

*The Peasant, The Prince, The Boot
and the Mirror*

REVISED

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knight-shtick press

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Madrigal Dinner 1495

The Peasant, the Prince, the Boot and the Mirror

Written and Compiled by Paul Brandvik

Cast:

Royal Court (*Any number*)
 Jester
 Mertonsire, Lord of Misrule
 Drover
 Master Arnold Twiggins
 Maude
 Elizabeth
 Mary
 Bailiff (*also Bellman*)

Incidental Roles:

Bellman (*Town Crier*)
 Minstrel (*A singing role*)
 Master Lewellyn
 Madame Willoughby
 Master Edgar West
 Litigant
 Midwife
 The Court Painter (*Non-speaking*)

Properties:

One Kabonger (*Jester's rattle*)
 Wassail bowl and goblets
 Royal Boots
 Royal Mirror
 Rubber gloves
 Artist's easel
 Palette and brush
 Various poster-size
 reproductions of
 famous paintings
 Stuffed fish (*Walleye, if
 available*)
 Bell
 Gavel

SETTING:

The setting is the interior banquet hall of a medieval English castle by the name of "Deep Manor." There is a stage with a curved table for the Royal Court and with space downstage for action of the Jester and other performers. The hall is decorated with banners with heraldic emblems. The tables are lit by candlelight.

There are raised platforms that are disguised as stone towers on each side of the stage. Tables are arranged in the room with a winding path down the center. There is room between the tables for minstrels and others to entertain each table of guests.

CHARACTERS:

Royal Court: The members of the Royal Court may give themselves names and adapt stage personalities. The speaking parts for the Royal Court may be taken by any member of the court. Since we do not know what names your actors will take, they are designated, "Courtier." Speaking parts should be distributed in such a way that the sounds of the voices come from various parts of the stage and also represent different timbres of the voices of the Royal Court. The actor/singers in the Royal Court must sit through the story night after night and look like they are having the time of their lives. They must be able to laugh on cue. They are all wealthy Dukes and Duchesses, Counts and Countesses, and counting! Tights and tunics for the men, long flowing gowns for the ladies. One item the men would have worn during the sixteenth century would be Chains of State, an ornate necklace that would indicate their rank and importance.

Jester: Could be either male or female. The Jester is a quick thinking, witty person who finds himself (or herself) in the middle of everything that's going on. The person who plays the Jester should be very quick on his/her feet, be able to joke with the audience, and be comfortable being silly. The actor should not be bossy, pushy, or strident as the audience must listen to him or her throughout the entire evening. The Jester is a likeable character, full of life and enthusiasm. The Jester is the key player in the madrigal dinner and dressed in a traditional jester's costume, a brightly patterned tunic with diamond checks in contrasting colors. Make-up can be whole-face or minimal. A hood with limp horns with small bells attached to the ends is customary. Many jesters of that era carried little sticks with a doll or puppet head on them, usually made up to look like the jester. (*In our scripts they go by the name "Kabonger."*)

Mertonsire, Lord of Misrule: Should be male. He is a pompous, bombastic fop of a person who is always right in his own mind, even though he is, more often than not, wrong in everybody else's mind. Ideally this actor would be the physical opposite of the Jester. Mertonsire and the Jester should work together well and develop a good sense of . . . timing. Mertonsire believes the whole world revolves around him, and as such he's pretty dizzy. He's a person who thinks he has more power than he does, and if the Jester can be considered a "brain half full" kind of person, Mertonsire's more of a "brain half empty" type. He's arrogant but worries what other people think. He or she should be dressed in an audaciously foppish costume full of frills and lace and ribbons of cloth in pastels or a vibrant color. Think overblown, over-done, and overboard, and you are close. Lace cuffs on every appendage, a handkerchief always in hand, and "frills to the gills" are just some of the ways to attire Mertonsire. Remember, he thinks he's more important than he is, and that translates to the outfit.

Drover: A decent young man of peasant stock. Dressed like he has been out in the field cutting hay with a scythe. (*What a crazy way to spell a word that sounds like "sy."*) One of the pretenders to the throne, only because the Royal Boot almost fits him. Does get a little carried away with the idea of being king.

Master Arnold Twiggins: Young courtier type. Arrogant, smarmy, slick, power hungry, conniving, cunning and suave. He is dressed almost as elegantly as Mertonsire. Feels it is his divine right to be the next king. The Royal Boot almost fits him also.

Maude: Mother of Drover, the peasant. A bit of the earth mother type, ambitious for her son. Nice, but also somewhat of a stage mother. Funny, witty, has been around and can handle herself.

Elizabeth: Nanny of Master Twiggins. Raised him since his birth. Ambitious for him. Puts on airs, and feels that her station in life should be much higher than it currently is. Longs to be the Queen Mother, or Queen Nanny, or whatever you might call her exalted position. Somewhat up-tight.

Mary: A girl who is exactly the same age as Drover and Twiggins. Raised as a peasant girl, she is sweet, genuine, self-sufficient, and independent. She is not impressed with royalty, but when the mantle of power is placed on her shoulders, she can handle it.

Bailiff: This should be a person with a strong, clear voice, and a good sense of timing. He or she, should almost sing his or her lines. Could make a character out of the speaking voice alone. He appears throughout the Dinner with one or

two lines each time. The Bailiff and the Bellman may be played by one person. Or, the bailiff may be played by a member of the Royal Court.

INCIDENTAL ROLES:

These roles may be played by other cast members, such as the minstrels, troubadours, recorders or brass players. They should all have strong, clear voices. The person playing the role of Minstrel should be able to sing well and play the guitar well. (*A balalaika might substitute for guitar, but not a banjo.*)_The role of the Royal Painter, should be someone who has a good sense of mime. It should be totally non-speaking. He or she should be dressed in typical painter's costume, with large floppy beret. He or she should have an easel and a palette with various colors of paint, in addition to a brush. On the easel is placed a large sketch pad, with a copy of a few famous paintings, such as the Mona Lisa or various portraits by Picasso. During the meal, the Painter sets up his or her easel and pretends to paint one of the guests. When the painting is "done," it turned around to reveal one of the famous paintings. During the final court scene, the Painter sets up his easel with a large painting, not seen by the audience, and works feverishly during the court scene. At the end, the painting is turned around to reveal, either "*The Last Supper*," "*Syndics of the Cloth Guild*," or "*Nightwatch*."

COSTUME NOTES:

The Jester should be dressed in a traditional Jester's costume. He should have a Kabonger, which is a stick with a doll's head mounted on the end, sort of like a Jester-on-a-Stick . The doll's head is identical to the Jester's head, except it is made with more plastic and probably has a more solid interior. The other costumes should be in keeping with the period portrayed. Care should be taken in regard to the overall color scheme on the stage. The "Royal Boots" should be knee-high boots, similar to those worn by Robin Hood, and should be decorated in an elaborate manner.

MUSIC:

The names: **Minstrels, Troubadours, Trouveres,** and **Peasants** are suggested names for quartets of singers. They will entertain the guests with music and occasional "Old English" repartee at the guests' tables. They will also join the Royal Court in any antiphonal music or music designated, "Cast."

The music in the script is only a suggestion. Other music, appropriate for your singers may be used. A list of the music appears in the appendix. I have always believed that simple music sung beautifully is far better than complicated music sung poorly. The object of music in a Madrigal Dinner is not to impress, but rather to create the beautiful. If a good guitar player is available, he or she could accompany any of the quartets, or soloists from the quartets. If your dinner is done near Christmas, simple carols would be appropriate. The Oxford Book of Carols is a wonderful source for music for the quartets.

ACTION:

If desired the first two acts during the meal may be omitted. If this is done, the quartets would continue entertaining at the tables. The action begins outside the hall in a gathering place for the guests. While they wait they will be entertained by the peasants, selling roses and holly, by the minstrels, recorders, troubadours, and the brass. At the appointed time, all action ceases, there is a short brass fanfare, or bell or drum, and Bellman (*The Town Crier*) announces the beginning of the Madrigal Dinner by proclaiming in a loud voice:

Bellman: Lords and ladies, one and all
 Join us in the banquet hall.
 The path ahead is rather winding
 But at the end thou wilt be finding
 Pleasures aplenty for eye and for ear!
 So Let us be gone, then, with good cheer!

Names of the guests are called by the Town Crier. (eg: Lord Biden and his party of seven...or... Lord and Lady McCain.) The guests are then escorted to their tables by the servants. The servants should use the old English words, "thy, thee, thou, shalt, wilt, etc. Minstrels, troubadours, peasants, and recorders entertain the guests as others are seated. When the guests have all been seated, Bellman and Merton appear. Bellman is ringing a bell to attract attention. Merton winces at the loudness of the bell and addresses the audience:

Merton: Wes hale, wes hale. Tonight, let us surprise the Jester and, for the first time in 500 years of Madrigal Dinner history, return his greeting. After he says, "our music and our company" We will say: "Wes hale, Jester, wes hale!" Let's try it. ...Our music and our company.

Audience: Wes hale, Jester, wes hale!

Merton: Bravo! You are such good actors. Oh, this is going to be a great evening!

Brass: **Fanfare I: The Welcome**
(Following Fanfare I, the Jester enters the rear of the hall and proceeds to the stage greeting the guests with:)

Jester: Wes hale, good lords and ladies fair,
 We bid thee welcome, we bid thee share
 Our feasting and our revelry,
 Our music and our company.

Audience: Wes hale, Jester, wes hale!

Jester: *(Surprised)* Oh! jolly good, that...well again, wes hale to you.
 Be thou whole, be thou healthy, and...be thou true.

In the Kingdom, this day is called, "Ruling Day."
 The king and the court will say yea or nay
 To all supplicants and to those aggrieved,
 Who wish a judgment ere they leave.
 Who is right? What is real?
 Is *all* resolved by fortune's wheel?

Things are seldom as they seem:
 Reality rarely fits our dream;
 Our personal truths and private lies
 Are swaddled in cloths of flimsy disguise;
 Our very being filtered through
 The warp and weft of what and who
 We aren't... but who we wish to be;
 Defining our...rare reality.

They say a mirror never lies
 But tonight the mirror might surprise
 The ones who look at it's mirrored gaze,
 Expecting the common affirming praise.
 For in the mirror might lie the truth,
 Or lie the lie. We know, forsooth,
 That in a mirror, left is right
 And right is left. But in our sight
 Is down then up...and up then down?
 Methinks that...methinks...

Merton: (*Entering through the audience.*) Ha, ha, can't find the rhyme, can you? You know, they say memory is the first thing to go?

Jester: Who says that?

Merton: (*Looks puzzled.*) Says what?

Jester: Why don't you take your leave and thereby raise the cultural level of this audience?

Merton: Ow, that hurt. Major ego damage.

Jester: Are you wounded?

Merton: No, just sort of sore, sire.

Jester: Pull yourself together and let us finish welcoming our guests, because the Royal Procession is about to begin. (*Regaining composure*) In the Kingdom, this day is called, "Ruling Day."

Merton: You said that part.

Jester: Right...I forgot. But I *didn't* say this...I think: (*Again regaining composure*) The King, yet young, is growing old.

Merton: (*Imitating the Jester's voice.*) Like aging cheese, he's beginning to mold.

Jester: Oh no, don't say that! I've grown quite fond of having my head attached to my neck. Just say:
 A pretender to the throne we must behold.

Merton: Oh, all right. But we must tell our guests that one of *them* might be the next king. If they fit the Royal Boot and can look into the Royal Mirror and see the image of a King, they *will* be the next king.

Jester: Absolutely! (*Looking over the audience, focusing on one person.*) You might be...*The Next King!*
 Publisher's Clearing House...eat your heart out.

Audience Member: (Selected and coached before the performance.)
 And...to you, we'll owe our gratitude
 If you hurry your speech
 So we can have food.

Jester: Right you are, and hungry I am.
 Is everyone ready?
 Is everyone in?
 Then, by my word,
 Let the feast begin:
*Trumpets blow thy clarion call,
 And Singers, hie thee to the hall!*

Brass: **Fanfare I: (Repeated) The Processional**
The Royal Court enters from the rear of the hall and sings: GOOD DAY, SIR CHRISTEMAS! They then lead a Royal Procession to the head table singing, PERSONENT HODIE. They are followed in the procession by the pages, minstrels, troubadours, trouveres, recorders, and finally the peasants. The ones following the Royal Court sing the chorus of the piece. The servants are carrying pitchers of wassail. The Royal Court proceeds to the stage. The rest of the cast come to the front, then split and form a line on each side of the hall surrounding the audience. The cast stand with heads bowed as the Royal Court sings: ADORAMUS TE, CHRISTE. They sing with their hands folded in the classical manner. Immediately following this song, the brass begin the next fanfare.

Brass: **Fanfare II: The Wassail**
The pages enter at the sound of the fanfare. They are carrying the bowl of wassail. The servants and the cast approach the pages as the bowl is brought forward. They congregate beneath the stage on either side. In loud and clear voices, various member of the Royal Court speak the following:

Courtier: Come bravely on, my masters, for here we shall be tasters of curious dishes that are brave and fine.

Courtier: Where they that do such cheer afford, I'll lay my knife upon the board; my master and my dame, they do not pine.

Courtier: Who is it will not be merry and sing down, down-a-derry? For now it is a time of joy and mirth!

Courtier: 'Tis said: 'Tis merry in the hall whenas beards they do wag all. God's plenty's here. It doth not show a dearth!

Courtier: Let him take all lives longest! Come fill us of the strongest, and I will drink a health to Honest John!

Courtier: Come pray thee, butler, fill the bowl and let it round the table roll! When it is up, I'll tell you more anon!

Page: (Loudly calling) **Wassail, wassail, wassail!**

The page sets the bowl on the table, bows subserviently, and exits. The servants distribute the wassail to the guests, while the Royal Court, cast, and audience sing: GLOUCESTERSHIRE WASSAIL. Goblets at the head table are filled by the King and Queen and are passed down to others in the Royal Court as the song is sung. The Royal Court may sing the first part of each verse in unison and be joined in harmony by the rest of the cast in the remainder of each verse. The audience should remain seated for the toasts, so the toaster can be seen, unless the toasters feel comfortable standing on their chairs or tables.

Courtier: Lords and ladies, our gracious host
Bids thee raise our *Wassail Toast!*

King: Lords of the Kingdom!
We welcome thee to...*Deep Manor!*
Now, from the castle host,
Hear my toast. Drink it well!
Here then, I bid thee all *Wassail!*
Down with him who will not say, *Drink Hale!*

Royal Court and Audience: Drink Hale!

The following toasts are to be given by audience members. They should be distributed to the guests before the Madrigal Dinner begins. Select guests with strong voices. Some coaching may be needed. The toaster should stand and deliver when his or her turn comes.

Guest: A toast! To all here under twenty:
May they find *love...* and cash a-plenty!

Royal Court and Audience: Drink Hale!

Guest: A toast! To all of thirty-nine:
Who are...or have been...for some time!

Royal Court and Audience: Drink hale!

Guest: A toast! To all those who are fifty:
May they find life at fifty...nifty!

Royal Court and Audience: Drink hale!

Guest: A toast! To all of sixty-eight:
May they always find it ne'er too late.

Royal Court and Audience: Drink hale!

Guest: A toast! To all of ninety-three:
May they endure a century!

Royal Court and Audience: Drink hale!

Guest: And...one last toast, the final page:
For those...who don't admit their age!

Royal Court and Audience: Drink hale!

King: May the peace and joy of Christmastide
Within thy hearts this year abide.
or:
May the love and joy of St. Valentine
This year thy heart and life define!

Royal Court: *The final verse of GLOUCESTERSHIRE WASSAIL is repeated. The first course is served by the servants. Minstrels,, troubadours, peasants, recorders and others entertain at the tables of the guests. Actors go through the audience during the meal with the royal boot and try it on members of the audience. The boot should be packed with newspapers or rags, so that it is impossible for anyone to get it on.*

Optional Acts

Act One:

Bellman: *(Ringing bell to attract attention.)* Hear ye! Hear Ye! Hear ye!
(goes on the stage. Forgets the rest of his lines. Grins foolishly. Repeats:) Hear ye! Hear Ye! Hear ye! *(Pause)* Oh, very sorry, I forgot the rest of me lines. *(Exits, ringing bell:)* Sor-ry! Sor-ry! Sor-ry!

Bellman: *(Returns immediately, ringing bell to attract attention.)* Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! *(To Audience:)* Hey, I remembered! This is how it goes: Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Order in the court!

Jester: Good idea. this court needs order. *(The buffoons are just below the stage. The Jester goes near them.)* But you should have said, Hear Ye! Hear Ye! Hear Ye! There is an odor in the court! Smells like something fishy here. Must be a cover-up. *(Lifts the coat of a peasant and finds a stuffed fish.)* Ah, it is a cover-up!

Act Two:

Bellman: *(Coming through the audience with the Jester. Rings bell)* Hear ye! Hear ye! Hear ye! Rather, hear the Jester! Hear the Jester!

Jester: *(To the Litigant)* You are charged with bigamy, trigamy, quadrigamy...and polygamy. how do you plead?

Litigant: *(Entering from opposite side.)* Tired, your honor, very tired.

Bellman: *(Rings bell. All exit.. Applause from Royal Court. The fanfare should follow immediately.)*

Brass: **Fanfare III: The Boar's Head**
The Boar's Head is brought in by the pages, followed by the servants with great platters of the main course. The servants form a line at the rear of the hall where they sing: THE BOAR'S HEAD CAROL. If desired, the Royal Court may sing this carol.

- Courtier:* At the beginning of the meat, of the boar's head ye shall eat!
- Courtier:* And of the *mustard* we shall treat....and ye shall singen ere ye go!
- Servants:* THE BOAR'S HEAD CAROL (*Verse 1*)
- Courtier:* Welcome be ye that are here! And ye shall all have right good cheer!
- Courtier:* And also have right good fare! And ye shall singen ere ye go!
- Servants:* THE BOAR'S HEAD CAROL (*Verse 2*)
- Courtier:* Welcome be ye, everyone! For ye shall singen soon anon! Hie ye fast, that ye be done. And ye shall singen ere ye go!
- Servants:* THE BOAR'S HEAD CAROL (*Verse 3*)

The Royal Court applaud. The main course is distributed. During the consuming of this course, the minstrels, troubadours, trouveres, recorders and peasants entertain the guests at their individual tables. During this time also, a juggler, mime, bird salesman, peculiar teacher or principal, Abyssinian grape crusher, or other visual act may appear. When the main course has been consumed by most of the guests, the following act should begin.

Act Three:

- Bailiff:* Hear ye, hear ye, hear ye! The next case being that of Master Lewellyn, Keeper of the Royal Game:
- Jester:* (*Jumping up.*) I will represent Master Lewellyn.
- King:* Very well. What is the charge?
- Jester:* He is charged with poaching, your Grace.
- King:* Poaching deer, poaching pheasants, or poaching partridge?
- Jester:* It was only *eggs* your honor.
- King:* You were poaching eggs?
- Lewellyn:* Well, I *likes* 'em poached.
- King:* Then I will set an *eggs...ample*. (*Aside:*) Get that? Eggs...ample? (*Laugh*) You are hereby sentenced to two years of collecting little-bitty hummingbird eggs for the Royal Ukrainian Society of Tiny Egg Painters. You could say that... the "yolks on you."
- Lewellyn:* I *could* say that... but I wouldn't...especially when they didn't laugh when you said it.

- King:** Enough! (*Strikes gavel loudly on table.*)
- Minstrel:** (*On each of the following appearances of the minstrel, he or she should appear in a different part of the hall. At the sound of the gavel, he or she should rise quickly, immediately strum an E minor chord and begin to sing the following text to the tune of "Greensleeves." If you do not know the tune, "Greensleeves," perhaps you should consider counseling with a special emphasis on the generational perceptual differences in the acceptance or rejection of post-revolutionary Anglo-centric folkloric recurring or non-recurring melodies in the key of E-minor commonly attributed to "Anonymous," which everybody else in the English-speaking world knows except you.*)
- For poaching eggs should not be a crime.
But still he will be doing time,
For doing time, the King believes,
Is a darn good way to catch mean thieves.
- (*Royal Court applauds. Lewellyn exits.*)
- King:** Next supplicant!
- Bailiff:** The case of Wanda Willoughby versus the poet, Edgar West.
- King:** Who is counsel?
- Merton:** I will represent Madame Willoughby.
- Jester:** Anyone present, more or less
Will know that I represent Master West.
- King:** What are the charges?
- Bailiff:** Causing bodily harm, and/or...*death...*, Oh ,my! (*Begins to get emotional.*) to a beautiful, but large, uncaring, insensitive, but...nevertheless uncommonly exquisite, mammal.
- Merton:** He did cause the horse of Madame Willoughby to discontinue breathing...and end its horsey existence as we know it.
- Willoughby:** (*Indignant*) No he didn't, He killed me horse!
- Jester:** He did the deed, I can not lie:
He did cause Wanda's horse to die.
- Willoughby:** He went right up to me horse and...read his...*bloated poetry* into his ear until the poor horse died of...pure, unadulterated... boredom.
- Jester:** (*To West:*)
Master West, 'tis your moment of glory.
Please tell the court *your* side of the story.
But, what e'er you do , *this* be the thing:
Do not admit to anything.

- West:* He was sick and tired,
So I aspired
To bring him cheer
Unto his ear,
In depressing times
With refreshing rhymes.
- Willoughby:* Your *turgid verse* killed him!
- West:* Refreshing rhyme
Is no crime.
- Willoughby:* Nothing is worse
Than turgid verse.
- West:* Refreshing rhyme!
- Willoughby:* (*Coming right into his face.*) Turgid Verse!
- West:* (*Becoming more and more agitated.*) Refreshing rhyme!
- Willoughby:* (*Coming yet closer.*) Turgid Verse!
- West:* (*Almost becoming emotional and shouting.*) All right! Good night!...(*Pause*) So, I killed your bloody horse. I couldn't help it...Nobody's perfect.
- King:* You say you are a poet, do you have your poetic license with you?
- Jester:* No, your Honor, his poetic license was revoked.
- King:* Then you are hereby convicted of writing poetry *after* your poetic license was revoked. Now *this* is poetic justice: You are hereby sentenced to five years of hard labor...or one semester of (Freshman English) (*Or other unpopular class*)...whichever seems longer. (*Loudly strikes gavel.*)
- Minstrel:* (*At the sound of the gavel, he or she immediately strums an E minor chord and begins to sing the following to the tune of Greensleeves.*)
- There is no doubt, her horse is dead,
He poured his poetry into its head;
A terrible way to take its leave:
From puffed up poetical recitative.
- (*Applause from Royal Court. The fanfare should follow immediately.*)
- Brass:* **Fanfare IV: The Dessert**
At the start of this fanfare, the pages and the servants bring in the flaming dessert. The pages proceed to the foot of the stairs leading to the stage. The servants form a line around the edge of the room. They remain standing while the Royal Court sings:

DECK THE HALL. *The Royal Court may remain seated for this song. At the conclusion of the song, the servants serve the dessert, and the cast resumes entertaining at the tables. After everyone has been served, the Jester will enter, noisily attracting attention with his Kabonger and begin the Masque.*

The Masque:
The Peasant, the Prince, the Boot and the Mirror

(The stage is set with a bench on either side of the Boar's Head, in front of the head table. If necessary, the Boar's Head may be removed.)

**Scene One:
In the Beginning**

Bailiff: *(Entering from the rear of the hall, ringing a loud bell and loudly calling:)*

Hear ye, Hear ye, Hear ye! This day is Ruling Day!
The king will hear supplications, adjurations, appellations, and entreaties. Any citizen of the realm who has just complaint or just cause for redress, may this day appear before the king and be granted a ruling.

Hear ye, Hear ye, Hear ye! This day is Ruling Day! *(He finishes near the stage, walking by the Jester and Mertonsire, who puts his hands over his ears.)*

Jester: Did you hear that?

Merton: What?

Jester: Did you hear that?

Merton: Sorry, I can't hear you, I have my hands over my ears.

Jester: Take your hands off of your ears, then you can.

Merton: *(Taking hands off ears.)* Ah, yes, thanks. That's much better. Now what did you say?

Jester: I said, *(Loudly)* Did you hear that?

Merton: *(Blanches at the loud sound.)* How could I? I had my hands over my ears. Couldn't hear a thing.

Jester: Right. Well, today is Ruling Day.

Merton: You don't say! Today is Ruling Day.

Jester: I do say. Let's pretend we are lawyers, then we can get a better seat in the court. If anyone asks, we can say we are just *practicing* law . . . not really *doing* it.

- Merton:* But have you passed the bar?
- Jester:* I seldom pass a bar... I almost always stop.
- Merton:* I mean have you passed the bar exam?
- Jester:* Never took it, but I know I could pass it with flying flagons. For the bar exam, all you need to know is...red wine with meat, and white wine with fish...and tip twenty percent. How hard can that be?
- Merton:* Can't be too hard...most *politicians* are lawyers.
- Jester:* Do you think there will be cameras in the court? If there are, I want to be sure they get my good side. (*Preening and posing.*)
- (*Court Painter is setting up his easel and a large canvas on one side of the stage. The front of the canvas is not visible to the audience.*)
- Merton:* It is highly unlikely, since cameras haven't been invented yet. But it looks like there will be a court painter.
- Jester:* Make sure you smile when he looks this way. Oh, there he is. He's looking at us. Smile. (*They smile and pose.*)
- Merton:* Who do you think will be the judge?
- Jester:* It will most certainly be the King, although some people call him Judge... Ego. I'm not sure why. (*Making their way on stage and going toward the benches.*) Let us quietly find a seat.
- King:* (*Loudly*) Jester, Merton..sire! Approach the bench.
- Merton:* (*Still heading toward, and pointing to, the benches.*) We are, your Majesty.
- King:* No, I mean approach *this* bench!
- Jester:* (*Looking over the table at the King's chair:*) But, your Grace, that bench...appears to be occupied.
- King:* (*Exasperated*) Take a seat!
- Jester:* (*Exchanging quizzical glances, each starting to pick up one of the benches.*) Well, if you say so, your Grace. (*To Merton:*) I'll take this one, you take that one.
- King:* No, no, no! Just be seated!
- (*Jester and Merton sit, then immediately rise at the Town Crier's line. They look confused, and look at the King, who is seated, and sit down, then rise again. The Royal Court rises to the occasion.*)

Bailiff: All Rise! Today being the Day of Ruling, all supplicants, appellants, and adjurers may now approach the bench. The King will also hear all pretenders to the throne, who would be king when our king passes.

Cast: *(All cast members come forward and sit in a random manner on the floor and stairs in front of the stage, as if waiting for a great show, which of course it will be.)*

Bailiff: *(To the King:)* Your Majesty, Your Grace, and Your Honor, All in One Person...

King: Oh, stuff it.

Scene Two: After the Beginning

(Takes place where the last scene took place. Nobody move!)

Courtier: Bailiff, has not one person come forth who claims to be pretender to the throne?

Bailiff: Not one, m'Lord.

FemaleCourtier: Surely in our vast Kingdom someone must fit the Royal Boot and see the image of the King in the Royal Mirror?

Bailiff: One would certainly think so, m'lady.

(Drover, a peasant, and Master Arnold Twiggins, a gentleman, come up through the audience very loudly struggling over the royal boot. Each has on only one shoe, and is half hopping, half walking.)

Drover: Stop, right now!

Twiggins: No, I can't stop now! I have no time.

Drover: But the boot very *nearly* fits me!

Twiggins: No, this is the *royal boot* and it belongs only on *my* royal foot!

Drover: No it doesn't. It does not fit your foot at all. You had to...*squint* your toes.

Twiggins: It does fit! Anyway, I don't have to *walk* in the boot, only get it on.

Drover: If you would stop for a second, I would show you that it fits me also...like a glove.

Twiggins: I shan't stop now, I am on my way to the Royal Court to make my claim to the throne. You know what they say: If the boot fits, wear it. And, by my troth, I intend to wear it!

- Drover:* Aha, but you will soon find out that the boot is on the other foot, and that foot is mine.
- Twiggins:* Let go, you noisome knave!
- Drover:* No, you let go, you pretentious pocket of pomposity.
- Jester:* Hold, enough! What jabbering prattle dares to disturb this court?
(*Takes boot from Twiggins and Drover and gives it to Bailiff.*)
- Twiggins:* I prattle not, I am here to claim my rightful station as the pretender to the throne.
- Drover:* Pretend all you want, but the boot also *very nearly* fits me and I thereby claim *my* right as the next king.
- Jester:* They must be twins.
- Twiggins:* No! Never! Heaven forbid that my mother's womb could bear such insignificant dross.
- Drover:* Heaven forbid that thy mother would even admit to being *present* at *thy* birth.
- Jester:* Be gone, both of you, before your caterwauling disturbs his majesty. The king brooks no boisterous babble.
- King:* What manner of mayhem have we here?
- Jester:* By your leave, your Grace, we seem to have two candidates who claim to fit the Royal Boot.
- King:* We can *not* have two pretenders. That would be too...pretentious. Only *one* shall be my successor. We shall let the Royal Court decide who gets the Royal Boot...and who gets the Royal Shaft. (*Loudly strikes gavel.*)
- Minstrel:* (*Jumps up immediately, and strums an E minor chord. The Bailiff scowls at him or her and shakes his head. He or she quickly sits down.*)
- Jester:* But, your Grace, they cannot appear before the court without counsel.
- King:* I know that, you fool. (*Aside*) I did not get to be king by being dumb. (*Jester reacts, as if saying, Oh, really?*)
- Bailiff:* Let them choose their counsel. If they can not afford counsel, one will be appointed by the court.
- Merton:* (*Jumping right in there.*) I shall be *most* pleased to represent the one with elegance, grace, style... and *shillings*....you know, the *rich* one. After all, do not the rich deserve the best justice their coin can buy?

Drover: Your Grace, I have neither pounds nor pence....nothing but the shirt on me back and me good looks. (*Winks and makes a face at the audience.*)

Courtier: Let the *Jester* represent him. He will give him the best justice *his* pence, or lack of it, can buy.

King: Good idea.

Courtier: Pity, he has a pants with no pocket and a pocket with no pence.

King: Well, on with the trial and on with...the Royal Boot.

Bailiff: (*In a loud, high-pitched, and rather affected voice:*) The Royal Court court is still in session. The matter of the determination of the rightful pretender to the throne shall forthwith, herewith, and withwith be dethided. Let he who hath tethtimony...(*Clearing his throat.*) Let he who hath...tes-ti-a-mony, present himself at this time or forever hold his peace. (*Again loudly, almost singing*) Hear ye, hear ye! The Trying On Of The Royal Boot!

Merton: Your Majesty, I would like to make an opening statement on behalf of my client, Master Arne (*The name of your governor or other political figure may be substituted.*) As you can see from his elegant bearing and his impeccable manner of dress, that he is of royal blood.

He will make a splendid king. He will *force* the kingdom to live within its *budget* ...and stop spending money *foolishly* on such things as education, the arts, the sick, and poor people.

His plan is *this*: Let the poor people learn to make art and sell it in the open market. When they *fail* to sell their wares, it will be...a *good education* for them. *Yes!* Education through capitalism...let *business* set priorities! *Priorities through Profit!* . . . You see, he *does* care for poor people, the arts, and education. He just does not want to pay for it.

Jester: Your Grace, my client, Master Drover, though poor in material goods, comes from sturdy peasant stock. Though rough in demeanor, he is noble in thought. Though low in means, he is high in spirit. He would make a compellingly compassionate king.

Twiggins: (*Standing, impatiently*) I'll go first.

Merton: My client would like to go first.

Twiggins: Would you believe he gets paid to say the obvious?

Bailiff: (*Throws the boot to Twiggins.*) Incoming!

Jester: Look! Its a boot-in-air! (*Repeat if necessary, looking to Audience*)
Look! Its a boot-in-air!

Twiggins: (*There should be another drum roll, or a drumming sound on the table by the Royal Court. After much tugging the boot is forced halfway onto his foot. He says with a pained smirk:*)
There. It fits. The trial is over.

Merton: It fits! The trial is over.

Twiggins: (*Does a double-take.*) I just said that.

Jester: I object.

Twiggins: So do I. He's just repeating what's already been said.

Merton: Repeating what's already been said?

Twiggins: There he did it again.

Jester: I still object.

Merton: You are just being objectionable.

King: And *you* are out of order...Jester, have *your* client try on the Royal Boot. But as a precaution, instruct your client to first put a rubber glove on his foot...(*To Queen*) that way he will not *befoul* the Royal Boot. Can't be too careful these days.

Drover: (*There should be a drum roll, or a drumming sound on the table by the Royal Court. He forces his foot part-way into the boot. It sort of fits, but with great difficulty. He holds up his foot for the audience to see. The boot dangles halfway off his foot. He says enthusiastically:*) Ah-hoo-ah!

King: What did he say?

Jester: (*Imitating Drover*) My client said, "Ah-hoo-ah!"

King: Oh, I like that...a man of few words. So refreshing in a court of law.

Beiliff: Since the boot almost...but not quite...fits both pretenders, We here-with, here-under, and here-upon, declare this trial to be thus far...here-by...inconclusive.

King: (*Strikes gavel loudly on the table.*)

Minstrel: (*At the sound of the gavel, he or she immediately strums an E minor chord and begins to sing the following to the tune of Greensleeves.*)

Oh, two pretend to the Royal Throne
Each one hoping that he alone
Would fit the boot with no dispute
And claim the throne to be his own.

Scene Three:
Quite a bit after the beginning,
But not too close to the ending.

(Takes place where the last scene took place. Nobody move!)

Bailiff: Hear ye, Hear ye! We continue the Trial of the Millennium, Part Two-A: *(Loudly)* The Calling of Witnesses.

Courtier: Don't you think they should have witnesses?

Courtier: A trial without witnesses is like a...

Courtier: Exactly. It goes without saying.

Courtier: Well, it certainly did this time. You didn't give me a chance to...

Courtier: Finish . . . it . . . later. We must have witnesses.

King: Counsel please approach the bench.

(Merton and Jester approach the bench, trying to elbow each other out of position.)

Jester: Yes, your honor.

Merton: Yes, your...grace.

Jester: Yes, your highness.

Merton: *(With great flair)* Yes, your...majesty.

Jester: *(To Merton, imitating his speech.)* Yes, *your* majesty. You're really sucking up to him, aren't you?

Merton: *(Mockingly, to the Jester)* Yes, *your* majesty. I am a lawyer. Sucking up to the judge is what I do, if I want to win. And I want to win.

King: Do you have witnesses to call?

Jester: Yes, your Majesty. We would like to call King Charles the Second.

Bailiff: I beg your pardon, but Charles the Second has been dead for two hundred years.

Jester: Oh, I am terribly sorry...I didn't even know he was sick. Well then, we would like to call Charles the Third.

Bailiff: He has also been dead for 150 years.

Jester: How about Charles the Fourth?

Bailiff: Dead.

Jester: Charles the Fifth?

Bailiff: Still dead.

Jester: How about the big one..Henry the Eighth?

Bailiff: Not *born* yet!

Jester: *(Pause...unless the Henry the Eighth shows up at your performance. If he does, call the author to rewrite the rest of the script at no charge.)* Oh my. In that case, we would like to call... Drover's... mother.

Elizabeth and Maude: *(Entering from the back of the hall, muttering to themselves, then speaking louder and louder. They start at different places, but their paths intersect with near violent collisions. They should each have a rather determined silly walk with several steps and a hop. One should be dressed like a lady of the court, and the other should be dressed much like a Renaissance bag-lady. They are repeating the same lines, but not together, to the nearby guests as they approach the stage.)* That's my boy up there. My boy is going to be King, and when he is, I will be the Queen Mother.

Bailiff: The court calls Drover's mother.

Maude: *(Loudly, from the back of the hall.)* What? Say that again.

Bailiff: *(Louder)* The court calls Drover's mother.

Jester: *(Goes to first table.)* The court calls Drover's mother. Pass it on!

Audience: *(Each table from the front to the back, repeat the following, with the help of the Jester or other cast members:)* The court calls Drover's mother. Pass it on!

Maude: That's me! I am Drover's mother. I'm coming. I'm coming! *(In her hurry, she collides with Elizabeth.)*

Audience: *(Each table from the back to the front, repeat the following:)* She's coming. Pass it on!

Jester: She's coming!

Maude: I am going to the castle. You see, my son is going to be the next...king.

Elizabeth: *(In a haughty manner.)* Your son the next...King? That is...twiddling twaddle. You see, the boot *actually* very nearly fits my boy...*(Aside)* I raised him like my own... and *he* is going to be the next king.

Maude: Oh, *really!* You probably trimmed his toenails back to the first joint to make the boot fit. *(Laughingly)* We could all call him King Stumpy! *(On stage, turning to the audience:)* Everyone! Hail, King Stumpy!

- Audience:* (And Cast, except Royal Court) Hail, King Stumpy!
- Elizabeth:* You jest now, you brazen peasant, but when I am the Queen Mother, you will jest no more. Buffoons can't be choosers, and buffoons...can't ...be...kings!
- Maude:* (Going on-stage. Out of breath. Carrying a lot of "stuff.") I'm here. Am I late? I hope I'm not too late. Am I late? I came as soon as I got your call. (To Bellman:) I'm not late, am I, your highness? Are *you* the highness? Kind of short to be a "high-ness" ain't you? A little humor there. I never been to court before. Where do I stand? Do I have to swear? Somebody said I have to swear. I want you to know I don't swear. Never have. Never had a reason to. I hope you don't make me swear. That would go against me a lot.
- Bailiff:* Madame..
- Maude:* Oh, please don't call me a...Madame. I'm just...a Maude. Don't make near that kinda quid, not me.
- Bailiff:* Raise your right hand. (She raises her left hand.) No, your *other* right hand. Do you promise to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth...so help you God?
- Maude:* Ohhh, well...you caught me off guard on that one didn't you? Since this is me first time, (Pause) could I just go for...half the truth... so help me Clinton? (Or current President)
- Jester:* Lady Maude, I am your son's counsel.
- Maude:* You got two things wrong there, cox comb. First I ain't "Lady" Maude, and second, you're fired. I can counsel me own boy.
- Jester:* But...I am appointed by the court.
- Maude:* Well, you are *dis*-appointed by me.
- King:* I appointed the Jester as counsel to your son and he will remain as counsel.
- Maude:* Well, who do you *think* you are?
- Royal Court:* (Gasp!)
- King:* I *think*...I am the King!
- Maude:* Oh, good *thinking*, yes, good thinking. *King.* Oh, good. (Pausing, then realizing she is speaking to the real king.) Then...*you* are the "highness?" I see. Yes...you've got the crown and everything. (To son:) I've bollixed this, haven't I? Put the boot on, kid, and let's get outa here. We'll go home, I'll make you some porridge.
- Drover:* No, mother, not until I am...King!

- Maude:* Such peevish tenacity. I love that in you, son.
- Jester:* Maude, please tell us about your son. Start at the very beginning.
- Maude:* Very beginning, oh, boy. Well...I was layin' on me back in the hayloft, and this guy...
- Jester:* Not that far back, Maude!
- Maude:* Well, next I was in this Ladies' Hospital in London town. I think I had twins this time. They came so fast for awhile, it's hard to count. But...I do remember in the nursery, there was a great hustling and bustling folderol.
- Jester:* What happened?
- Maude:* Well, one of the midwives came in, all nervous-like, and said to me:
- Midwife:* *(From the parapet. Holding a doll wrapped up like a newborn baby. Midwife could be either female or male speaking in falsetto.)* "I am terribly sorry, mum, but I think there has been a mix-up. One of the little nippers climbed out of *his* crib and into the *next* crib. We didn't know which was which, and when we tried to put one of them back into the empty crib, we accidentally dropped him on his little 'ead." *(Drops the doll over the edge of the parapet. It is attached by a bungee cord to its leg. A slide whistle could in a musical manner describe the bungee trip. The extra pulls the doll up by the leg, wraps it up, and smiles at the audience. Exits.)*
- Maude:* Oh, he cried...and he cried...and he cried.
- Jester:* Then what?
- Maude:* Well, then he bawled...and he bawled...and he bawled.
- Jester:* And then what?
- Maude:* And...and then he wailed...and he wailed...and he wailed. *(Crying from the son.)*
- Jester:* And???
- Maude:* And...then they said... "This one *must* be...the Prince of Wails!"...so they put him in the fancy crib. And I know its a little thing, but he has been kinda like *royalty* ever since. And it's kinda funny, you know. One day you're a wee one wailin' to be changed, and then the nurse drops you on your 'ead an' says you're the Prince o' Wails, an' then you put your foot in a boot an' it fits...an' before you know it, you are the next king. I'd say that's life in the fast track.
- Merton:* I object! This is all hear-say.

- Jester:* Of course it is! That is why we have *her* here. So we can hear what *her* has to say...that's *her* say.
- King:* Objection over-ruled. Mertonsire, would you like to cross-examine the witness?
- Merton:* Yes, your grace, I would. *(To Maude)* Maude. May I call you Maude?
- Maude:* You can call me anything you want, Merty, as long as you don't call me late for dinner. *(To audience.)* Ha, ha...that was my grandfather's favorite joke. We laughed a lot at that in Edina. *(Or other nearby town.)* Not a lot to *laugh* about in Edina. *(Or other nearby town.)*
- Merton:* Maude, did you *indeed* have twins?
- Maude:* Yes, indeed I did the deed...and indeed I did have twins.
- Merton:* No further questions.
- King:* Maude, you may step down. Call the next witness.
- Merton:* I would like to call Elizabeth, the Nanny of Lord *Arne*. *(Or other political personage.)*
- Elizabeth:* *(Stomping to the stage in a huff.)* Well, it's about *time*. I have been sitting back in the shadows, listening to the dribbling drivel of this *peasant* woman. How can you listen to someone who...*(Closes her eyes and ponders her words, then opens her eyes.)* Oh, its all just...too emotional.
- Jester:* Yes, emotions happen, don't they?
- Merton:* Would you please tell us of the early recollections of your charge?
- Elizabeth:* I, too, remember the London Ladies' Hospital. The Queen came in on the same day as the *(nose in air, sniffs disdainfully)* aforementioned peasant woman.
- Merton:* Did she give birth to a baby?
- Elizabeth:* She gave birth to a..baby...boy. Yes, that's it....a baby...boy. She left the boy in *my charge* and I have raised him as my own ever since, away from the harsh glare of candles.
- Merton:* Tell us about his early years.
- Elizabeth:* I remember when he was a young boy and he and his friends would play "*King of the Hill*." He would get up real early to be on the hill first, then pour *hot oil* ...on his friends as they slid off the sides of the hill. He *owned* that hill, he did! It was something to watch, let me tell you. He *was* the King!

Merton: Was there anything else?

Maude: Oh, my yes. The little “Prince“ loved collecting “taxes” from the smaller boys so they could use the road in front of his house. It was so cute. If they didn’t pay, he would send his “army” of friends to collect. He acted *so much* like a king...and he made so much *money!*

Merton: I rest my case.

Maude: I think he’s got...DNA!

Drover: What’s DNA, Mummy?

Maude: That’s a ...*Dangerously...Narrow...Attitude.*

King: Jester, do you wish to cross-examine this witness?

Jester: No, but I would like to ask her some *questions.*

King: Proceed.

Jester: On the day these young men were born, was there not also a... young girl born?

Royal Court: (*Gasp!*)

Elizabeth: Well, yes...and no. She was not a young girl when she was born, she was just a baby.

Jester: Who was the mother of the baby girl?

Elizabeth: I...I’d rather not say.

Jester: Is it not true that the mother of the baby girl is in this...*very... room?*

Royal Court: (*Gasp!*)

Elizabeth: (*Looks around at the Royal Court, and starts crying.*) I won’t say! You can’t make me.

Jester: Your Majesty, I would like to recall this witness later.

King: Very well. Elizabeth, you may step down. (*Looking to Royal Court*)

Bailiff: The results are yet inconclusive. We still have two pretenders to the throne.

Courtier: We *must* bring in the...Royal Mirror.

Bailiff: According to the custom in the kingdom, anyone who looks into the mirror, and sees the image of the king, will indeed...*be* the next king.

King: (Strikes gavel on table.)

Minstrel: (As gavel sound is heard, immediately rises, strums an E minor chord and begins singing:)
 Three babies born on the same day,
 Two almost fit the boot, they say.
 But one alone will be the king;
 The mirror will tell us this ev-en-ing.

(The Royal Mirror is brought into the hall by the pages, with a drum roll and much pomp and ceremony. It should be a full-length frame. It is draped in red velvet. It is set on a stand.)

Twiggins: I'll go first. Then we can end this quickly. Hold the mirror up so our guests can see *my...kingly* image.

Jester: I'll help. (The mirror, which is actually just a large, empty, picture frame is between the prince and the peasant. The drape is taken off the mirror only after both the prince and the peasant are in place. The peasant is upstage holding the mirror.)
 Mirror, mirror in the hall,
 Who's *kinkiest* one of all?

Bailiff: Sorry, *not* right. That's:
 Mirror, mirror in the hall,
 Who's *king-liest* one of all?

Jester: So what's the difference?

Royal Court: (Gasp!)

Jester: Mirror, mirror in the hall,
 Who's *king-liest* one of all?

Twiggins: Twiggins sees Drover as his reflection in the mirror. (Actually on the other side of the frame, facing out so that the audience can also see.) He is stunned! Drover echoes his every move, as Higgins tries to fool him. The drape is replaced over the mirror.)
 There must be a mistake! I look just like *him!* How *dreadful!*
 How *revolting.* It's not the image of a king at all. My life's dream is *shattered.* Now I shall be forced to go into...*politics!*...or worse yet, become a high school principal. (Or other occupation.)

Drover: Tough luck, you *counterfeit courtier!* That narrows the field considerably. Ah, I shall *savor* this moment. Now, hold the mirror for *me*, your next *king!*

Merton: Let's get on with it. I'll ask the question:
 Mirror, mirror in the hall,
 Who is the *kingliest* one of all?

Drover: (Drover sees the reflection of Twiggins in the mirror. (Actually on the other side of the frame, facing out so that the audience can also see.) He is also stunned. Twiggins echoes his every

move, as Drover tries to fool him. The drape is replaced over the mirror.)

No, no, no! There *must* be a mistake. I look just like *him*. It can not *be* that we are twins. Oh no! Heaven forbid. I can't believe it! I'm *not* the next King? What a royal pane in the glass!

Scene Four:

Really far from the beginning
And thankfully approaching the ending.

(Takes place where the last scene took place. Nobody move!)

Mary: Is this the Royal Court?

Bailiff: Yes, of course, it is the Royal Court.

Mary: I *must* see the king.

Bailiff: But this is Ruling Day, and his Majesty is *very* busy.

Mary: His Majesty will *want* to hear what *I* have to say.
(Slipping away from the Bailiff and approaching the king. She does a deep curtsey, kind of a cute-sy curtsey.)
By your leave, your Grace, I *must* have a word with you.

King: It is all right, Bailiff. Yes, young lady, what is it?

Mary: *(To mother Maude)* Oh, Hi, mum. When I was born in the London Ladies' Hospital, the *Queen* was there. According to me mum, the Queen sent me home in this large, beautiful boot...the one I wear today. They said I completely fit into it, would you believe, me whole body and everything!

Twiggins: I believe it.

Elizabeth: *(Hitting him with her purse or something like a purse but not unlike an umbrella but not a too-hard hit so as to avoid causing pain or disfigurement.)* Oh, be quiet, you noodle-noggin'd good-for-nothing oaf!

Mary: Well, the Queen said that when I got big enough to wear the boot on me foot, I should come to the castle and ask the King to give me the other boot. So that's why I am here. Could I have me boot now?

King: Well...yes. Bailiff, please give her the Royal Boot, so to speak. And Jester, get her a chair.

(Jester looks around and finding no chair, gets down on his hands and knees. The Bailiff gives the Royal Boot to Mary, who sits on the Jester and pulls it on. Of course, it fits perfectly.)

Jester: It fits...like a *hand* in a *glove*!

Merton: *(To the Jester:)* Not that bloody *glove* joke again!

Jester: I'll keep trying until they laugh. (*No laughter*) It fits like a hand in a glove!

Royal Court: (*Pause one beat, then Royal Court and cast loudly laugh*)

Jester: Your Majesty, I would like to recall Elizabeth, the Nanny.

King: Why not? One good surprise deserves another.

Jester: Elizabeth, I know what a terrible burden it has been to carry this secret with you all these years.

Elizabeth: I promised *never* to say anything to anyone.

Jester: But now you *must* tell the court exactly what happened that fateful day.

Elizabeth: I know I must. (*Looking toward the Queen, taking out a large handkerchief and loudly blowing nose.*) Sorry, mum. I share the secret with one who is in this room. We vowed *never* to tell. The day these two boys were born, a girl was also born. The twin boys were born to this *peasant* woman, (*Motioning to Maude*) and this *girl* ...was born to....the Queen.

Royal Court: (*Gasp*)

King: Yes, go on.

Elizabeth: The Queen was quite distressed, because the King wanted *only* a son, so this woman said,

Maude: "Why don't you take one of *my* boys and I'll take your *daughter*. I *always* wanted a daughter. And no one need know. (*To the Queen*) Mums the word...mum."

Elizabeth: The Queen agreed.

Courtier: (*Stunned*) No! Not so!

Elizabeth: Oh, yes, quite so! I raised the boy as a *prince*, and she raised the princess as a *peasant*.. It is no surprise to me that she fits the Royal Boot.

Maude: She will also see the King when she looks into the Royal Mirror.

Merton: Does that mean she will be *king*...or she will be...*queen*?

Jester: I think she will be a *King*.

Merton: No she *must* be a *queen* ...because she is a girl.

Jester: Well, if *boys* can be kings, girls can also be *kings*.

King: First, she *must* look into the Royal Mirror.

- Mary:* I'd just as soon go home with me mum, if its all the same to you. I feel like I have already been on a game show. I got these fantastical boots. I am fordone. That's enough for me. I'm happy. By your leave, Ta ta. *(Starts to leave.)*
- King:* *(Coming around from behind the head table.)* No, stay your leave. You must first look into...the Royal Mirror. I'll hold it myself, so we are sure there's no higgledy-piggledy. *(King holds up the mirror, so that he is facing the audience.)*
- Mary:* I never seen meself in a mirror before. *(The mirror is undraped. With great surprise!)* Ohh...I look like...a *King!* I always thought I looked a bit more *feminine* than that...Kind-a chunky, too.
- King:* I hereby proclaim that *you, Mary,* will be the next King. *(Strikes the gavel loudly.)*
- Minstrel:* *(As gavel sound is heard, immediately rises, strums an E minor chord and smiles.)*
- Mary:* Ain't that something? I'm gonna be the new *King!* But, shouldn't I be *Queen Mary?*
- Jester:* I am sorry to tell you, but the name, Queen Mary, was already spoken for... something about this big, big boat.
- King:* Mary, you *will* be the new king...after I die.
- Mary:* When'll that be?
- King:* *Hope-*fully several years.
- Mary:* I hope it is *fully* several years. In the meantime, I would like to go back 'ome. Me mum makes the best porridge in the whole world.
- Jester:* *(Motioning to the painter in the parapet)* ...And the Court Painter paints the best portraits in the whole world. *(The Royal Painter turns around the painting he has been working on. It turns out to be Leonardo da Vinci's "Last Supper." Surprise, surprise.)*
- Bailiff:* All rise...and *Hail King Mary!* *(Gavel strikes table)*
- Minstrel:* *(As gavel sound is heard, immediately rises, strums an E minor chord and begins singing:)*
All male kings hairy, now hail King Mary!
Hail Mary, hairy kings all, now hail!
Sing merry men and maids to hail
King Mary! *(Pauses and comes to the center of the stage, then finishes the song.)* And thus ends our courtly tale.
- Cast:* *(Repeat the ending of the song, joining the Minstrel at center stage.)*
Sing merry men and maids to hail
King Mary! *(Pause)* And thus doth end our courtly tale.

(The Royal Court leads the audience in the applause. Characters bow and exit. The Brass appear during the applause and begin the fanfare or slightly longer brass work as soon as the applause dies down.)

Brass: Fanfare V: The Concert

Royal Court: Royal Court stands and applauds the Brass. They stand behind their chairs as the Brass exit.

*Courtier: Now let us sing with joy and mirth
In honor of our Lordës birth;
For his life and humanity,
Who gave himself for us to die.*

*Courtier: By Adam we were all forlorn;
But now Christ Jesus to us is born:
Has freed us from captivity
And vanquished has our enemy.*

*Courtier: When he was born none did him snib,
To lie richt low intil ane crib,
Ane ox, ane ass, richt tenderly
Refreshit his humanity.*

*Courtier: The angels sang with merryness,
Unto the herds, both more and less,
And bade them of good comfort be
For Christës new nativity.*

*Courtier: Now let us sing with joy and mirth,
In honor of our Lordës birth.*

1. Noel Sing We

2. With Hearts and Minds

3. Ave Plena Gracia

*Courtier: A little child there is y-born,
And he sprang out of Jesse's thorn
To save all us that were forlorn, Alleluia!*

*Courtier: Now Jesus is the childës name,
And Mary mild, she is his dame;
And so our sorrow is turned to game. Alleluia!*

*Courtier: It fell upon the high midnight,
The stars, they shown both fair and bright.
The angels sang with all their might! Alleluia!*

*Courtier: Now sit we down upon our knee,
And pray we to the Trinity,*

Our help, our succor, for to be. Alleluia!

4. Susanni

5. Jesus Christ the Apple Tree

5. To Keep the Cold Wind Away

Courtier: Unfold, unfold! Take in his light,
Who makes thy cares more short than night.
The joys, which with his Day-star rise,
He deals to all but drowsy eyes:
And what the men of this world miss,
Some drops and dews of future bliss.

Courtier: Hark! how his winds have chang'd their note,
And with warm whispers call thee out,
The frosts are past, the storms are gone:
And backward life at last comes on.

Courtier: The lofty groves in express joys
Reply unto the turtle's voice,
And here in dust and dirt, O here
The lilies of his love appear!

6. Poverty

7. What is This Fragrance?

8. Sans Day Carol

Courtier: All this night shrill chanticleer, day's proclaiming trumpeter
Claps his wings and loudly cries:
"Mortals, mortals, wake and rise!
See a wonder heaven is under:
From the earth is risen a Sun,
Shines all night though day be done!"

Courtier: Wake, O Earth, wake everything! Wake and hear the joy I bring!
Wake and joy, for this night heaven and earth and ev'ry twinkling light
All amazing, still stand gazing!
Angels, powers, and all that be, wake and joy this *Sun* to see!

Courtier: Hail, O Sun, O blessed light, sent into this world by night:
Let thy rays and heavenly powers shine into this dark soul of
ours:
For most duly thou art truly God and man, we do confess.
Hail O Sun of Righteousness!

Cast: *(From the back of the hall, the Cast sings the Choir 2 echo on the next piece. They make their way to the stage during the singing of CHILDREN, COME A-RUNNING, where they sit in a random manner for the next two songs.)*

10. Echo Song

11. Children, Come, Come A-running

12. A Merry Christmas

Cast: (The cast bows and exits quickly. The Jester comes on stage.)

Jester: My friends, as we now take our leave,
We pray *your* mirror of this eve'
Will reflect our music, laughter, love,
Our truth in beauty, our peace thereof.

For the Royal Mirror we *all* possess,
Are the friends, who in their truth do bless
Our hearts with visions...not of kings,
But of ourselves. My soul sings
For who I am because of you:
I *am* a King in what I do.

God speed, good friends....good night.

(The Jester exits slowly and quietly through the audience during the singing of the next song.)

13. My Friends, We Now Must Leave Thee

14. Silent Night

(The Royal Court sings the first verse from the stage, then exits singing the other verses. The final verse is sung in a distant hallway, slowly fading out.)

Madrigal Dinner Music 1495

<i>Opening Call:</i>	Good Day, Sir Christemas	Anon. 15th Cent. English Carol (MDB)
<i>Processional:</i>	Personent hodie	Anon. 14th Cent. German Carol (OBC)
<i>Prayer:</i>	Adoramus te, Christe	Quirino Gasparini (Walton 2177)
<i>Wassail:</i>	Gloucestershire Wassail	Traditional English (MDB)
<i>Boar's Head:</i>	Boar's Head Carol	Traditional English (MDB)
<i>Dessert:</i>	Deck the Hall	Traditional English, arr. Brandvik (MDB)

Concert

1. Noel, Sing We	Anon. 15th Cent. English (MDB)	
2. With Hearts and Minds	Michael Praetorius (S&B 2065-3)	
3. Ave plena gratia	Anon. 15th Cent. English (MDB)	
4. Susanni	Anon. 15th Cent German (OBC)	
5. Jesus Christ the Apple Tree	Elizabeth Poston (B#ECS 141)	
6. To Keep the Cold Wind Away	Paul Brandvik (National CH-52)	
7. Poverty	Welsh Carol, arr. Caradog Roberts (OBC)	
8. What is This Fragrance?	Paul Brandvik (A)	
9. Sans Day Carol	English Carol, arr. Martin Shaw	
*10. Echo song	Orlando di Lasso (Walton W7022)	
*11. Children, Come, Come A-running	Paul Brandvik (Schmitt)	
*12. A Merry Christmas	Trad. English, arr. Warrell (Oxford 43.205)	
<i>Farewell:</i>	My Friends, We Now Must Leave Thee	Heinrich Isaac (MDB)
<i>Recessional:</i>	Silent Night	Franz Gruber (MDB)

**Denotes music to be sung by entire cast.*

Madrigal Dinner Music Publishers:

A	Augsurg Fortress
B	Banks Music Publications (Intrada Mus. Group, Distributer)
KS	Knight-Shtick Press
MDB	The Compleet Madrigal Dinner Booke , Paul Brandvik. Curtis Music Press, Minneapolis, 1979 (<i>Distributed by Neil A. Kjos Music Company, San Diego</i>)
MF	Mark Foster
National	National Music Publishers
MS	Unpublished Manuscript
O	Oxford University Press
OBC	Oxford Book of Carols , Oxford University Press, Dearmer, Vaughan Williams, Shaw; London, 1964
Schmitt	Schmitt Publications
S & B	Stainer and Bell
Walton	Walton Music