

# Teatrolley

*or,*

*A Midsummer Night's Scream*

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## CAST

Peascod	A wise old fairy, but not quite as wise as he thinks.
Orangeblossom	A rash young fairy, impetuous and full of ideological zeal.
Pistachio	A clone. Moustache, short hair, jeans and check shirt. In his thirties.
Neapolitano	His partner. They live together. Identical in appearance.
Gaspatcho	A leather queen. A fierce appearance, very macho. Any age.
Raspberry	A bumbling and cowardly policeman on a mission
A fairy singer	Either or no gender. Spirit of the Heath.

## SCENE

Various parts of Hampstead Heath

## TIME

Midnight on Midsummer Night

## Scene One

### A HEATH JUST OUTSIDE LONDON

*[A dumb show. Figures of men pass and repass. They pause in their dance, singly and in pairs, to stare hard at each other. Then each disappears back into the woods once more.]*

*[Offstage, a Spirit of the Heath sings a plaintive faery melody:]*

There they go, to and fro,  
The dancers in the dark.  
Lovers meet, sharing sweet  
Secrets of the park.  
The owls do cry, the cricket hums  
As lovers lie till morning comes.  
Their kisses they  
May steal till day  
While far away  
Lo! In the distance foxes bark.

Some will stay, some will stray,  
The dancers in the dark;  
Some will cling, some take wing  
At daybreak with the lark.  
The evening star holds equal sway  
O'er eager predator and prey;  
The gentle breeze  
With equal ease  
Fans all of these  
Seeking their brief electric spark.

*[The masque vanishes.]*

## Scene Two

### ANOTHER PART QF THE HEATH

*[Enter PEASCOD and ORANGEBLOSSOM with a tea-trolley, and much alarum.]*

ORANGE: For pity sake, sweet Peascod, let us stop;  
I am winded as an old moth-eaten bellows.

PEASCOD: Already, faintheart? Come, raise up thy spirits  
There is now but a little mile ahead.

ORANGE: But, Peascod, all my clothes to rags are torn,  
My dazzling finery the merest shadow  
Of erstwhile glory; this fair damask cape,  
That dazzled all the eyes of GLF  
At our last dance in Lambeth Hall, now hangs  
Limp, like Miss Haversham's old wedding weeds,  
About my chilly person. All the trees  
Have leapt, as with malevolent intent,  
To pluck my cerulean Loons<sup>1</sup> from off me;  
While the shifty ground hath sucked the Cuban heel  
From off my Glitter Boot, so boggy is't.

PEASCOD: Alack, good Orangeblossom! Thou art bedeck'd  
With garb more suitable for Town than Heath.  
Rough wool thou should'st have worn, not flaring silk;  
Sensible brogues, not Cinderella slippers;  
The hawthorn with its nimble-finger'd branches  
Disports itself to catch thy amber beads;  
Thy wilful locks had better been confin'd  
In the austere prison of an hair-net,  
And all thy flaming and outrageous person  
More muted, temperate, and practical.  
But we must not be mir'd in the past.  
Come, we must forward ere the sport begins  
And bring our joyous message to the Heath.

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<sup>1</sup> Loons were low-slung flared canvas or crushed velvet trousers in strong primary colours popular in the early 1970s.



PEASCOD: For shame, is now thy belly-fire put out?  
Is this my Orange-blossom that talketh thus?  
Ofttimes in our just protests have I seen thee  
Press I' the thick of the confusion,  
And when the state in all its armed might  
Has threatened all our plans with overthrow,  
Then hast thou rais'd the sequinn'd banner high,  
Rallied the falt'rer to the flaring pink,  
Urg'd on the failing ranks to new assaults,  
Till at the last thou hast seiz'd the triumphant prize  
Of occupation, zap, and straight retreat;  
At leafletting of Smith<sup>2</sup>'s thou wast the first,  
Braving the indignant business man,  
The raised broly of many a righteous granny.  
Newsletters didst thou duplicate in reams,  
Perform street theatre in many a shopping mall.  
All this hast thou done. And wilt thou now  
Tremble at the whisper of a breeze?  
Shall a mere summer frost now chill thy ardour  
Which once was fit to fan us all to flames?  
For fie, this is not Orangeblossom speaks,  
But some more feeble, lily-liver'd queen.

But hush! Who comes? Let us conceal ourselves.

*[PEASCOD and ORANGEBLOSSOM exit with the tea-trolley behind a tree.  
Enter PISTACHIO and NEAPOLITANO, quarrelling.]*

NEAPOLITANO: Let me dissuade thee, sweet Pistachio,  
From such a rash intemperate exercise.

PISTACHIO: Do not, Neapolitano, urge me from  
My fixed purpose.

NEAPOLITANO: Dear Pistachio,  
Thou hast me fast, chain'd in love's gentle bonds;  
My heart I gave thee half a year ago,

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<sup>2</sup> WH Smith was the constant target of GLF actions, first for stocking David Reuben's violently homophobic book, *Everything You Wanted to Know About Sex But Were Afraid To Ask*, and later for refusing to stock *Gay News*, our fortnightly newspaper.

To do with what thou wilt; and wilt thou now  
Trample it i' the mire promiscuously?

PISTACHIO: Peace, I am adamant.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* I cannot tell  
One from other, as mirror images.

PEASCOD: *To ORANGEBLOSSOM:]*  
This have I seen in clubs and bars betimes;  
Clones are they called.

ORANGE: A most distressing sight.

NEAPOLITANO: Pistachio -

PISTACHIO: Hush, Neapolitano.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* Pistachio and Neapolitano?  
Two ice cream clones.

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* Be still.

NEAPOLITANO: My love -

PISTACHIO: The love  
Thou speak'st of suffocates my ardent spirit;  
My soul is chaf'd within these narrow walls,  
And I will seek release.

NEAPOLITANO: Thy freedom? Sure,  
Thou hast thy freedom, given thee most glad;  
Thou hast thy evening classes twice a week  
In pottery and "hablo espagnol";  
Wednesdays thou playest bridge, on Friday, squash,  
And we pursue our independent lives.  
Friends have we both in each our separate spheres,  
And, within bounds, our several interests.

PISTACHIO: Ay, within bounds; which bind me more like fetters.

NEAPOLITANO: What is thy wish?

PISTACHIO: Thou know'st full well my wish:  
More rare delights, love's banquet turning stale.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* O bravely said! I see thou hast perceived  
The cankered root of our oppression  
In heterosexual bourgeois mimicry  
And aping marital fidelity.

NEAPOLITANO: Stale? Now here thou hurt'st me to the quick  
Am I not in myself to thee sufficient?  
What is there that another could provide  
That I cannot? I fail if thou dost tire.

PISTACHIO: Thou canst not give the thrill of casual sex  
Which my loins crave, and on the Heath will find.

NEAPOLITANO: But what about our oath?

PISTACHIO: Pish for our oath.

NEAPOLITANO: Mock not with sacrilege OUR sacred oath,  
worn when I left my bedsit in West Ham  
[With all mod. cons. and fully furnished]  
For thy exclusive flat in Belsize Park.  
I gave my independence all for thee;  
Not for thy fitted carpets, TV lounge, .  
Eye-level grill, and plastic shower unit,  
But for thy self, which I did hold most dear,  
And do so still, if thou wilt leave this folly.

PISTACHIO: Call it not folly.

NEAPOLITANO: By what other name,  
That throws away the jewel to dote on paste,  
Consigns the better part of love to dust \_  
The blanket of our safe concupiscence  
And warm connubial bliss that swaddles both?



And faithfulness is but a little thing;  
I ask it as mere token of our trust,  
Signifying each is the other's world.  
But solid joys thou wilt evaporate  
In seeking out chimaeras, mere mirages.

PISTACHIO: Except what I seek is too too solid flesh

NEAPOLITANO: Which disappears with morning dew at dawn.  
Pistachio, I beg thee, think again.

PISTACHIO: I have already pondered deep and long.  
These woods and their adventures, night-conceal'd,  
Perchance may aid thee just as much as me.

NEAPOLITANO: Never! I would not void my lusts so basely,  
But save myself for thee and thee alone.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* Why, this is very marriage-madness!

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* Hush!

PISTACHIO: I shall not stay to hear thee longer. Go,  
Roam the wild woods and take thy pleasures there  
Disport thee as thou wilt; likewise will I,  
And thus return refresh'd to Belsize Park.  
Thus add we piquant spice to the stale broth  
Of our relationship.

NEAPOLITANO: The heavens forbendo  
Call'st thou Our union stale? Oh cruel man,  
Despising most the thing which hurts thee least.

PISTACHIO: Desist, I say.

NEAPOLITANO: I cannot.

PISTACHIO: Hold.

NEAPOLITANO: Go to.  
For my sake.

PISTACHIO: No!

NEAPOLITANO: I'll kill myself.

PISTACHIO: Please do.

ORANGEBLOSSOM: *[Aside]* This is no talk, it is a ping-pong match.

PISTACHIO: For all I care, go howling to the moon.  
No more. I am firm - or hope to be so soon.

*[Exit PISTACHIO]*

NEAPOLITANO: Ah, me! What melancholy place is this!  
Who knows what beasts may prowl within these woods,  
To rend the unsuspecting traveller?  
The branches rustle here most sinister,  
And twigs snap under many a sharp-claw'd pad.  
Well, I will follow, but with fearful mind,  
To seek Pistachio; perchance to find  
His mood is chang'd, and he, more pliable,  
Will turn his rout to paths reliable.

*[Exit NEAPOLITANO. Re-enter PEASCOD and ORANGEBLOSSOM.]*

PEASCOD: See'st thou their need? We are here timely come.

ORANGE: What can we do for these? It is too late.  
They are as pigs, in love with their Own mire

PEASCOD: That is most species-ist.

ORANGE: I do repent,  
And take back this remark, as slighting pigs.

PEASCOD: Canst thou not see, these here cry out for us;  
And we need them, for we can also learn,  
Embrace the patterns of our sexuality,  
The time-worn rituals of our brothers' rites -  
But stay. Another comes. We'll hide again.

*[They bide again. Enter GASPATCHO, in leather practising macho poses.]*

ORANGE: *[Aside]* What curious man is this? He scarce can move,  
So iron-clad is he.

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* Not iron, but like  
Th' Encyclopaedia Britannica,  
In leather bound; 'gainst which his muscles strain,  
Craving the wholesome air.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* Most monstrous sight!  
My hair doth prickle but to think on it.  
Oh, gentle Peascod, let us leave this place,  
That hath such strange, unhuman creatures in't.

PEASCOD: Ay, there's the rub, for human is he too;  
Also Our brother, though so different.  
*[To audience:]*  
This is the theory, which my head doth know  
But, I confess, my heart is not so clear;  
For the mere presence of these leather men  
Brings forth a most unlibertarian panic.  
This I must conceal from Orangeblossom,  
For fear of setting him a bad example.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* He moves most strange and marvellous  
silently.  
*[To GASPATCHO]* Ho, fellow! Here, I say!  
*[To PEASCOD]* Why speaks he not?

PEASCOD: He will not, for he must not break the vow  
Of Trappist silence while the hunt's afoot.  
One word said, and revels now are ended,

The god Priapus fled; that is the rule  
To which these superstitious prowlers hold.

*[Exit GASPATCHO, still posing and searching. Re-enter PEASCOD and ORANGEBLOSSOM.]*

PEASCOD: Therefore go forth, and do thou follow him,  
Break thou his silence, urge him to come here,  
To rest himself at dead hour of the night,  
When charms of chase do pale, and he is weary.  
Then shall we give him tea, and talk to him.  
The first two clones, now follow thou likewise.  
The body sated, then is the mind most free,  
And warm content melts granite hearts like wax;  
The moment chosen, we shall take our seal  
And stamp that soft, straight in our fixed likeness.

ORANGE: Well, I shall do thy will with no great liking.  
And strike as the flint, that blunts itself in striking.

*[Exit ORANGEBLOSSOM]*

PEASCOD: And luck go with thee, gentle Orangeblossom.  
Thy rough untutor'd zeal may ope more hearts  
Than force of grizzl'd reason. But see, the moon,  
Big-bellied at the peak of potency,  
Smiles on Our enterprise; her gentle beams  
Wash o'er Our woods with silver. Now flies the bat,  
Now scurries field-mouse from tuft to tuft,  
While overhead the all-seeing owl doth hover.  
Now crickets play their mazy symphony;  
Now vixen barks, now rumbles badger forth;  
And now I must about my work also.  
There's magic in the air this mild night,  
And I must mix heady enchantment further.

*[He produces a vial.]*

Here have I brought a potion sweet and heady,  
Of tincture of the rarest herbs compact,

Distill'd to Queen Mab's own arcane receipt:  
Oil of Muscovy, sweet cinnamon,  
Comminuted mandrake, unctuous balm,  
And other, more obscure, ingredients,  
Mix'd in proportions arcane, dark and deep  
By granddames at the midnight equinox.  
This purchas'd I at Boots, th' apothecary,  
Intending that I here should add the philtre  
Unto the PG Tips, which I do now.  
Thus shall the barriers fall, crumbled to dust,  
With which these fearful folk protect themselves  
From show of all-too-human frailty.  
Whoe'er shall drink from this enchanted urn  
Shall open up their eyes; their secret thoughts  
Are given tongue; desires long hid will lie  
Reveal'd, as stranded earthworms after rain.  
The Heath shall break its solemn vow of silence,  
Thought and word made one, as Cupid's darts  
Fly thick and most promiscuous through the air.  
The tea-drinker shall on the instant fall,  
Smitten by the object of desire  
On which his eye first lights; th' infusion  
Shall waft delicious fancy to the brain;  
And lives will never be the same again.

*[PEASCOD adds the potion to the tea, mixes it and sniffs it. Sings:]*

Go, Cupid, do thy work;  
Open minds and hearts.  
Drag forth desires that lurk  
In our most secret parts.

Go, Cupid, do thy work,  
And love shall be the yeast;  
Let hormones go berserk  
Let psyche be released.

Go, Cupid, do thy work;  
The puritan shall fall,  
As quiddity and quirk

In darkness conquers all.

Go, Cupid, do thy work  
On these most fixed lives;  
Drown the complacent smirk  
In older, primal drives.

*[He disguises himself in an old cloak.]*

My coat I don.  
I'm here; I'm gone.

*[Exit PEASCOD.]*



SCENE FOUR:

THE TEA-TROLLEY AGAIN

*[Enter NEAPOLITANO.]*

NEAPOLITANO: Pistachio! Pistachio! Where art thou?  
Pistachio, ho! Ay me, the quest is bootless.  
Thickets here do press so close about,  
And he is gone so deep, he'll ne'er be found.  
My eyes are weary, and my feet so sore  
That I must rest awhile. But what is this?  
A trolley with an urn? How came this here?  
This is no place for Social Services  
Or Meals on Wheels. Perchance some kindly soul  
Hath lost his way to an Old People's Home.  
Halloa!

Halloa!

There's none about. The tea is getting cold.  
I will refresh myself... But that is theft...  
Tush, who's to know? What's one small cup of tea?  
But all the same, not thine... Thou foolish man,  
Thou faintest quite with thirst, thy bones are chill;  
Take what has chanc'd to offer. That I will.

*[NEAPOLITANO pours a cup of tea and drinks. Enter ORANGEBLOSSOM.]*

ORANGE: My fruitless journey ends where it began.  
Nor sight nor sound of lost souls have I had,  
Save for the indistinguishable rustle  
Of furtive scuffles in the undergrowth.

*[ORANGEBLOSSOM spies NEAPOLITANO.]*

ORANGE: But here at last is one poor downcast gay;  
I'll talk with him and show him his Oppression.  
Perchance he'll see the error of his ways.  
Thou poor base thing, I come to raise thee up,  
To take the narrow blinkers from thy eyes,  
And lead thee from the common to the commune.



NEAPOLITANO: What beauteous voice thus ravishes mine ear?  
Art thou a man? Thy form suggests thou art,  
Save that thy godlike lineaments deny't,  
While thy fair garments seem of elves or sprites,  
Gossamer creatures, in whose tiny hands  
The finest silk takes shapes fantastical.

ORANGE: Come out from thy dark closet; join with us.

NEAPOLITANO: I'll join with thee most gladly, on the instant.  
Take shelter with me 'neath this friendly bush.

ORANGE: Nay, I am here to bring thee deepest joy.

NEAPOLITANO: Better and better. Come, the bush awaits.

ORANGE: My drift is lost; I mean relationships.

NEAPOLITANO: Most certain so do I, who pant for thee.

ORANGE: Leave go my tassles, base promiscuous lout.  
Thy mind runs all to this one constant rout,  
Like to a needle stuck in th' LP's groove.  
Canst thou not see, thou pitiable wretch,  
That there is more to life than lechery,  
And constant chasing of the well-shap'd groin?  
Pick-ups can be brothers, partners friends,  
And all can melt in the voluptuous flux  
Of multi-sided communality;  
Relationships spring from supportive groups,  
United 'gainst the "isms" of age, race, sex,  
And capital, engag'd in common struggle  
To overwhelm straight violence with gay love.  
As sunflower to the Sun our loves unfold;  
As tendrils of the columbine, Our lives  
Snuggle th' unyielding wall, stone turn'd to flowers  
Till all is clouded in ambrosia.

NEAPOLITANO: Speak on, my love, thy words do sting most sweet.

Fain would I smart beneath thy honey d lash;  
The more thou rates, the more I am enthral'd,  
Like itches, scratch'd, which then do itch the more.

ORANGE: Still mir'd in lusts thou liest, thou miscreant,  
For thou hast he~ded ne'er a word I said.

NEAPOLITANO: Nay, my parch'd mind doth pant for thy discourse  
As desert after rain.

ORANGE: I'll none of thee.  
Much can be 'complish'd by gay liberation,  
But making the blind to see, the lame to walk,  
Lies quite outside our manifesto's scope.  
I'll to Peascod and seek his sager counsels.

NEAPOLITANO: I'll follow close to thee in thy despite;  
Thou art not lost so quickly to the night.

ORANGE: Help, Peascod, help!

*[ORANGEBLOSSOM flees.]*

NEAPOLITANO: I come, my love, I Come.

*[Exit NEAPOLITANO in pursuit. Enter RASPBERRY.]*

RASPBERRY: Ha! I have miss'd the felon yet again;  
Ensnar'd by undergrowth, I lose my way.  
Lord how these cunning paths do twist and turn!  
An army might be lost i' th' tangled gorse.  
Still, I'll about my work in spite of checks.  
What though my shiny size ten boots be scuff'd,  
My creases crumpled and my raincoat torn?  
Though now my plain clothes might arouse the Sarge  
To give me fierce rebukes, yet with a scamp  
Hot from the Heath, and handcuff'd by my side,  
I'll soften all his scourges unto smiles.  
Where crime is rife, the policeman never rests;  
For mischief, like a spark to arid timber,  
Not scotch'd at source, will fire all our woods.

*[He looks round, a-tremble.]*

RASPBERRY: I know they're at it... somewhere... all around...  
They must be... Lusts aquiver... Flesh to flesh...  
They're here... In naked ecstasy... Around...  
Tongues - warm - mouths - limbs entwin'd - moist –  
shooting joys.  
I almost faint at prospect of such sin.

*[He staggers, but takes deep breaths to recover.]*

Come, come, brave Raspberry, now play the man,  
And force thyself on through this hideous den.

*[Enter PEASCOD, to check the urn is safe.]*

*[Aside]* Here comes a saucy villain now.  
*[To PEASCOD:]* Ho, sirrah!  
*[Aside]* I know him for a fairy by his gait.  
I'll play upon his innocence awhile,  
To lead me to his fellows where they sport.  
I must convince him quickly that I share  
His bent; and to this end will I employ  
The homosexual vernacular.

*[He takes out a book entitled 'Parliamo Parlare'. Accosts PEASCOD.]*

A naughty night for trolling, is it not?

PEASCOD: Trolling, sayest thou? I know not thy intent.

RASPBERRY: Nay, you mis-hear. For 'strolling' was the word  
Which I did utter. 'Trolling' is a word  
For those who wander slow, or 'swish' or 'mince'

PEASCOD: I like not 'mince'. A vegetarian, I.  
*[Aside]* His boots betoken a policeman sure.  
I'll play his game awhile to lead him on,  
He will reveal more if he's at ease.

*[To RASP]* The evening air is soothing, is it not?

RASPBERRY: Soothing and pleasant for a summer "cruise"!?

PEASCOD: A Cruise? We're fifty miles from the sea.

RASPBERRY: But were we by the sea, then would it be  
Most fitting cruising weather. Yet I trow  
Thou wilt find a slew of sailors hereabouts,  
If thou wert so inclined.

PEASCOD: What need have I  
For jolly matelots? The only boats  
Are model yachts floating on Hampstead Pond.  
Wherefore do sailors sail so far from home?

RASPBERRY: Why ask me? I know not. *[Aside]* The man's a vice  
Whose jaws I yet must strain to unclamp further.

PEASCOD: Perhaps a better word might be "patrol".

RASPBERRY: What say you?

PEASCOD: A fine evening to "patrol".

RASPBERRY: A curious turn of phrase; "patrol" implies  
Some pith and moment to the enterprise.  
I fear the rascal sees through my disguise.

PEASCOD: Why sure, for such I take it that thou hast.  
Why otherwise a lonely vigil keep  
In this wild place?

RASPBERRY: Yet fit enough it is  
To "vada" "dolly eeks" and "bona buns".

PEASCOD: Buns? If pangs of hunger grip thy bowels  
I know a quaint tea shoppe in East Heath –  
Though likely clos'd at this late hour of night.

RASPBERRY: I am not hungry –

PEASCOD: Why then say thou wast?

RASPBERRY: - save for fair "lallies" and "butch" bulging "baskets"

PEASCOD: Baskets? Of fruit? There's none upon the Heath.

RASPBERRY: Oh really? That is not what I've heard tell.

PEASCOD: Mayhap thou meanst a truncheon – luncheon –  
basket.

RASPBERRY: A truncheon basket! What a merry thought!  
Ho, ho. You see, I split my sides with mirth.  
*[Aside]* I fear he may be taking of the piss.

PEASCOD: Well, I'll away, I fear that I disturb  
Thy 'beat'.

RASPBERRY: My beat? I know no beat.

PEASCOD: Thy beet-  
root face doth sure betoken growing wrath.  
I fear, alas, I keep thee from thy purpose.  
*[Aside]* I joy to see the pig dripping his lard  
In sweaty fear.

RASPBERRY: What purpose I might have  
Is, I am sure, as innocent as your.  
Touché - I have him! Oh, clever Raspberry!  
The hook goes home; now I will play the line.

PEASCOD: Well, sir, I must admit –

RASPBERRY: *[Aside]* Now truth will out

PEASCOD: My nightly walks are somewhat purposeful;  
Yet seems it little harm.

RASPBERRY: *[Aside]* Now comes it pat

PEASCOD: Perhaps I shouldn't say, \_

RASPBERRY: *[Aside]* Confess, thou villain!

PEASCOD: But, truly, conscience stirs when I'm abroad,  
For criminal it is...

RASPBERRY: *[Aside]* I knew't!

PEASCOD: ... to steal mushrooms.

RASPBERRY: Mushrooms?

PEASCOD: Thou art right; 'tis an offence,  
For all this spacious park is property  
Of all us Londoners and the GLC.  
I should not take them for my privy use.  
My mind is troubled sore. But, my dear friend,  
My lovely wife, now big with our *[thinks]* fourth child,  
Craves mushrooms, as a pregnant woman may,  
And what must I do but satisfy her whim?  
Therefore steal I nightly to the Heath,  
In earnest mercy-search of Nature's bounty.  
I have confess'd; condemn me if you will;  
But he must have an adamant heart,  
Who would deny a poor fond doting husband  
The right to ease his wife's persistent pangs.

RASPBERRY: No more; the tears start ready to my eyes.  
I too have children; three most precious babes,  
Three little Raspberries cluster'd on the bush;  
For them, I trow, I would do much the same.

PEASCOD: My wife I will provide for, come what may,  
Despite contending winds and angry rains.  
Muds, fogs and mires - and Rash Intemperate Men.

RASPBERRY: What say you?

PEASCOD: Hast thou seen them on the Heath?

PEASCOD: Some men there are, furtive and sinister,  
Who lurk these wild woods about, most strange.

RASPBERRY: In truth, I have heard tell there are such men.

PEASCOD: But what their purposes might be, I know not.

RASPBERRY: *[Aside]* Though I have misjudged this innocent,  
Now I will open to him; unbeknownst  
He may yet lead me to the scandalous spot.  
*[To PEASCOD:]*  
Sir, I'll be frank; thou art an honest man.  
I am not what I seem. My clothes disguise  
An officer of Her Majesty's Police.

*[He reveals himself]*

PEASCOD: No!

RASPBERRY: Truly.

PEASCOD: Cross thy heart?

RASPBERRY: I do assure you.

PEASCOD: I never would have seen through thy disguise.

RASPBERRY: We have our methods, taught at Training School;  
Our Force is stuffed with masters of deception.

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* He knoweth not how true he speaks.  
*[To RASPBERRY]* Thy name?

RASPBERRY: Constable Raspberry, at your service, sir.

PEASCOD: A fair and fruity constable indeed.

RASPBERRY: These men that you have seen are villains quite,  
Devils incarnate, void of moral sense,  
Who here do practice vile perversions,  
Corrupting children and the public weal –

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* Sure, there are many children walk abroad  
Upon the Heath at this, the midnight hour.

RASPBERRY: - To outrage of the common decency.  
These vile monsters have I vowed to track  
Unto their very lair; and this long night  
Do I keep watch, in hope of catching them.  
But creep I up, they're melted into air,  
Into thin air, or swallowed in the copse.  
Good sir, if these you've seen, then tell me now  
Where I may apprehend them. My arrests  
Will reach their monthly quota then, which now  
Limp laggardly behind. The Sarge will smile,  
Promotion and a pay-rise will be mine,  
And little Raspberries well fed and watered.

PEASCOD: As one man with a family to another,  
I cannot hear unmoved thy piteous pleas,  
And I see plain it is my public duty  
To give thee Succour in thy enterprise.  
Yet stay and rest awhile; thou must be tir'd  
By thy long watch.

RASPBERRY: My feet are killing me.

PEASCOD: And doubtless thou art thirsty too.

RASPBERRY: In truth.

PEASCOD: It happens that I recently espied  
A hostess-trolley lying quite close by,  
Left by some wandering lost Home Visitor.  
I touch'd the tea-urn; warm 'twas to my hand.  
If we could find it, a hot cup of tea



Will set thee for thy labours yet to come.

*[He discovers the teatrolley.]*

Ah, here it is. Sit down and have some tea,  
While I go seek th'unmentionable men  
Who blight our Heath - and offer hope of glory.  
Thus private gain and public good combine,  
And Mrs Thatcher's cause unites with thine

*[He removed his drab coat. Aside:]*

Off with these weeds; the pike has ta'en the bait.  
Now as myself I'll greet my brothers straight.

*[Exit PEASCOD. RASPBERRY relaxes with his tea.]*

RASPBERRY: What bliss it is to snatch a moment's ease:  
A log, some PG Tips, and fame in view.  
I'll wait my new-found ally's quick return.  
Of such, I like to think, is Heaven made.  
*[He drinks]* Ah, that's better.  
Life flows again along my jaded veins.  
I feel like a new man -

*[Enter PISTACHIO]*

- and here one comes.

PISTACHIO: The Youngmen prowl, and I too must about  
The magic circle of forbid desires;  
Join and part in shadowy ecstasy;  
Hard bodies silhouetted 'gainst the sky,  
Eyes bright and glitt'ring in hidden faces,  
Nameless, silent, stealthy as the night,  
Lost in the concentration of the chase.  
Thrice have I join'd and parted; such sweet thrill  
I never dream'd could be; it stirs my blood.  
I was a fool to lock myself away  
I' th' cosy rabbit-hutch, monogamy.  
Well, I will reclaim the time thus lost,

And quickly, for my heart cries out for more.

*[PISTACHIO makes to exit; his way is barred by RASPBERRY.]*

RASPBERRY: Oh beauteous fair, that ravishes my sight,  
And brushes my heart with gossamer.

PISTACHIO: Got some poppers?

RASPBERRY: I have not lov'd till now, nor e'en existed.  
This moment trembles in eternity,  
Fixed in amber, proof 'gainst razing time,  
And lives for ever.

PISTACHIO: Dost thou want to fuck?

RASPBERRY: Come, sweetness, let us lie on pregnant banks;  
The ash will bend to lend its kindly shelter,  
Rough bark of elm will yield to our backs,  
Turning to softest down; the twigs will part,  
While mossy turf, new sprung, grows pliable  
To tender shape of our reclining forms, -

PISTACHIO: Indeed? Thou know'st a better place than I.

RASPBERRY: - While I do cradle in mine easeful arms  
Thy head, thy lovely head with locks so tight,  
Resting on my strong protective shoulder.

PISTACHIO: That doesn't sound like any fun to me;  
I came here for the sex, not Cupid's dart;  
There's armour plating round my tender heart.

RASPBERRY: Then linger here awhile my gentle dove

PISTACHIO: *[Insulted]* Gentle!

RASPBERRY: While I do sing thee of my love.

*[He accompanies himself on the lyre which drops from the tree.]*

*[Sings:]* Not silkiest damask of fairest rose  
Nor softest blossom on the bough  
Exceeds the gentleness which flows  
From mine own heart-springs now.

PISTACHIO: His talk is all of soft; I seek hard cock.

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Come away,  
Come away, Sweet,  
Come away with me.  
Let us play,  
Let us play, Sweet,  
While the night is free.

PISTACHIO: He wanders in his wits; I must escape.

*[He makes to leave; RASPBERRY brings him to the ground in a rugby tackle.]*

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Nor balmiest zephyr wafting round  
Nor fluffiest cloud that floats above,  
Compares with airy pleasure found  
In kisses offered by my love.

PISTACHIO: Such love as this I can do well without.

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Come away etc.

PISTACHIO: Away with him? To Disneyland, it sounds.

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Nor nectar from the flower's lips,  
Nor creamy peaches from the South,  
Nor sweetest syrups from rose hips  
Equal thy honey-dripping mouth.

PISTACHIO: He sounds like talk in women's magazines;  
I fear I shall throw up. Excuse me, please –

*[He makes to leave, stopped again by RASPBERRY.]*

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Come away etc.

PISTACHIO: I get all this from Neapolitano  
When I'm at home; I do not need it here.

RASPBERRY: Nay, thou shalt stay, for love will vanquish all,  
To hear my plaintive heart-easing lament.  
I offer thee my soul.

PISTACHIO: But I don't want it.

RASPBERRY: Don't go, my love; there's fourteen verses yet.

PISTACHIO: All to the same effect, I have no doubt.  
I get the message, but I've heard enough.

RASPBERRY: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?

PISTACHIO: No, not today, thank you. Some urgent business  
With two men in white T-shirts calls me hence.  
I've had enough of this romantic game;  
I seek new thrills, and not more of the same.

*[Exit PISTACHIO.]*

RASPBERRY: Thy voice is as the lodestar to the pole.  
Whither thou goest, there also will I troll.

*[RASPBERRY exits, following. Enter GASPATCHO. His eyes dart round. He swaggers across the stage. He leans against the tea-urn, posing, hand on crotch. His other hand rests on the urn, not realising what it is. He yelps in pain as he burns himself. He looks at it, grunts, pours himself a cup and drinks. He is seized with strange convulsions in the throat.]*

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GASPATCHO: What's this? What's this? I hear the alien sounds  
Issue from my mouth as from another's.  
They come not at my bidding, yet they do;  
They force themselves to utterance on my tongue,  
Volcanic from the hot depths of my being,

Breaking the cold crust of my solitude.  
What does it mean? There's none to catch my voice,  
Which dies on the whisp'ring inattentive wind.

*[He pauses, listens.]*

Yet still they come, these words, and will not still,  
Tumbling the confus'd tumult of the brain  
Onto the air in pitch'd and pattern'd sound.  
The molten, unshap'd lava cools, sets firm  
In whorled shapes, now permanent and sharp.  
And I am happy. For through my loosen'g tongue  
My soul can cleave the skies on unclipp'd wing.  
In formless silence, man is as the beast,  
Mute and unworthy, condemn'd to barren cage.  
Too long the stiff unyielding show has hid  
The fluid self which 'lurks within its case.  
Now, with the voice, the tim'rous self is free;  
I claim my self, and strive that self to be.

[Enter PEASCOD]

PEASCOD: Help! 'Tis the leather man; my knees are weak  
With fear; nor is my Orangeblossom nigh.  
What shall I do? My heart doth palpitate  
At threat of his approach. I like it not.  
He comes forth with an all-too-keen intent.  
I fear he will mis-take me in his lust.

GASPATCHO: All hail, fair brother. I would talk with thee.

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* I will be circumspect.  
*[To GASPATCHO:]* All hail, good sir.

GASPATCHO: Fain would I have thee teach me how to love.

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* I knew't; his chains are jangling in his  
passion

GASPATCHO: My life has been an insubstantial shade  
Till now, when my eyes lighted first on thee.

PEASCOD: Please - no - we are ill-match'd - I cannot see -  
*[Aside]* This smell of leather quite befumes my brain.

GASPATCHO: I need no more of silent, faceless gropes,  
Which empty as they seem to satisfy,  
And leave th' insatiate heart athirst for more.

PEASCOD: I cannot think for fear.

GASPATCHO: Thou hast the answer –

PEASCOD: The answer? I don't even know the question.

GASPATCHO: - Which on the instant I will pluck from thee.

PEASCOD: No force, I pray. I have great fear of pain.

GASPATCHO: Then wilt thou freely give me what I want.

PEASCOD: I know not what it is.

GASPATCHO: I'm sure thou dost,  
Or else, what dost thou here upon the Heath?

PEASCOD: Nay, thou mistak'st my purposes entire.  
*[Aside]* These metal studs do cause most piteous  
hurt;  
I cannot breathe, I shall be crush'd to death  
By force of his lascivious embrace.

GASPATCHO: Thou alone hast force to set me free.

PEASCOD: *[Trapped]* Can I free thee, who cannot free myself?

GASPATCHO: Thou alone canst break these metal chains  
That bind me close.

PEASCOD: And me, when so hard prest.

GASPATCHO: I would I knew thee –

PEASCOD: In the Bible sense?  
No thanks.

GASPATCHO: - better; thou hast much to teach.

PEASCOD: Help! *[Aside]* Would that Orangeblossom now were  
here!

GASPATCHO: Hast thou thy friends about? I fain would meet them.

PEASCOD: Yes – no! *[Aside]* I dare not put them in his path;  
He looks as if he'd eat them all alive.

GASPATCHO: Too long I've waited.

PEASCOD: Thou standest on my foot.

GASPATCHO: Now would I break my self-made silent wall,  
And reach out -

[He takes PEASCOD by the hand in a bone-crushing grip.]

PEASCOD: Aaagh!

GASPATCHO: - To grasp the hand of friendship.

PEASCOD: My hand is crush'd!

GASPATCHO: And thou wilt show the way;  
I would know all the secrets of thy life,  
My friend. *[Aside]* I ne'er had real friends before.

PEASCOD: *[Aside]* I cannot make friends with a grisly bear.  
Sweet sir, -

GASPATCHO: Nay, "friend".

PEASCOD: Well, "friend" then let it be.  
I fear that this is quite beyond my power,  
For I must haste away. I do recall –

A tofu casserole I have left on,  
And I must straight return or it will burn.

GASPATCHO: I will come with thee; we can talk some more  
In quiet privacy at thine own house.

PEASCOD: No! I recall also - my mother comes,  
Who must not find thee there.

GASPATCHO: Art thou not "out"?  
- Is that the phrase for fearless open gays?

PEASCOD: Yes - no - I mean - I am, but not to her...  
She has a heart condition - very bad...  
I fear the shock would be too much for her.

GASPATCHO: Such bravery knit up with loving care  
Is quite beyond my narrow wit to grasp.  
He decks himself with such a store of badges,  
Like to a Christmas tree, yet minds his mum.  
O brave GLF, that hath such people in't!  
Spark thou my tinder; I will quickly flame,  
And light a blaze will warm the vasty world.

PEASCOD: Think not of me, for that is Stalinist.  
The pers'nal is political, for sure \_  
But must the polit'cal be so personal?

GASPATCHO: How should I forget thee, since thou wast  
The first gay activist I e'er set eyes on?  
I'll speak out with thy voice, hear with thine ears,  
And thy sight, taste, touch, smell shall all be mine.

PEASCOD: Thy leather image doth unhinge me quite.

GASPATCHO: The leather? Then I shed it like a snake,  
Sloughing my former self as well the while.  
I cast it off, and do present myself  
Naked to the world, in my true shape.



*[He starts to take his clothes off PEASCOD hurries to prevent him.]*

PEASCOD: No! In thy leather glory's bad enough -  
A naked leather queen is even worse.  
Thou'lt catch thy death of cold; welcome thou art  
To come to meetings down in Camden Town,  
Where thou wilt meet an host of activists  
And not just me; for certain now I am,  
I cannot give thee all that thou requir'st.

GASPATCHO: But I would rather catch these jewels from thee.  
In thee I do perceive a special mark  
Of intellect and feeling which stands out  
Above the common.

PEASCOD: Please, no hierarchies!  
I am as others, and no more or less.

GASPATCHO: To me thou shin'st as beacon on the cliff,  
That flashes all lost sailors such as I.

PEASCOD: I flash no-one; nor do I seek to flash.  
Help, Orangeblossom, help! I'm overwhelm'd.  
O what a murky storm is here let loose;  
I fear I shall be hang'd with mine own noose.

*[Exit PEASCOD in panic.]*

GASPATCHO: I come, dear friend, my cannon prim'd for firing.  
*[Aside]* I never knew gay politics was so tiring.

*[GASPATCHO exits after him. Enter ORANGEBLOSSOM, with NEAPOLITANO following.]*

NEAPOLITANO: Stand not so far away; what dost thou fear?  
I would not harm thee, but would do thee good.  
My fingers itch to touch thy creamy skin,  
To run thy smooth curves along, to pinch thy flesh,  
And tease thy downy nipples.

ORANGE: Go away.  
How can I seek to bring enlightenment,  
With the, mine albatross, about my neck?  
They run into the woods at sight of thee,  
Or sound more like, for ne'er did mortal man  
Make such noisy love.

NEAPOLITANO: Thou hast the cure,  
For but the tincture of thy sweetest kiss  
Will serve to cool my raging lovesick fever.

ORANGE: Well, have some tea; mayhap that does the trick

NEAPOLITANO: I like it not; when I did drink before  
A curious haze did blur my keener vision;  
A bitter aftertaste did sear my mouth.  
Nay, from thy lips alone I drink my cure.

*[Enter PISTACHIO and RASPBERRY.]*

PISTACHIO: Now get thee hence, for I will none of thee.  
Thy melody doth jangle on mine ears  
Untuneably.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* Here is a kindred spirit.

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Come away  
Come away, sweet -

PISTACHIO: Piss off!

ORANGE: *[Aside]* For certain, he is tired of sex,  
His jaded life out here upon the Heath,  
And doth rebuff this importuning wretch,  
Who still will work him to his wanton lusts.

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Let us play,  
Let us play, sweet -

ORANGE: Now get thee hence

NEAPOLITANO: I will not leave thy side  
Ever, for here my heart doth now reside.

ORANGE: Stay then and watch, but silent and aside.  
Thy cause is hopeless; never will I succumb;  
But if thou must, stand fixed, and be dumb.

NEAPOLITANO: My love, in this at least I'll do thy will,  
In hope to please thee.

ORANGE: *[Aside]* I will about my work.  
Good sir, I see thee troubl'd by this man.

PISTACHIO: He follows me and will not go away.

ORANGE: And thou would'st leave this vanity and folly,  
And build a new, more fruitful style of life.  
I understand.

PISTACHIO: Well, not exactly -

ORANGE: Sit,  
Have some tea, and listen while I tell thee  
Where we're at in Camden GLF.  
Thou know'st that down the centuries we gays  
Were persecuted, tortur'd and revil'd.  
Now with the '67 Act it seems  
More lib'ral, but society has ways  
Of keeping us still down. 'Tis self-oppression -

*[PISTACHIO has drunk some tea. He sees NEAPOLITANO.]*

PISTACHIO: Neapolita - !

ORANGE: - through which we do  
The self-denying which the State demands.

PISTACHIO: I see my old love now with new-found eyes.  
Never was his familiar face so fair.

ORANGE:                   You follow? Good. Well, now the time has come  
To root out self-oppression from our midst,  
For us to say, "No more." We have the right -

PISTACHIO:               *[To NEAPOLITANO:]*  
O fairest love, I do repent me now  
That I did leave thy side.

NEAPOLITANO:                               *[To PISTACHIO:]* Speak not to me.

ORANGE:                   *[To PISTACHIO:]*  
To seize the freedom that is justly ours -

NEAPOLITANO:               *[To PISTACHIO:]* I never lov'd thee, now I realise.

PISTACHIO:               *[To NEAPOLITANO:]*  
Say it's not so, that livid with me, my love,  
These many months in sweet tranquillity.

NEAPOLITANO:               *[To PISTACHIO:]*  
  
Until thou cam'st up here to void thy lusts.  
Well, I have found the object of my joys.

*[He lunges for ORANGEBLOSSOM.]*

ORANGE:                   *[To NEAPOLITANO:]*  
Be quiet, I try to teach him mysteries.

NEAPOLITANO:               *[To PISTACHIO:]*  
Never will I give thee second glance;  
For here and here alone I take my chance.

PISTACHIO:               *[To NEAPOLITANO:]*  
With uncouth hippies, casually met.

ORANGE:                    *[To PISTACHIO:]* Hippy? I speak to thee of GLF;  
Be slighting, and thou'lt get a bunch of fives.

NEAPOLITANO:            *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM:]*  
Well said, my sweet, do thou reprove him straight;  
My love for him is ashes in the grate.  
*[To PISTACHIO:]*  
Darest thou talk of casually met,  
That came here with that very goal thyself?

PISTACHIO:                *[To NEAPOLITANO:]*  
I've changed my mind.

NEAPOLITANO:            *[To PISTACHIO:]* "Variety", thou'st said.  
"I need variety, for we are stale".  
"Stale" - thy very word.

PISTACHIO:                *[To NEAPOLITANO:]* Which I take back.  
For age cannot wither thee, nor custom stale  
Thy infinite variety.

NEAPOLITANO:            *[To PISTACHIO:]* Tell me another.

RASPBERRY:               *[To PISTACHIO, sings:]*  
Come away.  
Come away, sweet  
Come away with me.

*[His lyre breaks]*

NEAPOLITANO:            *[To PISTACHIO]*  
Thou need'st not me, for thou hast found another -  
"Casually met" as well, I have no doubt.  
Go thou to him.

PISTACHIO:                *[To NEAPOLITANO:]* I tell thee I despise him;  
A harmless lunatic I will not humour,  
For thou art still my being and my life,  
Alpha and Omega, as I now see.

ORANGE:                   *[To PISTACHIO:]*

Please, I am trying to raise your consciousness.

PISTACHIO: *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM:]*  
A fig for my consciousness; 'tis high enough

*[To NEAPOLITANO:]*  
Rais'd, when I am conscious here of thee.

NEAPOLITANO: *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM:]*  
Of thee.

RASPBERRY: *[To PISTACHIO]* Of thee.

ORANGE: Oh, I have had enough.  
These men are quite beyond my kind of help,  
That will not look beyond their narrow bound  
Of individual solutions.

*[RASPBERRY has repaired his lyre.]*

RASPBERRY: *[Sings]* Come away \_

OMNES: Oh, shut up.

ORANGE: *[To RASPBERRY:]* Now that I do see thee close,  
There is about thee a familiar air...  
Familiar and sinister... those size ten boots...

ORANGE: Didst thou not follow me a while back?

RASPBERRY: I follow'd thee to lead me to my love.

ORANGE: The regulation mac... The hat...

RASPBERRY: I fear'd  
That it might rain tonight, and came prepar'd.

ORANGE: Thou art a member of Constabul'ry!

RASPBERRY: Never! - At least, I was an hour ago,  
But now my previous life is but a dream,

Which I mind not; and here do set aside  
To consecrate myself to Cupid's service.

ORANGE:                   *[Aside]* A Copper on the Heath! In love! 'Tis brave!  
And I must go acquaint my Peascod on't;"  
'Twill warm his heart; and he may chance to find  
A way to turn this marvel to advantage.  
Now may a happy accident set right  
The bleak mishaps of this Midsummer Night.

*[Exit ORANGEBLOSSOM]*

NEAPOLITANO:           I follow, fairest love, to do thy will.

*[Exit NEAPOLITANO]*

PISTACHIO:               And I to thee, now that I love thee still.

*[Exit PISTACHIO]*

RASPBERRY:               *[Sings]*       Come away,  
                                  Come away, sweet -

He's gone; but in despite I will pursue,  
And never cease till one is made from two.

*[Exit RASPBERRY]*

SCENE FIVE:

YET ANOTHER PART OF THE HEATH

[Enter PEASCOD:]

PEASCOD:                    Escap'd at last! The hulking maniac  
                                  Gaspacho, sheathed in leather, runs amok.  
                                  But he has ta'en another turn; I've lost him.  
                                  He prattles like a Christian seeing the light,  
                                  Of higher planes and spiritual love,  
                                  The whiles he strives to hold me in a vice,  
                                  Unspiritually panting down my neck;  
                                  Nor will he follow through his new-found life,  
                                  Without I must be by his side t' approve.  
                                  Now, in the respite, I must seek the trolley;  
                                  Orangeblossom also must be found,  
                                  And we will hence to saner Camden Town.

*[Enter ORANGEBLOSSOM]*

ORANGE:                    Well-met by moonlight; I have need of thee.  
                                  Three men there are, and all in hot pursuit.

PEASCOD:                    I have but one, but he not far behind.

ORANGE:                    We draw them on, as moths unto the flame,  
                                  But not to our intent. What is our charm,  
                                  That fastens them so ravenously on us?

*[PEASCOD makes a decision]*

PEASCOD:                    'Tis time to take thee in my confidence;  
                                  The tea -

ORANGE:                                       No matter; I have news for thee.  
                                  The fuzz is on the Heath, hilariously  
                                  Fallen in love.

PEASCOD:                                       My Raspberry? I knew't.



ORANGE: Thou know'st this man?

PEASCOD: Yeah, we have met before.  
It all falls out according to my plan.

ORANGE: Thy plan? What plan? Thou hast not told me of it.

PEASCOD: I cannot tell thee all; suffice to say  
The tea -

*[Alarums off]*

But later I will tell thee all.  
For we must haste to catch this rising tide  
And barque our enterprise upon the flood.  
Where is this constable?

ORANGE: He follows straight,  
One of the three I mention'd, almost here.  
O, 'tis the rarest sight I e'er beheld.  
He frolics, gambols, sings about his love,  
Like to an elephant in ballet skirt  
That dances on its hind legs to a waltz.

*[More alarums off.]*

PEASCOD: We must stir. Go that way, I'll go this.  
Together we will lay a merry trail,  
To lead them to the tea-urn whence they came;  
There do I have a quaint device to teach  
Constable Raspberry and all his kind  
To stay away from what doth not concern him.

*[Exeunt. Enter NEAPOLITANO, PISTACHIO and RASPBERRY.]*

NEAPOLITANO: My love went that way.

PISTACHIO: *[To NEAPOLITANO:]* Stay a while with me.

RASPBERRY: *[To PISTACHIO:]*  
Think not of him, that thinkest not of thee.

I am sufficient.

PEASCOD: *[Off]* Orangeblossom, ho!

ORANGE: *[Off]* Peascod, Peascod, I fly to thee.

NEAPOLITANO: 'Tis he.  
His sweet voice beckons on, and I will go.

*[He exits, following the voices. Enter GASPATCHO.]*

GASPATCHO: *[To PISTACHIO:]*  
Hast thou not seen a most fair activist  
Walking this way, upright and badge-bedeck'd?

PISTACHIO: I know him not; forgive me, I must give chase.

*[Exit PISTACHIO. Enter GASPATCHO.]*

GASPATCHO: Hast thou seen him?

RASPBERRY: Who's that?

GASPATCHO: From GLF -  
A man whose courage towers to the skies,  
Who fills with hope and strips away the lies.

RASPBERRY: Badges, you say? I have seen none like that.  
One I recall, as from a previous life,  
Collecting mushrooms with a tea-trolley.

GASPATCHO: *[Aside]* He wanders in his wits.

RASPBERRY: And when he left  
Love flooded me, who once was parch'd with hate.  
But I forget myself; my love doth wait.

*[Exit RASPBERRY]*

GASPATCHO:           Are they all mad? They run like rabid beasts.  
                          Commotions such as these were never seen  
                          Upon the Heath; what do these portents mean?  
                          This and much more I'll ask my guide about.  
                          But where is he in all this wild rout?  
                          I'll follow these; mayhap they'll find him out.  
                          Peascod!

*[Exit GASPATCHO. Blackout. In the darkness, alarums and flashing torches.]*

SCENE SIX

THE TEA-TROLLEY AGAIN

[Enter ORANGEBLOSSOM and PEASCOD severally. ]

ORANGE:                   Well, we have made it, and one step ahead  
                              O' the tumult which doth follow in our wake.  
                              Quick, tell thy plan, that I may be forearm'd.

*[PEASCOD looks for a hiding-place.]*

PEASCOD:                 But first a convenient bush. This is too small  
                              For the concealment which I have in mind.

*[ORANGEBLOSSOM helps himself to tea.]*

                              This one is better: there is room for two.  
                              Here will we lie in wait till time is ripe  
                              To leap on Raspberry; we'll fright him so -

*[Enter GASPATCHO]*

                              - He'll ne'er recourse to queer-bashing again  
                              In search of self-advancement.

*[He sees ORANGEBLOSSOM drinking.]*

  No! The tea!  
                              Drink not the tea, 'tis drugg'd. Ah, 'tis too late.

*[ORANGEBLOSSOM sees GASPATCHO]*

ORANGE:                 *[To GASPATCHO]*

                              O tie me, bite me, beat me, whip me, fuck me;  
                              I will be master'd, be thy naked slave.  
                              Bind me to all thy secret privy lusts;  
                              Use me, revile me, spit on me, my love,  
                              For, dominant, it is thy natural right  
                              By force to take me all unwillingly.

Kick me and spurn me; trample over me.  
I am unworthy e'en to eat thy stools.

PEASCOD: Ew!

ORANGE: Cupid, do I find thy saw of might:  
"Whoever lusts that lusts not at first sight?"  
Thy leathern garb, so beauteous in my sight,  
Clings as a second skin around thy trunk,  
Strong -

*[Noises off]*

PEASCOD: *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM]*  
For Heaven's sake, we've work afoot.

GASPATCHO: *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM]*  
Away, thou wretch, thou grovellest in vain;  
I would not even waste my breath on thee.

ORANGE: O lash me with thy tongue as I deserve;  
And later will deserve thy other lash.

PEASCOD: *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM]*  
They come and we are unprepar'd. Go to –  
*[To GASPATCHO]*  
Sweet friend, if thou didst ever love our cause,  
I pray thee get thee hence behind that bush.

ORANGE: *[To GASPATCHO]*  
I will go with thee; do thou drag me there.

PEASCOD: No! *[Aside]* This young fool will yet be our undoing.

ORANGE: *[To GASPATCHO]*  
Bind me in chains of hardest adamant.

PEASCOD: "Bind me"! I have't!  
*[To GASPATCHO]* Give me thy collar straight.

GASPATCHO: My collar?

PEASCOD: To put on Orangeblossom.

ORANGE: Please!

GASPATCHO: I have renounc'd these baubles from the past;  
I do not wish to dominate or serve,  
Nor will I join with one I scarcely know.

RASPBERRY: *[Off]* My love!

PISTACHIO: *[Off]* Neapolitano!

NEAPOLITANO: *[Off]* Sweet!

PEASCOD: *[To GASPATCHO]* Thou seest,  
We have no time to talk. The collar straight.

GASPATCHO: Is't for the cause?

PEASCOD: Why, sure.

GASPATCHO: Well then, I will.

*[Takes his collar and chain, puts it round ORANGEBLOSSOM's neck.]*

PEASCOD: Attach the chain, then tie him to the tree.

ORANGE: I almost faint for ecstasy!  
*[TO GASPATCHO]* No, tighter.

PEASCOD: And now my scarf will serve him as a blind.  
*[To ORANGEBLOSSOM]*  
Later he'll strip thee, take a strap to thee,  
For thou hast been most naughty.

GASPATCHO: *[To PEASCOD]* Must I do this?

PEASCOD: *[To GASPATCHO]*  
No, but 'twill quieten him and get him hence.  
In love he's useless.

ORANGE: Unimagin'd bliss!

*[They manoeuvre ORANGEBLOSSOM behind a tree.]*

PEASCOD: *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM]*  
Now wait thee there. Suspense is half the pleasure.  
The lunatic, the masochist, the poet  
Are of imagination all compact,  
And thy imaginings will make thy pains  
The sweeter; now await thy punishment,  
While thinking of the vile things he'll-do  
Because of all thy fearsome wickedness.

ORANGE: This wait is almost more than I can bear;  
O hurry my chastisement harsh and fair.

PEASCOD: Now let us leave him safely out of sight.  
Take thou this torch, get thee behind that tree.  
Ere long I'll call thee; till then, wait for me.

*[Exit GASPATCHO; enter RASPBERRY.]*

RASPBERRY: Where is my love, my sweet Pistachio?  
O, I am winded; I can run no more.

PEASCOD: Thou seek'st Pistachio?

RASPBERRY: 'Tis you, my friend.  
Er - yes, I seek the man Pistachio;  
Th'abominable villain did solicit,  
Approach'd me with advances, lewd designs,  
Which I agreed to, thus to lure him on,  
And then entrap him. But I fear I lost him.  
He'll never join me in unnatural acts,  
More's the pity - I mean -

PEASCOD: Pistachio?  
Moustach'd and in a lumberjack's check shirt?  
With working boots and narrow turn'd-up jeans?

RASPBERRY: The very same. You've seen him lately then?

PEASCOD: Most certainly. He left me with a note,  
That thou should wait behind yon copious bush,  
And there divest thee of thy heavy clothes.  
Naked he'll come to thee, and there fulfil  
All that thy heart desires.

RASPBERRY: He will? – I mean,  
My heart desires only to arrest him;  
For that alone I thus degrade myself.  
You understand?

PEASCOD: Oh, quite.

RASPBERRY: My gorge doth rise,  
But I must sacrifice when duty calls.

GASPATCHO: *[Round tree]* Is it yet time?

PEASCOD: For pity sake, get back.

NEAPOLITANO: *[off]* Halloa!

PEASCOD: He's here. Now get thee to the bush.  
And there prepare to make thy sacrifice.

RASPBERRY: I fly with light – with heavy heart I go.

*[He exits behind a third tree. Enter NEAPOLITANO.]*

NEAPOLITANO: My Orangeblossom flies my very voice.  
O woe is me, most cruelly cast off.  
I cannot bear it. I will end it all,  
And hang myself in my Doc Marten laces.

*[He prepares to do so. PEASCOD appears, a benign apparition.]*



PEASCOD: Do not despair, for he hath chang'd his mind.

NEAPOLITANO: In truth?

PEASCOD: In truth.

NEAPOLITANO: Thou mak'st me live again.

PEASCOD: But moments gone he trod this very ground.

NEAPOLITANO: O sacred turf, compress'd beneath his foot.

PEASCOD: Come here. He told me that he wanted thee,  
And thee alone t' assuage his sickly yearning.

NEAPOLITANO: "Yearning"!

PEASCOD: Nor would he ever rest in peace,  
Until, he said, he held thee in his arms.  
Me has he charged with care to seek thee out,  
Cleave thee from thy companions, bring thee here,  
And here to see the two of you made one.

NEAPOLITANO: He's here? I see him not.

*[He tries to get NEAPOLITANO into the bush with RASPBERRY.]*

PEASCOD: Behind that bush  
He waits, all naked, panting for thy touch.

ORANGE: *[Off]* O but the wait is more than I can bear.

PEASCOD: Thou hear'st? Behind that bush.

NEAPOLITANO: From over there  
It seem'd to me the voice came.

PEASCOD: Thou mistak'st.

ORANGE: *[Off]* My skin's aquiver for thy pitiless lash.

PEASCOD: *[To ORANGEBLOSSOM]*  
Shut Up!  
*[To NEAPOLITANO]* He's over here, I do assure thee.

GASPATCHO: *[Round tree]* Tis now?

PEASCOD: Not yet.

NEAPOLITANO: And now from over there.

ORANGE: O punish me.

NEAPOLITANO: 'Tis him.

PEASCOD: No, 'tis another.

NEAPOLITANO: I know that voice; it dances in my fancy.

PEASCOD: Nay, go behind that bush and thou wilt find him.

GASPATCHO: *[Round tree]*  
What shall I do?

NEAPOLITANO: This voice is schizophrenic.

PEASCOD: *[To GASPATCHO]*  
Get back, thou fool.

NEAPOLITANO: It is a will-o'-the-wisp,  
Some naughty sprite that flits from tree to tree.

*[PEASCOD has nipped behind ORANGEBLOSSOM's tree to deal with him. The sound of a slap.]*

PEASCOD: There! There's thy lash. Now wait till I am ready.

ORANGE: *[Off]* Bliss!

PEASCOD: Quiet, or I'll leave thee there, thou slave.

*[NEAPOLITANO makes to exit]*

NEAPOLITANO: I will not listen to this wand'ring voice.

ORANGE: *[Off]* I'm dumb, dear master.

*[PEASCOD returns, catches NEAPOLITANO]*

PEASCOD: Dost thou hesitate?  
Thou dith'rest like a green and giggling girl.  
Go to. Get in. Thy love's aflame for thee.

*[He throws NEAPOLITANO behind RASPBERRY's tree. There is a grunt and a squeal, followed by sexy noises.]*

GASPATCHO: *[Round tree]* Tis now?

PEASCOD: Have patience. See - another comes.

*[Enter PISTACHIO]*

PISTACHIO: Where is he? I demand to see my love.

PEASCOD: Through there –

PISTACHIO: Thank you.

*[Exit PISTACHIO behind RASPBERRY's tree.]*

PEASCOD: - engag'd with a policeman.

*[Noises of ecstasy behind the bush. PEASCOD gets GASPATCHO from hiding. ]*

PEASCOD: They know not whom they meet, nor do they care,  
In the embracing dark. I don my coat

*[He puts on his 'straight' drag.]*

As my disguise. Now is our moment come.  
Do thou take Raspberry's, which he has left  
In haste to be agent provocateur.  
And thus we are transformed to judges stern,  
The guardians of outraged society –  
Save that 'society' is all our own  
And outrage at the confines of our freedom.

*[PEASCOD and GASPATCHO produce torches. They assume 'policeman' voices.]*

PEASCOD: All right, what's all this here?

GASPATCHO: What's going on?

PEASCOD: This is a raid.

GASPATCHO: Police here. Knock it off.  
Come out there, as you are.

PEASCOD: Let's see you then.

GASPATCHO: Do I have to drag you out?

PEASCOD: You filthy queers –

GASPATCHO: We know you're there –

PEASCOD: We're coming in to get you –

*[RASPBERRY, PISTACHIO and NEAPOLITANO come out in various stages of undress.]*

PEASCOD: *[To RASPBERRY]*  
Move over.

GASPATCHO: *[To PISTACHIO and NEAPOLITANO]*  
Hands on heads. Against the tree.  
Don't move – No, don't turn round. We've got you  
now.

PEASCOD:                    *[To RASPBERRY]*  
Name?

RASPBERRY:                                 Must I?

PEASCOD:   Name, thou pervert

RASPBERRY:   Raspberry.

PEASCOD:                    Thy name and face have a familiar air.  
Employment?

RASPBERRY:   Do I have to?

PEASCOD:   Quiet, scum.  
None of thy cheek, or it's the worse for thee.  
I asked thee what thy occupation was.

RASPBERRY:                    Policeman. *[Aside]* O, this will go ill with me.

PEASCOD:                    Policeman, eh? A turn-up for the books,  
A very pretty kettle of fish indeed,  
And juicy reading in the incident book.  
I wonder what thy Sarge will have to say.  
*[To GASPATCHO]*  
Hey, George, we've got ourselves a bent policeman.

GASPATCHO:                    O what a laugh! He's sure to get the boot.

RASPBERRY:                    No, mercy, please. The Sarge will do his nut;  
And, worse, I cannot bear the deep disgrace.  
My wife, my little ones, will surely starve;  
For, at my age, what other job awaits?  
I only join'd the force in desperation,  
Unfit for any other occupation.

PEASCOD:                    What right hast thou to mercy, who would show  
None to thy sorry victims on the Heath?  
Nay, they're abominations, thou hast said  
Which means thou therefore must be vile also.

This hast thou said, and by this thou must fall.

*[PEASCOD removes his coat/disguise.]*

RASPBERRY: Now do I recant my thoughtless words,  
And here do penance with my bitter tears.

PEASCOD: Ah, but which thoughtless words dost thou recant?  
The words of love thou spake, or those of hate?  
Are thou a fool to fall headlong in love,  
Or else to be the heavy, vicious arm  
Of a corrupt, unfair society,  
That rules by force, and not by our consent?  
Think carefully before thou mak'st reply;  
Thy future will depend upon thy answer.

RASPBERRY: I see that I have err'd in this alone;  
Hating in others' hearts what's in mine own;  
And I can never act or fair or free  
While all that oppresses thee, oppresses me.

*[PEASCOD ceremoniously produces the antidote, administers it to RASPBERRY. ]*

PEASCOD: Well spoken. Stand, and take of thy release.  
Gaspacho, bring the jarring lovers forth.

*[GASPACHO produces PISTACHIO and NEAPOLITANO]*

NEAPOLITANO: Was 't thou, not Orangeblossom, in the copse?

PISTACHIO: Yea, it was I, that caught thee with another.

NEAPOLITANO: Another?

PISTACHIO: This wretch that stands beneath the tree.  
O hypocrite, who claims undying love,  
But yet will to the bushes on the nonce  
With any passing stranger. I care not  
If thou'lt say thou'st fallen for another,  
Sure, it will hurt, but that I can respect

As hon'rabable and upright. But this act,  
This sacrilegious spoiling of my love –

NEAPOLITANO: Which thou didst spoil before I ever thought –

PEASCOD: Peace, warring souls, and here do rest thy quarrel.

[NEAPOLITANO and PISTACHIO take the antidote.]

PISTACHIO: Mine eyes are open'd; I have stray'd the path,  
And seek the way which leads back to thy hearth.  
Never will I strive myself to free  
At the expense of thy security.

*[He kneels to NEAPOLITANO]*

NEAPOLITANO: Nay, do not abase thyself to me,  
For I have learnt of other ways to be.  
Who can be sure they are the folks they say,  
Or will tomorrow be as yesterday?  
Change is the unchanging rule of living;  
Therefore will I find changing ways of giving.

PEASCOD: Well said, Neapolitano. See  
Now the man thou doted on so fond.

*[GASPATCHO brings ORANGEBLOSSOM forth.]*

ORANGE: I am a worm to grind beneath thy heel,  
Unworthy clay, nay, even less than dust.

NERAPOLITANO: O, is my former love now brought so low?

PEASCOD: As low as all his secret heart's desires.  
Here, gentle Orangeblossom; quench thy fires.

*[PEASCOD administers the antidote.]*

These unrehearsed longings now shall cease;  
But, for the future, use them at thine ease.

I must confess, the blame lies at my door,  
That drugg'd the tea and should have said before.  
Nor was it mine intent to bring thee low;  
But, having done so, now do let thee go.

ORANGE: Never again will I these men despise,  
Nor cut myself off from my strongest ties;  
For, in condemning their reality,  
I put down also what is part of me.

GASPATCHO: But what of me, dear guru? Am I forgot?  
Hast thou no word to give to thy disciple?

PEASCOD: "Disciple"? No. That leave we to the Christians,  
And other self-oppressed superstitions.  
Take thy release – and with it, new positions.

*[PEASCOD administers the antidote to GASPATCHO.]*

GASPATCHO: Now do I see, for better or for worse,  
Thou art not the answer to the universe,  
But yet a man, and just like any other,  
And take thee as my sweet and frail brother.

PEASCOD: I too have learnt; of thee I was in fear,  
Deducing falsely from what did appear.  
But now thou hast drawn near, and now I know  
Thy inner sweetness from thy outward show.  
This too I realise; the wheels turn,  
And who would teach must be prepar'd to learn.

PEASCOD: *[To Audience]*  
Thus, gentles, we at last have set aright  
The hazards of this brief midsummer night;  
And if an author's message you would see,  
It is, that truth is a plurality;  
Not 'tolerance', or other lib'ral phrase,  
But learning each from each in richer ways.  
The dawn will rise, the sun stalk through the land,  
And our release now lies at your fair hand.



*[They take their bows.]*

OMNES:                    *[Sing]*        Stars are fading  
   Owl is still;  
   Light cascading  
   Off the hill.

   Away, away;  
   Tomorrow lies  
   Stretch'd i' the sun  
   Before our eyes.

   Mist is curling  
   Off the lea;  
   Flower unfurling  
   To the bee.

   Away, away  
   Tomorrow lies  
   Stretch'd i' the sun  
   Before our eyes.

*[Exeunt Omnes, dancing.]*

**FINIS**