

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Lord Beichan (2)

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Young Beichan was a king's son,
And aye a king's son was he,
And he went on wi' a foreign Moor,
Unto a foreign land went he.

When he was in a foreign land,
And in among the savage black,
They laid a plan among themselves,
It was young Beichan for to tak'.

They hae ta'en him young Beichan,
And put him in a vault o' stane,
It was daylight and the sun shone bright,
But I wat young Beichan, he saw nane.

But it fell out upon a day,
Young Beichan, he did mak' his moan,
But it was not unto a stock,
Nor yet was it unto a stone.

"If any lady would borrow me,
I would promise to be her son,
If any knight would borrow me,
I would at his bridle run.

"But if a maiden would borrow me,
I would wed her wi' a ring,
And all my land and all my houses,
They should a' be at her command."

The savage Moor had an only daughter,
Her name it was ca'd Susan Pye,
And she went in at the prison door,
And kindly ca'd young Beichan by.

"It's hae ye ony land?" she says,
"Or hae ye ony dowry free
Ye could bestow on a lady's love,
If out o' prison she would lowse thee?"

"It's I hae lands baith broad and wide,
But they are far beyond the sea,

But all that's mine, it shall be thine,
If out o' prison ye would lowse me."

So it fell out upon a day,
Her faither to the hunt did gae,
And she's stolen the keys frae aneath his hied,
And I wot she set young Beichan free.

She's gie'n him a steed frae her faither's stable,
She's gien him a saddle wi' ivory bane,
And she has gi'en him twa guid greyhounds,
That they might at his bridle run.

Between them twa they wrote a letter,
Between them twa they hae made a bond,
That for sieven years he would not marry,
Nor yet that she should love a man.

When sieven years were gane and past,
She longed young Beichan for to see,
She's ta'en her mantle a' about ("aboot") her,
And she's ta'en shipping on the sea.

When she cam' by young Beichan's gates,
And knocked gentle at the pin,
"Who is this," the porter cried,
"Who knocks so gentle and would come in?"

"Is this not young Beichan's gates,
And is that worthy knight at hame?"
"He's up the stair at his dinner set,
Wi' his bonny bride and mony a ane."

She's put her hand into her pocket,
She's gi'en the porter a guinea fee.
"Gang up the stair and bring him to me,
And bid him speak one word wi'me."

"Get first a sheave o' his white bried,
And then a glass o' his red wine,
And bid him mind on a lady fair,
That once relieved him out of pine."

The porter, he went up the stairs,
And he fell low down upon his knee,
Young Beichen, he pulled him up again,
Says, "What makes a' this courtesy?"

"Outside there stands the fairest lady,

That ever my eyes did see,
And she's got rings on every finger,
And on her mid-finger she's got three.

"She wants a sheave o' your white breid,
and then a glass o' your red wine,
And bade you mind on a lady fair,
That once relieved you out o' pine."

The stair it was full fifteen steps,
But I wot he mde nane but three,
He's caught her in his arms twa,
And he's kissed her tenderly.

"Gie me my hand and troth," she said,
For my native country I maun see,
For since ye've met wi' another lady,
My hand and troth you must gie to me."

"Oh, no, Oh no, madam," he said,
"Oh, no, Oh no, and this maunna be,
For since ye lowsed me out o' pine,
Rewarded now it's you must be!"

He took her by the milk white hand,
And led her to the marriage stane,
He changed her name frae Susan Pye,
And he called her, "my dear Lady Jane."

Then out and spak the young bride's mither,
She was never kent to speak sae free,
"Will ye forsake my only daughter,
Though your fair Susan has crossed the sea?"

""Tis true that I hae wed your daughter,
She's nane the better nor the waur for me.
She came here on a hired horse,
I send her hame in a chariot free."
[Also, please accept this tasteful commemorative ash-tray.]

I wot na who would hae done the like,
Or yet if ever the like was seen,
To wed a lady in the mornin' early,
And choose anither one long ere e'en!

As sung by Ewan McColl, "The English and Scottish Popular Ballads," Vol. 2, Folk
ways Records Album FG 3510 (1964).

The liner notes say: "A 12th Century manuscript of a poetical narrative credits
Gilbert Beket [Becket?] father of Saint Thomas of Canterbury, with adventures si

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milar to those experienced by the ballad hero. While it is unlikely that the ballad derives from this legend, there is little doubt that it has been influenced by it. Learned from Grieg and Kieth."

Child #53

JWM