

House Carpenter

Traditional (Child no. 243)

male
 Am C G Am
 “Well met, well met, my own true love
 Well met, well met,” cried he
 G Em
 “I’ve just returned from the salt, salt sea
 Am G Am
 And it’s all for the love of thee
 “Oh, I could have married a king’s daughter,
 dear
 And she would have married me,
 But I forsook the crown of gold,
 And it’s all for the love of thee.”

female
 “If you could have married a king’s daughter,
 dear,
 I’m sure you are to blame;
 For I am married to a house carpenter,
 And I find him a nice young man.”

male
 “Ah, wilt thou forsake thy house carpenter,
 And come away with me?
 I’ll take thee to where the white lilies grow
 On the banks of Italy.”

female
 “But if I forsake my house carpenter
 And come away with thee,
 What have you got to maintain me on,
 And keep me from poverty?”

male
 “Six ships, six ships all on the sea
 And seven more upon dry land;
 One hundred and ten bold brave sailor men
 To be at thy command.”

female
 And she’s picked up her own wee babe,
 And kisses gave him three,
 Saying, “Stay right here with my house car-
 penter,
 And keep him good company.”

male
 Then she’s putted on her rich attire,
 So wond’rous to behold,
 And as she trod along her way,
 She shone like the glittering gold.

female
 Well they’d not been gone but about two weeks,
 I’m sure it was not three,
 When she espied his cloven foot,
 And wept most bitterly.

male
 “Ah, why do you weep, my own pretty maid,
 Weep you for your golden store,
 Or do you weep for your house carpenter,
 Who never you will see any more?”

female
 “I do not weep for my house carpenter,
 Nor for my golden store,
 But I do weep for my own wee babe,
 Who never I will see any more.”

female
 “What hills, what hills are those, my love
 That rise so fair and high?”

male
 “Those are the hills of Heaven, my love,
 But not for you and I.”

female
 “What hills, what hills are those, my love
 That rise so dark and low?”

male
 “Those are the hills of Hell, my love,
 Where you and I must go.”

instrumental break
both

He took her up to the topmast high,
 To see what she could see;
 He sank the ship in a flash of fire
 Down to the bottom of the sea.

Mostly from the singing of Joan Baez, with a couple of verses replaced by the versions in Child to bring out the demonic nature of the lover a little more. I’ve also changed the pronouns a bit, so that the “lover” uses “thee” consistently, and switches to “you” as the “demon”. The last verse is straight out of Child.

20060522