

Three for Three

Catches for Young Trombonists

Toss'd in a blanket

Edmund Nelham



The Tinker

John Cobb



A scolding catch

John Blow (?)



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Each of these pieces is a “catch”--a kind of round popular in England in the 17th and 18th centuries--written for three voices. Catches were sung by catch clubs, groups of men who got together in the evening, usually over a punch bowl, to sing catches, rounds and glees. (Our glee clubs are their descendents.) The lyrics of catches often contain jokes, puns and double meanings, some of which are lost when playing them on the trombone.

All three players read from the same music, but they begin at different times. The first player begins alone. When she is just starting the second line, the second player starts at the top. Then, as the first player starts the third line, the third player starts at the top. The group repeats the piece as many times as it likes. To finish they may all stop together at the end of any line. Or each one may drop out as he comes to the end of the music, leaving the third player to finish the last line all alone.

Sources

Edmund Nelham, “Slaves to the World shall be toss’d in a blanket”
in John Hilton, *Catch that Catch Can, or a Choice Collection of Catches, Rounds and Canons* (1658) 2nd edition, p.70

John Cobb, “Hey hoe, hey hoe, heart’s delight”
in Hilton, *Catch that Catch Can*, 2nd edition, p.89.
This catch is about a repairer of cookware, and the third line’s lyrics consist of the word “tink” over and over as he hammers on a pot. Hence our title, “The Tinker.”

“A Scolding Catch”
in John Playford, *Catch that Catch Can or the Second Part of the Musical Companion* (1685).

This tune has been adapted from the original: all of the notes are here, but they have been rearranged a bit to better fit the range and skills of young players.

To find more catches, or to read the words:

Facsimiles of the original sources can be found on the Internet and in some libraries. A facsimile edition of Hilton’s *Catch that Catch Can* was published by Da Capo Press in 1970, but is now out of print. A good source of catches in modern notation is Paul Hillier, *The Catch Book* (1987), Oxford University Press.

--David Caldwell, March 2008