

## The Female Cabin Boy

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and 6/8 time. The melody is simple and folk-like, with lyrics written below the notes. The first line of music corresponds to the first verse of the song.

1. It's of a prett - y fair maid as you shall un - der - stand She  
 had a mind for ro - - ving in - - to a for - - eign land At -  
 tired in sail - or's cloth - ing she bold - ly did ap - - pear. And en -  
 \* ga - - ged with a cap - - tain To serve him for a year.

2. The captain's wife she being on board, she seem-ed in great joy  
 To see her husband had engaged such a handsome cabin boy  
 And now and then she'd slip in a kiss, and she would have liked to toy  
 But the captain found out the secret of the female cabin boy.
3. Her cheeks they were like roses and her hair all in a curl  
 The sailors often smiled and said "He looks just like a girl."  
 But eating of the Captain's biscuit, her colour did destroy  
 And the waist did swell of pretty Nell, the female cabin boy.
4. It was in the Bay of Biscay our gallant ship did plough  
 One night among the sailors was a fearful scurrying row.  
 They tumbled from their hammocks for their sleep it did destroy  
 And they cursed about the groaning of the female cabin boy.
5. "Oh doctor dear, oh doctor," the cabin boy did cry.  
 "My time has come, I am undone, and I will surely die."  
 The doctor came out smiling and laughed at all the fun  
 To think a sailor lad should have a daughter or a son.
6. The sailors when they heard the news, they all did stand and star  
 The child belonged to none of them, they solemnly did swear.  
 The captain's wife she says to him, "My dear I wish you joy  
 For it's either you or I betrayed the female cabin boy."
7. Then each man took his tot of rum, and drunk success to trade  
 And likewise to the cabin boy, who was neither man nor maid  
 Here's hoping the wars won't rise again, our sailors to destroy  
 And here's hoping for a jolly lot more like the female cabin boy.

Source: Sung by Mrs. Mary Anne Clayton (64) at Chipping Campden. Collected by Cecil Sharp Jan 13th 1909.  
 Notes: Tune and 1st verse collected from Mary Ann Clayton. Remainder from another version.

