

## The Handsome Cabin Boy

### The Handsome Cabin Boy

It's of a pretty female as you will understand  
Her mind was set on rambling into a foreign land  
She dressed herself in man's attire and boldly did appear  
And she engaged with a captain to serve him for a year.

The captain's lady being on board, she seemed in great joy  
To think that the captain had engaged such a handsome cabin boy  
And many's the time she cuddled and kissed, and she would have  
liked to toy  
But 'twas the captain found out the secret of the handsome cabin  
boy

Her cheeks they were like roses, her hair was all a-curl  
The sailors often smiled and said, he looks just like a girl  
But eating the captain's biscuit, well, her color it did destroy  
And the waist did swell of pretty Nell, the handsome cabin boy.

As through the Bay of Biscay our gallant ship did plough  
One night among the sailors there came an awful row  
They tumbled from their hammocks for their rest it did destroy  
They complained about the groaning of the handsome cabin boy

It's doctor, dearest doctor, the cabin boy did cry  
My time has come, I am undone, surely I must die  
The doctor ran with all his might, a-smiling at the fun  
For to think a cabin boy could have a daughter or a son

Now when the sailors heard the joke, they all began to stare  
The child belongs to none of us, they solemnly did swear  
And the lady to the captain said "My dear I wish you joy  
For it was either you or I betrayed the handsome cabin boy."

Come all of you bold fellows and we'll drink success to trade  
And likewise to the cabin boy who was neither man nor maid  
And if the wars should rise again, us sailors to destroy  
Well, here's hoping for a jolly lot more like the handsome cabin  
boy.

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A popular broadside ballad of shipboard carryings-on. This  
version from Louis Killen; it derives from that sung by one of

the greatest ballad singers of all times, Jeannie Robertson of  
Aberdeen.

Recorded by John Roberts and Tony Barrand on "Mellow with Ale  
from the Horn", FHR-04

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