

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Noble Fisherman or Robin Hood's Preferment

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IN summer time, when leaves grow green,
When they doe grow both green and long,
Of a bould outlaw, calld Robin Hood,
It is of him I sing this song.

When the lilly leafe and the elephant
Doth bud and spring with a merry good cheere,
This outlaw was weary of the wood-side,
And chasing of the fallow deere.

`The fishermen brave more mony have
Then any merchant, two or three;
Therefore I will to Scarborough goe,
That I a fisherman brave may be.'

This outlaw calld his merry men all,
As they sate under the green-wood tree:
`If any of you have gold to spend,
I pray you heartily spend it with me.

`Now,' quoth Robin, I'le to Scarborough goe,
It seemes to be a very faire day;
Who tooke up his inne at a widdow-womans house,
Hard by upon the water gray.

Who asked of him, Where wert thou borne?
Or tell to me, where dost thou fare?
`I am a poore fisherman,' saith he then,
`This day intrapped all in care.'

`What is thy name, thou fine fellow?
I pray thee heartily tell to me;'
`In mine own country where I was borne,
Men called me Simon over the Lee.'

`Simon, Simon,' said the good wife,
The outlaw was ware of her courtesie,
And rejoyed he had got such a dame.

`Simon, wilt thou be my man?
And good round wages I'le give thee;
I have as good a ship of mine owne

As any sayle upon the sea.

`Anchors and planks thou shalt want none,
Masts and ropes that are so long;
`And if that you thus furnish me,
Said Simon, 'Nothing shall goe wrong.'

They pluckt up anchor, and away did sayle,
More of a day then two or three;
When others cast in their baited hooks,
The bare lines into the sea cast he.

`It will be long,' said the master then,
`Ere this great lubber do thrive on the sea;
I'll assure you he shall have no part of our fish,
For in truth he is of no part worthy.'

`O woe is me,' said Simon then,
`This day that ever I came here!
I wish I were in Plomton Parke,
In chasing of the fallow deere.

`For every clowne laughs me to scorne,
And they by me set nought at all;
If I had them in Plomton Park,
I would set as little by them all.'

They pluckt up anchor, and away did sayle,
More of a day then two or three;
But Simon spied a ship of warre,
That sayld towards them most valourously.

`O woe is me,' said the master then,
`This day that ever I was borne!
For all our fish we have got to-day
Is every bit lost and forlorne.

`For your French robbers on the sea,
They will not spare of us one man,
But carry us to the coast of France,
And ligge us in the prison strong.'

But Simon said, Doe not feare them,
Neither, master, take you no care;
Give me my bent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.

`Hold thy peace, thou long lubber,
For thou art nought but braggs and boast;

If I should cast the over-board,
There were nothing but a lubber lost.'

Simon grew angry at these words,
And so angry then was he
That he tooke his bent bow in his hand,
And to the ship-hatch goe doth he.

`Master, tye me to the mast,' saith he,
`That at my mark I may stand fair,
And give me my bended bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.'

He drew his arrow to the very head,
And drew it with all might and maine,
And straightway, in the twinkling of an eye,
Doth the Frenchmans heart the arow gain.

The Frenchman fell downe on the ship-hatch,
And under the hatches down below;
Another Frenchman that him espy'd
The dead corps into the sea doth throw.

`O master, loose me from the mast,' he said,
`And for them all take you no care,
And give me my bent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.'

Then streight they did board the Frenchmans ship,
They lying all dead in their sight;
They found within the ship of warre
Twelve thousand pound of money bright.

`The one halfe of the ship,' said Simon then,
`I'le give to my dame and children small;
The other halfe of the ship I'le bestow
On you that are my fellowes all.'

But now bespake the master then,
For so, Simon, it shall not be;
For you have won her with your own hand,
And the owner of it you shall bee.

`It shall be so, as I have said;
And, with this gold, for the opprest
An habitation I will build,
Where they shall live in peace and rest.'

Version in Child
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