

The Watchtower of Judah – A one-act Play*

Act 1, Scene 1 – *The court jester encounters a thief attempting to steal into the king's bedchamber through the water closet locked from within.*

The Joker (*sounding nervous*) There must be some way out of here.
There's too much confusion.
I can't get no relief.
Businessmen, they drink my wine.
Plowmen dig my earth.
None of them along the line
know what any of it is worth.

The Thief (*speaking kindly*) No reason to get excited.
There are many here among us
who feel that life is but a joke,
but you and I, we've been through that,
and this is not our fate,
so let us not talk falsely now,
the hour is getting late.

The chamberlain unlocks the king's water closet and discovers the joker and the thief hiding therein.

The Chamberlain (*sounding angry*) And what, pray tell, are you about
here hiding in this easy chair
while wise Isaiah summons thee
to Uzziah's throne as for his jeer?
And who this stranger besides be
who whispers slyly in your ear?

The Joker My lord, he but a beggar be
who strains to lighten up his load.

The Chamberlain Remove thee both at once or feel my wrath!
The times are not for such tomfoolery.

Act 1, Scene 2 – *The prophet Isaiah appears before the throne of King Uzziah. The court chamberlain and the court joker are standing at his right-hand side. Many princes and knights gather about awaiting the prophesy. The thief busies himself picking the princes' pockets.*

The Prophet Isaiah (*Speaking loudly and ominously*) Prepare the table. Watch in the watchtower. Eat and
drink. Arise ye princes, and prepare the shields.
For thus hath the Lord said unto me: "Go set a
watchman, let him declare what he seeth."

Act 1, Scene 3 – *All along the watchtower princes keep the view, while all the women come and go – barefoot servants too. Outside in the distance, a wildcat does growl. Two riders are approaching. The wind begins to howl.*

The Watchman I saw a chariot with a couple of horsemen, a chariot of asses, and a chariot of camels; and I hearkened diligently with much heed. ...And, behold, here cometh a chariot of men, with a couple of horsemen!

The first rider (*hollering joyfully*) Babylon is fallen! ... It is fallen! And all the graven images of her gods He hath broken unto the ground!

King Uzziah The prophet hath seen and spoken verily!
Babylon's loss: Judah's gain.
Let's ride, boys!
And can somebody please shoot that goddam wildcat!

*Pastiche by Pascual Delgado © (September 4th 2015.) All quoted texts are from the song "All along the Watchtower" by Bob Dylan (1967) and from the Book of Isaiah, Chapter 21, verses 5-9.