Enmeshed in mud and muck!. I would rather be anywhere else, doing anything else.

GARRICK

Nothing more specific? Let your imagination fly sir!

FIELDING

I would rather be dancing!

GARRICK

Ah. Dancing with whom, sir?

FIELDING

With fine ladies, of course. Any of them.

GARRICK

I see no fine ladies here, sir. I see nothing but mud, and muck--and you, and me. I see no fine ladies, here in all this mud.

FIELDING

No fine ladies. Then we shall have to do the best with what we have... Shall we dance, sir?

GARRICK

Dance....Well,Why not. Indeed we'll dance. You may take my hand, sir. But let us first step over there a little, to free us of this mud.

FIELDING

Very wise,sir... There...Now we may begin.

FIELDING and GARRICK

NO 20 TWO MEN DANCING

TWO MEN DANCING, NOTHING ELSE TO DO
 TWO MEN DANCING, DANCING WITHOUT SHAME
 LET US HOPE THAT NO ONE SEES US
 WHO DOESN'T KNOW THAT DANCING'S JUST A GAME

TWO MEN DANCING, GLAD TO HAVE A FRIEND
 TWO MEN DANCING, GLAD NOT TO BE ALONE
 IF A FINE LADY SHOULD APPEAR RIGHT NOW I
 I WOULD DROP YOU LIKE A STONE.

FOR WE ARE JUST MAKING DO
 JUST GETTING THROUGH THE DAY
 WE ARE JUST MAKING DO
 IN AN ENGLISH SORT OF WAY.
 BUT OH WE'D LOVE TO SEE FINE LADIES
 WALK HERE ACROSS THIS MUDDY FIELD!
 A LADY NOW WOULD MAKE THIS ALL WORTHWHILE --
 AND CAUSE MY INNER PARTS TO FLOOD.

TWO MEN DANCING, SINGING OUT OF TUNE
 TWO MEN DANCING, NOTHING MORE TO SAY
 THAT'S NOT SURPRISING
 THAT'S THE ENGLISH WAY

ACT TWO

NO 21 TRANSITION

SCENE 6

(CUT TO: EXTERIOR,
MORNING. Outside of Mother
Needham's fortress-like bawdy
house. POPE and SWIFT plan their
strategy.)

POPE

Are you ready to mount your assault on Mother
Needham's?

SWIFT

No, I want to wait until this afternoon, when the
house has come fully alive. I'm just reminding myself
of the nature of my challenge. For the moment we
should return to our carriage and take a turn or two
around town. See the sights, as it were.

POPE

Are you nervous about trying to gain access to the
house?

SWIFT

Not at all. I shall just present myself and show my
seriousness of purpose.

POPE

I'd be willing to try again. Today is another day.

SWIFT

The woman regarded you as a worm, or so you said.

SWIFT (Continued)

POPE

I'm not a worm.

SWIFT

I agree. You are not a worm. I thought we had settled the issue yesterday.

POPE

It keeps coming up.

SWIFT

I didn't bring it up. Who brought it up?

POPE

The woman brings it up.

SWIFT

The woman is not here.

POPE

She brings it up in my mind. I can't expunge her loathsome spirit from my brain.

SWIFT

Let's take a jaunt and see the sights. That should clear your brain and give you a fresh outlook on the world.

ACT TWO SCENE 7

(INTERIOR OF A CARRIAGE, LATE MORNING. POPE AND SWIFT)

(THE TWO GENTLEMEN WATCH THE PASSING SCENE AS THE CARRIAGE PASSES THROUGH THE STRAND, HAYMARKET, AND SURROUNDING AREAS. THEY SAY 'LOOK, LOOK OVER THERE!' -- AND WHAT THEY CALL ATTENTION TO ARE WEALTHY GENTLEMEN DANDIES, OBVIOUS PROSTITUTES OF VARYING FINANCIAL CONDITIONS, VERY POOR PEOPLE, DRUNK PEOPLE IMBIBING FROM THE GIN BOTTLES IN THEIR HANDS, MOTHERS SO DRUNK THEY CAN NOT HOLD ON TO THEIR BABIES, AND PICKPOCKETS IN THE ACTUAL ACT OF ROBBING FROM THEIR VICTIMS. BUT FINALLY THE TRIP IS OVER. [THE SCENE MAY BE ACCOMPLISHED PERHAPS BY VIDEO OR SLIDES OF HOGARTH ENGRAVINGS, ETC.]

POPE AND SWIFT

NO 22 LONDON ITS WORST

LONDON AT ITS VERY WORST
IS NOT A PRETTY SIGHT
ALL THE PIPES HAVE BURST
THE TOWN IS MUD AND BLIGHT.

LONDON AT ITS DARKEST ...
IS NOT A SOURCE OF LIGHT.
THE ROADS AND LANES ARE CURSED
THE DAY IS DEAD THE REST IS DREADFUL NIGHT.

SWIFT

I think we've seen enough, my friend. Let us take some lunch and then get back to Mother Needham's.

SWIFT (Continued)

Yes, you have work to do, since you are not a worm.
You're not,
are we agreed?

POPE

We are agreed!

ACT TWO SCENE 8

(EXTERIOR, AFTERNOON, OUTSIDE OF
MOTHER NEEDHAM'S MANSION)

MOTHER NEEDHAM

NO 23 SIREN SONG

(the ladies of Mother Needham's house
sing and dance to entice customers.)

COME VISIT US, DEARIE,
WE WON'T HURT YOU AT ALL,
WE WILL MAKE THINGS BETTER
WE WILL BE YOUR DEBTOR
FOR THE PLEASURE YOU WILL GIVE TO US.

COME PLAY WITH US, SWEETIE,
SO WE CAN BLEND OURSELVES
MEND OURSELVES WITH YOU,
WE WILL BE YOUR DEBTOR
FOR THE TREASURE YOU WILL GIVE TO US.

FOR ALL AROUND US PEOPLE LIE
BUT NOT YOU NOT YOU
YOU WILL PAY JUST WHAT YOU SAID YOU WOULD
WHEN YOU SAID THAT YOU'D ALWAYS BE TRUE.

MOTHER NEEDHAM

NO 24 PARADE OF GIRLS

LET ME INTRODUCE MY LOVELY LADIES
OUT OF MODESTY I WILL OMIT MYSELF [COQUETTISHLY]
EXCEPT FOR THE MOST EXTRAORDINARY MAN
WHO CAN OFFER EXTRAORDINARY PAY.
THIS HERE IS DOLLY, AS PRETTY AS JAPAN,
AND HERE IS JANE, GIVES QUITE A THRILL THEY SAY
AND THE GENTLEMEN SAY SHE'S GREAT IN THE HAY
AND NOW WHO'S HERE BUT ESTHER
AND DON'T LET YOUR PASSION JUST FESTER

MOTHER NEEDHAM (Continued)

GIVE THIS LOVELY CUMQUAT A LAY
 I HAVE OTHER LADIES (YOU CAN BET YOUR LIFE)
 AND EVEN THE LEAST WILL RELEASE YOUR STRIFE
 SO PAY YOUR MONEY AND TAKE YOUR CHOICE
 SPEAK UP GENTLEMEN, I NEED TO HEAR YOUR VOICE

POPE

Dean Swift, have you become nervous yet?

SWIFT

No, I told you I wasn't nervous this morning, and
 nothing has changed.

POPE

What has changed is that the time for ACTION has
 arrived.

SWIFT

I am not nervous.

POPE

You have not yet seen the woman or her girls.

ACT TWO SCENE 9

(SWIFT walking to the house and
 being admitted by the spiteful
 woman referenced by Pope.)

WOMAN I.e., MOTHER NEEDHAM

Which of our girls do you wish to see?

SWIFT

I wish to see them all.

SWIFT (Continued)

WOMAN

You want to see them ALL? I have 17 girls here now. You don't have sufficient stamina for that.

SWIFT

How do you know? I'll be the decider of that.

WOMAN

Ultimately the girls will decide, but you're right: it's not for me to judge. It's for you to prove.

SWIFT

Good. Bring me your girls.

WOMAN

No, sir. Many of them are sleeping.

SWIFT

It's three o'clock in the afternoon now, madam.

WOMAN

But many of the girls were working until dawn. There was a party. It was a very successful party indeed, judged by the broken champagne bottles. I'll show you some girls. [She beckons to a servant, who immediately ushers into the room three girls of different ages and descriptions.] Which of these beautiful ladies pleases you the most?

SWIFT

None of them pleases me.

WOMAN

I can not imagine why you are displeased. I showed three of my loveliest ladies.

WOMAN (Continued)

SWIFT

Keep trying.

WOMAN

I'll show you three more, sir.

(She beckons again to the servant, who removes the first three and ushers in three more young ladies.)

SWIFT

These also won't do. Not that I want to hurt their feelings.

WOMAN

No worries, sir. Mr Swift, is it? My girls have no feelings. They are steeled. Feelings would detract from their work. Perhaps for an extra remuneration I could have one of the girls summoned who is still asleep. What sort of young lady does the gentlemen prefer? What hair color, height, age, bosoms, and so forth? What sort of girl would you most like to inspect?

SWIFT

Please bring to me a teenaged blond girl newly arrived from the country. She is known as Henny or Henrietta.

WOMAN

Sir, don't dare to play with me. Are you a friend of that crooked little worm who came asking for her?

SWIFT

Yes, madam, he is my friend -- but he is not really a worm.

SWIFT (Continued)

WOMAN

That is your opinion, and you are wrong. You know nothing about worms. He is a bent little worm and you are an over-fed buffoon. Get out of my house at once, or my servant will have our Mr Dollar, an animal, throw you into the gutter. Now! Out! Out!

ACT TWO SCENE 10

(SWIFT and POPE back in their carriage.)

POPE

What did she say to you, exactly?

SWIFT

She said 'Out, out!'

POPE

And what did you do?

SWIFT

I got out. It seemed the prudent thing to do. She threatened to have me thrashed by some brute in her employ, a Mr. Dollar or some such. Mr Dollar, indeed.

POPE

Very wise of you. I would have done the same thing myself... In fact I already did... After that woman called me a worm I no longer wished to remain in her company. So I got out, just as you did. Mr Dollar would not have provided you good conversation.

ACT TWO SCENE 11

(CUT TO INTERIOR, AFTERNOON,
HOGARTH'S STUDIO. THEY ARE ALL
BACK TOGETHER NOW.)

HOGARTH

It's a pleasure to have all of you gentlemen back here again, safe and sound.

FIELDING

Our horses are dead, mine and Mr Garrick's, from the stress they were subjected to.

POPE

Dean Swift and I also were subjected to stresses and taunts, which I would rather not discuss, though they called into question not just my personal honour but that of this entire group.

SWIFT

Mr Pope thinks we should make the woman pay for these slurs. I cannot truthfully say I disagree with him.

GARRICK

My horse is in a field somewhere, maybe dead or maybe just enjoying the guilty pleasure of eating some strange man's grass. I know how he feels and what he's thinking: I could take his part in a play. Maybe he'll be taken in by the farmer there, and live a very long life. I hope so.

FIELDING

Or maybe he'll be whipped unmercifully for trespassing. Would you like to play the part of someone being whipped unmercifully?

HOGARTH

In any event, my sincere thanks for the efforts you have made, however frustrating they may have been for each of you.

HOGARTH (Continued)

DR JOHNSON

As commander I add my own thanks, but I must offer you also a new challenge, since we have not yet accomplished our mission. It seems clear now that the girl Henny is being held somewhere in the house of this so-called Mother Needham. To fulfill our mission our entire group must storm that house tonight, and stealthily retrieve the missing girl. We will strike in dead of night. Be ready to leave here at midnight. We must persevere. Great works are achieved not by strength but by perseverance. We will persevere, and we will prevail!

ACT TWO SCENE 12A

(CUT TO EXTERIOR, DEAD OF NIGHT. THE HUSHED GROUP IS BEHIND BUSHES AT THE SIDE OF MOTHER NEEDHAM'S HOUSE.)

DR JOHNSON

Many things difficult to design prove easy to performance. Our task tonight is exactly like that. We simply need to work together cunningly to surprise our foe and extricate the girl. Do you have any questions?

SWIFT

Just how will we do this, sir?

DR JOHNSON

Excellent question, Dean Swift, but since that is more a question of tactics than of strategy, I will ask Mr Hogarth, my co-commander, to give you your instructions.

HOGARTH

We will divide our efforts as follows. At three o'clock precisely Dr Johnson and Mr Pope will appear at the front of the house making noise and commotion and strange and frightening looks. Mr Fielding and Mr Garrick will be hiding at either side of the establishment, serving as lookouts, and getting the much-needed rest they earned on their recent journeys through the mud and brambles of our lovely English countryside. The remainder of us -- myself and Dean Swift and Dr Goldsmith -- will break into a second-storey window at the rear of the building, and surreptitiously make our entrance into the house.

GOLDSMITH

How will we get up to the window, sir?

HOGARTH

It is you who will do all the getting up, Mr Goldsmith. Except for great quantities of ale you consume, you hardly ever eat a meal, so you are slight enough to be hoisted up to the window by Dean Swift and myself. This is a good plan because you are the only gentleman in our party to have been a regular visitor to the establishment.

HOGARTH (Continued)

So your mission is simplicity itself: get in, get the girl, and get out. Then we can all go back to my house, where Mrs Hogarth will us a meal worthy of marauding conquerors, which is what we will have been. Let's go to our stations. At three o'clock we strike!

GOLDSMITH HOGARTH POPE SWIFT
& JOHNSON

NO 25 QUIET! WE MUST SURPRISE THEM

QUIET! WE MUST SURPRISE THEM!

WE WILL LEAVE THEM THEM IN THEIR BEDS UNTIL WE RISE
THEM!

THEY WILL FALL UPON THEIR HEADS WHEN WE SURPRISE THEM
AND MAKE A NOISE TO WAKE THE VERY DEAD!

ACT TWO SCENE 12B

(THE SURPRISE PARTY)

(HENRY FIELDING, hunkered down in the bushes at one side of the house.)

(DAVID GARRICK, hunkered down in the bushes at the other side of the house.)

(HOGARTH, SWIFT, and GOLDSMITH at the rear of the house. They are trying to position the ladder properly but are having difficulty doing so without making noise.)

(DR JOHNSON and MR POPE at the front of the house. The time now is three o'clock.)

POPE

It is time raise the dead. It is time to make holy hell.

[They use whistles and noisemakers to make extra noise at the same time as Dean Swift presses happily on the house chimes. Their enjoyment intensifies when MOTHER NEEDHAM finally opens the door, in a state of shock. They make horrible faces, and DR JOHNSON exaggerates his normal blinks and twitches. POPE imitates Johnson.]

POPE

You want to see a worm in action? Here's a worm in action!

(MOTHER NEEDHAM faints outrageously, almost in a death spiral.)

ACT TWO SCENE 12C

(CUT TO EXTERIOR, NIGHT, THE REAR OF MOTHER NEEDHAM'S MANSION. GOLDSMITH, SWIFT, and HOGARTH, are struggling mightily with a tall ladder. SWIFT gives ups trying to climb the ladder and instead stays below to attempt to steady it. GOLDSMITH mounts the ladder, followed by HOGARTH, who steadies and pushes him.)

GOLDSMITH

(at the window)

The window is locked.

HOGARTH

Of course the window is locked. Break it!

GOLDSMITH

I can't break the window. It's private private property. Breaking it would be against the law.

HOGARTH

LJust go ahead and break the window. Everything we're doing is illegal. That's why it is called breaking-and-entering.

GOLDSMITH

I can't do an illegal act -- other than public drunkenness.

SWIFT

(calling up from below)

Break it, and break it now, or I'll break your head. Break the damned thing!

(GOLDSMITH breaks the window and enters the house.)

GOLDSMITH

(loudly whispering to the others below)

GOLDSMITH (Continued)

Victory! We are in! Have the horses ready to carry the girl and all of the rest of us back to Hogarth's house.

ACT TWO Scene 13A

(MID-MORNING, HOGARTH'S STUDIO.)

GARRICK

Dr Johnson, what do you think about our little adventure rescuing that sweet little girl?

DR JOHNSON

Think? Don't get me started on what I'm thinking! We don't have time in the day, or the week or the month, for me to tell you what I'm thinking!

FIELDING

Then what are you feeling, sir?

DR JOHNSON

I am divinely exhilarated! I am thrilled as I have not been thrilled since I finished writing the entries for the letter 'E' in my dictionary. I am ecstatic -- which is one of the 'E' words.

SWIFT

And let's have a special toast for Mr Goldsmith, who has become the greatest second-storey man in all of England, after a little boost from his friends.

HOGARTH

Huzzah!

POPE

Nolly Goldsmith has gone from being a goat to being the hero of the hour.

HOGARTH

Although our ale has not yet been brought upstairs from below, let us go ahead now with our toast to Mr Goldsmith: Hip-hip [all: Hooray], Hip-hip [all: Hooray], Hip-Hip [all: Hooray.] Jane, where are the gentlemen's pints of good English ale?

JANE

It's only mid-morning, but I am having a servant bring them up!

DR JOHNSON

Don't forget my pot of tea, please. By the way, what happened to the rescued girl?

JANE

I haven't forgotten your pot of tea, sir. And the girl is downstairs toiling at honest work in my kitchen to earn her keep in this household and her honour in civil society. She seems very happy. In fact, it is my understanding that our valued footman Ralph Lozon, is smitten with. He has offered her a proposal of marriage, and our Henny has accepted

DR JOHNSON

I'm glad. Dear Madam Jane, you led us correctly: Rescuing the girl was the right thing to do. Bring her to us now... Ah, she is here already. IT IS A MIRACLE!

ACT TWO SCENE 13B

(HENNY arrives with the promised ale and tea.)

DR JOHNSON

Miss Henny, tell us your thoughts, please. I'm sure we would all love to hear the thoughts of such a pretty young girl who has overcome so much. If you please, my dear. Tell me your thoughts.

HENNY

Yes, sir, if you wish.

DR JOHNSON

Are you the same old girl we knew before?

HENNY

No sir. I am entirely new.

NO 26 I AM ENTIRELY NEW

I'M NEW ALL OVER NOW
 NEW TO ME, NEW TO THEE, NEW TO THE WORLD,
 I'M AN APPLE TREE, I'M A BUMBLE BEE,
 I'M A FLAG UNFURLED.

I'M ALL IN CLOVER NOW
 GLAD AS RAIN, GLAD AS SUN, GLAD AS A BABY GIRL.
 I'M UNSURPASSED, I'M A CANNON BLAST,
 I'M A TOP TO BE WHIRLED.

I'M IN LOVE AND MY HEART IS MORE THAN JUST WILLING
 RATHER THAN DROWNING I'M ABLE TO SWIM ASHORE
 I'M IN LOVE, YET MY HEAD HAS RETURNED TO ME
 I SEE LIKE I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYTHING EVER BEFORE.

HOGARTH

Let us toast again -- to our new friend HENNY,
 to Mr Goldsmith and to all of us, including especially
 our honorable friend the great Dr Samuel Johnson, who
 led us to victory. [HOGARTH leads them in another
 toast.]

POPE

I can't describe the joy I felt when old Mother
 Needham collapsed to the ground upon seeing the
 fearsome faces
 of myself and Dr Johnson. Especially Dr Johnson.

DR JOHNSON

Mr Hogarth, none of our great victory would have been
 possible without your ideas, inspiration, and general
 direction. I thank you, sir. I have not in my whole
 life had so much fun as I have had in since this
 adventure began. Mr Hogarth, I know I speak for us all
 when I say we need many more such secret and thrilling
 escapades, for our mental health. Can you think of any
 crimes to be solved or prevented?

HOGARTH

Yes, sir. I can think of dozens. There are robbers, pimps, thieves, murderers and fraudsters all over London! They are everywhere.

DR JOHNSON

Are there! That is excellent news. Make us a comprehensive list, Mr Hogarth, so that we will be able to spring back into action! What fun, what fun!... Our company of sleuths and adventurers must be known as 'Billy's Boys' to honor the creativity of our friend who convened this group, the great artist Billy Hogarth... But in the meantime, I needs must get back to my dictionary. I am about to begin work on words beginning with the letter 'K', a letter which is one of my very favourites.

SWIFT

I understand why you like the 'K' words, Dr Johnson. They are among my favourites too. Which ones do you like best? Do you like the word 'kill'?

DR JOHNSON and DEAN SWIFT huddle together to discuss the 'K' words among them. We hear the discussion focus on the words 'kill', 'killer,' and 'killing' until we can no longer hear what they are saying.

NO 27 reprise, LONDON GENTLEMEN

DR JOHNSON AND THE COMPANY

BUT OH! ON SOME DISTANT SUNBURNT SHORE
THEY WILL FIND A WRONG THAT
MUST BE RECTIFIED,
A TRUTH THAT MUST BE RECOGNIZED,
A CAUSE THAT CALLS FOR WAR!
THEN LONDON GENTS WILL
RISE TO THE OCCASION!
RISE TO THE OCCASION!
AND DO THEIR VERY, VERY BEST AND MORE

(THE END)
(Curtain and bows)

(IF POSSIBLE, THERE IS A LOBBY
DISPLAY OF REPRODUCTIONS OF A
NUMBER OF HOGARTH'S FAMOUS ART
WORKS, SUCH AS 'A HARLOT'S
PROGRESS,' 'THE RAKE'S PROGRESS,
'SELF-PORTRAIT,' etc.)