

# 'Singlish Folk' Broadsheet Number 26

## El Condor Pasa

I'd rather be a sparrow than a snail  
Yes I would,  
If I could  
I surely would  
Hmm...

I'd rather be a hammer than a nail  
Yes I would,  
If I could  
I surely would  
Hmm...

Away, I'd rather sail away  
Like a swan that's here and gone  
A man gets tied down to the ground  
He gives the world  
Its saddest sound  
Its saddest sound

I'd rather be a forest than a street  
Yes I would,  
If I could  
I surely would

I'd rather feel the earth beneath my feet  
Yes I would,  
If I only could  
I surely would

## Farewell to Funery

Wind is fare and the day is fine  
And swiftly swiftly runs the time  
The boat is floating on the tide  
That wafts me off from Funery

We must up and haste away  
We must up and haste away  
We must up and haste away  
Farewell, farewell to Funery

Thousand, thosand tender tides  
Awake this day my plaintive cries  
My hear within me almost dies  
At thought of leaving Funery

I musty leave these happy dales  
See, see they spread their flapping sails  
Adeau, adeau my native vales  
Farewell, farewell to Funery

## **The Legend of Tam Lin (Wikipedia)**

*The legend has it that Tam Lin collected either a possession, or the virginity of any maidens who passed through the forest of Carterhaugh. A young maiden called Janet came to Carterhaugh and plucked two roses, whereupon Tam appeared and asked why she was in Carterhaugh without his command and had taken what was his. She stated that she owned Carterhaugh, as her father had given it to her. She then went home, and discovered she was pregnant, and announced that her lover was an elf and that she loved him. She returned to Carterhaugh, and discovered Tam was a mortal man, who, after falling from his horse, was rescued and captured by the Queen of the Fairies.*

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## Tam Lin

I forbid you maidens all that wear gold in your hair  
To travel to Carter Haugh, for young Tam Lin is there.

Them that go by Carter Haugh, but they leave him a pledge  
Either their mantels of green or else their maidenhead.

Janet tied her kirtle green a bit above her knee  
And she's gone to Carter Haugh as fast as go can she.

She doth pull the double rose, a rose but only two  
And up then came young Tam Lin, says lady pull no more.

And why come you to Carter Haugh without command from me  
I'll come and go, young Janet said, and ask no leave of thee.

Janet tied her kirtle green a little bit above her knee  
And she's gone to her father as fast as go can she.

Then up spoke her father dear, and he spoke meek and mild  
Well alas Janet, he said, I think you go with child.

Well if that be so, Janet said, myself shall bear the blame  
There's not a knight in all your halls shall get the baby's name.

For if my love were an earthly knight, as he is an elfin grey  
I'll not change my own true love for any knight you have.

Janet tied her kirtle green a bit above her knee  
And she's gone to Carter Haugh as fast as go can she.

Oh tell to me Tam Lin she said, why came you here to dwell  
The Queen of Fairy's caught me when from my horse I fell.

And at the end of seven years she pays a tithe to hell  
I so fair and full of flesh am feared it is myself.

But tonight is Halloween and the fairy court rides  
Those that would let true love win, At Miles' Cross they must hide.

First let pass the horses black and let pass the brown  
Quickly run to the white steed and pull the rider down.

For I ride on the white steed, the nearest to the town  
For I was an earthly knight, they give me that renown.

They will turn me in your arms to a newt or a snake  
Hold me tight and fear not, I am your baby's father.

And they will turn me in your arms into a lion bold  
Hold me tight and fear not and you will love your child.

And they will turn me in your arms into a naked knight  
Cloak me in your mantle and keep me out of sight.

And in the middle of the night she heard the bridle ring  
She heeded what he did say and young Tam Lin did win.

Then up spoke the fairy queen, an angry queen was she  
Who betide her ill-farr'd face, an ill death may she die.

Oh had I known Tam Lin, she said, what this night I did see  
I'd have looked him in the eye and turned him to a tree.

### The Foggy, Foggy Dew

When I was a bachelor, I liv'd all alone  
I worked at the weaver's trade;  
And the only, only thing that I did that was wrong  
Was to woo a fair young maid.  
I wooed her in the wintertime,  
Part of the summer, too,  
And the only, only thing that I did that was wrong  
Was to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew.

One night she knelt close by my side  
When I was fast asleep.  
She threw her arms around my neck,  
And she began to weep.  
She wept, she cried, she tore her hair  
Ah, me! What could I do?  
So all night long I held her in my arms  
Just to keep her from the foggy foggy dew.

Again I am a bachelor, I live with my son  
We work at the weaver's trade.  
And every sing time I look into his eyes  
He reminds me of that fair young maid.  
He reminds me of the wintertime  
Part of the summer, too,  
And the many, many times that I held her in my arms  
Just to keep her from the foggy, foggy, dew.

### Hangin' Johnny

They calls me hangin' Johnny, Away, aye, oh  
They says I hang for money! So hang, boys, hang!

They says I hanged me mother, Me sisters and me brothers

They says I hanged me granny, I strung her up so canny

They says I hung a copper, I gave him the long dropper

I'd hang the mates and skippers, I'd hang 'em by their flippers

A rope, a beam, a ladder, I'll hang ye all together

Hang 'em from the yardarm, Hang the sea and buy a pigfarm

They say I hang for money, Hangin' ain't bloody funny

They calls me hangin' Johnny, Ain't never hanged nobody

### Dark Island Music – see P.4

In the years long a - go When I first left my home, I was young and I wan-ted the  
wide world to roam; But\_ now I am ol - der and wi - ser, you see, For that love - ly dark\_  
is - land is \_ cal - ling to me. O I've wan-der'd a - way from the land of my birth, And been  
roa - ming a - round to the ends of the earth, Still my heart is at home in the land far a -  
-way, That\_ love - ly dark is - land where\_ mem - o - ries stray.

### The Gas-Man Cometh

(Michael Flanders)

Twas on the Monday morning the gas-man came to call  
The gas tap wouldn't turn I wasn't getting gas at all  
He tore out all the skirting boards to try and find the main  
And I had to call a carpenter to put them back again  
Oh it all makes work for the working man to do.

Twas on the Tuesday morning the carpenter came round  
He hammered and he chiselled and he said, "Look what I've found  
Your joists are full of dry rot but I'll put them all to rights."  
Then he nailed right through a cable and out went all the lights  
Oh it all makes work for the working man to do.

Twas on a Wednesday morning the electrician came  
He called me Mr. Sanderson which isn't quite me name  
He couldn't reach the fuse box without standing on the bin  
And he put his foot through a window so I called the glazier in  
Oh it all makes work for the working man to do.

Twas on the Thursday morning the glazier came along  
With his blowtorch and his putty and his merry glazier song  
He put another pane in, it took no time at all  
But I had to get a painter in to come and paint the wall  
Oh it all makes work for the working man to do.

Twas on a Friday morning the painter made a start  
With undercoats and overcoats, he painted every part  
Every nook and every cranny but I found when he was gone  
He'd painted over the gas tap and I couldn't turn it on  
Oh it all makes work for the working man to do.

On Saturday and Sunday they do no work at all  
So twas on the Monday morning that the gas-man came to call.

### Hal an Tow

Take no scorn to wear the horn  
It was the crest when you were born  
Your father's father wore it  
And your father wore it to

Hal an tow, jolly rumbalo  
We were up long before the day o  
To welcome in the summer  
To welcome in the may o  
For summer is a comin in  
And winter's gone away o

Robin Hood and Little John  
Have both gone to the fair o  
and we will to the merry green wood  
To hunt the buck and hare o

What happened to the Spaniards  
Who made so great a boast o  
It's they shall eat the feathered goose  
And we shall eat the roast o

And as for that good knight, St. George  
St. George he was a knight o  
Of all the knights of Christendom  
St. George is the right o

God bless Aunt Mary Moses  
In all her power and might o  
May she send peace to England  
Send peace by day and night o

### Hard, Ain't It Hard (Woody Guthrie)

First time I seen my true love  
He was walkin' by my door  
The last time I seen his false hearted smile  
He was dead on the barroom floor

cho: It's hard and it's hard, ain't it hard  
To love one that never did love you  
Hard and it's hard, ain't it hard, great God,  
To love one that never will be true.

There is a house in this old town,  
That's where my true love lays around.  
Takes other women right down on his knee  
Tells them a tale that he won't tell me.

Don't go to drinkin' and to gamblin',  
Don't go there your sorrows to drown.  
This hard-liquor place is a low-down disgrace,  
The meanest damn place in this town.

### Heave Away, Me Johnnies

Now Johnny was a rover,  
and today he sailed away  
Heave away, me Johnnies. Heave away -- away!  
Says she, "I'll be yer sweetheart, dear,  
if ye will only stay"  
And away, me bully boys, we're all bound to go.

Sometimes we sail for Liverpool,  
sometimes we're bound for France;  
But now we're bound for New York town  
to give the girls a chance.

Our advance note's in our pocket, boys,  
it sure will take us far  
And now a cruise down Lime Street, boys,  
and to the American bar.

In two days time we'll be outward bound,  
and down the Mersey we'll clip  
The gals'll all be waiting, boys,  
when we get back next trip.

The Peter's flying at the fore,  
the pilot's waiting the tide  
And soon we'll be bound out again,  
bound for the other side.

And when we're homeward bound again,  
our pockets lined once more  
We'll spend it all with the gals, me boys,  
and go to sea for more.

So gaily let your voices ring,  
me bullies heave and bust  
'Taint no use in caterwauling;  
growl ye may, but go ye must.

### Isn't It Grand, Boys

Look at the coffin, with silver handles  
Isn't it grand, boys, to be bloody well dead?  
Let's not have a sniffle, let's have a bloody good cry  
And always remember, the longer you live  
The sooner you'll bloody well die.

Look at the widow, bloody great woman...

Look at the mourners, bloody great hypocrites..

Look at the preacher, bloody well sanctified...

Look at the choir boys, bloody young faggots...

### Henry My Son

Where have you been all the day,  
Henry my son?  
Where have you been all the day,  
my currant bun?  
In the woods, dear mother  
In the woods, dear mother  
Mother be quick I got to be sick and  
lay me down to die.

What did you do in the woods all day,  
Henry my boy?  
What did you do in the woods all day,  
my saveloy?  
Ate, dear mother. Ate, dear mother.  
Mother be quick I got to be sick and  
lay me down to die.  
What did you eat in the woods all day,  
Henry my son?  
What did you eat in the woods all day  
my pretty one?  
Eels, dear mother. Eels, dear mother.  
Mother be quick I got to be sick and  
lay me down to die.

What color were those eels, Henry  
my boy?  
What color were those eels, my pride and joy  
Green and yellor. Green and yellor.  
Mother be quick I got to be sick and  
lay me down to die.

Those eels were snakes, Henry my son.  
Those eels were snakes, my pretty one.  
Urgh, dear mother. Urgh, dear mother.  
Mother be quick I got to be sick and  
lay me down to die.

### High Germany

Oh colleen, love, oh colleen love, the rout has now begun,  
And I must go a-marching to the beating of a drum.  
Come, dress your self all in your best and come along with me  
And I'll take you to the wars, me love, in High Germany.

I'll buy for you a horse, my love, and on it you will ride  
And all of my delight will be in riding by your side  
We'll stop at every ale-house, and drink when we are dry  
We'll be true to one another and get married by and by.

Oh cursed be those cruel wars that ever did they rise  
And out of merry England pass many a man likewise;  
They took my true-love from me, likewise my brothers three  
And sent them to the wars m'love in High Germany.

My friends I do not value and my foes I do not fear  
For now my fine love's left me and wanders far and near  
But when my baby it is born and smiling on my knee  
I'll think of handsome Willie in High Germany.

### Legend of Tam Lin contd. from P.1.

*Every seven years the fairies paid a tithe to Hell of one of their people, and Tam was fated to become that tithe on that night (Hallowe'en). He was to ride as part of a company of knights, and Janet would recognise him by the white horse upon which he was riding. He warned her that, when she caught him, the fairies would attempt to make her drop him by turning him into all manner of beasts but that he would do her no harm, and when he was finally turned into a burning coal she was to throw him into a well, whereupon he would reappear as a naked man and she should hide him. Janet did as she was asked, of course, and won her knight. The Queen of the Fairies was not best pleased, but acknowledged her claim.*

### The Hippopotamus Song

(Flanders and Swan)

A bold hippopotamus was standing one day,  
On the banks of the cool Shalimar.  
He gazed at the bottom as it peacefully lay  
By the light of the evening star.  
Away on a hilltop, sat brushing her hair  
His fair hippopotamine maid.  
The hippopotamus was no ignoramus  
And sang her this sweet serenade.

cho: Mud, mud, glorious mud,  
Nothing quite like it for cooling the blood.  
So follow me, follow, down to the hollow  
And there let us wallow in glorious mud.

The fair hippopotama he aimed to entice  
From that seat on the hilltop above.  
As she hadn't got a ma to give her advice  
Came tiptoeing down to her love.  
Like thunder the forest reechoed the sound  
Of the song that they sang as they met.  
His inamorata adjusted her garter  
And lifted her voice in duet.

Then more hippopotami began to convene  
On the banks of that river so wide.  
I wonder now what am I to say of the scene  
That ensued by the Shalimar side.  
They all dived at once with an ear-splitting "Splosh"  
Then rose to the surface again.  
A regular army of hippopotami  
All singing this haunting refrain.

"Some people think the title of this song is irrelevant, but it's not irrelevant - it's a Hippopotamus!"

### If I Was a Blackbird

I am a young sailor, my story is sad  
For once I was carefree and a bold sailor lad  
I courted a lassie by night and by day  
But now she has left me and gone far away

CHO: Oh if I was a blackbird, could whistle and sing  
I'd follow the vessel my true love sails in  
And in the top rigging I would there build my nest  
And I'd flutter my wings o'er her lily-white breast

Or if I was a scholar and could handle a pen  
One secret love letter to my true love I'd send  
And I'd tell of my sorrow, my grief and my pain  
Since she's gone and left me in yon flowery glen

I sailed o'er the ocean, my fortune to seek  
Though I missed her caress and her kiss on my cheek  
I returned and I told her my love was still warm  
But she turned away lightly and great was her scorn

I offered to take her to Donnybrook Fair  
And to buy her fine ribbons to tie up her hair  
I offered to marry and to stay by her side  
But she said in the morning she sailed with the tide

My parents they chide me, and will not agree  
Saying that me and my false love married should never be  
Ah but let them deprive me, or let them do what they will  
While there's breath in my body, she's the one that I love still

### In the Evening (Leroy Carr)

In the evenin', in the evenin', baby when the sun goes down  
In the evenin', in the evenin', baby when the sun goes down  
Ain't it lonesome, ain't it lonesome, when your lover can't be found.  
When the sun goes down.

Last night I lay a-sleepin', thinkin' to myself  
Last night I lay a-sleepin', thinkin' to myself  
Well I thought she loved me, found she loved somebody else  
When the sun went down

Well the sun rises in the east, sets down in the west  
Well the sun rises in the east, sets down in the west  
Lord, ain't it hard to tell. Hard to tell which one will treat you the best  
When the sun goes down.

[When the party's all over, baby, an' all the liquor's gone dry,  
A man gets to thinkin', a man is born to die  
In the evenin', in the evenin', baby when the sun goes down  
When the sun goes down.]\*

Goodbye my sweet and lovin' baby, you know I'm goin' away  
Be back to see you, some old rainy day.  
Well, in the evenin', in the evenin', baby when the sun goes down  
When the sun goes down.

### Dark Island version 1 (Silver Maclachlan)

Away to the westward I'm longing to be  
Where the beauties of heaven unfold by the sea  
Where the sweet purple heather blooms fragrant and free  
On a hilltop high above the Dark Island

Oh, isle of my childhood, I'm dreaming of thee  
As the steamer leaves Oban and passes Tiree  
Soon I'll capture the magic t5hat lingers for me  
When I'm back once more upon the Dark Island

So gentle the sea breeze that ripples the bay  
Where the stream joins the ocean and the young children play  
On the strand of pure silver I'll welcome each day  
And I'll roam forever more the Dark Island

True gem of the Hebrides bathed in the light  
Of the midsummer dawning that follows the night  
How I yearn for the cry of the seagulls in flight  
As they circle above the Dark Island

### The Dark Island version 2 (Stewart Ross)

In the years long ago  
When I first left my home  
I was young and I wanted  
The whole world to roam;  
But now I am older  
And wiser, you see,  
For that lovely dark island  
Is calling to me.

cho: O, I've wandered away  
From the land of my birth,  
And been roaming around  
To the ends of the earth,  
Still my heart is at home  
In that land far away  
That lovely dark island  
Where memories stray.

One day I'll return  
To that far-distant shore,  
And from that dear island  
I'll wander no more.  
'Til the day that I die  
I will no longer roam  
For that lovely dark island  
Will be my last home.

### **The Folker**

Oh I am a folk musician, though my songs are seldom sold  
I massacre folk music with a yard of American plywood  
and a capo, I do requests  
Just the ones that got two chords in and I disregard the rest  
When Pete Seeger dies someday I'll be the best.

Li li li...etc.

Asking 20 plus expenses I went looking for a gig  
but I got no offers, Just a come-on from a groupie down Buda  
I do declare  
I was feeling rather randy so I had him then and there  
Heh, heh, heh, ho, ho, ho, ha, ha, ha!

Li li li...etc.

On the stage I stand so bravely, for a folkie is my trade  
And I carry the reminder of every gig I ever played,  
like at the folk club, I fled in mortal fear  
With the imprint of a Aszok bottle stamped behind my ear  
And a voice that yelled, "Don't play that shit in here!"

Li li li etc.

I have sung the folk tradition with my finger in my ear  
Cause half the tripe I'm singing, I just can't bear to hear  
It's a load of cobblers  
Bar after bar  
To the rhythm of an off-key British one-string thatched guitar

Li li li etc.

In "Sir Patrick Spens" I clean forgot the forty-second verse  
So I sang the twenty-seventh, twice as loud and in reverse  
And no one noticed  
I laughed for hours  
The tears ran down my trousers, I thought I'd wet my drawers

Li li li etc.

### **The Lincolnshire Poacher**

When I was bound apprentice in famous Lincolnshire,  
Full well I served my master for more than seven years,  
Till I took up to poaching, as you shall quickly hear,  
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night in the season of the year.

As me and my companioans were setting of a snare,  
'Twas then we spied the gamekeeper, for him we dld not care,  
Far we can wrestle and fight, my boys and jump out anywhere,  
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night in the season of the year.

As me and my ccmpanions were setting four or five,  
And taking on 'em up again, we caught a hare alive.  
We took a hare alive my boys, and through the woods did steer  
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night in the season of the year.

I threw him on my shoulder and then we trudged home  
We took him to a neighbor's house, and sold him for a crown;  
We sold him for a crown, my boys, but I did not tell you where  
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night in the season of the year.

Success to ev'ry gentleman that lives in Lincolnshire  
Success to every poacher that wants to sell a hare  
Bad luck to ev'ry gamekeeper that will not sell his deer  
Oh, 'tis my delight on a shiny night in the season of the year.

### **Marching Through Georgia** (Henry Clay Work)

Bring the good old bugle boys, we'll sing another song.  
Sing it with a spirit that will start the world along  
Sing it as we used to sing it fifty thousand strong,  
While we were marching through Georgia.

cho: Hurrah! Hurrah! We bring the Jubilee!  
Hurrah! Hurrah! The flag that makes you free,  
So we sang the chorus from Atlanta to the sea,  
While we were marching through Georgia!

How the darkeys shouted when they heard the joyful sound!  
How the turkeys gobbled that our commissary found!  
How the sweet potatoes even started from the ground  
While we were marching through Georgia.

Yes, and there were Union men who wept with joyful tears,  
When they saw the honoured flag they had not seen for years!  
Hardly could they be restrained from breaking forth in cheers,  
While we were marching through Georgia.

"Sherman's dashing Yankee boys will never reach the coast!"  
So the saucy rebels said, and 'twas a handsome boast,  
Had they not forgot, alas, to reckon with the host  
While we were marching through Georgia.

So we made a thoroughfare for Freedom and her train  
Sixty miles in latitude, three hundred to the main;  
Treason fled before us for resistance was in vain  
While we were marching through Georgia.

*Best known song of the American Civil War*

### **Marvellous Toy** (Tom Paxton)

When I was just a wee little lad full of health and joy  
My father homeward came one night and gave to me a toy  
A wonder to behold, it was, with many colours bright  
And the moment I laid eyes on it, it became my heart's delight

It went "zip" when it moved and "bop" when it stopped  
And "whirr" when it stood still  
I never knew just what it was and I guess I never will.

The first time that I picked it up, I had a big surprise  
For right on its bottom were two big buttons that  
Looked like big green eyes.  
I first pushed one and then the other, and then I twisted its lid  
And when I set it down again, this is what it did:

It first marched left and then marched right  
And then marched under a chair  
And when I looked where it had gone, it wasn't even there:  
I started to sob and my daddy laughed, for he knew that I  
would find,  
When I turned around, my marvellous toy, chugging from  
behind.

Well, the years have gone by too quickly, it seems,  
I have my own little boy  
And yesterday I gave to him my marvellous little toy.  
His eyes nearly popped right out of his head  
And he gave a squeal of glee,  
Neither one of us knows just what it is,  
but he loves it, just like me.