

## A THE ROVING GAMBLER

Girls with a wild streak, in the farther yesterdays, often lost their hearts to the man in dapper clothes, with a big gold watch-chain across his vest, and with plenty of money. ("I don't care where he gets it.") That the man was a stranger in town, that he was a gambler, that he introduced himself saying, "Come with me, girlie"—were points in favor of his audacity, nerve. Such a couple, jack and queen, are briefly sketched in this song. The later chapters, whether she had to take in washing, whether he was converted at a religious revival and set himself up in a respectable business, we do not know. There is a swing and self-assurance to the tune and words, the swagger of the old-time minstrel troupe going down Main Street and around the public square, led by the high-hat drum-major holding aloft a long baton with a golden ball gleaming on the end. In the mischievous, *Yonder Comes My Pretty Little Girl*, text B, is an authentic folk song found by R. W. Gordon on a southern tour. From Delaney's *Songbook No. 23*, we give the text C, with repeated lines eliminated, of a piece called *The Gamboling Man*. This is evidently the popular song of English origin from which the southern and western minstrel troupes made their verses, Delaney tells us. We may note, in passing, that while gamblers may gambol and gamblers may gamble, the English version carries no deck of cards.

Arr. A. G. W.

*Con moto, tranquillo*

The musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of one flat (Bb). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part includes dynamics such as *mp* and *poco rit.* The lyrics are: "I am a roving gambler, I've gambled all a-round, Wherever I meet with a deck of cards I lie my mon-ey down."

- 1 I am a roving gambler, I've gambled all around,  
Wherever I meet with a deck of cards I lie my money down.
- 2 I've gambled down in Washington and I've gambled over in Spain;  
I am on my way to Georgia to knock down my last game.
- 3 I had not been in Washington many more weeks than three,  
Till I fell in love with a pretty little girl and she fell in love with me.

## THE ROVING GAMBLER

- 4 She took me in her parlor, she cooled me with her fan,  
She whispered low in her mother's ears, "I love this gambling man!"
- 5 "O daughter, O dear daughter, how could you treat me so,  
To leave your dear old mother and with a gambler go?"
- 6 "O mother, O dear mother, you know I love you well,  
But the love I hold for this gambling man no human tongue can tell.
- 7 "I wouldn't marry a farmer, for he's always in the rain;  
The man I want is the gambling man who wears the big gold chain.
- 8 "I wouldn't marry a doctor, he is always gone from home:  
All I want is the gambling man, for he won't leave me alone.
- 9 "I wouldn't marry a railroad man, and this is the reason why;  
I never seen a railroad man that wouldn't tell his wife a lie.
- 10 "I hear the train a-coming, she's coming around the curve,  
Whistling and a-blowing and straining every nerve.
- 11 "O mother, O dear mother, I'll tell you if I can;  
If you ever see me coming back again I'll be with the gambling man."

## B

### YONDER COMES MY PRETTY LITTLE GIRL

- 1 Yonder comes my pretty little girl,  
She's a-goin' all dressed in red.  
I looked down at her pretty little feet,  
I wish my wife was dead.
- 2 Yonder comes my pretty little girl,  
How do you know?  
I know her by her bright apron strings  
Hangin' down so low.
- 3 O, I've gambled in the wildwoods,  
I've gambled in the Lane;  
I've gambled in the wildwoods  
And I never lost a game.

## C

### THE GAMBOLING MAN

- 1 I am a roving traveler and go from town to town,  
Whene'er I see a table spread so merrily I sit down.
- 2 I had not been traveling but a few days, perhaps three,  
When I fell in love with a London girl, and she in love with me.
- 3 She took me to her dwelling and cooled me with a fan.  
She whispered low in her mother's ear, I love the gamboling man.
- 4 Oh, daughter, dear daughter, how could you treat me so,  
To leave your poor old mother and with the gamboler go?
- 5 'Tis true I love you dearly, 'tis true I love you well,  
But the love I have for the gamboling man no human tongue can tell.
- 6 So I'll bundle up my clothing, with him will leave my home,  
I'll travel the world over wherever he may roam.