

JONAH-MAN JAZZ

A Cantata-Musical for Unison Voices and Piano
Words and Music by Michael Hurd

Chorus

[1] Nineveh city was a city of sin
The jazzin' and a-jivin' made a terrible din
Beat groups playin' a rock and roll
And the Lord when he heard it said, "Bless my soul!"

The people wouldn't listen, danced night and day
No time for work, no time to pray
They went on dancin' by day and night
'Til the Lord he said, "Well, this ain't right!"

The Lord he pondered a subtle plan
He looked around for a righteous man
Saw Jonah sittin' 'neath a pineapple tree
And the Lord he said, "That's the man for me."

"A righteous man that I can trust
"To raise this city from out the dust
"The man that's sittin' 'neath the pineapple tree
"I'm certain sure, sure, sure is the man for me."

Spoken

And the Lord spake unto Jonah with a loud voice, saying:

Chorus

[2] Jonah, Jonah, listen to me Jonah
Listen while I tell you of a plan I have in mind
A city dancin', dancin' and romancin'
All too obviously to virtue must be blind

Take my warnin', early in the mornin'
As early as you feel inclined
Shout to the people, shout from every steeple
Tell them the Judgement Bell has chimed

Tell them to stop their laughter or in the Great Hereafter
What's to come is all too sure
For I will smite 'em, ad infinitum
If they will not turn to me once more

Spoken

But Jonah feared to do as the Lord commanded. He turned instead
and ran. He ran until he came to the sea. There he found a boat and
a man standing by. And to that man he said:

Chorus

[3] I need a boat, man, that'll carry me away
And how I hope man, she's sailin' today
You can see I got not suitcase, I'm travellin' light
Ain't got no reason for stayin' the night

You don't even have to tell me where we're sailing to
Just as long as we're sailin', sailin', sailin' into the blue

Cast off that rope, man, manhandle those oars
You name the price, man, an' the money is yours
Quit your delayin', give your orders to the crew
And take me sailin' over the deep blue sea with you
So help me, take me, sailin' over the deep blue sea with you

Spoken

And so the boat set sail, and Jonah thought he would escape the eye
of the Lord. But as they sailed, and night drew on, a strange thing
came to pass.

Chorus

[4] The waves grew high, the ship began to roll
The wind blew strong and the storm bell toll
The sailors muttered, "There must be a jinx on board."
The rain beat down, the lightning flashed
The thunder roared and the topmast crashed
The sailors muttered, "There sure is a jinx on board."
Soon all the sailors are decided
That someone in the passengers or crew
Had brought down an evil luck upon them
So there was only one thing left to do
They all drew lots and it fell out
That Jonah lost and they gave a shout
"The jinx is Jonah, just look what he has drawn!"
"Take that man Jonah, and throw him overboard!"

Spoken

And that is exactly what they did.

Solo

[5] When Jonah sank into the sea he closed his eyes and prayed
"Oh Lord I'm very sorry that your word I've disobeyed
"If you will only come and save me I will do as you command
"Instead of treading water let me tread upon the land"

Chorus

Go down, Jonah, deep in the ocean
Go down, Jonah, far from the shore
Go down, Jonah, deep in the ocean
Go down, Jonah, far from the shore

Solo

When Jonah had repented him the Lord he didn't fail
Although the sea was tropical he sent along a whale
It promptly swam right up to Jonah and its mouth was open wide
Before he'd even noticed it poor Jonah was inside

Chorus

Go down, Jonah, deep in the ocean
Go down, Jonah, far from the shore
Go down, Jonah, deep in the ocean
Go down, Jonah, far from the shore

Solo

And after swimming very hard for three days if not four
The whale came near to Nineveh and ground on the shore
Whereat it gave a little shudder as its jaws were widely flung
And Jonah came a-strollin' out upon its mighty tongue

Chorus

Go down, Jonah, deep in the ocean
Go down, Jonah, far from the shore
Go down, Jonah, deep in the ocean
Go down, Jonah, safe once again on the shore

Spoken

And Jonah kept his promise. He warned the people of Nineveh that the
Lord was angry with their evil ways. And because they had seen him
step out of the belly of the whale, they believed what he said and did
as the Lord commanded. And when he saw it, the Lord was pleased
and would not smite them. Then Jonah and the people rose up and
said:

Chorus

[6] We had a wonderful party and Jonah had a whale of a time
But now that we've really repented everythin's goin' to be fine
We let our hair down in plenty and boy we had the blues on the run
But even though we have repented our dancin' days ain't done

Dancin' in praise of the Lord, singin' his praises all night
Spreadin' the gospel word, everythin's turned out right
Jonah's amazin' adventure inside that mighty fish
Brought us to our salvation, brought us our dearest wish

So sing out the gospel music, sing out the gospel shout
Sing out the new song, the me and the you song
Tell the whole world, tell the whole world
Tell the whole world just what it's all about

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PRODIGAL

A Cantata in Popular Style for Unison Voices and Piano
Words and Music by Michael Hurd

Chorus

[7] Many years ago in a country far away
There lived a wealthy man
And that you may know
Listen how we tell you how the story first began
His sons were mighty fellows who laboured night and day
And did his will from morn to night
With very little pay
For he had made a solemn promise
That one day, given health,
They would inherit all his wealth

It was not to be. Things were not to work out quite
According to the plan
And that you may see
Listen while we justify the ways of God to man
It was the younger brother declared with all his might
He'd take his share immediately
He said it was his right
For he was very, very eager
To take a little ride
And go explore the world outside

Chorus

[8] I want to go the big bad city
Want to go where the lights are bright
I want to go where the girls are pretty
And there's plenty of fun at night
I want to go where the grass is greener
And there's nothing to do but play
I want to go to the big bad city
And I'm packing my bags today

Don't want to listen to your objections
You can keep all your good advice
And as for voting in the elections
I won't do it at any price
I kiss goodbye to my civic duties
I won't listen to what you say
And tho' you register your objections
I will do it my own sweet way

You may think my action inscrutable
I do not mind
All I know is life is too beautiful
To be confined
So I've decided to let my hair down
I've decided to play it cool
And tho' your noses you all may stare down
And consider me just a fool
I won't abandon my great ambition
I will stick to it come what may
I'm going off to the big bad city
And I fully intend

Yes my friend, I fully intend to stay

Chorus

[8] In the city, free and easy
Even though the life was sleazy
He insisted he was having a good time
There he lived a life of pleasure
Spending money at his leisure
Everybody said, "He's having a good time!"

For you could see him playing bingo
Every night and day
He had learned the lingo
And knew exactly what to say
And then he started backing horses
Didn't stop to count his losses
"Never mind," he said, "I'm having a terribly good time."

He was proud and he was haughty
Frankly he was rather naughty
Yet it seemed he was having a good time
Tho' he couldn't hold his liquor
Growing sick and then much sicker
It was his idea of having a good time

He spent his money with abandon
More and more and more
Never even noticed
That he was growing very poor
Oh he was foolish, he was silly
Going downhill, willy-nilly
Coming to the end of having a terribly good time

Chorus

[10] Down and out in the city
People pass you by
Now you know who your friends really are
Life is growing colder you feel older
The life you led has cut you down to size
You thought you played it pretty cool
And now at last you're forced to realise
You've been a fool

Down and out in the city
No-one hears your cry
Now you know what despair is all about
When you hit the bottom, you're forgotten
It's far too late to try and make amends
You can't undo the things you've done
The trouble you are facing never ends
It's just begun

Down and out in the city
In the dirt you lie
Now you know that your luck has run out
One thing is for certain
It's the curtain
There is no future now you've lost your friends
From now it's downhill all the way
This is the moment when the music ends
And you must pay

Chorus

[11] Why did I leave the house of my father?
Heedlessly throwing the future away?
Why did I squander all that he gave me
Burning the candle night and day?
What is there left but pain and confusion?
Pleasure has turned to disillusion
I have rejected, scorned and neglected

All that my father ever had to say

Why did I dream new pasture was greener?
Why did I think it was better than old?
Why did I seek the end of the rainbow
Thinking to find the pot of gold?
Now I am sadder, wiser and lonely
Pinning my faith on one thing only
Humble and weary, seeing more clearly
I am returning as the lamb
Returns at last to the fold

Chorus

[12] No use denying I've been a fool
Disobeyed all you taught me
What will you answer, what will you say?
Can you forget and forgive what I've done to you?
No use in sighing, life is a school
Bitter the lesson it taught me
What is the answer, say how I may
Honour the debt and repay you by serving you

Spoken Solo

But his father did not reject him. He knew the prodigal had learned his lesson and that a new life would begin for them all:

Chorus

[13] Kill the fatted calf
Sing out in jubilation
Don't do things by half
For this is the day for a celebration
Lift your voice in song
(You do not mind, now do ya?)
Raise the roof the whole day long
With shouts of Hallelujah

Make the day a gay and a jolly day
Fill it full of pleasure
Treat it as an extra Bank Holiday
Enjoy it at your leisure
Make a joyous sound
Welcoming home the rebel
What was lost at last is found
And torn from the grip of the very devil

Sing and dance and shout
Tell the people what the news is
Let it all hang out
For such joy as ours
Doesn't need excuses
Come and have a ball
Set aside your labours
Open house to one and all
But don't disturb the neighbours!

Take your partner down to the barbecue
Where the grub is grilling
Even though you've had more than just a few
To show that you are willing
Join the merry dance
Savour the situation
Take this one and only chance
To raise your voice in a great ovation

Chorus

[14] It was long ago. Even so
The same thing could be happening today
Someone that you know
Someone being foolish
In the old familiar way

It's really very easy, it doesn't take you long
To miss your footing on the way and end up in the wrong
But if you realise your error
Admit it from the heart
And then resolve that come what may
You'll make a brand new start

Spoken

That's all it takes!

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ROOSTER RAG

A Cantata in Popular Style for Unison Voices and Piano
Words and Music by Michael Hurd

Chorus

[15] Once upon a time there was a widow
She was poor and life was very hard
She had three pigs and a cow upon a meadow
And a rooster struttin' proudly in the yard
His name was Chanticleer, what a handsome fella
It was Chanticleer, monarch of them all
His name was Chanticleer, red and black and yella feathers
See him standin', crowin' on the wall

Now in that farmyard there were hens a-plenty
They were red an' brown an' neat an' trim
The rooster ruled the roost yet evidently
They all admired and worshipped him
His name was Chanticleer, what a handsome fella
It was Chanticleer, monarch of them all
His name was Chanticleer, red and black and yella feathers
See him standin', crowin' on the wall

Among those hens there was a very beauty
She was fair, her name was Pertelote
She was his loving wife, it was her duty
To make his bed and brush his morning coat
For he was Chanticleer, what a handsome fella
It was Chanticleer, monarch of them all
His name was Chanticleer, red and black and yella feathers
See him standin', crowin' on the wall

Widow

And so the days went by and each morning, as Chanticleer surveyed his little kingdom, Pertelote would sing to him:

Pertelote

[16] Every time I lay an egg I think of you
You're the only one that I adore
When I hear you singin' in the silence of the night
I know that you are heraldin' the dawn
Every time I hatch a chick I think of you
Just for you I'd hatch a dozen more
You're the early bird with whom I love to share a worm
And if I might presume, an ear of corn
Morning', afternoon and night I think of you, I do

Widow

And then all the other hens would gather round her and repeat her song:

Chorus

Every time we lay an egg we think of you
You're the only one that we adore
When we hear you singin' in the silence of the night
We know that you are heraldin' the dawn
Every time we hatch a chick we think of you
Just for you we'd hatch a dozen more
You're the early bird with whom we love to share a worm

And if we might presume, an ear of corn
Morning', afternoon and night we think of you, we do

Widow

One morning, however, Chanticleer staggered from his bed, bleary-eyed and haggard.

Chorus

He was a worried man.

Chanticleer

[17] I had a terrible dream woke in the night
And my heart went pit a pat, pit a pat
I am sure there's a meaning implied
When you're dreaming like that
I had a singular fright, tried to escape
But my legs turned into stone, into stone
I was dizzy with fear and my voice shrivelled into a moan

There in my dream I saw a red face
A grimace and a chase
That was closing upon me
Sharp pointed teeth and glittering eyes
That said I was the prize
That was ripe for the slaughter

Chorus

Oh what a horrible chill, right to the marrow
My blood ran cold as ice, cold as ice
I was caught in a terrible vice

Widow

But Pertelote simply smiled and said:

Pertelote

[18] Oh what a beautiful dream
No need to panic or to call for aid
For it stands to reason
There is no reason you should be afraid

Chorus

Oh what a wonderful thing
You've had a vision and a prophecy
And in the future
There is a future that looks good to me

Pertelote

Dreams have a meaning that's opposite
And a fright's quite all right
Means that the future is very bright
Fortune's waiting round the corner
Oh what a prospect in view
Something is coming that will make you glad
And that is the meaning of
The meaning of the dream you've had

Widow

Chanticleer felt much better when he heard these cheering words, for he knew that Pertelote had a habit of being right about such matters. And so, when he met a rather foxy-looking gentleman with a very red cunning face he simply said, "Good morning" and thought no ill. But the foxy gentleman tapped him on the shoulder and said:

Mr Fox

[19] Do me a favour won't ya, sing me a song
You've got a voice in a thousand honey
I'm all anticipation, I can feel somethin' comin' out of the blue

Chorus

It's goin' ta take ya, an' it's goin' ta make a star out of you

You're for the big time, don't ya know you'll go far
You've got the looks to go with it, honey
The world will be your oyster I'm not exaggeratin'

Chorus

Don't be afraid, I know a talent when I see a talent
You've got it made

Mr Fox

I'll be your agent, your publicity I'll build
Take my advice and baby, you could even sing in op'ra

Chorus

He's got the contacts, yes, an' he knows the score
This is a chance in a million honey
The tide is turnin' for ya
Look at the future comin', ain't it a peach
Whatever dreams you may have dreamed
Lie within reach

Widow

Chanticleer blushed and flapped his wings. It was true, he had a fine voice. Everybody said so. If others could win fame and fortune and glitter, why shouldn't he? So he closed his eyes, stretched out his neck and began to sing:

Chanticleer

O, for the wings, for the wings of a d ...

Widow

And the fox grabbed him.

Chorus

[20] There's a thief in the night an' he's got no pity
There's a thief an' he's comin' after you
There's a thief in the night, and he's in the city
He has plans for me and plans for you
He's sniffin' around
Bolt all the doors and windows
Pawin' the ground
Put out the light, don't make a sound
Just pull the blankets over
Who do you think you're kiddin'?
Closer, closer, he's getting closer

There's a thief in the night, an' it just ain't funny
There's a thief in the night, an' he's comin' after you
There's a thief in the night, an' he don't want no money
Cos he knows just what he has to do
He's liftin' the latch
Don't let him know you're rattled
Slippin' the catch
Put up a fight, don't strike a match
Check your insurance cover
Even tho' you're hidden
Closer, closer, he's gettin' closer
There's a thief in the night
Here he comes

Widow

Off went the fox, dragging Chanticleer behind him. Off ran the villagers and the hens, in hot pursuit, but the fox outstripped them all. At last he paused to take breath and Chanticleer, realising that this would be his last chance, whispered to him as best he could:

Chanticleer

[21] If I were you, do you know what I'd do?
I'd sing and dance and laugh and shout
I'd point my triumph out, if I were you
If I'd my way, do you know what I'd do?

I'd stand and shout defiance at
Each brick and stone and bat
If I'd my way
If I felt that I couldn't stand their nonsense
I'd look them in the eye and then
I'd stare them out of countenance
If I felt that, that is exactly what I'd do

Chorus

If I'd the luck to have your kind of pluck
I'd let them know just what was what
I wouldn't care a jot, if I'd your pluck
If I'd the nerve and had your kind of verve
I'd make it plain as plain could be
They'd never capture me, if I'd the nerve
If I could be, like you, safe as houses
I'd sneer at them from night 'til morn
I'd openly admit my scorn
That's how I'd box if I were such a clever fox

Widow

This time it was the fox who fell into the trap. He opened his mouth
and Chanticleer escaped onto the highest branch of a nearby tree.
And nothing the fox could do or say would make him budge. Of
course in the end Chanticleer was rescued by his friends and the fox
crept back to his lair, furious at the way things had turned out. And
that is the end of the story, except of course for the moral:

Chorus

[22] Beware, take care
And don't give house room to flattery
Beware, take care
When you feel pride swelling up inside
You may be sure that you're about
To sign away discretion
And you're climbing up the ladder
On the danger list
This is the moment to beware

Beware, take care
And don't give in to cajolerie
Beware, take care
When you feel strongly
You can't be wrong
You may be sure that you're about
To come and awful cropper
And you're climbing up the ladder
On the danger list
This is the moment to beware

Beware, take care
And don't give way to your vanity
Beware, take care
When you are quite sure you must be right
That's when you are about to drop a dreadful clanger
And you're climbing up the ladder
On the danger list
This is the moment to beware

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SWINGIN' SAMSON

A Cantata in Popular Style for Unison Voices and Piano
Words and Music by Michael Hurd

Chorus

[23] Samson was a hero in the days of old
The spirit of the Lord had made him bold
The muscles in his arm stood out like iron bands
And he had big hands

He battled with a lion, me oh my
He smote the Philistines both hip and thigh
With the jawbone of an ass he turned them on and then
Slew a thousand men

He let himself be led and bound with rope
The Philistines were filled with joy and hope
He gave a little shudder and the rope just melted away
There was no method of restrainin'
All the mighty power that lay within
The hair upon his head and chin
For that was where the secret of his fitness lay
Or so they say

Narrator

But although Samson was a strong man, he had one little weakness:
he liked a pretty girl. And so, when the Philistines found out, they
began to search for a likely candidate. They did not have far to look.

Chorus

[24] When Miss Delilah goes walkin' in the morning air
You see the people who are shoppin' in the market square
Abandon all their tittle tattle
Turn around and stare like cattle
For she is so fair!
Lovely Delilah doesn't take a scrap of notice
Holds her head up high
She doesn't hear the cries of wonder, doesn't wonder why
There is a palpitating murmur and a general sigh
Upon the air, Delilah fair!

When Miss Delilah goes a-saunterin' along the street
There isn't anyone that anyone would rather meet
And pass the time or have a chat with
Every man's a willin' captive
For she is so sweet
Lovely Delilah has a string or two
Or three or four to every beau
She doesn't give her approbation but she don't say no
And that's the reason she's the woman every man wants to know
She's the elite, the super treat

Delilah has a beauty that can drive you mad
A subtle kind of beauty like a summer day
Old and young adore her
Fall upon their knees before her
Raise their voices to implore her
Just to look their way

For she is pretty, she is witty
She has big brown eyes
And several features quite remarkable in shape and size
And that's exactly where they say
The fatal fascination lies

When Miss Delilah goes a-walkin'
All the fellers start talkin'
Even whistlin' and shoutin'
As she takes her little outin'
For she is the sweetest, neatest girl in town

Narrator

In next to no time, Samson and Delilah had become real friends. And
soon Samson declared he would do anything for her – she had only to
ask. And when she heard this, Delilah pointed to his long hair and said:

Chorus

[25] Samson cut your hair
You want to be with it but you're really square
Be guided by this golden rule

At your age, man, you should play it cool

Samson, shave your nut
You're in the height of fashion but
According to the teenage plan
It don't look good on a middle-aged man

Samson, go to the barbers
Tell him he must cut those curls
Beside the dirt it harbours
It ain't appealin' to the girls

Samson, trim that beard
I don't dig men that look so weird
You're too way out for me and so I say
That hairy head my dear has had its day

Samson, though you're strong you'll
Never admit it but your hair is too long
I know you think me rather cruel
But frankly man you just look a fool

Samson, snip it off
You think you're smart and quite the toff
In fact you are mistaken man
You look like mutton that's dressed as lamb

Samson, make an appointment
Your coiffure is far from right
Book now, avoid disappointment
Don't you know you look a fright

Samson, take my tip
With hair like that you just ain't hip
Of course I'm not complainin'
Yet I say if you don't dig, Delilah won't stay

Narrator

And so, having got the message, Samson did as he was told and sat himself down in the barber's chair.

Chorus

Clip clip went the clippers
And the hero's hair came tumbling down
Clip clip went the clippers
He the baldest man in town

[26] Clip and clip and clip and clip
And clip and clip and clip and clip
And clip and clip and clip and clip
And clip and clip and clip and clip

Is there something else that you fancy sir?
Vibro-massage I hear you say?
Just a little something on it sir?
Short back and sides have won the day

Clip clip went the clippers
And the hero's hair came tumblin' down
Clip clip went the clippers
He's the baldest man in town

I'm afraid your hair is receding, sir
Wouldn't you like a nice toupee?
Mind the razor! Oh, now you're bleeding sir
Here's the bill you have to pay

Clip clip went the clippers
And the hero's hair came tumblin' down
Clip clip went the clippers

He's the baldest man in town

Narrator

Now that Samson had lost his hair, he not only looked his age but he also began to feel it. He grew weaker and weaker and soon the Philistines were able to catch him and bind him fast. This time he could not escape.

Chorus

[27] Weak as a kitten and mild as a ham
Samson is bound in chains
Soft as a mitten and tender as lamb
Hors de combat, oh what a tragedy
All because of a female snare
Lost his grip when he lost all his hair
Walked right into the tiger's lair
Samson bound in chains (altogether now)
Weak as a kitten &c

Narrator

The Philistines were so pleased with themselves that they decided to throw a party. Everybody was invited and everybody came – for they all wanted to see Samson in his degradation, not to mention Delilah in her glory. It was quite an occasion.

Chorus

[28] Everybody came to the Philistines' party
Everybody came to enjoy the fun
Dressed in their best, lookin' hale and hearty
There was a partner for everyone
Don't you hear the band a-playin'
Simple tunes in country style
There behind a fan lookin' rather arty
See Delilah with a great big smile

Solo

Take your partner by the hand

Speaker

Lead her to the promised land

Chorus

Samson standing between two pillars
Looks around with a worried frown
Wonders if with a mighty effort
He can bring them tumblin' down
Up 'til then he's been embarrassed
By a growin' urge to scratch
Suddenly it dawns upon him
He's been growing a brand new thatch

Solo

Swing your partner to a fro

Speaker

Eeny meeny miney mo

Chorus

Samson raises his mighty shoulders
Finds his strength comin' back again
Each and every minute a-growin' bolder
Not afraid of mice or men
Puts his hands upon the pillars
Finds them weak and rather thin
Then he lets his dorsal muscles ripple
With a crash the roof falls in !

Solo

Turn your partner round about

Speaker

Hallelujah, give a shout

Chorus

That was the end of a swingin' party
Went with a bang you could hear for miles
Philistines' friends covered in confusion
Philistines' enemies wreathed in smiles
You can read the Bible story
Judges fourteen to sixteen
Don't blame us if our version's not
As accurate as it might have been

Bow to the Lord and sing his praise
For moving in a mysterious way
Time and again when things go wrong
He steps right in and has his say

You can lean upon his mercy
He will send you the strength you need
Thus in our song there lies a moral
He who runs may learn to read

Amen, amen, amen

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CAPTAIN CORAM'S KIDS

An "eighteenth century pop cantata" for Narrator, Unison Voices and Piano

Words and Music by Michael Hurd

Narrator

In the spring of 1722 Captain Coram was a worried man. Since his retirement he had noticed something about the London streets that distressed him greatly. He began to ask questions:

Chorus

[29] Who are these abandoned children
Lying shivering in the snow?
None to clothe and none to feed them
Where can these poor children go?

They are foundlings every one of them
Leave them lying in the snow
Each an outcast of society
Children no-one wants to know

Shall we in a Christian country
See them brought so sad and low
Offer not a crumb of charity
Turn away and answer no?

Do not waste your time or pity
Leave them lying in the snow
We pronounce them guilty, guilty
They must reap the seed they sow

Narrator

When he realised what was happening, Captain Coram came to a decision:

Chorus

I will help the helpless children
Pluck them crying from the snow
I shall clothe and I shall feed them
Find a place where they may go

I will build a Foundling Hospital
Though the going may be slow

Give to these abandoned children
A taste of heaven on earth below

Narrator

It took him seventeen years to make his dream a reality. What he needed was a royal charter. But how to get it? A petition was the obvious answer. But who would sign it? He pondered and pondered and then quite suddenly he knew what he must do. He would approach some of the greatest ladies in the land. If they did not refuse him, surely the gentlemen would follow?

Chorus

[30] Eight were duchesses, eight were countesses
Five were pretty baronesses
All signed willingly the petition
He intended now to bring
And the marvel is a scheme such as his
Never never had been known before
It was felt to be such a novelty
It would surely please the king

He began again with the gentlemen
Would they kindly give their blessing?
So persuasive he, they signed readily
He did not have to wait
Every autograph was a sort of path
To the highest councils in the land
With authority thus provided
He begged the privy council name the date

Narrator

On October 17th 1739 Thomas Coram received his royal charter. Five weeks later the lords and ladies who had signed his petition converged on Somerset House in the Strand. They were coming to appoint the governors of the new Foundling Hospital.

Chorus

[31] What is the humming and drumming and thrumming
And who is it coming in coaches and carriages
All the nobility in their civility
Come with agility into the Strand

Pushing and heaving and winding and weaving
It's quite past believing the hithering and thithering
Merchants and bankers, no thin lean or lankers
All highest of rankers on every hand

Oh what a clattering, bumping and battering
Dreadful nerve-shattering kind of occasion
The climbing and clamouring
Shoving and hammering
Yelling and stammering of that noble band

Narrator

The first Foundling Hospital was a house in Hatton Garden and it opened its doors on March 23rd 1741. People came from all over London hoping to find a home for children they were too poor to feed.

Chorus

[32] Take my child take and look after him
Keep him safe and warm
I am too poor to look after him
Give him food and shield him from all harm

Round his neck there is a token
Token of my love
Nothing else I have to give him
Save the prayers I make to heaven above
Where, oh where is his father, far across the sea
First he loved then he betrayed me

Leaving naught to help or comfort me
I have sinned, sinned and repented
Lost in shame and woe
This is my last loving sacrifice
Ah, it breaks my heart to let him go

Narrator

Soon there were more children than the house could hold and in 1745 a brand new building was opened in Bloomsbury. This was to be the Foundling Hospital for nearly two hundred years and it became the fashion to look in and see the children at their daily tasks. It made quite a pleasant day out.

Chorus

[33] See the Foundlings at work, how inspiring
What a pretty, pretty sight
The Foundlings at work, I could stare at them all day
See the Foundlings at work, they're perspiring
Well, of course it's only right
The Foundlings must work, while the better class of folk see the play

See the boys are making ropes for fishermen
And girls are sewing shirts for gentlemen
And fine household linen for which we shall pay
What a lovely surprise to observe such a hive of industry
If I just close my eyes will it vanish away ?
It's a thing we should prize and it's patently our duty
To see Coram's Foundation is here to stay

See the things they have made
Pretty purses, garters, stockings and knitted gloves
The things they have made are a sight to behold
Oh the things they have made
Picking oakum, spinning twine and darning socks
The things they have made must be worth their weight in gold

See how tidy, neat and simple is their dress
How modest is their glance and address
They've learned to obey and to do as they're told

Narrator

Once they had learned a useful skill the Foundlings were apprenticed to a trade and went to live with their new masters. If they were lucky – and many of them were – they would do well and one day set up in business for themselves.

Chorus

[34] I am a little Foundling apprenticed to a trade
Sing o, sing o
The work is hard the hours are long
But I've an honest master, the premium is paid
Ah, well-a-day is the burden of my song

No father, no mother to guide and comfort me
Sing o, sing o
The work is hard the hours are long
The Hospital my home or a beggar I should be
Ah, well-a-day is the burden of my song

Oh, I shall be a free man when I'm twenty-four
Sing o, sing o
The work is hard the hours are long
With wife and home and children
I could not ask for more
Ah, well-a-day is the burden of my song

Come all you Foundling children, attend to what I say
Sing o, sing o
The work is hard the hours are long
Be diligent and honest, you may earn your pay

Ah, well-a-day is the burden of my song

Narrator

Of course there was never enough money to meet all the Hospital's needs and the governors had to devise all sorts of ingenious ways to raise more. One of them, the painter William Hogarth, decided that it would be a good idea to hang paintings on the bare walls in order to encourage more visitors. Thus the Foundling Hospital became London's first public art gallery. At much the same time, Mr Handel began to give concerts for the benefit of the Foundlings. They proved very popular – even the king came to some of them.

Chorus

[35] Here in the pleasant court room
There are paintings of high degree
Placed there by Mister Hogarth
They are simply a delight to see
Each tells a story, biblical and true
And each one reminds us what we must do
To help poor abandoned children
By our love and our charity

Here in the solemn chapel
There is music upon the air
Written by Mister Handel
It will banish every worldly care
Telling a story biblical and true
Messiah reminds us what we all must do
To help poor abandoned children
By our love and our charity

Art and music are united in accents rare
Acting upon our senses they contrive to banish all our care
Soothing our feelings readily and yet
Reminding us that we never should forget
To help all abandoned children
By our love and our charity

Narrator

When he died on March 29th 1751 Captain Coram was a poor man. But he left behind him a legacy of infinite value, for his work still goes on. Not in Bloomsbury to be sure, but in the Thomas Coram Foundation Hospital in Hertfordshire. Over the years, thousands of children have had cause to bless his name.

Chorus

[36] Captain Coram! 'E was a gent, an' no mistake
Captain Coram! Give 'im a great big 'and
Didn't 'e went an' saved me life
Captain Coram! Blimey but ain't 'e grand
For no-one loved or cared for me
Now I'm 'appy, don't yer see
Captain Coram! Is 'e a saint or is 'e not
Captain Coram! Best man in the land

See the beggars in the street
Aching 'earts and aching feet
Nowhere they can lay their 'ead
Paving stones their only bed

You may think the times 'ave gone
When such things were going on
Look around you, it is plain
Though we change we stay the same

Captain Coram! Took to 'im like a duck I did
Captain Coram! Saved me from being damned
Captain Coram! Gave me an 'ome when just a kid
Captain Coram! Just look at what 'e planned

Oh, 'e was nippy, 'e was fly
Now he's 'appy, so am I
Captain Coram! Is 'e an 'ero, yes 'e is
Captain Coram! We are yer loyal band

Some believe what they've been told
London's streets are paved with gold
But the fable's far from true
What can these poor creatures do

Finding they have less than nowt
They become the down and out
Do not scorn but lend an 'and
Do as Captain Coram planned

Captain Coram! Sing we 'is praises every day
Captain Coram's famous throughout the land
Captain Coram! What can we say that ain't been said
Captain Coram! Give 'im a great big, give 'im a great big
Give 'im a great big, great big, great big 'and

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