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Says Willie to Mollie “Why can't we agree?  
Give me your consent love, and married we'll be.”  
Her cheeks they did blush like the roses in bloom ,  
Says Mollie to Willie, “We'll marry too soon.”  
They parted that night with kisses so sweet.  
He returned the next morning before it was light ,  
Took her by the hand, saying “Come love, with me,  
Before we get married, your friends go to see.”  
He led her through valleys and forests so deep,  
Until the fair damsel began for to weep.  
She says “Dearest Willie, you've led me astray,  
On purpose my innocent life to betray.”

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He said, “Dearest Mollie, it's true that I have,  
For all of last night, I was digging your grave.”  
She saw the grave dug, and the spade standing by.  
“Is this your bride's bedding, young man?” she did cry.  
He says: “Dearest Mollie, there's no time to stand.”  
And, instantly taking his knife in his hand,  
He plunged her fond heart, and the blood it did flow,  
And into the grave her fair body did throw.  
He covered her over, and quickly rode along,  
Leaving nothing but small birds to weep and to moan.  
He rode to New Bedlock, took ship and sailed free,  
Bound down from New Portsmouth to plough the salt sea.

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That night as Willie in his berth <sup>ii</sup> did lie ,  
He was aroused by an innocent cry  
Saying “Rise up dear Willie, and come for to hear  
The voice of a fair one you once loved so dear.”  
He rose like a man, a steward so bold ,  
He beheld that fair damsel all on the ship's hold .  
She held in her arms a baby so fair ,  
He ran to embrace her but nothing was there.  
'Twas all that long night he could hear her wild cries,  
While flashes of fire flew out of his eyes.  
There was none but Willie could see that sad sight ,  
He went wild distracted and died the next night. <sup>iii</sup>

*Finis*



### **Notes**

- i. **Willie and Mollie** : A variation of an old traditional ballad called *The Cruel Ship's Carpenter*.
- ii. **berth** : *Nautical* : The cabin of a ship's officer
- iii. **...and died the next night** : An alternative ending to *The Cruel Ship's Carpenter*, where Willie is killed by the incarnation of Mollie's spirit.