

## **Reginald Bunthorne**

Large Role. Comic-Baritone. Range: Bb2 – E4 (opt. G4)

**Audition Music: “Am I alone and unobserved?” Rect. AND “If you’re anxious for to shine” Song (all 3 verses).**

Music found in Chappell Score pg 45-49

Or G&S Archive edition pg 50-57 [here](#)

Lots of dialogue including reciting a somewhat complicated poem, lots of singing.

Described as a ‘fleshly poet’, he has managed to convince all the well-bred ladies that ‘Aestheticism’ is the most ideal way to live one’s life and they follow his ‘example’ and adore him for it. All the female chorus are in love with him, and he revels in the attention. However, it is all a rouse...

Unlike ‘traditional’ portrayals of Bunthorne, we would be keen to see an actor who is able to bring out the more selfish, manipulative side of the character and portray Bunthorne as the antagonist of the piece, rather than playing him for laughs or ‘camping him up’. Someone who can portray Bunthorne as a ‘bad actor’ would be ideal! We don’t want the audience to feel too much sympathy for him at the end when he ends up with no one.

**Audition Dialogue (please prepare both):**

- 1. “Ah! Patience, come hither.” – “Farewell! Patience, Patience, farewell!”**
- 2. “Crying, eh?” – “I don’t believe you know what love is!”**

Dialogue found on following pages:

1.

**BUN.** Ah! Patience, come hither. I am pleased with thee. The bitter-hearted one, who finds all else hollow, is pleased with thee. For you are not hollow. *Are you?*

**PATIENCE.** No, thanks, I have dined; but – I beg your pardon – I interrupt you.

**BUN.** Life is made up of interruptions. The tortured soul, yearning for solitude, writhes under them. Oh, but my heart is a-weary! Oh, I am a cursed thing! Don't go.

**PATIENCE.** Really, I'm very sorry.

**BUN.** Tell me, girl, do you ever yearn?

**PATIENCE.** (*misunderstanding him*) I earn my living.

**BUN.** (*impatiently*) No, no! Do you know what it is to be heart-hungry? Do you know what it is to yearn for the Indefinable, and yet to be brought face to face, daily, with the Multiplication Table? Do you know what it is to seek oceans and to find puddles? – to long for whirlwinds and yet have to do the best you can with the bellows? That's my case. Oh, I am a cursed thing! Don't go.

**PATIENCE.** If you please, I don't understand you – you frighten me!

**BUN.** Don't be frightened – it's only poetry.

**PATIENCE.** Well, if that's poetry, *I* don't like poetry.

**BUN.** (*eagerly*) Don't you? (*Aside.*) Can I trust her? (*Aloud.*) Patience, you don't like poetry – well, between you and me, I don't like poetry. It's hollow, unsubstantial – unsatisfactory. What's the use of yearning for Elysian Fields when you know you can't get 'em, and would only let 'em out on building leases if you had 'em?

**PATIENCE.** Sir, I –

**BUN.** Patience, I have long loved you. Let me tell you a secret. I am not as bilious as I look. If you like, I will cut my hair. There is more innocent fun within me than a casual spectator would imagine. You have never seen me frolicsome. Be a good girl – a very good girl – and one day you shall. If you are fond of touch-and-go jocularities – this is the shop for it.

**PATIENCE.** Sir, I will speak plainly. In the matter of love I am untaught. I have never loved but my great-aunt. But I am quite certain that, under any circumstances, I couldn't possibly love *you*.

**BUN.** Oh, you think not?

**PATIENCE.** I'm quite sure of it. Quite sure. Quite.

**BUN.** Very good. Life is henceforth a blank. I don't care what becomes of me. I have only to ask that you will not abuse my confidence; though *you* despise me, I am extremely popular with the other young ladies.

**PATIENCE.** I only ask that you will leave me and never renew the subject.

**BUN.** Certainly. Broken-hearted and desolate, I go.

(*Recites*) "Oh, to be wafted away,  
From this black Aceldama of sorrow,  
Where the dust of an earthy to-day  
Is the earth of a dusty to-morrow!"

It is a little thing of my own. I call it "Heart Foam". I shall not publish it. Farewell!  
Patience, Patience, farewell!

2.

**BUN.** Crying, eh? What are you crying about?

**PATIENCE.** I've only been thinking how dearly I love you!

**BUN.** Love me! Bah!

**JANE.** Love him! Bah!

**BUN.** (to JANE) Don't you interfere.

**JANE.** He always crushes me!

**PATIENCE.** (*going to him*) What is the matter, dear Reginald? If you have any sorrow, tell it to me, that I may share it with you. (*Sighing.*) It is my duty!

**BUN.** (*snappishly*) Whom were you talking with just now?

**PATIENCE.** With dear Archibald.

**BUN.** (*furiously*) With dear Archibald! Upon my honour, this is too much!

**JANE.** A great deal too much!

**BUN.** (*angrily to JANE*) Do be quiet!

**JANE.** Crushed again!

**PATIENCE.** I think he is the noblest, purest, and most perfect being I have ever met. But I don't love *him*. It is true that he is devotedly attached to me, but I don't love him. Whenever he grows affectionate, I scream. It is my duty! (*Sighing.*)

**BUN.** I dare say!

**JANE.** So do I! I dare say!

**PATIENCE.** Why, how could I love him and love you too? You can't love two people at once!

**BUN.** Oh, can't you, though!

**PATIENCE.** No, you can't; I only wish you could.

**BUN.** I don't believe you know what love is!