

Bold Volunteer

Em G D Em
One morning, one morning, one morning in May
Em G D Em
I spied a young couple as they made their way,
G Am D Em
One was a fair maid, her beauty shone clear
G D D Em
And the other was a soldier and a bold volunteer.

“Good morning, good morning, good morning,” said he.
“And where are you going my pretty lady?”
“I’m going down to the banks of the sea
Just to see the waters flow and hear the nightingale sing.”

Now they had not been stopped but a minute or two
And out of his knapsack a fiddle he drew.
And he played such a merry tune, made the valleys all ring.
“Oh hark,” cried the maiden, “hear the nightingale sing.”

“O lady, pretty lady , ’tis time to give o’er.”
“Oh no” said the fair maid “please play one tune more,
For I’d rather hear your fiddle and the touch of one string
Than to see the waters flow and hear the nightingale sing.”

“O soldier, dear soldier, will you marry me?”
“Oh no”, said the soldier , “that never shall be.
I’ve a wife in old London and children twice three,
Two wives and the army’s too many for me.

“ I’ll go back to London and I’ll stay there for a year,
It’s often that I’ll think of you, my sweet dear.
And if I return it will be in the spring
Just to see the waters flow and hear the nightingale sing,
To see the waters flow and hear the nightingale sing.”

Transcribed by Peter Bromwich, Dulcimer Heaven.

These are the words as I remember them from years ago, many other versions are available!