



IRISH MOON

MaryLee

Lyrics to the CD recording of
IRISH MOON

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These songs resonate with me. I'm a singer, in another time perhaps a balladeer, a troubadour. I love language, it's history, it's nuances, it's precision and poignancy. And I love a great tune. These songs, lyric and melodies magically intertwined, have traveled far in time and distance to be sung here and now. I hope you'll welcome them! Cheers! — MaryLee

The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face Ewan MacColl, 1957

The first time I ever heard this song was long before Roberta Flack made it a hit. This is the original melody. Camping with girlfriends in Topanga Canyon on my 16th birthday, we were sharing songs by the river and a plaintive voice began:

The first time ever I saw your face, I thought the sun rose in your eyes!
And the moon and stars were the gifts you gave
To the dark and the endless skies my love, to the dark and the endless skies!
The first time ever I kissed your mouth,
I felt the earth move in my hand, like the trembling heart of a captive bird,
That was there at my command my love, that was there at my command!
The first time ever I lay with you, and felt your heart beat close to mine,
I knew our joy would fill the earth,
And last till the end of time my love, and last till the end of time

Do You Love An Apple? Traditional

Do you love an apple? Do you love a pear? Do you love a laddie with thorny brown hair?
Oh, still I love him, I can't deny him, I'll be with him wherever he goes!
Before I got married I wore a black shawl, but since I got married, I wear bugger-all.
He stood on the corner, a fag in his mouth, two hands in his pockets, he whistled me out.
He works at the pier for nine bob a week, come Saturday night he's drunk and asleep.
Before I got married I'd sport and I'd play, but now, the cradle, it gets in my way.

Marble Halls Enya

A passionate and romantic ballad! This is why I love to sing!

I dreamt I dwelt in marble halls with vassels and serfs at my side.
And of all who assembled within those walls
That I was the hope and the pride. I had riches all too great to count and a high ancestral name.
**But I also dreamt, which please me most, that you loved me just the same, that you loved me,
You loved me still the same, that you loved me, you loved me still the same!**
I dreamt that suitors sought my hand, that knights upon bended knee,
And with vows no maiden could withstand, They pledged their faith to me.
And I dreamt that one of the noble host, come forth my hand to claim!

Wild Mountain Thyme Traditional

I've read that everyone knows this one and sings along in the British Isles. Though I've been there twice, I haven't heard it sung there yet...perhaps the third time is the charm...

O, the summer time is coming, And the trees are sweetly blooming,
And the wild mountain thyme, blooms around the purple heather, will you go, laddie, go?
**And we'll all go together, to pluck wild mountain thyme
All around the purple heather— will you go, laddie, go?**
I will build my love a bower by yon clear crystal fountain,
And on it I will pile All the flowers from the mountain, will you go, laddie, go?
If my true love, will not go I will surely find another,
To pluck wild mountain thyme all around the purple heather, will you go, laddie, go?
We shall travel to the crest of yon high mountain green
And my love shall be the fairest that the summer sun has seen, will you go, laddie, go?

Red is the Rose Traditional

This melody has been sung by wanderers and workers crisscrossing the Irish Sea for centuries. The power and grace of this tune and its lyric of longing are part of 18th century Celtic culture. This is the Irish version.

Come over the hills my bonnie Irish lad, come over the hills to your darlin'
You choose the road love and I'll make a vow that I'll be your true love forever

**Red is the rose that in yonder garden grows,
Fair is the lily of the valley
Clear is the water that flows from the Boyne,
But my love is fairer than any.**

'Twas down by Killarney's green woods that we strayed, when the moon and the stars they were shining
All through the night till the soft daylight, he swore he'd be my love forever

The Foggy, Foggy Dew Traditional

My favorite performed by the great balladeer, Burl Ives. I sang with him in concerts from 1971– till he passed away. There's tenderness and mischief in the tale. I altered the lyric to sing it from a woman's point of view. Burl, of course, sang it in "first person."

Once he was a bachelor, he lived all alone, he worked at the weaver's trade
And the only, only thing he did that was wrong was to woo a fair young maid

**He wooed her in the wintertime, part of the summer, too
And the only, only thing he did that was wrong was to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew**

One night she knelt close by his side when he was fast asleep
She threw her arms around his neck and then began to weep

**She wept, she cried, she tore her hair, oh dear, what could he do?
So all night long he held her in his arms just to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew**

Again, he's a bachelor, he lives with his son, they work at the weaver's trade
And every single time he looks into those eyes, they remind him of the fair young maid

**They remind him of the winter time, and of the summer, too
And the many, many times that he held her in his arms
Just to keep her from the foggy, foggy dew**

The Sally Gardens William Butler Yeats / Traditional

I think of my sister, Sally, when I sing this...of course this "sally" refers to an excursion off the beaten path.

It was down by the sally gardens my love and I did meet.
She passed the sally gardens with little snow-white feet
She bid me take love easy as the leaves grow on the tree.
But I being young and foolish with her did not agree
In a field down by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she placed her snow-white hand
She bid me take life easy as the grass grows on the weirs,
But I was young and foolish and now am full of tears

Bendemeer's Stream Thomas Moore / Traditional: "The Patriot Mother"

This song was Burl Ives' favorite. I played it at his memorial service on my little lap harp.

There's a bower of roses by Bendemeer's Stream, and the nightingale sings round it all the day long
In the time of my childhood 'twas like a sweet dream to sit in the roses and hear the birds song

**That bow'r and its music I never forget, but oft when alone in the bloom of the year
I think, "Is the nightingale singing there, yet? Are the roses still bright by the calm Bendemeer?"**

No, the roses soon withered that hung on the wave

But some blossoms were gathered while freshly they shone

And the dew was distilled on the flowers that gave all the freshness of summer when summer was gone

Thus memory draws on delight ere it dies an essence that breathes of it many a year

Thus bright to my soul as 'twas then to mine eyes is that bow'r on the banks of the calm Bendemeer

O Brighde Traditional

An Irish chant to honor St. Brigid.

O Brighde our heart, our brightest queen,

Cast your blessings onto us!

We are your children and you are the mother,

So hearken unto us! Oh, fire of life, pure fire of love,

O Brighde come to us!

Don't Sing Love Songs Traditional

There's a haunting melody played on an Irish Whistle in River Dance that is very close to this one.

The song is sometimes called "Come All Ye Fair and Tender Ladies," and it came with Irish immigrants to America.

Don't sing love songs, you'll wake my mother. She's sleepin' close, right by my side.

In her right hand she holds a dagger, and says that I can't be your bride.

All men are false, says my mother, they'll tell you wicked lovely lies

And the very next evenin' go court another, leavin' you alone to pine and sigh

Wish that I was a little sparrow, yes, one of those that flies so high.

'd fly away to my false-true love and when he's speak, I would be nigh.

And on his breast, I'd light and flutte with my little tender wings, I

'd ask him who he meant to flatter and who he meant to deceive.

Come al ye fair and tender ladies take a warnin' how you court young men,

They're like the stars of a summer's mornin': first they appear and then they're gone.

I Know Where I'm Going Traditional

One of the first songs I learned on guitar...I'm playing my Baby Taylor—a pint sized instrument, good for travel, sweet and small.

I know where I'm going and I know who's going with me,

I know who I love and my dear knows who I'll marry...

I have stockings of silk and shoes of bright green leather,

Combs to buckle my hair and a ring for every finger!

Feather beds are soft and painted rooms are bonny,

But I would trade them all for my handsome, winsome Johnny!

Some say he's bad but I say he's bonny,

Fairest of them all is my handsome, winsome Johnny!

I know where I'm going and I know who's going with me,

I know who I love and my dear knows who I'll marry...

Fly Not Yet Thomas Moore / Traditional Air: "Planxty Kelly"

Last call at the pub, and everyone's in a sentimental mood...

Fly not yet 'tis just the hour when pleasure like the midnight flower
That scorns the eye of vulgar light begins to bloom for sons of night and maids who love the moon!
Twas but to bless these hours of shade that beauty and the moon were made
'Tis then their soft attractions glowing set the tides and goblets flowing

Dedicated to my Irish/American grandmothers...

*Rose Burke and Anna Kennedy and their mothers: Mary Murphy and Ann Conway...
and to all the grandmothers before...*