

The Butcher Boy

C G7 C
In Dublin town where I did dwell,
G7 C
A butcher boy I loved right well,
Am Dm
He courted me my life away,
G7 C
But now with me he will not stay.

Chorus

G7 C
I wish, I wish, I wish in vain.
G7 C
I wish I were a maid again
Am Dm
But a maid again I ne'er will be
G7 C
Till apples grow on an ivy tree.

There is an inn in some fine town
And there my love he sits him down.
He takes a strange girl on his knee
And he tells her what he wouldn't tell me.

Chorus

The reason is, I'll tell you why
Because she's got more gold than I.
But gold will melt and silver fly
And in time of need be as poor as I.

Chorus

I wish my baby it was born,
And smiling on its daddy's knee,
And my poor body to be dead and gone,
With the long green grass growing over me.

Chorus

I'll go upstairs and make my bed,
"What's there to do?" my mother said.
My mother she has followed me
Saying, "What's the matter daughter dear?"

Chorus

Oh mother dear, you little know
What pains and sorrows or what woe
Go get a chair till I sit me down
With a pen and ink I'll write it down.

Chorus

Her father he came home that night
Enquiring for his heart's delight
He went upstairs and the door he broke
He found her hanging from a rope

Chorus

He took his knife and he cut her down,
And in her pocket these words he found
Oh what a foolish girl was I
To give my heart to a butcher boy.

Chorus

Oh make my grave large wide and deep,
Put a marble stone at my head and feet,
And in the middle a turtle dove,
So the world may know that I died for love.

The lyrics to The Butcher Boy tell the story of a young woman who takes her own life because she has been abandoned by her lover after becoming pregnant. There are variations with similar lyrics to be found throughout the English speaking world.

We give the lyrics here in full, although some of verses are often missed out to shorten the song for modern audiences.

The chords are presented here in the key of C Major. Use our key converter to play the chords in other keys.

Tommy Makem sang the song in A Major in his performances with the Clancys. Sinead O'Connor sings the song in B Flat Major. Maureen Hegarty and The Ludlows perform the song in C Major.

For more information about The Butcher Boy, and videos of various performers, visit <http://www.irishmusicforever.com/butcher-boy>

Chord Converter



Our chord converter enables you to play this song in any key.

There's lots of information about changing chords, dominant sevenths advanced use of capo, and more to

make playing your favourite songs easier. Find it here:

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