

THE KING AND THE MAIDEN

(from the story by Soren Kierkegaard)



A king with wealth beyond compare
Fell in love with maiden fair;
He went his estate to survey,
Saw her standing by the way

In rags of direst poverty,
While he wore such finery;
"How can I make this maiden mine
While I wear such clothes so fine?"

"She will think of me a king,
Bound to give me everything;
But of this I can have no part,
I must win her love, her heart."

So as his love within him burned
To his castle he returned,
Found his lowliest, meanest serf,
Donned his shoes and pants and shirt,

Mussed his hair and forsook to shave,
Hiding thus his kingly face;
Went to the damsel's town to dwell,
Lodged in a small wayside cell.

He worked as a carpenter's help
Near to where the maiden dwelt;
One day he passed her in the way,
Bid her have a pleasant day.

Next day they chanced again to meet,
She with pleasant smile did greet
This king become a carpenter

Who did all for love of her.

As summer came and winter passed
He asked her for her hand at last;
They married in the village hall,
Circled by the townsfolk all.

She told him of her cumb'ring debt,
He paid it all with no regret;
Then he told her, "I am the king,
Come with me and be my queen."

She swooned and fell into his arms,
He was ravished by her charms.
So to his castle they repaired,
Lived in love together there.

And just so did our King of Kings
Forsake all of heav'nly things,
Clothed Himself in humanity
Came to live as such as we

That He might win the hearts of men;
He was like us, to our ken.
He labored in the carpenter's shop ~
He was God, we knew it not.

Our God became a man to win
Our hearts, e'en taking all our sin;
Our hearts, our love, our lives, our all
We give, and at His feet we fall.