

August 2019

The Doublet of Gray

Author Unknown

Follow this and additional works at: https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk



Part of the [Folklore Commons](#), and the [Music Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Unknown, Author, "The Doublet of Gray" (2019). *Broadside Ballads: England*. 1223.
https://egrove.olemiss.edu/kgbsides_uk/1223

This Book is brought to you for free and open access by the Kenneth S. Goldstein Collection: Broadside Ballads at eGrove. It has been accepted for inclusion in Broadside Ballads: England by an authorized administrator of eGrove. For more information, please contact egrove@olemiss.edu.

THE
DOUBLET OF GRAY;
OR, THEODORE AND MADELINE.

Beneath the tall turrets that nod o'er the dell,
A dark forest now blackens the mound,
Where often at dawn-light the deep sounding bell
Tolls sadly and solemn a soul parting knell,
While the ruin re-echoes the sound.

Yet long has the castle been left to decay,
For its ramparts are skirted with thorns ;
And no one, by moon-light, will venture that way,
Lest they meet the poor maid in the doublet of gray,
As she wanders, all pale and forlorn.

And why does she wander, O tell me, I pray,
And O ! why does she wander alone ?
Beneath the dark ivy now left to decay,
With no shroud but a coarse simple doublet of gray,
Lies her bosom as cold as a stone.

Time was when no form was so fresh and so fair,
Or so comely, when richly array'd ;
She was tall, and the jewels that blaz'd in her hair,
Could no more with her eyes' living lustre compare,
Than a rose with the cheek of the maid.

She lov'd, but the youth who had vanquish'd her heart,
Was the heir of a peasant's hard toil ;
For no treasure had he, yet, a stranger to art,
He would oft by a look to the damsel impart,
What the damsel received with a smile.

Whene'er to the wake or the chace she would go,
The young Theodore loiter'd that way ;
Did the sun beams of summer invitingly glow,
Or across the bleak common the winter winds blow
Still he watch'd till the closing of day.

Her parents so wealthy, her kindred so proud,
Heard the story of love with dismay ;
They rav'd, and they storm'd, by the virgin they vow'd,
That before they would see her so wedded, a shroud
Should be Madeline's bridal array.

One night, it was winter, all dreary and cold,
And the moon beams shone palely and clear ;
When she open'd her lattice, in hopes to behold
Her Theodore's form, when the turret bell toll'd,
And the blood in her heart froze for fear.

Near the green mantled moat her stern father she spy'd,
And a grave he was making with speed ;
The light which all silver'd the castle's strong side,
Display'd his wild gestures, while madly he cried,
'Curs'd caitiff ! thy bosom shall bleed.'

Distracted, forlorn, from the castle of pride,
She escap'd at the next close of day ;
Her soft blushing cheek with dark berries she dy'd,
With a spear on her shoulder, a sword by her side,
And her form in a doublet of gray.

She travers'd the court, not a vassal was seen,
Through the gate, hung with ivy, she flew ;
The sky was unclouded, the air was serene,
The moon shot its rays, the long vistas between,
And her doublet was spangled with dew.

O'er the cold breezy downs to the hamlet she hied,
Where the cottage of Theodore stood ;
For its low roof of rushes she oft had descry'd,

When she drank of the brook that foam'd wild by its side,
While the keen hunters travers'd the wood.

The sky on a sudden grew dark, and the wind
With a deep sullen murmur, rush'd by ;
She wander'd about, but no path could she find,
While horrors on horrors encompass'd her mind,
When she found that no shelter was nigh.

And now on the dry wither'd fern she could hear
The hoofs of swift horses rebound ;
She stopp'd, and she listen'd, she trembled with fear,
When a voice most prophetic and sad met her ear,
And she shudder'd and shrunk at the sound.

'Tis here we will wait,' cried the horsemen, 'for see
How the moon with black clouds is o'erspread :
No hut yields a shelter, no forest a tree ;
This heath shall young Theodore's bridal couch be,
And the cold earth shall pillow his head.

Hark ! some one approaches : now stand we aside ;
We shall know him, for see the moon's clear ;
In a doublet of gray he now waits for his bride ;
But, ere dawn-light, the carl shall repent of his pride,
And his pale mangled body rest here.'

Again the moon shrouded in clouds ; o'er the plain
The horsemen were scatter'd far wide ;
The night became stormy, the fast falling rain
Beat hard on her bosom, which dar'd not complain,
And the torrent roll'd fast by her side.

Now clashing of swords o'erwhelm'd her with dread,
While her ear met the deep groan of death :
'Yield, yield thee, bold peasant,' the murderer said,
'This turf with thy heart's dearest blood shall be red,
And thy bones whither over the heath.'

Now shrieking, despairing, she starts from the ground,
And her spear with new strength she let go ;
She aim'd it at random, she felt it rebound,
From the sure hand of fate which inflicted the wound,
As it drank the life-blood of her foe.

The morning advanc'd o'er the pale chilling skies,
Soon the warm rosy tints circling wide ;
But, O God ! with what anguish, what terror she flies,
When her father, all cover'd with wounds, she espies,
With her lover's pale corpse by his side.

Half frantic, she fell on her parent's cold breast,
And she bath'd her white bosom with gore ;
Then, in anguish, the form of her Theodore press'd,
'I will yet be thy bride, in the grave we will rest,'
She exclaim'd, and she suffer'd no more.

Now o'er the wild heath, when the winter winds blow,
And the moon silver'd fern branches wave,
Pale Theodore's spectre is seen gliding slow,
As he calls on the damsel in accents of woe,
Till the bell warns him back to his grave.

And while the deep sound echoes over the wood,
Now the villagers shrink with dismay ;
For, as legends declare, where the castle once stood,
'Mid the ruins, by moon-light, all cover'd with blood,
Shrieks the maid in her doublet of gray.