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# The Court Jester

## Dena Enterprises presents Danny Kaye

[song during opening titles]

Life could not better be, better be, better be  
It could not possibly, no sirrah, sirrah siree

Songs could not gayer be, sound your do ray or me.  
Ray me fa so la see fa, la la la, follow me

Why be gloomy? Cut thy nose off to spite thy face?  
Listen to me: A nose is hard to replace.

Skies could not bluer be, hearts in love truer be  
I'd say for you or me, life couldn't possibly, not even probably,  
life couldn't possibly better be

Life could not better be, on a med-eival spree  
knights full of chivalry, villains full of villainy

You'll see as you suspect maidens fair, in silks bedecked  
each tried and true effect for the umpteenth time we resurrect

We did research -- authenticity was a must!  
zukes! did we search! and what did we find?  
a lotta dust!

After the dust had cleared, half the cast had a beard  
and I'm the one as you can see for whom the bell tolls merrily!

We asked Shakespeare and Francis Bacon would they declare  
which one wrote this and they both said: get outta dere!

Which brings us to the plot, plot we got, quite a lot!  
as it unfolds you'll see . . . what starts like a scary tale . . . ends like a fairy tale . . .  
and life couldn't possibly better be!

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**[narrator . . . ]**

*This is the story of how the destiny of a nation was changed by a birthmark. A royal birthmark on the royal backside of a royal infant child. Here returning to his castle is King Roderick. Roderick the tyrant, who some months before seized the throne by a massacre of the entire royal family. But uneasy lies Roderick's crown, for rumor hath it that an infant, the rightful heir to the throne had survived the massacre and even now is being cared for by a group in the forest. A group led by an elusive dashing outlaw known only as the Black Fox! [shoots a guard]*

**[dialog . . . ]**

**Guard** (reading): The child lives! Death to the tyrant! The Black Fox.

**Roderick:** The Black Fox again! To the castle, quick!

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**Roderick:** My kingdom seething with revolt, cutthroats and assassins in every tree! Why must I be surrounded by fools? Ravenhurst! Ravenhurst!

**Ravenhurst:** Sire!

**Roderick:** Could you have been so incompetent, bungled so horribly, as to have permitted that child to live?

**Ravenhurst:** Sire, there is no child. My men assure me that none of the royal family escaped alive. Believe me, sire, this is nonsense.

**Roderick:** Nonsense? You call it nonsense, Ravenhurst! Is it nonsense that I cannot ride my own domain without being murderously attacked. My child, I came within an inch of my life.

**Princess Gwendolyn:** Oh, father.

**Roderick:** Each day, some new insurrection. Who is this black fox?

**Ravenhurst:** Oh just some ridiculous adventurer with a handful of rabble

**Brockhurst:** Rabble today but an army tomorrow! We need help to wipe them out. Men and arms!

**Pertry:** Aye, an alliance with our good friend Griswold of the North!

**Finsdale:** Aye, alliance, and quickly! He arrives tomorrow for the great tournament.

**Roderick:** Alliance with Griswold...

**Ravenhurst:** Sire, this rabble can be crushed.

**Brockhurst:** Griswold has men and arms

**Ravenhurst:** We need no uncouth interloper from the north.

**Roderick:** Uncouth, yes, but Griswold is strong

**Brockhurst:** Perhaps too strong. Perhaps our friend Ravenhurst fears an alliance would put Griswold and not himself at the king's right hand!

**Ravenhurst:** You shall die for this!

**Brockhurst:** One of us will!

**Roderick:** Stop! Stop! Stop, I say!

[Ravenhurst disarms Brockhurst]

**Roderick:** Put up your sword, you fool.

**Ravenhurst:** Sire!

**Roderick:** Silence!

**Ravenhurst:** But sire!

**Roderick:** Silence!

**Brockhurst:** Your pardon, sire.

**Roderick:** And you, too. Must we quarrel amongst ourselves? Do you think I could make alliance? Griswold is rich. What could I offer him?

**Brockhurst:** That which he desires most in the world. Marriage, sire. With your daughter, the fair Gwendolyn.

**Princess:** Marriage with Griswold? Never!

**Roderick:** What's that you say?

**Princess:** He's a brute and a lout!

**Roderick:** Brute or not, lout or not, if I so decide, you'll marry Griswold.

**Princess:** I will not.

**Roderick:** I am the king. If it pleases me, you will marry Griswold.

**Princess:** If it pleases you so much, you marry Griswold. When I marry, I marry for love. Someone dashing and romantic, who will carry me off as a princess should be carried off!

**Roderick** (interrupting): Who fills your head with this childish fiddle faddle? ah, I know... Grizelda. She of the evil eye. Take the witch out and burn her!

**Princess:** Harm one hair of her head and I throw myself from the highest turret.

**Roderick:** Gwendolyn, you go too far!

[Trumpets sound]

**Messenger:** Dire news, sire! I've just come from the forest. The child lives!

**Roderick:** The child lives?!

**Messenger:** Aye, sire.

**Roderick:** How know you that this is the royal child and not some outrageous imposter?

**Messenger:** Because sire, disguised as a member of their group, I saw him. And I can assure you that like his royal ancestors, and on the same spot as his royal ancestors, he bears the royal birthmark.

**Roderick:** The... purple pimperl?

**Messenger:** The purple pimperl.

**Roderick:** Oh... Then why stand you here, you incompetent JACKALINGS(?)? To horse! To the forest!

Cut them down! Kill the infamous child who claims to be the rightful king. And destroy forever this traitorous fiend who calls himself the Black Fox!

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**(Apparently the Fox):** Ah ha ha ha ha ha ha!

(sings)

Only the sharpest eye, the keenest nose, the quickest ear and fleetest toes can ever outfox the fox!

(They'll never outfox the fox!)

[Etc.]

[Skipping song]

**Black Fox:** Hawkins! Hawkins! Come here!

**Hawkins:** (falls)

**Dwarf 1:** Are you all right, Hawkins?

**Dwarf...n:** Hawkins, are you all right? [Etc.]

**Black Fox:** Come here!

**Hawkins:** Sir.

**Black Fox:** Hawkins, how many times have I told you to stay out of my clothes? And who are these little people?

**Hawkins:** Oh, these are my friends, sir. They used to work with me at the carnival. They're the finest troupe of acrobats and tumblers in all of England.

**Black Fox:** But why did you bring them here?

**Hawkins:** Well they too would be part of our group, sir. They feel strongly as we do about the tyranny and would join in our worthy cause.

[Secret whistle from off screen]

**Jean:** Sir.

**Black Fox:** Well, captain?

**Jean:** The new recruits are arriving, sir.

**Black Fox:** Hawkins, I don't mean to be disparaging to your little friends, but weapons are limited and...

**Hawkins:** Oh oh oh, I didn't intend for them to fight, sir, I I merely thought that they would take over my chores of entertaining the men. Then perhaps I'd be free to bear arms myself, sir, and come to grips with the

enemy. Face to face and steel to steel. Fist to fist, sir.

**Black Fox:** Hmph. Little friends, I'm sorry, but food and weapons are limited so you see, uh...

**Dwarf1** (interrupting): We'll do anything for hawkins, sir. He always was our friend.

**Black Fox:** I'm sorry, there's no time to discuss it. Please go quickly and without detection.

**Dwarf1:** Well, if you ever need us, call us!

**Black Fox:** I shall.

**Dwarf2...n:** Bye hawkins!

**Black Fox:** Hawkins! The recruits will be here in a moment. Get the child.

**Hawkins:** Child... er... I hate to keep mentioning this, sir...

**Black Fox:** Just get the child!

**Hawkins:** Well, sir, you know I'd do anything for his majesty, but don't you think it look better if a woman were...

**Black Fox** (interrupting): Tend to your duty! And get out of my clothes!

**Hawkins:** Yessir.

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[Hawkins flashes baby's butt to recruits]

**Recruit 1** (kneeling): Majesty!

**Recruit 2:** Your majesty!

**Recruit 3:** Your majesty!

**Recruit 4...n:** Your majesty!

**Hawkins** (continuing): Sir. Don't you think it really would, look better if this kind of thing were done by a woman?

**Black Fox:** I've told you repeatedly, hawkins. Each one serves as best he can.

**Hawkins:** I know, sir, but when I ran away from the carnival, sir, and joined your group, I thought I'd be in the thick of it. Robbing the rich and giving to the poor.

[Secret whistle]

**Man with pigeon:** Sir! Our presence is known. The king's men are on their way!

**Black Fox:** We must disperse! Maid Jean.

**Jean:** Yes, sir.

**Black Fox:** You will see that the child is transported to the abbey in Dover.

**Jean:** The usual method?

**Black Fox:** The usual method.

**Jean:** Come, hawkins.

**Hawkins:** Yes, captain.

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**Jean:** Hawkins, hurry!

**Hawkins:** I'm putting the last touches on, right now.

**Jean:** Don't just stand there, man! Make haste!

**Hawkins:** There.

**Jean:** Why do you stare?

**Hawkins:** I... Beg pardon, captain, but, I'm... I'm sorry, captain, but I didn't mean to stare. Each time I see you as a woman, sir, I mean with your flowing hair...

**Jean:** Conceal the child! Quickly!

**Hawkins:** Yes, captain.

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**Jean:** The king's men. you know what to do, hawkins.

**Hawkins:** Yes, captain. I'll try. (coughs)

**Guard Captain:** Ho there! Hold I say! Come down old man, we would talk to you. You too, wench.

**Hawkins:** What's that?

**Guard Captain:** Hurry along, this is king's business!

**Hawkins:** What's the meaning of this?

**Guard Captain:** Come on!

**Hawkins:** W...what's the meaning of this? What do you want of us?

**Guard Captain:** Where go you, ancient one? Who are you?

**Hawkins:** What's that?

**Guard Captain:** Who are you?

**Hawkins:** What's... what's that?

**Guard Captain** (shouts louder): Who ARE YOU?

**Hawkins:** Fine, thank you.

**Guard Captain:** No! No, no. WHO?

**Hawkins:** Who! Who, who. Who. (cough, cough) who. (Cough) I am Foltzingdale uh the wine merchant (cough), and this is my little granddaughter. Uh poor child, she's a mute, uh she neither speaks nor hears except through my fingers. (Fingers to her mouth) Child, the... No, no, here (her fingers to his mouth) child, (coff) these (coff) these are the king's men. Men of the king!

**Jean:** (Signs for a while)

**Hawkins:** Eh she says long live the king and down with his (bad coughing spell, she pounds his back) long live the kind and down with his (choke, cough) long (coughing) little harder, dear (coughing) long live the kind and down with his (coughing) not quite so hard... (Wheeze) long live the kind and down with his enemies.

**Guard Captain:** Enough! Have you seen a group in the forest with a child?

**Hawkins:** Uh what's that? What? What?

**Guard Captain:** A child! A child!

**Hawkins:** A child. Child. Oh! Lovely child, pretty little creature, isn't it? (Scolding) but you stay away from her!

**Guard Captain:** No, no no no, a child! (Gestures) So big! Uh with a little mark on...

**Hawkins** (shouted interruption): You do and I'll break every bone in your body! (coughing)

**Guard Captain:** (Sighs) Ask the... Ask the girl if she's seen a group in the forest.

**Hawkins:** Uh what's that? what?

**Guard Captain:** Ask the girl if she's seen a group in the forest.

**Hawkins:** Eh why din't I what?

**Guard Captain** (shouting): Ask THE GIRL IF SHE'S SEEN A GROUP IN THE FOREST!

**Hawkins:** No need to holler, sir, I hear very well indeed!

**Guard Captain:** Well ASK HER!

**Hawkins:** Ask her what?

**Guard Captain:** If SHE'S SEEN A GROUP IN THE FOREST?

**Hawkins:** Uh y-yes... (Her fingers to his lips) child, have you seen a group in the forest?

**Jean:** (Signs for a while)

**Hawkins:** Eh she says no.

**Guard Captain:** What took her so long?

**Hawkins:** Stutters.

**Guard Captain:** Tah, we waste time with these dolts. Off with you!

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[riding wine cart]

**Baby:** (squawks)

**Hawkins** (checking baby): Oh, he's quite all right.

**Jean:** You were excellent, hawkins

**Hawkins:** You too, captain. We played our parts extremely well, I thought. You know, we should spend a lot more time together. Uh, for rehearsal, I mean. **Jean** (looks up after thunderclap): There's a storm brewing. We'll spend the night in the woodman's hut.

**Hawkins:** Yes, captain.

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**Hawkins** (holding baby): (Comforting noises, "de-de-de-de-de") (sings . . . )

loo loo loo I'll take you dreaming  
through the rainy night  
to a place behind the raindrops  
where the stars are bright  
you may not find gold or silver  
but a richer prize  
waits for you behind the raindrops  
if you'll close your eyes  
tonight, tonight  
when all the world's asleep  
we will tiptoe home with a wondrous star  
a star you can always keep  
and years from now when you go dreaming  
when you're very old  
though your crown be rich with rubies  
diamonds set in gold  
none will shine as bright  
as the star we'll find  
tonight  
(puts baby to bed)  
tonight, tonight  
when all the world's asleep  
we will find a star  
that you can always keep

**Hawkins:** His majesty's asleep, now.

**Jean:** You better get some sleep, too. Over there.

**Hawkins:** Uh, there's only room for one... I... I think you'd better take it.

**Jean:** We can both lie there. If you get wet and ill, you'll be no use to his majesty at all. Lie down.

**Hawkins:** Yes, captain

[they lie down]

**Hawkins:** Wet.

**Jean:** Very. There'd be more room if you raised your arm. The other one.

**Hawkins:** Sorry.

**Jean:** Hawkins.

**Hawkins:** Yes, captain.

**Jean:** I'm sorry I... I spoke in the manner I did. I was wrong.

**Hawkins:** Y-yes, captain?

**Jean:** There's something else I'd like to say.

**Hawkins:** Yes?

**Jean:** I am a woman. And I do have feelings.

**Hawkins:** I... I find it hard to believe that the captain could ever be fond of a man who isn't a fighter.

**Jean:** Sometimes tenderness and kindness can also make a man. A very rare man.

**Hawkins:** Could the captain... Could the captain ever entertain thoughts of marriage with such a man?

**Jean:** Yes, Hawkins. I think she could, and would. If things were different.

**Hawkins:** How di-different?

**Jean:** The infant on the throne and... Our fight for freedom won.

**Hawkins:** Why does such a little girl have to do such a big job?

**Jean:** It's the way I was brought up. My father's influence. You see, my father made me everything I am.

**Hawkins:** He does beautiful work.

**Jean:** He taught me how to love freedom and hate injustice. The use of weapons and how to fight. In fact, I think he... he really wanted me to be a boy (kisses Hawkins)

**Hawkins:** Too bad. You'd've made a wonderful girl.

**Jean:** No! We daren't think of ourselves until our fight is won.

**Hawkins:** Yes, but that could take twenty years or more.

**Jean:** Or twenty hours. If only we could put our plan into operation.

**Hawkins** (kissing Jean): Plan? Do we have a p-plan?

**Jean:** A handful of men could overthrow the castle in a matter of hours.

**Hawkins** (still kissing her): Yes.

**Jean:** You see, there's a secret passage that starts in the forest and tunnels underneath the walls of the castle

**Hawkins** (still...): Secret passage

**Jean:** But it's locked at both ends and the key is in the king's possession

**Hawkins:** The king's possession, yeah

**Jean:** If only we could have someone inside the castle; an intimate of the king, with access to his chambers.

**Hawkins:** Mm-hmm, with access to his chambers. But, but that's impossible.

**Giacomo:** Ah, good evening! A thousand apologies for this uh intrusion, but may I beg shelter and warmth from this miserable storm.

**Jean:** Who are you?

**Giacomo:** A stranger in this land, young woman, but not for long. I'm Giacomo of the continent (?), the king's new jester.

**Jean:** The court jester.

**Hawkins:** Giacomo?

**Giacomo:** Giacomo the incomparable! King of jesters, and jester of kings.

**Jean:** Well where are you from?

**Giacomo:** Most recently the italian court. But I have entertained in all the courts of Europe and speak a ready wit in their every tongue.

**Jean:** Hawkins, we are indeed honored that our humble hut will shelter one will tomorrow be an intimate of the king.

**Hawkins:** With access to his chambers.

**Jean:** But how will they know you? Are you sure that no one in the castle has ever seen your face?

**Giacomo:** Not yet! But I assure you, Ôere another sun has set, the entire court of England will succumb to the charm, wit, and song of the incomparable Giacomo, king of jesters... (Thud)

**Jean:** ...And jester to the king! I'll take the child to the abbey. You must go to the castle at once. Quickly, into his clothes!

**Hawkins:** W-what are we going to do about him?

**Jean:** I'll notify the fox, he'll be taken care of. Now listen, listen **carefully**: once inside the castle, you must get to the king's chamber, and find the key to the secret passage.

**Hawkins** (undressing Giacomo): Key to the passage. Right.

**Jean:** Then you must give it to the one man inside the castle who's our confederate.

**Hawkins:** Confederate. You mean we already have somebody inside the castle? One of our own people?

**Jean:** You will contact him by whistling our secret call.

**Hawkins:** (Whistles)

**Jean:** Whistle it, hum it, sing it.

**Hawkins:** But I don't understand, if... if we already have somebody inside the castle, why doesn't he get the key?

**Jean:** You'll understand when you see him. Now, he'll hear that and identify himself.

**Hawkins:** Why can't you just tell me his name?

**Jean:** Should they discover you, they might force you to reveal his identity.

**Hawkins:** Okay, I'd like to ask you one question: After months of pleading for just this kind of action, what makes you think that anybody - anybody could make me reveal the identity of my confederate?

**Jean:** Because they'd put you on the rack, crack your every bone, scald you with hot oil, and remove the nails off your fingers with flaming hot pincers.

**Hawkins:** I'd... Like to withdraw the question.

**Jean:** Hawkins, the future of england depends on this; you cannot fail.

**Hawkins:** I will not.

**Jean:** Oh heaven help you. (They kiss) now remember: From this moment on, you're no longer hubert hawkins the carnival entertainer; you're the incomparable Giacomo, king of jesters and jester to the king.

**Hawkins:** Jester to the king. Jester to the king. To the king!?

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**Roderick:** The child escapes. You hear that, Ravenhurst? The child escapes. Gwendolyn, dear, do stop picking that thing. The revolt spreads. Brockhurst here says alliance with Griswold, Finsdale says alliance, Pertry says alliance, and yet you, Ravenhurst, you of all my ministers....

**Ravenhurst:** Sire. If my lords Brockhurst, Finsdale, and Pertry plead so strongly for alliance, then by all means let us have such alliance. A marriage between Sir Griswold and the princess Gwendolyn.

**Roderick:** You are quite right.

**Princess:** Never! Never marriage with Griswold!

**Roderick:** Be sensible.

**Princess:** Sensible! I've seen this monster, and it's not for nothing he's called the grim and gruesome grisly Griswold.

**Roderick:** Grim, grisly or gruesome, you'll marry Griswold!

**Princess:** I'll die first.

**Roderick:** Go to your chambers! Good, it is done. Arrange for the wedding directly after the tournament. We'll make a show of this. You there! Go hence. Scour the countryside. Bring in the fairest wenches in the land. Mind you see that they are the fairest. Wenches, laughter, song, that's what this court needs!

**Ravenhurst:** Indeed, sire! And the good Giacomo will provide it.

**Roderick:** Giacomo? Who is Giacomo?

**Ravenhurst:** He's the new jester I've sent for. By reputation the gayest and wittiest entertainer in Europe.

**Roderick:** Splendid! Ha ha! What a festival this will be. Jousting by our boldest knights. Wenches at our beck and call. My daughter married to Griswold, who will take her to a castle up north. WAY up north! (Laughs, as do ministers) But ("me"?) gentle lords, you make me very happy.

**Lackey to Ravenhurst:** They have won.

**Ravenhurst:** For the moment, yes. The king is guided by the last voice he hears, and that voice shall be mine. Giacomo will see to that.

**Lackey:** Giacomo? A mere jester?

**Ravenhurst:** With one special talent for which my agent has bargained dearly. In addition to his brilliance as an entertainer, the jester Giacomo also happens to be the world's most skillful, devious, and subtle master of the art of assassination.

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**Announcer:** So as Hawkins becomes the incomparable Giacomo and heads for the castle, while the maid Jean with the infant king still hidden in the wine cask journeys towards the abbey and safety for the child. Their plan seems simple enough, but the simplest plans so often go amiss. For at the very moment Hawkins was delayed on the road, the maid Jean was to run afoul of the king's men, who were scouring the countryside for the fairest wenches in the land. And so Jean and the precious wine cart were taken to the castle before Hawkins had even finished repairing his wheel.

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**Guard Captain:** Ho there!

**Hawkins:** What's that?

**Guard Captain:** Welcome Giacomo! We have come to escort you to the castle, w-- haven't we met before?

**Hawkins:** Ah... it's not very likely, my good man, you see, I'm on my way back from the Italian court.

**Guard Captain:** How speak you the King's English with no trace of accent?

**Hawkins:** Ah my dear sir, Giacomo is a master of many many tongues indeed. French: (mixed with vowel gibberish) *Je le parle le fleur ce magnifique* (throws kiss with both hands), Italian: (More vowel gibberish, clasps hands, kisses fingertips), German: *Was haben Sie ausgehoebn in das Kneibinbabn? Das Schmerz . . .* (angry gibberish and pointing), which means in any language, why tarry? Let us off to the castle!

**Guard Captain:** Off to the castle!

**Hawkins:** Off to the castle. (Stumbles) To the castle.

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[Jean rides into courtyard in a cart full of wenches, whistling secret signal]

**Jean:** Quick! The infant!

**Ostler:** The infant? Where?

**Random guard:** Off of the main! Off of the main!

**Jean:** The child is in the cask.

**Ostler:** In the cask?

**Jean:** You must take him to the jester.

**Ostler:** But the jester hasn't arrived, yet.

**Jean:** Something must have gone wrong. I'll have to get the key myself.

**Ostler:** But how?

**Jean:** I don't...

**Random guard** (interrupts): Come along there, wench!

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**Hawkins:** (sings) My heart knows a lovely song . . .

**Ravenhurst:** So this is the incomparable Giacomo. He looks not at all like what I expected.

**Lackey:** And this singing peacock will still the voices of Brockhurst, Finsdale, and Pertry?

**Ravenhurst:** Before midnight, if he fulfills his bargain.

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**Witch:** You sent for me, m'lady?

**Princess:** Lock it.

**Witch:** What is it, child? Something wrong, m'lady?

**Princess:** Drink! A brew of your own concocting. Before I marry Griswold, I will die, and so will you. Drink!

**Witch:** No! Don't despair, child. You will not marry Griswold. I've told you. It was written in the stars. Your true love will come yet, I promise you!

**Princess:** Drink! You lie.

**Witch:** Would I lie to you, child? Your own Grizelda? Look at me! Look in my eyes!

**Princess:** Try not your wiles on me, Witch! Too often have I seen people look in those eyes and fall under your evil spell. You will die for your deceit! Filling my head with fairy stories of a romantic lover. A lover who would carry me away from this monstrous castle!

**Witch:** And so he shall! He comes, even now!

**Princess:** You lie!

**Witch:** No, I swear it, your highness, look!

**Princess:** If this be another one of your tricks...

**Witch:** Trust me, look. Look, near the drawbridge.

**Princess:** King of jesters, jester of kings. He is most fair of countenance.

**Witch:** Oh yes he is!

**Princess:** Handsome of bearing.

**Witch:** Like Apollo of the Greeks!

**Princess:** A figure of romance.

**Witch:** Sent by the gods, and for you alone!

**Princess:** Now mark this, creature of evil: If this be not my true love, and I am faced with marriage to Griswold, you will die, and by my hand.

**Witch:** Fear not, m'lady, your lover will be here, in this room, within the hour. And he will prove that his is a mission of love.

**Princess:** For your sake, dear Grizelda, he had better.

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**Hawkins** (singing):

I am giacomo, giacomo, my fame before me rings --  
a king of jesters, and jester of kings!  
my heart knows a lovely song -- heh heh  
(whistles secret signal)  
it whistles it all day long  
(whistles)  
giacomo is my nom de plume,  
I whistle and hum but I hum to whom?  
To whom do I hum, to whom?  
(whistles, hums, whistles)  
my song of love let the whole world hear  
until that sweet moment, that moment when you appear  
i'll whisper it in your ear  
(whistles, blows air)

**Ostler:** (Whistles secret signal)

**Hawkins:** (Sees Ravenhurst instead)

**Ravenhurst:** I bid you welcome! I am Ravenhurst.

**Hawkins:** Ravenhurst (laughs) Ravenhurst? Uh the real Ravenhurst?

**Ravenhurst:** What?

**Hawkins:** Does the king know? I mean does the king know about your being the real Ravenhurst?

**Ravenhurst:** Keep your jests for the king. Don't stand there gaping! You, Fergus and the others, get the jester's bags! You arrived not a moment too soon.

**Hawkins:** When do we start?

**Ravenhurst:** Tonight.

**Hawkins:** Good. I'd like to get in, get on with it, get it over with, and get out. Get it?

**Ravenhurst:** Got it.

**Hawkins:** Good.

**Ostler:** That was an interesting song you sing.

**Hawkins:** Thank you, I'm glad you liked it, old man.

**Ostler:** Did it go like this? (whistles)

**Ravenhurst:** (hits Ostler) Ostle about your business! What is the first step?

**Hawkins:** Get me to the king's chambers.

**Ravenhurst:** The king's chambers?

**Hawkins:** Yes...

**Ravenhurst:** Very well, if you say so.

**Hawkins:** It may be the KEY to the whole plan, get it?

**Ravenhurst:** Got it.

**Hawkins:** Good.

**Roderick:** Yes, yes, I'll take Griswold's emissaries, but for the moment there are other matters... I understand the wench has arrived. Where are they? What have we here?

**Ravenhurst:** Uh, Sire, may I present the incomparable Giacomo.

**Hawkins:** Uh, king of jesters, and jester of kings.

**Roderick:** Oh, yes! From Italy. I haven't been there for years. Tell me, how go things at the Italian court?

**Hawkins:** Ah very well indeed, sire.

**Roderick:** Splendid, splendid. what about all those stories we've heard? Wasn't it awful about the Duchess of Urber (?)?

**Hawkins:** Oh, just. Uh, just awful, sire.

**Roderick:** I ask you, how could a thing like that happen?

**Hawkins:** Well, sire, you know the Italian court; what better place to court Italians?

**Roderick:** Italian court? Court Italians! (laughs)

**Hawkins:** (laughs) **Roderick:** Ah, Ravenhurst, the fellow has wit! (laughs) Ah, I must admit, I was

shocked to hear about the Duchess. What did the Duke do?

**Hawkins:** Pardon?

**Roderick:** The Duke. What did the Duke do?

**Hawkins:** Eh... the Duke do?

**Roderick:** Yes. And what about the Doge?

**Hawkins:** Oh, the Doge!

**Roderick:** Eh. Well what did the Doge do?

**Hawkins:** The Doge do?

**Roderick:** Yes, the Doge do.

**Hawkins:** Well, uh, the Doge did what the Doge does. Eh, uh, when the Doge does his duty to the Duke, that is.

**Roderick:** What? What's that?

**Hawkins:** Oh, it's very simple, sire. When the Doge did his duty and the Duke didn't, that's when the Duchess did the dirt(?) to the Duke with the Doge. **Roderick:** Who did what to what?

**Hawkins:** Oh, they all did, sire. There they were in the dark; the Duke with his dagger, the Doge with his dart, Duchess with her dirk.

**Roderick:** Duchess with her dirk?

**Hawkins:** Yes! The Duchess dove at the Duke just when the Duke dove at the Doge. Now the Duke ducked, the Doge dodged, and the Duchess didn't. So the Duke got the Duchess, the Duchess got the Doge, and the Doge got the Duke!

**Roderick:** Curious. I... I... hm? What? What's that? All I heard was that the Duchess had a siege of rheumatism. She's 83, you know.

**Hawkins:** Oh, come next summer, sire.

**Roderick:** So's the Duke.

**Hawkins:** So's the Duke. Remarkable, those Italians, what? (laughs)

**Roderick:** (Laughs) Made the whole thing up, didn't you? Ho ha. Very witty, very clever. Just what this court needs: Laughter, gaiety, songs, wenches... ohhh, yes

**Roderick & Hawkins together:** Wenches...

**Roderick:** I'm just on my way to inspect the lot of them. Who knows, I may find some luscious...

**Ravenhurst** (interrupts): Oh, sire. If I may suggest, it ill befits the propriety of your high office to be seen with these unkempt wenches.

**Roderick:** Wha...?

**Ravenhurst:** It is said the incomparable Giacomo has a discerning eye for beauty. Eh, why not let him select a suitable companion for your majesty?

**Roderick:** Excellent! Excellent! I trust the jester's reputation is based on many years of accomplishment?

**Hawkins:** Why do you think they call me incomparable, sire? Get it?

**Roderick:** Got it.

**Hawkins:** Good. (snickers with Roderick)

**Roderick:** Bring her to my chambers. Within the hour?

**Hawkins:** Within the hour.

**Ravenhurst:** Finish with the king and come to my chambers.

**Hawkins:** Within the hour.

**Ostler:** Eh, about that song, sir...

**Hawkins:** Some other time, my good man.

**Ravenhurst:** Yes, Fergus, get on with your work! (To Hawkins) The good captain will escort you to your quarters.

**Hawkins:** Very well.

**Guard Captain:** Are you sure we haven't met before?

**Hawkins:** Quite sure. (To Ravenhurst) Within the hour.

**Lackey:** Your Giacomo seems more the fool than the assassin.

**Ravenhurst:** Or perchance a brilliant combination of both.

**Lackey:** We shall see.

---

**Hawkins:** (Singing) I'm Giacomo, Giacomo, my fame before me rings, king of jesters, and jester of kings!  
(squawks) What are you doing here?

**Ostler:** I'm Fergus, the Ostler.

**Hawkins:** Whobis the whatsler?

**Ostler:** Fergus the Ostler. It is I, not Ravenhurst who is your friend.

**Hawkins:** Look, my good man, you pick your friends and I shall pick mine. At the moment, I have a very important mission with the king. After all, I'm the incomparable Giacomo, king of jesters and jester of kings. I have entertained in all the courts of Europe and speak a ready wit in their every tongue. Uh who are you?

**Witch:** I am Grizelda?

**Hawkins:** Gruhwhoolda?

**Witch:** Grizelda. I bring you a message from the princess.

**Hawkins:** Uh, the royal princess?

**Witch:** She finds you most attractive and would like to meet you.

**Hawkins:** M-m-me?

**Witch:** Yes. She finds you passing fair, passing graceful.

**Hawkins:** Oh, uh, tell her thank you very much but I'm (ahem) just passing through.

**Witch:** One does not ordinarily refuse princesses...

**Hawkins:** Well, one doesn't ordinarily, but you see...

**Witch:** Is it possible there's someone else of whom you are fond?

**Hawkins:** Uh y-yes, as a matter of fact there is.

**Witch:** Giacomo, would you look in my eye?

**Hawkins:** Eye?

**Witch:** Yes, it's been troubling me, and I thought that the great Giacomo would have a knowledge of science.

**Hawkins:** Eh s-science. Well, yes, as a matter of fact I have a great deal of scientific knowledge. We have b-b-which eye?

**Witch:** Both. Look at them both. Closer, closer. Deeper, deeper. Deeper, deeper. Tails of lizards, ears of swine, chicken gizzards soaked in brine, now thine eyes and mine entwine, thy will is broken, thou art MINE! Repeat after me: I am craven and thou art my master!

**Hawkins:** I am craven and thou art my master!

**Witch:** Stand there, fool. (?)

**Hawkins:** Stand there, fool. (?)

**Witch:** Silence!

**Hawkins:** Silence!

**Witch:** You are in my power and will obey my every command.

**Hawkins:** Every command...

**Witch:** And remember, any time I choose, a mere snap of my fingers can bring you out of the spell like this (snaps)

**Hawkins:** Oo!

**Witch:** And back like that (snaps)! Do you understand, fool?

**Hawkins:** Yes, master. You can snap me in and snap me out.

**Witch:** Now, listen closely. First and foremost, you must convince the girl that this is a miracle, that you have been sent here by the gods. To do that, you must go to her room and make love! Go and make love to the princess!

**Hawkins:** The princess...

**Witch:** At once! WAIT! Not like that! You are a figure of romance; of spirit and action, but at the same time humble and tender. You are a man of iron with the soul of a poet. You are adventurous, gay, but with a lovers brooding melancholy, and above all, you must show passion!

**Hawkins:** Hm?

**Witch:** Show passion!

**Hawkins:** (Growls and passionately attacks Witch)

**Witch:** Not me, you fool! Now go. Make love. Climb the vine to the tower where your love awaits you! Stop! Above all, remember you must be cavalier, dashing!

**Hawkins:** Fear not, master! Once I'm up the thorny vine, the regal maiden shall be mine. (hits door frame)  
Oop! Fear not, master!

---

[Jean sneaks into king's chamber, steals key]

**Jean:** Hawkins! You got here!

**Hawkins:** Well of course I got here, my silly little goose!

**Jean:** Thank heaven.

**Hawkins:** Ah-cha-cha, you'll have to wait your turn like the others!

**Jean:** Good, good, you're doing it well. But have you heard the change of plan? Here, take this.

**Hawkins:** I just told you, dear, you'll just have to wait your turn.

**Jean:** Now don't overdo it. Fergus will bring you the infant.

**Hawkins:** Huh?

**Roderick:** Well, well, Giacomo. Successful so soon? Truly as dainty a dish as ever was set before a king. About your business, I would have a word with the maid.

**Hawkins:** Your majesty. Oop! Ha ha.

**Roderick:** What is your name, child?

**Jean:** Jean, sire.

**Roderick:** Jean. Lovely name. For a lovely face. See that she is jeweled and gowned. She shall sit next to me at the banquet, tonight.

---

**Princess:** You! You've come!

**Hawkins:** At your service, m'lady.

**Princess:** So this is Giacomo! King of jesters and jester of kings.

**Hawkins:** Not today, m'lady. Today I am Giacomo, a lover of beauty, and a beauty of a lover.

**Princess:** Can this be true? Or is it merely a dream?

**Hawkins:** Dream? Is this a dream? Or this? Or this? Or this? Or this? Or or this?

**Princess:** No, no, no, we are strangers, hardly met. What manner of man are, you, Giacomo?

**Hawkins:** What manner of man is Giacomo? Ha ha! I shall tell you what manner of man is he. He lives for a sigh, he dies for a kiss, he lusts for the laugh, ha! He never walks when he can leap! he never flees when he can fight (thud) oop! He swoons at the beauty of a rose. And I offer myself to you, all of me. My heart. My lips. My legs. My calves. Do what you will -- my love endures. Beat me. Kick me. (kiss, kiss) I am yours.

**Princess:** Oh, Giacomo, you are so ardent!

**Hawkins:** With your permission, m'lady, I'd like to go 'round again.

**Princess:** Oh, no, Giacomo, we must be discreet.

**Hawkins:** Ha! Discretion is for fools and simpletons! (kisses her)

**Princess:** This cannot be! Miracles are things of fancy, and lovers are not sent by the gods.

**Hawkins:** Speak not too lightly, my love. Who are we to say nay to miracles?

**Princess:** But one doesn't find love in one moment, one kiss... that key? Where did you find it?

**Hawkins:** Key?

**Princess:** It is a miracle! The gods who sent you have also provided a means for our escape. This is the key to the secret passageway.

**Hawkins:** Grand. We leave at midnight. Get it?

**Princess:** Got it.

**Hawkins:** Good. Very good.

**Princess:** Oh no, no, my precious, I'll keep it next to my heart; a sweet symbol of your love. And take this, a sweet symbol of mine.

**Hawkins:** I'll wear it always next to my heart.

**Roderick:** (knocking) Gwendolyn?

**Hawkins:** Hm?

**Roderick:** Are you there? I would have words with you?

**Princess:** You must hide!

**Hawkins:** Hide?! Giacomo hides for no man!

**Princess:** But you must! He'd kill any man found in my chambers.

**Roderick:** (Knocking) Gwendolyn?

**Hawkins:** Ah, be he king or peasant, my ready blade will find its mark! I'll... I'll... (struggles with knife) I... I... I live for a sigh, I die for a laugh, I lust for a laugh, ha ha!

**Princess:** Please!

**Hawkins:** What?

**Princess:** Or our lives aren't worth that! (snaps)

**Hawkins:** What? Eh, eh? Eh?

**Roderick:** Are you alone, my dear? I thought I heard voices.

**Princess:** Yes, I'm quite alone, father.

**Hawkins:** (Hiding) The king!

**Roderick:** Listen, my child. I've just met Griswold's emissary, and the marriage is approved.

**Princess:** You know very well, father, that when I marry, I marry only for love.

**Roderick:** Heh, heh, I knew you'd say that. Now, Gwendolyn, do be reasonable. Don't you realize that without this alliance, our prestige, our power, our position could go like that! (snaps)

**Princess:** Well, then let it go like that! (snaps)

**Roderick:** I wish you to marry Griswold.

**Princess:** And suppose I do not wish (snaps) to marry Griswold?

**Roderick:** I don't give a fig (snaps) for your wishes!

**Princess:** And I don't give a fig (snaps) for yours!

**Roderick:** No one snaps at the king! (snaps) Don't you dare snap at me!

**Princess:** I'll snap (snaps) if I choose!

**Roderick:** Don't snap at me!

**Princess:** I will snap! (snap)

**Roderick:** You won't! Now understand this, my child: This castle has walls high and strong, with massive gates under lock and key. Whilst you remain within those walls and I am king, you will obey my command.

**Princess:** Very well, father. Perhaps I have been selfish and thoughtless.

**Roderick:** Oh, my child. I knew I could depend upon you. Because you are a princess. A true princess. Loyal to the crown. Sympathetic. Sensitive. Faithful (key falls). The key to the secret passage!

**Princess:** Father, let me have it...

**Roderick:** So, run away, would you! Well, you trick me not. This key will never leave my person. You will marry Griswold upon the morrow, and I promise you, daughter or not, princess or not, one move, one false move, and your neck will snap (snaps) like a twig! (slams door)

**Hawkins:** Where is he?! Giacomo hides not behind drapes!

**Princess:** No no no no, you must go!

**Hawkins:** I'll cut him to ribbons.

**Princess:** No, we'll escape tonight after the banquet.

**Hawkins:** Very well, my sweet. Until tonight. Very good.

**Princess:** Do be cautious, sweet Giacomo!

**Hawkins:** Ha! Caution is for poppinjays and cockatoos

**Bird:** (Squawks)

**Hawkins:** Begging your pardon. Until tonight, my sweet.

**Princess:** But you heard what my father said. If caught, our necks will snap like twigs (snaps)!

**Hawkins:** Eh... uh... like what?

**Princess:** Twigs! (snaps)

**Hawkins:** Twigs? Speak not of twigs when you look at an oak! Until tonight, my little sapling.

---

**Ravenhurst:** If Giacomo says he will be here within the hour, he will be here... eh, within the hour!

**Hawkins:** At your service, m'lord!

**Ravenhurst:** Your arrival, good Giacomo, shows imagination and brilliance.

**Hawkins:** Did you expect less?

**Ravenhurst:** Are you now prepared to fulfill the bargain arranged by my agent, Sir Burton of Allenburg?

**Hawkins:** Quite.

**Ravenhurst:** Very well, then. There are two plans.

**Hawkins:** Two plans.

**Ravenhurst:** Plan one. The untimely demise of my lords Brockhurst, Finsdale, and Purtry.

**Hawkins:** Three for tonight. Proceed.

**Ravenhurst:** The method I leave to you. But die they must.

**Hawkins:** Heh! They shall drop like flies.

**Ravenhurst:** Precisely. (snaps) Like flies. (snaps)

**Lackey:** Do you have some sort of twitch?

**Hawkins:** Twitch? I twitch only for action. I live for a sigh, I die for a kiss.

**Ravenhurst:** I like that very much.

**Hawkins:** Thank you. I lust for a laugh. Ha ha! I never leap when I can walk, I never flee when I can fight!

**Ravenhurst:** Yes, but, but...

**Hawkins:** I... I... pardon?

**Ravenhurst:** Listen carefully! If plan one fails, you must execute plan two.

**Hawkins:** Plan two?

**Ravenhurst:** Take the princess from the castle before midnight. By whatever means you may devise.

**Hawkins:** For murder or abduction, I'm your man. You've paid the price; name your plan.

**Ravenhurst:** First, plan one. Are you sure you can dispose of my lords Brockhurst, Finsdale, and Pertry?

**Hawkins:** Are they married?

**Ravenhurst:** Yes...

**Hawkins:** Order flowers for the widows. Get it?

**Ravenhurst:** Got it.

**Hawkins:** Good. (goes out window) Tally ho! Ho ho!

---

**Hawkins:** Master, I am back!

**Witch:** Well?

**Hawkins:** I have climbed the thorny vine, and the regal maiden is mine.

**Witch:** Good. Now, when I release you from the spell, you will fall into a deep sleep and remember nothing.

**Hawkins:** Nothing...

**Witch:** Look into my eye. Deeper, deeper.

---

**Ravenhurst:** Ah, my lords. I understand the engagement of the princess Gwendolyn to Sir Griswold will be announced tonight. My congratulations.

**Witch:** (Overhears)

**Brockhurst:** There is something afoot. He is far too confident.

**Finsdale:** If this alliance fails, we are lost.

**Brockhurst:** It must not fail. Let us solemnly pledge that we will permit nothing to interfere with the marriage of Griswold to the princess Gwendolyn.

**Pertry:** I so pledge.

**Finsdale:** And I.

**Brockhurst:** Though it cost our very lives!

**Finsdale & Pertry:** Our very lives.

---

**Osler** (outside): (Whistles)

**Jean:** Please, stop your picking and fussing! I must breathe some air!

**Attendant:** But madam!

**Jean:** All afternoon without a moment's peace!

**Ostler:** I just learned of your whereabouts. What happened...

**Jean:** Never mind that. You must take the child to the jester.

**Ostler:** To the jester!

**Jean:** Immediately. He has the key.

**Ostler:** But he's under the spell of the...

**Jean:** Silence! It is my command.

**Ostler:** (Sputters)

---

**Roderick:** The jester! Where is the jester? Summon him immediately!

**Clergyman:** Very good, sire! (knocks on a door) Jester!

**Hawkins:** Coming!

**Clergyman:** Come quickly, man! The king is waiting!

**Hawkins:** Yes, uh, ha-ha-have you seen Ravenhurst about?

**Clergyman:** He's somewhere about, yes.

**Hawkins:** Well, I... I was supposed to see Ravenhurst on some rather urgent business, but I fell asleep... I don't quite remember what I...

**Roderick:** Ahh, Giacomo. A striking costume, indeed. From the Italian court, I presume.

**Hawkins:** Yes, sire, Italian court. Ah, uh, what better place to, uh...

**Hawkins & Roderick:** ...court Italians.

**Roderick:** Yes. (laughs) Ah, this will be a festive evening. Noble knights to joust at my tournament. Come along. And by my side a lovely little wench who I'm sure will fulfill every promise of your discerning eye. Ah, look at her! Charming. Charming, Giacomo, charming. A tribute to you, my dear Giacomo. Come here, my child. Come.

**Jean:** Your majesty.

**Roderick:** Was there ever more beauty? More radiant? Rise, child. The sweetness of your smile outshines the elegance of your gown.

**Jean:** Thank you, sire.

**Roderick:** Would you attend me?

**Jean:** You are most gracious, sire.

**Ostler** (to Hawkins): Quickly. (gives basket to Hawkins) Use the key.

**Hawkins:** Key?

**Ravenhurst** (to Hawkins): Remember, plan one: Brockhurst, Finsdale, Pertry.

**Hawkins** (dazed): Brockhurst, Finsdale, Pertry.

**Princess** (to Hawkins): Midnight. Horses at the north gate.

**Hawkins:** Horses at the north gate...

**Baby:** (Cries)

**Roderick:** Summon the jester!

**Guard Captain:** Where are you going? Didn't you hear the king?

**Hawkins:** Ah, beh, beh...

**Guard Captain:** Cover your head! Now get in there!

**Crowd:** (laughs)

**Roderick:** Come, come, Giacomo, let us be gay! I would have a song.

**Hawkins:** Eh. Song.

**Roderick:** Has the cat your tongue?

**Hawkins:** Uh, no, I...

**Roderick:** What do you carry there? Why the basket?

**Hawkins:** Beh, basket? (nervous laugh) What basket, sire?

**Roderick:** (Laughs) What basket, indeed! Come, boy, come, show me what you have in the basket.

**Hawkins:** Wuh, I can... eh...

**Roderick:** Yes, come on, show me what you have in the basket.

**Hawkins:** Eh, beh basket? It-it's...

**Roderick:** Yes, and what about that song?

**Hawkins:** S-s-song, sire? Eh beh s-song. (sings) If your majesty doth ask it, I will tell about the basket with a willo willo wailey and a nonny nonny (whistles signal)

**Roderick:** What's that? With a what?

**Hawkins:** Uh (sings) with a willo willo wailey and a nonny nonny loo loo loo I'll loo loo loo loo...

**Roderick:** What are you loo-loo-looing about?

**Hawkins:** Oh, I'm not loo-loo-looing, sire, I'm willo willo wailing.

**Roderick:** All right, all right, willo away, willo away.

**Hawkins:** (Sings) We will willo it away...

we'll willo willo willo we will willo it away!  
with a willo willo wailey, we will sing about it gaily,  
with a willo willo wailey and a hey! nonny... nooo!

**Roderick:** Come back here! What have you there? What have you in the basket?

**Hawkins:** Eh beh basket? Oh, b- sire, it's nothing, sire. Merely a jester's bag of tricks, sire. It's a secret, sire. Y-yes, a deep, dark secret - beh - which has never before been revealed to anybody in the world, sire. But I... I am prepared to make a statement.

(sings)

When I was a lad, I was gloomy and sad  
as I was from the day I was born!  
When other babes giggled and gurgled and wiggled  
I proudly was loudly forlorn!  
My friends and my family looked at me clamilly,  
thought there was something amiss!  
When others found various antics hilarious,  
all I could manage was this!

or this! (makes face)

or this! (makes face)

or this! (mock crying)

My father, he shouted: He needs to be clouted.

His teeth on a wreath I'll hand him!

**My mother she cried as she rushed to my side:**

You're a brute! and you don't understand him!

So they sent for a witch with a terrible twitch

to ask how my future impressed her.

She took one look at me and cried he... hee hee he he -- he?

What else could he be but a jester?

A jester? A jester? A funny idear a jester!

No butcher, no baker, no candlestick maker

and me with the look of a fine undertaker impressed her... as a jester?

But where could I learn any comical turn that was not in a book  
on the shelf?

No teacher to take me to mold me and make me a merry mad fool  
or an elf!

But I'm proud to recall that in no time at all  
with no other recourses but my own resources  
with firm application and determination...

I made a fool of myself!

I found a bow and arrow and I learned to shoot.

I found a little horn and I learned to too.

Now I can shoot and too, ain't I cute? (raspberry)

(further singing... sight gags...)

**Witch:** (poisons drinks) (to servant) Tend to your duties! Serve your drinks!

**Random guard:** Hold it with that basket. Let's have a look!

**Hawkins:** A toast! A toast! A toast to his most royal highness! To Roderick the first, for all that he has  
done for this great England of ours, may providence provide a true and just reward! To the king!

**Crowd:** To the king!

**Roderick:** Brockhurst!

**Ravenhurst:** Brilliant.

**Roderick:** Finsdale!

**Ravenhurst:** Magnificent!

**Roderick:** Pertry!

**Ravenhurst:** Fantastic!

**Hawkins:** Brockhurst... Finsdale... Pertry...

**Servant:** They are all dead, sire!

**Ravenhurst:** As you said, flowers for the widows.

**Roderick:** Dead. Murdered. And by whose hand? And who may be next?

[trumpets sound]

**Page:** Sir Griswold of Mackalwane is approaching the castle!

**Roderick:** And just in time. He comes not a moment too soon. Bid Sir Griswold enter!

**Ravenhurst:** Plan two.

**Hawkins:** Plan two? Plan two.

**Roderick:** Get those bodies out of here!

---

**Jean:** (Whistles, gives baby to Ostler) Quick, take him to safety.

---

**Roderick:** ...And get those goblets away. And... no! Not you, jester, not you. Come here, come here, boy, come here.

[trumpets sound]

**Page:** Sir Griswold of Mackalwane!

**Roderick:** Approach, Sir Griswold. (whispers) Lighten the mood, jester, a note of (mumbled...).

**Griswold:** My liege lord.

**Roderick:** Sir Griswold of Mackalwane, I bid thee welcome.

**Hawkins:** Ehh, a-welcome, Sir Griswold, your beard is full of hair, but do I say welcome or do I say meh! (bleats like a goat or sheep)

**Griswold:** Sire. My emissary did report. And I proudly accept your terms.

**Hawkins:** (Kicked by Roderick, sings) Eh... th-the terms! the terms! He doth accept the terms. He looks not smart, but in...

**Roderick:** Excellent, excellent! Members of the court, know you that the crown would make a most felicitous announcement concerning the defense and security of our great kingdom, I would have you know that today was an alliance consummated between the crown and our honored and valiant Baron, Sir Griswold of Mackalwane.

**Hawkins:** Uh, (sings) the terms! the terms!

**Roderick:** We've already had the terms.

**Hawkins:** Sorry.

**Roderick:** To cement this alliance, I have decreed a royal marriage between Sir Griswold of Mackalwane and Gwendolyn the Fair.

**Hawkins:** Eh, eh (sings) rejoice! rejoice! Although his brain is brief, for when the larder's empty, she'll have her ton of beef! (laughs) (kicked by Roderick) Would you like to try the other side, sire? (kicked again) Thank you, sire.

**Roderick:** What say our gallant Griswold?

**Griswold:** Sire. Princess fair. From this moment on, this hand, this steel, this heart will exist for naught but the love of the lady...

**Princess** (interrupting): Save your breath, Griswold! There will be no alliance and no marriage.

**Roderick:** What's that?

**Princess:** I cannot marry Griswold, father. I love another.

**Roderick:** Another?

**Hawkins:** (Sings) Another, another...

**Roderick:** What is this nonsense? What do you mean you love another?

**Princess:** Simply that, father. A miracle has occurred to fulfill my every dream. I have found my love, father. My true love.

**Roderick:** Who is this man?

**Princess:** One to whom I have given my heart and my hand. He who even now wears my silken handkerchief next to his heart.

**Roderick:** What's that?

**Hawkins:** What's that? (kicked by Roderick) Ah (sings) Her heart, her hand, she holds for joy or grief, but he who holds her hand holds her heart kerchief. (kicked) eh handkerchief (kicked) eh hand kerheart (kicked repeatedly) heart ke he che ha- hah

**Roderick:** Who is this man? His name!

**Princess:** The man I love is a simple man, but noble of heart. My beloved Giacomo!

**Roderick:** What?!

**Hawkins:** Uh. (sings) His name, his name, and now his blood must flow. Light up the oil, this man must boil, this man named Giaco- mo? oh! No!

**Roderick:** Seize this wretch and search him!

**Hawkins:** Eh... I- I'm- Th-th-this is a little mistake, sire. I don't have her heartkerchief, uh, handkerheart. I don't have th-

**Roderick:** A handkerchief! G! Gwendolyn!

**Hawkins:** Uh, n-n-no, sire. Geh-Gee G-G-Giacomo!

**Princess:** Shield me not, sweet Giacomo! Our love makes me strong.

**Roderick:** Love for a common jester. Take the swine out and hang him!  
**Princess:** Harm one hair of that majestic head and I throw myself from the highest turret!  
**Griswold:** (Shouts) Enough of this! How much insult must I endure? Come, men.  
**Roderick:** Hold, Sir Griswold, your honor will be avenged.  
**Griswold:** How? Were that wretch of noble rank, I would challenge him to combat mortal! But I would not deign to soil my blade with his miserable common blood!  
**Hawkins:** H-he's right, you know, sire. Rules of chivalry, you know.  
**Roderick:** Rules of chivalry be hanged! And so will you.  
**Hawkins:** She'll jump...!  
**Griswold:** (Shouts) Come, men.  
**Roderick:** Hold, Sir Griswold. You will stay until the morrow. It is my command.  
**Griswold:** 'til the morrow, sire.  
**Roderick:** You, Gwendolyn, to your chambers.  
**Princess:** Be brave, sweet Giacomo.  
**Roderick:** Throw this blackguard in chains!

**Ravenhurst:** Is he not fabulous? Go from plan one to plan two without a moment's pause.  
**Lackey:** The man is pure genius.

**Roderick:** Sir Griswold will never tolerate this insult. M'lords, to your chambers. Ponder this problem. A solution must be found ere we meet in council, tomorrow.  
**Ravenhurst:** Sire.

**Ravenhurst:** Welcome, Sir Burton! ("Umsburtle"?) You saw the jester's performance?  
**Burton:** Mm.  
**Ravenhurst:** When I sent you to negotiate for Giacomo, I never expected results like this! Was he not brilliant?  
**Burton:** Indeed. With one slight discrepancy. This man is not Giacomo!  
**Ravenhurst:** What?!  
**Burton:** I know not this pretender, but I assure you he is not the Giacomo I met and negotiated with in Europe!  
**Guard Captain:** I tell you I've seen this man before, and somehow that maid!  
**Lackey:** Did I tell you? What plan now?  
**Ravenhurst:** To my chambers, immediately!

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**Ravenhurst:** But if he's not Giacomo, who could he be, and what does he want? Why would he do our every bidding?  
**Lackey:** Why would he work to destroy the alliance?  
**Ravenhurst:** Why would he murder with the cunning of a fox? A fox. But of course, a fox! A Black Fox!  
**Lackey:** But you don't think that...  
**Ravenhurst:** Why not? Who else would oppose Griswold and want the alliance destroyed but that rabble in the forest?  
**Guard Captain:** The forest. That's where I saw him. Dressed as an old man, riding out of the forest, with the very wench who sat beside the king, tonight!  
**Ravenhurst:** My lords... what a prize! The Black Fox, himself!  
**Burton:** Expose him! You'll get all the credit!  
**Ravenhurst:** Not so fast. Not until the Fox pays us one more service. He'll rid us forever of the barbaric Griswold!  
**Lackey:** Kill Griswold? But how?  
**Ravenhurst:** Whose is the deadliest blade in England? Who is the only man alive who can best Griswold in mortal combat? Only the Black Fox!  
**Lackey:** But the Fox is a commoner and cannot fight in tournament.  
**Ravenhurst:** We shall see.

---

**Roderick:** No, Ravenhurst, I do not understand. What do you mean Griswold himself suggested a solution?

**Ravenhurst:** You yourself heard him, sire. He said were the jester of noble rank, he would challenge him to mortal combat.

**Roderick:** But the jester cannot fight in tournament! He's a commoner.

**Ravenhurst:** Then, sire, knight the jester.

**Roderick:** Knight the jester?!

**Ravenhurst:** Griswold can then challenge him for the hand of the princess Gwendolyn, and by the rules of chivalry, she must wed the victor!

**Roderick:** Knight the jester. Sir Griswold will challenge him. He dare not refuse. They meet at the tournament tomorrow. Sir Griswold's lance runs the jester through, and the marriage and the alliance proceed. Yea? Hm. Ha! (laughs) Magnificent!

**Ravenhurst:** Thank you, sire.

**Clergyman:** But your majesty, knighthood is an arduous ritual! It will take three years to knight the jester.

**Roderick:** Three years? Nonsense! Ravenhurst, take that nincompoop and knight that nincompoop by noon tomorrow!

**Ravenhurst:** Sire.

---

**Guard Captain:** (reads) By order of his sovereign majesty, the jester Giacomo shall enter upon a series of tests of manhood, skill, and courage requisite to his becoming a knight of the realm.

**Hawkins:** M-me a knight? But why?

**Guard Captain:** To make you eligible for the hand of the princess Gwendolyn.

**Hawkins:** M-marry the princess? W-when?

**Guard Captain:** Upon your passing each and every test.

**Hawkins:** Oh! Well that's different. It takes four or five years to become a knight, doesn't it?

**Guard Captain:** We shall see. Let the tests begin!

**Hawkins:** Uh, w-wait! What's the hurry? I- b- ch-

**Guard Captain:** He must scale a wall in full armor!

**Hawkins:** Ahh!

**Guard Captain:** Candidate passes!

**Hawkins:** Uh, b- buh... I didn't...!

**Guard Captain:** With long bow, he must slay a hawk in full flight! He passes!

**Hawkins:** But I didn't even shoot...

**Guard Captain:** The candidate passes!

**Hawkins:** But I didn't even shoot the arrow! The arrow...

**Hawkins:** I- I didn't pass...!

**Guard Captain:** The candidate must conquer a wild boar with his bare hands! Release the boar!

**Pig:** (Squeals)

**Guard Captain:** He passes!

---

**Random guard:** No one enters by the king's command!

**Jean:** But this is the king's command.

**Roderick:** Ah, maid Jean. Welcome. What brings you here at this hour?

**Jean:** Concern for you, sire.

**Roderick:** Mm?

**Jean:** You were so distressed last evening that I thought perhaps I could comfort you, ease the burdens of state.

**Roderick:** (to a page) Eh, don't tug it, idiot! (to Jean) Well that's very considerate of you, dear. I shall take advantage of your delightful offer... perhaps this evening?

**Jean:** Why tarry, sire? I am most accomplished on matters of appearance and would gladly free these young men for more important chores elsewhere.

**Roderick:** Well that's very kind of you, but... oh, yes. Pages, I'm sure you have some very important business to attend. Ah...

**Jean:** Now, then, sire, we have to get you ready for the ceremony!

**Roderick:** Ah, but my dear...

**Jean:** Now there. You can't imagine my feelings when I touch the head of a man who calls himself the king of England!

**Roderick:** Eh, w-w-

**Jean:** Who IS the King of England! And very handsome, too, sire. On the day of your first tournament. There you are.

**Roderick:** Where?

**Jean:** Now I must go, sire.

**Roderick:** Oh, now wait, dear, wait.

**Jean:** Oh, no, you have to get to your ceremony!

**Roderick:** But there's no hurry. We can't start until the jester's been made ready.

**Jean:** The jester?!

**Roderick:** Yes, haven't you heard? We're knighting the poor fool.

**Jean:** Knighting the jester!

**Roderick:** Yes, you'd never guess why.

**Jean:** So that he can marry the princess.

**Roderick:** Well, that's the fool thinks, but the moment I dub him knight, Griswold will challenge him for the hand of my daughter.

**Jean:** Mortal combat.

**Roderick:** Yes, isn't it delicious? He dare not refuse, they meet at lists, and Sir Griswold's lance runs the jester through as a fitting climax to a glorious day. Oh, my dear, you are a delicate, lovely creature. Tell me, does it bother you that I may be a few years your senior?

**Jean:** Oh, no, sire, not really. In fact, you remind me so much of my dear and recently departed father.

**Roderick:** Oh, your father, yes. Well, was he a handsome figure of a man? Dashing, effective...

**Jean:** Oh, yes, sire, 'til the scourge brought about his untimely end.

**Roderick:** Eh, come here, my dear.

**Jean:** What a horrible death!

**Roderick:** A little closer...

**Jean:** I can see him now, writhing on the floor in agony, like so many of his brothers and cousins and uncles and aunts...

**Roderick:** Yes. Would you grant the king a little kiss?

**Jean:** Oh, certainly, sire, and don't worry. They say it isn't catching.

**Roderick:** Oh, you are a little... catching?

**Jean:** Just because it runs in the family doesn't mean that everyone has it. Kiss me sire!

**Roderick:** Has it? Has what?

**Jean:** Don't I please you, sire?

**Roderick:** Oh, yes, yes, but, eh, these brothers and cousins and uncles...

**Jean:** And aunts. Let us not talk about their swollen, twisted, pain ridden bodies. Hold me, take me in your arms, tell me I am yours!

**Roderick:** But this, this uh writhing on the floor...

**Jean:** In agony.

**Roderick:** Yes, wh-what's... how does one catch this thing?

**Jean:** Oh, the touch of a hand, the brush of a lip... but let us not spoil this moment, sire! Hold me, hold me close!

**Roderick:** W-w-what's this monstrous thing called?

**Jean:** Breckenridge's scourge.

**Roderick:** Who's Breckenridge?

**Jean:** My father.

**Roderick:** Excuse me, dear, I'm feeling rather poorly.

**Page** (offscreen): Sire, the ceremony is ready.

**Roderick:** Oh, very well. Ah, I must go, now, dear, and so must- so must you. Quickly. Dear... don't touch me.

---

**Jean:** (Snaps) Where's the jester?

**Ostler:** Did you get the key?

**Jean:** Yes, here it is.

**Ostler:** It must be sent by pigeon to the Black Fox at once!

**Jean:** Let the jester take it and escape. They plan to kill him.

**Ostler:** It'd never there in time. The bird's our only chance.

---

**Master of ceremonies:** He who approacheth, deem you him worthy of noble knighthood?

**Crowd:** Yea, verily, yea!

**Roderick:** How many more before the jester?

**Clergyman:** Just this one, sire.

**MC:** ...Fealty, loyalty, moisten his lips with the vigorous wine.

**Crowd:** Yea, verily, yea! Yea, verily, yea!

**MC:** Now as the symbol of honor and dignity, let us beplume him and helmet his brow.

**Crowd:** Yea, verily, yea! Yea, verily, yea!

**Ravenhurst:** Sire, this storm bodes ill. It might drench the field and delay the tournament.

**Roderick:** Fetch the jester and run him through the ritual as quickly as possible.

**Clergyman:** But sure, custom...

**Roderick:** Custom be hanged! Fetch him and run him through!

**Ravenhurst:** (Snaps)

---

**Jean:** A message for the jester. From the king.

**Hawkins:** (Reads "They Knight you only to kill you. Run for your life!")

**Jean:** He requests you do this at once.

**Hawkins:** At w-once.

[chase scene]

**MC:** He who approacheth, deem you him ready for noble knighthood.

**Crowd:** Yea!

**Hawkins:** Y-yea.

**MC:** Hath he passed all test of valor?

**Crowd & Hawkins:** Yea, verily, yea!

**MC:** Now doth he flower with true nobility?

**Crowd & Hawkins:** Yea, verily, yea!

**MC:** Reveal him now to his sovereign liege.

**Hawkins:** Yea, verily, yea! Yea?

**Roderick:** Faster.

**Ravenhurst:** Faster.

**Clergyman:** Faster. (thumps cane)

**Hawkins:** B-but I!

**MC:** ...Fealty, loyalty, moisten his lips with the vigorous wine. Now will he pledge to his fealty, loyalty, courage, and vigor and valor and strength!

**Crowd:** Yea!

**MC:** Now as the symbol of honor and dignity, let us beplume him and helmet his brow.

**Crowd:** Yea, verily, yea! Yea, verily, yea!

**MC:** He who is girded and plumed and helmeted, let him (drowned out by marching)

**Roderick** (over Hawkins' objections): Considering the virtuous fidelity you have shown and the honorable exploits that you have done, having given proof of that honor, having given proof of that honor... as is the part of a good and faithful subject, I hereby dub thee knight of the realm, defender of the soil, protector of the crown, and a fit consort for the princess Gwendolyn the fair. Arise, Sir Giacomo. Now, if any knight present objects to this marriage, let him now step forward or forever hold his tongue.

**Griswold:** I! I, Griswold of Mackalwane do so object.

**Hawkins:** Very good, 'dya hear that, sire?

**Griswold:** I too love the princess and would fight for her heart. I hereby challenge in mortal combat Giacomo!

**Hawkins:** Hm?

**Griswold** (while striking Hawkins with his glove): Giacomo! Knight of the realm! Defender of the soil! And protector of the crown!

**Hawkins:** Woo!

**Jean** (whispers): You won't have to fight, I'll send a message, the Black Fox will come and fight in your place!

**Hawkins:** The Black Fox?

**Jean:** Get up, accept the challenge!

**Hawkins:** Uh... Black Fox, huh? Eh... he'll come and fight in my place?

**Jean:** Yes.

**Hawkins:** You're sure he'll come?

**Jean:** (Nods)

**Hawkins:** Well, if it's mortal combat you want, then mortal combat you shall have, and at the hands of Giacomo, knight of the realm, defender of the soil, protector of the crown... protector of the crown! Oo, oh. (giggles) Good stock. Good battle. Good bye!

**Roderick:** Your escorts to see you safely to the lists.

**Hawkins:** The the lists?

**Princess:** Very clever, father.

**Roderick:** Well, chivalry is chivalry, you know.

**Princess:** Yes, I know.

**Roderick:** May the best man win.

**Princess** (to Witch): Remember this -- if he dies, you die.

---

**Jean** (to Ostler): To the Fox, at once!

**Ravenhurst:** We have bigger game.

**Ravenhurst:** Get him!

**Messenger:** (Secret whistle) (reads) Griswold has challenged the jester to mortal combat.

**Black Fox:** The jester!

**Messenger:** Yes, the maid Jean requests that you come and fight in his stead.

**Workman:** The timbers have fallen and great rocks block the passage!

**Black Fox:** Can it be cleared?

**Workman:** Impossible!

**Black Fox:** With no passage, we can make no diversion, and with no diversion, no attack! Is there any opening?

**Workman:** No more than that, sir. Barely enough for a child!

**Black Fox:** A child, a child... or perhaps...! My horse!

**Messenger:** Where go you? To save Hawkins?

**Black Fox:** No, to save England!

**Messenger:** Then Hawkins must die!

**Black Fox:** Yes. But if my plan succeeds, I assure you, Hubert Hawkins will not have died in vain!

---

[At the lists]

**MC:** By order of his sovereign lord highness, King Roderick the First, this royal tournament is officially begun!

**Hawkins:** Where's the Black Fox? What's delayed him?

**Jean:** There's rain in the hills, perhaps the river is swollen.

**Hawkins:** He'll be taking the coast road. You better have a look. (sees G punch through a shield) Good stock.

**MC:** The first contest will be a battle to the death for the hand of the fair Gwendolyn. It will be fought by Sir Griswold of Mackalwane and Sir Giacomo of Italy. These two bold knights will choose weapons and enter upon the field of honor and fight in mortal combat until one of them lies dead.

**Jean:** Hawkins, run for your life.

**Hawkins:** No, they'd... they'd only catch me and kill me.

**Jean:** Can you ever forgive me?

**Hawkins:** There's nothing to forgive.

**Jean:** Dear Hawkins.

**Random Guard:** Sir Giacomo! You should be in armor! And you, maid Jean, in the stands.

**Hawkins:** If I die, just pray that I die bravely.

**Witch:** You'll not die, you'll not have to fight him. Griswold dies as he drinks the toast.

**Hawkins:** What?

**Witch:** Listen. I have put a pellet of poison in one of the vessels.

**Hawkins:** Which one?

**Witch:** The one with the figure of a pestle.

**Hawkins:** The vessel with the pestle?

**Witch:** Yes. But you don't want the vessel with the pestle, you want the chalice from the palace!

**Hawkins:** I-I don't want the vessel with the pestle, I want the chalice from the what?

**Jean:** The chalice from the palace!

**Hawkins:** Hm?

**Witch:** It's a little crystal chalice with a figure of a palace.

**Hawkins:** Th-the chalice from the palace have the pellet with the poison?

**Witch:** No, the pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle.

**Hawkins:** Oh, oh, the pestle with the vessel.

**Jean:** The vessel with the pestle.

**Hawkins:** What about the palace from the chalice?

**Witch:** Not the palace from the chalice! The chalice from the palace!

**Hawkins:** Where's the pellet with the poison?

**Witch:** In the vessel with the pestle!

**Jean:** Don't you see? The pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle.

**Witch:** The chalice from the palace has the brew that is true!

**Jean:** It's so easy, I can say it!

**Hawkins:** Well then you fight him!

**Witch:** Listen carefully. The pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle, the chalice from the palace has the brew that is true.

**Hawkins:** Where the pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle, the chalice from the palace has the brew that is true.

**Jean:** Good man!

**Witch:** Just remember that.

**Random Guard:** Sir Giacomo! Sir Giacomo, into your armor! And you, to your place in the pavilion.

**Hawkins:** The pellet with the poison... the pellet with the poison is in the vessel with the pestle, the chalice from the palace has the true that is brew. Eh... brew that is tru- The pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle, the chalice from the palace has the true that is brew. Eh, eh, brew that is true. Eh. The chestle with the pal- eh, eh, palace with the...

**Random Guard:** Look out!

[lighting strikes armor, magnetizing it]

**Random Guard:** Hurry, now, get into your armor!

**Hawkins:** The pestle with t... the pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle, the palace from the chalice has the brew that is blue. Eh, no... The pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle. The cha- eh, the pellet with the plip... the pellet with the poisle's in the vessel with the plazzle. Eh, the plazzle with the vlessle. Eh, the the bless... The vessel with the plozle is the plazzle with the...

**Random Guard** (interrupting): Come along, Sir Giacomo. His majesty is waiting.

**Hawkins:** The pestle with the poilet...

**Random Guard:** And take your helmet!

**Hawkins:** (Muttering "pellet with the poison") Thank you.

**Hawkins:** The pellet with the poisley's from chalice with the pazley.

**Roderick:** Oh, hello, my dear, it's nice to see y-

**Hawkins:** I've got it! I've got it. The pellet with the poison's in the vessel with the pestle, the chalice from the palace has the brew that is true, right?

**Witch:** Right. But there's been a change. They broke the chalice from the palace.

**Hawkins:** They broke the chalice from the palace?

**Witch:** And replaced it with a flagon.

**Hawkins:** Flagon.

**Witch:** With a figure of a dragon.

**Hawkins:** Flagon with a dragon.

**Witch:** Right.

**Hawkins:** Did you put the pellet with the poison in the vessel with the pestle?

**Witch:** No! The pellet with the poison's in the flagon with the dragon, the vessel with the pestle has the brew that is true!

**Hawkins:** The pellet with the poison's in the flagon with the dragon, the vessel with the pestle has the brew that is true.

**Witch:** Just remember that.

**Hawkins:** Yes, thank you very much. The pellet with the chasley, eh... the pellet with the poison is in the pasley with the chazzle. Eh, just remember that.

**Griswold's Lackey:** Beware of the drinks. One of them is poisoned.

**Griswold:** Poisoned! Are you sure?

**Griswold's Lackey:** I heard the witch.

**Hawkins:** The poisel with the plesley is the chaz... eh...

**Griswold:** The pellet with the poison's in the flagon with the dragon, the pestle with the pizzle... the pizzle with the f- the, the, the viss...

**Griswold's Lackey:** No, no, no...

**Hawkins:** The pellet with the poisley is the chalice with the... he he (laughs nervously at guards)

**Griswold's Lackey:** ...Vessel with the pestle.

**Griswold:** The vessel with the pestle has the brew that is true.

**Griswold's Lackey:** Right. Don't forget it.

**Griswold** (mutters): The palace with the dragon... no, no, no.

**MC:** The knights will approach each other!

**Crowd:** (Cheers)

**Hawkins:** The pellet with the poisle is in the flaggle with the chalice.

**Griswold:** The poison's in the dragon with the pestle.

**Hawkins:** Eh, ah, the chazze is in the poisley with the pellice with the plan- eh, plaglice.

**Griswold:** The pellet with the dragon's in the pestle with the poi-

**Hawkins:** The pezley with the poisle is...

**Griswold:** The dragon with the poisle's in the pestle...

**Hawkins:** Pazzle with the fleegle...

**Griswold:** (Retrieves helmet magnetically held by H's armor)

**Hawkins:** The poisley with the plazzle is the plazzle with the ploizle

**Griswold:** (Mutters)

**Hawkins:** The chalice with the pa... the flagon with the cha... the floizle with the flagon is the chalice with the poison.

**MC:** The knights will face the king!

**Hawkins & Griswold:** (muttering) (sight gags)

**MC:** They will approach the royal pavilion!

**Hawkins:** The pellet with the poison's in the flagon with the dragon!

**Griswold:** The vessel with the pestle has the brew that is true!

**Hawkins:** Oh, no, pglk, you've got the wrong one!

**Roderick:** Stop this mockery! There will be no toast! Put them to horse, let them choose weapons, and fight!

**Lackey:** This is the Black Fox?

**Ravenhurst:** And still playing the fool.

**MC:** Sir Griswold! Declare a choice of weapon!

**Griswold:** Mace and chain!

**MC:** Sir Giacomo! Declare a choice of weapon.

**Hawkins:** I'll take one of those, one of those, eh, a couple of those... and... I better take them all.

**Roderick:** Mace and chain for him, too!

**MC:** Charge!

**Crowd:** (Laughs)

**Roderick:** Take that horse and put it back under that idiot! Unfasten that perch! (?)

**MC:** Charge!

**Griswold:** (knock the head off Hawkins' armor)

**Crowd:** Ooh!

**Hawkins:** (raises head through armor) **Crowd:** (laughs)

**Hawkins:** (unhorsing Griswold due to magnetized armor) All right, Sir Griswold, prepare to die!

**Griswold:** Go ahead, sir knight. Slay me! You won in fair combat. Strike! Let rivers of blood wash away the stain of my disgrace! Go on! Spew the field with my dishonored guts!

**Hawkins:** No! No, I cannot slay a man whose only crime is that he loved not too wisely but too well. I grant your life! Take your men, and go!

**Crowd:** (Cheers)

**Guard Captain:** Fergus is dead.

**Ravenhurst:** Did he talk? The child? In the castle? Now listen carefully, there's little time...

**Roderick:** Sir Giacomo, I declare you winner of this combat, and I hereby decree that you shall marry the princess Gwendolyn.

**Ravenhurst:** Hold, sire! Seize this traitor!

**Roderick:** Traitor? What's this? How say you, Ravenhurst?

**Ravenhurst:** I say traitor, sire! And I shall prove to you that this man who stands before us is neither Giacomo nor jester but your deadly enemy, the leader of the rabble who have sworn to have your head, the Black Fox himself!

**Roderick:** The Black Fox?

**Ravenhurst:** And this demure maid his foul accomplice!

**Roderick:** Ravenhurst, are you mad? Have you proof of this foul treachery?

**Ravenhurst:** I have, sire.

**Roderick:** Then repair to the court! Summon the judges! If what you say be true, the headsman's axe will not only rid us of this jabbering popinjay, but will sever this lovely little head from this delicate little neck... oh. To the castle!

---

**Black Fox:** Hurry along, little friends. Hurry along! Keep your heads down.

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**Black Fox:** Come along, there, men! All of you! We'll take the coast road, but stay close to the trees!

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**Ravenhurst:** And I say again, sire! Never, sire, never was there such infamous treason. Not only is this man the Black Fox, but he and his despicable accomplice have the shameful effrontery to shelter in this

castle the miserable child they would put on your very throne!

**Roderick:** What's this? What say you, Ravenhurst?

**Ravenhurst:** I repeat, sire: The child they would put on your throne.

**Roderick:** The child... with the purple pimperl?

**Ravenhurst:** The very same, sire. Bring forth the basket!

**Roderick:** Let me see this fraud, this charlatan. Hurry up, hurry up, bring it here.

**Ravenhurst:** In a moment, sire. But first let me hear you pronounce sentence on this unholy pair. I know how anxious you are to dispose of this villainous scum so that you may proceed with the feast and the revelry. Sire, I accuse these impostors of the foulest and most loathsome crime against the crown, and I demand that they be given the full measure of your righteous wrath, and shall be disposed of before another hour is past. I tell you, sire, the headsman's axe is too kind a fate for these foul traitors. They should be put on a spit, and roasted like yon boar!

**Roderick:** Yes, yes, death to both of them.

**Princess:** Father, I say Ravenhurst lies. This is Giacomo, king of jesters, and never the Black Fox.

**Hawkins:** Nay, fair lady. For once, Ravenhurst is right. I am. I am the Black Fox! (whistles to dwarves, who whisk child and Jean away amidst much commotion)

**Roderick:** Seize that traitor!

[fight scene ensues]

**Roderick:** Ravenhurst! Ravenhurst! Do something! Do something!

**Roderick:** Quickly, fetch Griswold! Bring him back!

[upstairs]

**Jean:** Take him to safety!

**Jean:** Arm him (?). I must raise the gate!

**Jean:** Lower the gate!

**Random Guard:** The gate is lowered!

**Jean:** No it isn't! Look! (hits guard)

---

[fencing scene]

**Ravenhurst:** (Bitten by H) Aah!

**Princess:** If he dies, you die.

**Witch:** Tails of lizards, ears of swine, chicken gizzard soaked in brine, on your feet, be not afraid, you're the greatest with a blade!

**Hawkins:** Heh heh. (fences) Hey! (fences) Hey! (fences) Hey, hey! (etc.) Play games with the Black Fox, will you? At this very moment, my dear Ravenhurst, your life isn't worth that! (snaps) Oo! Hey!

**Ravenhurst:** Now my gallant fox, we'll see whose life isn't worth that! (snaps)

**Hawkins:** We shall, indeed! Hey ya!

**Hawkins:** (Laughs) With your permission? (pours drink)

**Ravenhurst:** Why you swine...

**Hawkins:** Your health.

**Ravenhurst:** Oo, you...

**Hawkins:** And now, Ravenhurst, you rat catcher! Ya! La! La! La, ha ha, ha ha!

**Ravenhurst:** Ha ha!

**Hawkins:** Well, my dear Ravenhurst, our little game draws to an end. I have toyed with you long enough. You shall die. And die like that! (snaps) Ehh!

**Hawkins:** Yaah! Ooo! (...) Waugh! Aiii!

**Jean:** Hurry! Help the Fox!

**Hawkins:** Jean!

**Jean:** Oh! Hawkins, are you all right?

**Hawkins:** Never mind me. Where's the child?

**Jean:** Safe.

**Hawkins:** Good.

**Jean:** You've been wonderful.

**Ravenhurst:** How convenient. The Fox and his mate! So my friends, the tables have turned yet again. But this time for the last time, and not only for one, but for two! What a prize!

**Dwarves:** Hey!

**Hawkins:** Griswold!

**Jean:** They'll cut us to ribbons. We've lost.

---

**Black Fox:** Hold there! Hold! Let no more English blood be spilled! Victory is ours!

**Griswold:** Not so fast! Unhand the king, and surrender!

**Black Fox:** Never!

**Griswold:** Then die as traitors to the crown!

**Hawkins:** Hold, Sir Griswold! Hold your men! Sir Griswold, I speak to you as knight to knight. When you were dubbed, you pledged your hand, your heart and your sword to defend the true king of England. Is that right?

**Griswold:** Well?

**Hawkins:** This man is not the true king. He has usurped the throne from the legitimate heir.

**Griswold:** Heir? What heir?

**Hawkins:** He who bears the mark of the royal bloodline. The purple pimpernel!

**Griswold:** The purple pimpernel? That's balderdash. No such person exists!

**Baby:** (Squawks)

**Griswold:** Your majesty!

**Roderick:** Your majesty!

**Crowd:** Your majesty!

**Hawkins:** (Sings) The real king is on the throne, Jean is my very own, and life couldn't possibly, not even probably\*, life couldn't possibly better be!

---

\* *bleh!*