

DSB Baseball 2/16
"King Kelly"

Cue: Tenor horn solo 1st 8 bars "Take Me Out to the Ballgame"
(Harvey and the band are onstage with Cally Dodworth. Enter Michael "King" Kelly in baseball shirt and cap, carrying bat.)

Harvey: Good evening, Mr. Kelly. We're so glad to have you join us for this evening's performance. *(They shake hands. Harvey winces, shakes his broken hand.)*

Kelly: *(He speaks in Irish dialect)* I'm very happy to be here, Mr. Dodworth. Most of our Chicago White Stockings club will attend the show tonight, as well as the Brooklyn players.

Harvey: Splendid!

Kelly: *(Indicating Cally)* And who might this lovely lady be?

Harvey: Ah...let me introduce you to my sister-in-law, Mrs. Allen Dodworth. Cally, this is --

Cally: *(Awed)* **Mister Michael "King" Kelly!!** Oh my gracious, I have wanted to meet you ever since I first saw you play on Blondie Purcell's team back in '74. I was a supporter of the Brooklyn Atlantics back then, but when you walloped that horsehide clean over Eddie Booth's head I said to myself, "Now there's a ball player".

Kelly: Why thank you, Mrs. Dodworth. *(Kisses her hand)*

Cally: Please call me Cally.

Kelly: Cally and Kelly, eh? Please, call me Michael. *(She beams)*

Cally: I recall there was a brass band at that game and they played a rousing rendition of the Home Run Galop as you tore around the bases.

Cue: Home Run Galop (band only)

Kelly: Why, I do recall that old contest. I was hardly more than a boy, just learnin' the finer points of the game. But I did have a lucky strike now and then.

Cally: I'll have none of your false modesty, Mr. Kel—er, (*she beams again*)...Michael. After all, you've twice been the National League's leader in runs scored and it looks as if you will be again this season!

Kelly: Not if Dan Brouthers of the Detroit Wolverines has anything to say about it. He's quite the slugger, I tell ya. But I scored another run for the White Stockings in our win over the Boston Beaneaters yesterday, so tally one for me!

Cue: Tally One for Me (tenor vocal with band)

Cally: I must admit that Big Dan Brouthers is a decent batter and a good first baseman, but he can't hold a candle to you, Mr. Kel—(*He shakes his finger at her*)...Michael. Why, I remember a game here in New York when Oyster Burns of the Giants hit a foul ball down the first base line with the first baseman nowhere in sight. You were sitting on the bench just behind the first base line and you jumped up, called out "Kelly now catching for Chicago" and caught that ball with your bare hand. And the umpire had to call the batter (*she gestures*) OUT!

Kelly: Of course that was before the new rules about player substitutions.

Cally: I suspect your unorthodox "substitution" had something to do with that.

Kelly: (*With a sly smile*) Anything to win a ball game!

Cally: I'm a great fanatic for base ball. I sometimes wish I could play outfield for the Giants. I'm very fast, you see.

Kelly: Oh, no, Mrs. Dod—er, Cally. (*She blushes*) I'm afraid baseball is not a game for the ladies. The competition can be terribly vicious. Why, I recall one game when the Cincinnati Redlegs had a runner on first who went to steal second and spiked our first baseman, Cap Anson, in the foot. Cap retaliated by tryin' to trip him, but he got away. Our second-

sacker, Dandelion Pfeffer, tried to block him while Burns, our shortstop, covered the bag. Now, the runner evaded Dandelion and threw himself spikes first at Burnsie, who knocked him flat to the ground. In the meantime, the batter hit me over the hands with his bat so I couldn't throw. I stomped on his foot with my spikes and shoved my mitt in the umpire's face so he couldn't see the whole mess. No, ma'am, baseball is much too competitive for the ladies.

Cally: I see you've never been to a debutante ball. *(Kelly eyes her quizzically, then laughs uproariously)* Well, you certainly can't object to the runner trying to steal second. You're quite the base burglar yourself.

Kelly: I must say there's nothing I love more than to hear the home crowd chantin' "Slide, Kelly, Slide".

Cally: Why, that's on our program tonight. Shall I give you a preview? Harvey?

Cue: Slide, Kelly, Slide (soprano with band)

Kelly: I see you are truly a base ball fanatic, as you claim.

Cally: What more can I say, Mr... Michael, but "Hurrah For Our National Game"!

Cue: Hurrah For Our National Game (band only)

Cally: Well, Michael, you certainly do add a great deal of excitement to our national pastime. After all, they do call you "King Kelly".

Kelly: I claim to be a fair player, especially for an orphan who started out to be an actor.

Cally: An actor?

Kelly: Oh, yes. When I was a wee lad, me best friend and I decided that we were going to become actors. Either that or railroad engineers. Both seemed very glamorous careers to our young minds.

Cally: And did your friend pursue a life upon the stage?

Kelly: No, on the diamond. Mac's pitching for the White Stockings.

Cally: *(Stunned)* You mean Jim McCormick?

Kelly: The very same.

Cally: Why, he's the best pitcher in the National League! And you grew up together. Now I understand why the two of you are such an unbeatable combination.

Kelly: It's best when a pitcher, like Mac, and a catcher like me know each other verra well. That's for certain. It's a bit like dancing—always easier when you and your partner know what to expect of one another.

Cally: A sort of "baseball quadrille"? *(Kelly grins, nods.)*

Cue: Baseball quadrille (Band only)

(Kelly eventually invites her to dance, and they do a quadrille figure in "open" dance position.)

Cally: You dance nearly as well as you slide into home base, Michael. Are your acting skills equally polished?

Kelly: I'll have you be the judge of that, Cally. Perhaps you would enjoy a dramatic presentation of "Kelly at the Bat".

Cally: Isn't it "Casey at the Bat"?

Kelly: Not the way I tell it.

Kelly collects his bat and steps forward to begin his recitation. Cally puts a hand above his on the bat and they go up hand over hand to see who bats. She wins, and enters as "Casey/Kelly" when the cue comes.

Cue: Casey [Kelly] At the Bat (dramatic recitation with occasional music)
Cally's one line is underlined in italics. The band is involved with full attention and participates vocally as the crowd.

Kelly:

The outlook wasn't brilliant for the Mudville nine that day;
The score stood four to two with but one inning more to play;
And then, when Cooney died at first, and Barrows did the same,
A sickly silence fell upon the patrons of the game.

A struggling few got up to go, in deep despair. The rest
Clung to that hope which "springs eternal in the human breast";
They thought, If only **Kelly** could but get a whack at that,
We'd put up even money now, with **Kelly** at the bat.

But Flynn preceded **Kelly**, as did also Jimmy Blake,
And the former was a lulu and the latter was a cake;
So, upon that stricken multitude grim melancholy sat,
For there seemed but little chance of **Kelly's** getting to the bat.

But Flynn let drive a single, to the wonderment of all,
And Blake, the much despised, tore the cover off the ball,
And when the dust had lifted and men saw what had occurred,
There was Jimmy safe at second, and Flynn a-huggin' third.

Then from five thousand throats and more there rose a lusty yell,
It rumbled through the valley; it rattled in the dell;
It knocked upon the mountain and recoiled upon the flat,
For **Kelly**, mighty **Kelly**, was advancing to the bat.

There was ease in **Kelly's** manner as he stepped into his place;
There was pride in **Kelly's** bearing and a smile on **Kelly's** face,
And when, responding to the cheers, he lightly doffed his hat,
No stranger in the crowd could doubt 'twas **Kelly** at the bat.

Ten thousand eyes were on him as he rubbed his hands with dirt;
Five thousand tongues applauded when he wiped them on his shirt.
Then, while the writhing pitcher ground the ball into his hip.
Defiance gleamed in **Kelly's** eye, a sneer curled **Kelly's** lip.

And now the leather-covered sphere came hurtling through the air,
And **Kelly** stood a-watching it inn haughty grandeur there,
Close by the sturdy batsman the ball unheeded sped—
"That ain't my style," said **Kelly**. (*Kelly gestures to audience & band*)

Strike One! the umpire said.

From the benches, black with people, there went up a muffled roar,
Like the beating of the storm-waves on a stern and distant shore.
“Kill him; kill the umpire!” shouted someone in the stand;—
And it’s likely they’d have killed him had not **Kelly** raised his hand.

With a smile of Christian charity great **Kelly’s** visage shone;
He stilled the rising tumult; he bade the game go on;
He signaled to the pitcher, and one more the spheroid flew;
But **Kelly** still ignored it, and the umpire said: (*Gestures to audience*)
Audience & band: STRIKE TWO!!

“Fraud,” cried the maddened thousands, and echo answered “Fraud,”
But one scornful look from **Kelly**, and the multitude was awed.
They saw his face grow stern and cold; they saw his muscles strain,
And they knew that **Kelly** wouldn’t let that ball go by again.

The sneer is gone from **Kelly’s** lip, his teeth are clenched in hate;
He pounds with cruel violence his bat upon the plate.
And now the pitcher holds the ball, and now he lets it go,
And now the air is shattered by the force of **Kelly’s** blow.

Oh! somewhere in this favored land the sun is shining bright;
The band is playing somewhere, and somewhere hearts are light.
And somewhere men are laughing, and somewhere children shout;
But there is no joy in Mudville—mighty **Kelly** has Struck Out.

8 bars of “Take Me Out To the Ball Game – tenor horn solo
Home Run Galop (band)
Tally One for Me (tenor vocal with band)
Slide, Kelly, Slide (soprano vocal with band)
Hurrah For Our National Game (band)
Baseball Quadrille (band)
Casey/**Kelly** At the Bat (dramatic presentation with incidental music)

Music: 15 min. + Casey/Kelly 5 min. Dialogue: 5 min 45 sec.