

Ballad: The King Of Canoodle-Dum

In "The King of Canoodle-Dum," from "The Bab Ballads," we're introduced to the adventurous tale of Frederick Gowler, a seasoned mariner who left his vessel, the Howler, during its voyage in the Caribbee. His travels brought him into the unexpected company of Calamity Pop Von Peppermint Drop, the whimsical and peculiar ruler of Canoodle-Dum.



Summaryer

Upon their meeting, the king humorously questions Gowler's presence in a land devoid of sea, to which Gowler responds with a sorrowful narrative of mistreatment back in London, falsely claiming royalty as William the Fourth. This revelation leads to immediate celebration among the locals, sparked by a desire for alliances with European nobility. The king sees an opportunity in Gowler's claimed misfortune—his kingdom attacked and landmarks like the Tower of London and Greenwich's Naval Fane targeted by a mad populace.

Sympathetic to Gowler's alleged plight, Calamity Pop offers him sanctuary and status within Canoodle-Dum, including luxurious accommodations, slaves, and unrestrained access to royal rum. In a significant gesture of goodwill, he even betroths his daughter, Hum Pickety Wimple Tip, to Gowler with the condition that she would become queen should they return to England.

Gowler's story encapsulates a fantastical mix of deception, cultural encounters, and unexpected royal favor in a land far from his home, illustrating whimsical diplomacy and the allure of exotic adventures. The ballad itself is playful and satirical, mocking both the British monarchy and the concept of noble savagery, while emphasizing the absurdity of Gowler's sudden shift from mariner to monarch.