

*The Pirates of Penzance*

**KING.** Oh, better far to live and die  
Under the brave black flag I fly,  
Than play a sanctimonious part,  
With a pirate head and a pirate heart.  
Away to the cheating world go you,  
Where pirates all are well-to-do;  
But I'll be true to the song I sing,  
And live and die a Pirate King.  
    For I am a Pirate King!  
    And it is, it is a glorious thing  
    To be a Pirate King!  
    For I am a Pirate King!

**ALL.** You are!  
Hurrah for the Pirate King!

**KING.** And it is, it is a glorious thing  
To be a Pirate King.

**ALL.** It is!  
Hurrah for the Pirate King!

**KING.** When I sally forth to seek my prey  
I help myself in a royal way.  
I sink a few more ships, it's true,  
Than a well-bred monarch ought to do;  
But many a king on a first-class throne,  
If he wants to call his crown his own,  
Must manage somehow to get through  
More dirty work than ever *I* do,  
    For I am a Pirate King!  
    And it is, it is a glorious thing  
    To be a Pirate King!  
    For I am a Pirate King!

**ALL.** You are!  
Hurrah for the Pirate King!

**KING.** And it is, it is a glorious thing  
To be a Pirate King.

**ALL.** It is!  
Hurrah for the Pirate King!

*Exeunt all except FREDERIC. Enter RUTH.*

**RUTH.** Oh, take me with you! I cannot live if I am left behind.

**FRED.** Ruth, I will be quite candid with you. You are very dear to me, as you know, but I must be circumspect. You see, you are considerably older than I. A lad of twenty-one usually looks for a wife of seventeen.

**RUTH.** A wife of seventeen! You will find me a wife of a thousand!

**FRED.** No, but I shall find you a wife of forty-seven, and that is quite enough. Ruth, tell me candidly and without reserve: compared with other women – how are you?

**RUTH.** I will answer you truthfully, master – I have a slight cold, but otherwise I am quite well.

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**FRED.** I am sorry for your cold, but I was referring rather to your personal appearance. Compared with other women, are you beautiful?

**RUTH.** (*bashfully*) I have been told so, dear master.

**FRED.** Ah, but lately?

**RUTH.** Oh, no; years and years ago.

**FRED.** What do you think of yourself?

**RUTH.** It is a delicate question to answer, but I think I am a fine woman.

**FRED.** That is your candid opinion?

**RUTH.** Yes, I should be deceiving you if I told you otherwise.

**FRED.** Thank you, Ruth. I believe you, for I am sure you would not practice on my inexperience. I wish to do the right thing, and if – I say if – you are really a fine woman, your age shall be no obstacle to our union! (*Chorus of Girls heard in the distance.*) Hark! Surely I hear voices! Who has ventured to approach our all but inaccessible lair? Can it be Custom House? No, it does not sound like Custom House.

**RUTH.** (*aside*) Confusion! it is the voices of young girls! If he should see them I am lost.

**FRED.** (*looking off*) By all that's marvellous, a bevy of beautiful maidens!

**RUTH.** (*aside*) Lost! lost! lost!

**FRED.** How lovely, how surpassingly lovely is the plainest of them! What grace – what delicacy – what refinement! And Ruth – Ruth told me she was beautiful!

**RECITATIVE.**

**FRED.** Oh, false one, you have deceived me!

**RUTH.** I have deceived you?

**FRED.** Yes, deceived me! (*Denouncing her.*)

**DUET – FREDERIC and RUTH.**

**FRED.** You told me you were fair as gold!

**RUTH.** (*wildly*) And, master, am I not so?

**FRED.** And now I see you're plain and old.

**RUTH.** I'm sure I'm not a jot so.

**FRED.** Upon my innocence you play.

**RUTH.** I'm not the one to plot so.

**FRED.** Your face is lined, your hair is grey.

**RUTH.** It's gradually got so.

**FRED.** Faithless woman, to deceive me,

I who trusted so!

**RUTH.** Master, master, do not leave me!

Hear me, ere you go!

My love without reflecting,

Oh, do not be rejecting!

Take a maiden tender – her affection raw and green,

At very highest rating,

Has been accumulating

Summers seventeen – summers seventeen.

**ENSEMBLE.**