

How Much Would You Give To Find Out - song lyrics

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HOW MUCH WOULD YOU GIVE TO FIND OUT?

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A Recitation By M. J. Cavanagh.

One morning in the "Sessions " a prisoner stood
In the dock, on suspicion of theft;
The facts brought against him were such that lied not
Of escape e'er the faintest chance left,
The officer's evidence tended to show
That he'd caught him in rather queer plight;
Trying hard with a key to open a door,
In the silence and dead of the night.
The District Attorney, pompous and loud
In his general blustering way.
Addressing the officer, said, sir, when caught,
Pray what did the prisoner say?
The officer coughed [ahem!] and scratching his head
Looked around as if something in doubt,
Then smiled at the lawyer and answered him thus:
"How much would you give to find out?"

"Come, come, sir, we want not your levity here,"
The lawyer irascibly cried,
"Or you might find yourself, sir, repenting your joke
In the dock at the prisoner's side."
Now, look at the prisoner grinning away
At your myrth, sir, so low and ill-timed.
"You say, sir, you saw him creep up to the door
When over the railing he climbed."
The policeman replied, "Yes, I did sir, that's true,
Then I followed and collared him tight,
Dragged him off to the station, altho' to escape
He tried, sir, with main and with might."
The counselor here interposed once again,
"Well, you stopped him from getting away,
But answer me this, when you seized him at first,
Then, what did the prisoner say?"
The policeman looked 'round and again scratched his head
As if of his ears were in doubt;
Then smiled, and amid roars of laughter he said:
"How much would you give to find out?"

The counsel jumped up and the counsel sat down,
Then at the policeman he glared,
And addressing the stern looking judge on the bench,
He solemnly vowed and declared,
That he'd never before since he'd practiced the law
Had with so much insolence met,
And hoped that the man reprimanded would be.
In a manner he would not forget.
The judge gave the witness a look of reproof,
And then with a manner severe,
Desired him at once a fit answer to give
To a question so simple and clear.
Then the lawyer addressed the policeman again,
"You have heard what his ' Honor' has said,
Which is only what I have expected from one
Who possesses his Honor's' great head."
The judge then continued, now, witness take care,
Just consider this is not child's play,
On your oath, when first you had seized upon him,
Pray, what did the prisoner say?
A silence profound then pervaded the court,
As tho' everyone's breath had been stopped
And there's not the least doubt but a pin could be heard
If down on the floor it had dropped;
The people, the jury, the bench and the bar,
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'Fore the officer's gaze were all mixed-
The eyes from all quarters that glared on him now
Like one terrible optic were fixed;
Add yet round his mouth a faint smile was discerned,
As he carefully twirled about
His club, and replied in stentorian tones,
"How much would you give to find out?"

A loud shout of laughter rang out in the court,
Which the judge very quickly suppressed,
And even his Honor was fain just to smile
As if he to himself had confessed,
That the matter was one not quite guiltless of myrth,
Here the counsel in passion's tones spoke,
And observed that with all due respect to the court,
He failed to perceive any joke.
In the insolent answer repeated now thrice,
By the witness, who's satisfied air,

Was an open insult to his Honor and all
Honest citizens now present there.
The policeman must guilty of perjury be,
Or else dull and heavy as lead.
At this the poor wretch in the dock shouted out
"You, duffer, that's just wot I said.
The cop, when he collared me, asked me my game.
'Twas an hour honest folks ain't about,
And I give him the 'gag' he's been giving to you,
How much would you give to find out?"