

W. S. Gilbert (1836-1911)

2 *Emily, John, James, and I*

A Derby Legend.

EMILY JANE was a nursery maid,
JAMES was a bold Life Guard,
JOHN was a constable, poorly paid
(And I am a doggerel bard).

A very good girl was EMILY JANE, 5
JIMMY was good and true,
JOHN was a very good man in the main
(And I am a good man too).

Rivals for EMMIE were JOHNNY and JAMES, 10
Though EMILY liked them both;
She couldn't tell which had the strongest claims
(And *I* couldn't take my oath).

But sooner or later you're certain to find
Your sentiments can't lie hid —
JANE thought it was time that she made up her mind 15
(And I think it was time she did).

Said JANE, with a smirk, and a blush on her face,
"I'll promise to wed the boy
Who takes me to-morrow to Epsom Race!"
(Which *I* would have done, with joy). 20

From JOHNNY escaped an expression of pain,
But JIMMY said, "Done with you!
I'll take you with pleasure, my EMILY JANE!"
(And I would have said so too).

JOHN lay on the ground, and he roared like mad 25
(For JOHNNY was sore perplexed),
And he kicked very hard at a very small lad
(Which *I* often do, when vexed).

For JOHN was on duty next day with the Force,
To punish all Epsom crimes; 30
Young people *will* cross when they're clearing the course
(I do it myself, sometimes).

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The Derby Day sun glittered gaily on cads,
On maidens with gamboge hair,
On sharpers and pickpockets, swindlers and pads 35
(For I, with my harp, was there).

And JIMMY went down with his JANE that day,
And JOHN by the collar or nape
Seized everybody who came in his way
(And *I* had a narrow escape). 40

He noticed his EMILY JANE with JIM,
And envied the well-made elf;
And people remarked that he muttered "Oh, dim!"
(I often say "dim!" myself).

JOHN dogged them all day, without asking their leaves; 45
For his sergeant he told, aside,
That JIMMY and JANE were notorious thieves
(And I think he was justified).

But JAMES wouldn't dream of abstracting a fork,
And JENNY would blush with shame 50
At stealing so much as a bottle or cork
(A bottle I think fair game).

But, ah! there's another more serious crime!
They wickedly strayed upon
The course, at a critical moment of time 55
(I pointed them out to JOHN).

The constable fell on the pair in a crack —
And then, with a demon smile,
Let JENNY cross over, but sent JIMMY back

(I played on my harp the while). 60

Stern JOHNNY their agony loud derides
With a very triumphant sneer —
They weep and they wail from the opposite sides
(And *I* shed a silent tear).

And JENNY is crying away like mad, 65
And JIMMY is swearing hard;
And JOHNNY is looking uncommonly glad
(And I am a doggerel bard).

But JIMMY he ventured on crossing again
The scenes of our Isthmian Games — 70
JOHN caught him, and collared him, giving him pain
(I felt very much for JAMES).

JOHN led him away with a victor's hand,
And JIMMY was shortly seen
In the station-house under the grand Grand Stand 75
(As many a time *I've* been).

And JIMMY, bad boy, was imprisoned for life,
Though EMILY pleaded hard;
And JOHNNY had EMILY JANE to wife
(And I am a doggerel bard). 80

1869

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