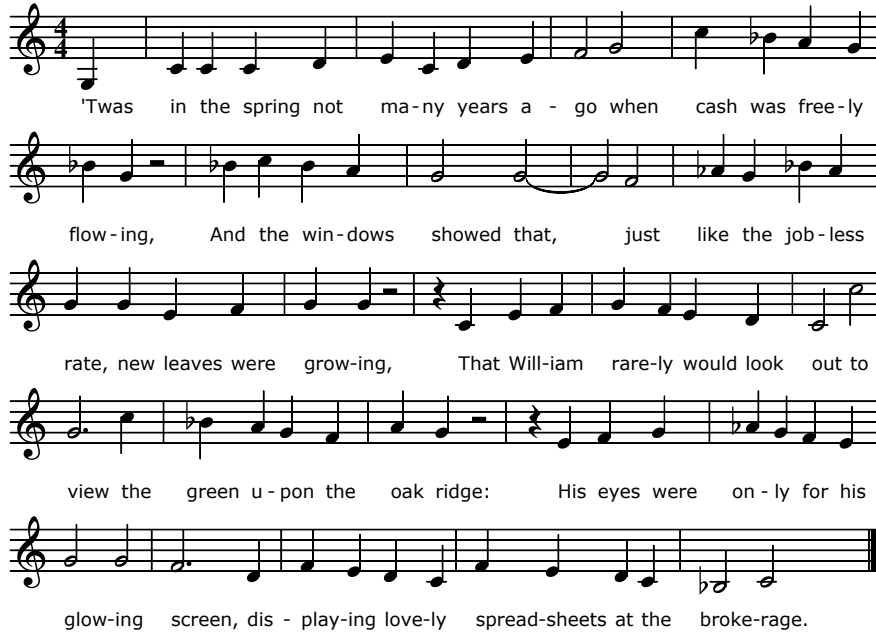


Barbara Elling

being the further adventures of characters we first met in Child 84

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Moderately (♩ = 180)



The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of Moderately (♩ = 180). It consists of five staves of music. The lyrics are written below the notes. The melody is simple and follows the rhythm of the lyrics.

'Twas in the spring not ma-ny years a - go when cash was free-ly
flow-ing, And the win-dows showed that, just like the job-less
rate, new leaves were grow-ing, That Will-iam rare-ly would look out to
view the green u - pon the oak ridge: His eyes were on - ly for his
glow-ing screen, dis - play-ing love-ly spread-sheets at the broke-rage.

'Twas in the spring not many years ago when cash was freely flowing,
And the windows showed that, just like the jobless rate, new leaves were growing,
That William rarely would look out to view the green upon the oak ridge:
His eyes were only for his glowing screen, displaying lovely spreadsheets at the brokerage.

No window to distract her from the tasks of buying and of selling
Graced the tiny cubicle of the junior trader, Barbara Elling,
And though she dealt in corn and wheat, both grains being vital to the nation,
She did not sow or harvest, winnow, grind, or even bake. She dealt in speculation.

From April to September of that year, as evening light was fading,
They would often leave work together for a round of late night trading.
But as the distant oaks turned red that fall, and city streets grew colder,
She found that William's invitations ceased, and she could find no place upon his shoulder.

Her mood was bad, just like the soybean crop; she thought she'd force the issue.
William kept on keying when she came through his door and said "I miss you!"
She pressed his nose into her breast, complaining, "Look at me! I'm real!"
His fingers did not stop as he replied, "Please, Barbara, don't. I'm working on a deal."

So, she began to dress in finer clothes as if to pass inspection,
Trying to catch the eye of one who had often gazed in her direction,
But never would be found upon the list of Barbara's ideal lovers.
Still, she'd some needs for which she'd gladly spend a few brief nights between the satin covers.

It is a form of currency much used when cash is not an option
For the purchase of some small favour or some policy's adoption,
And when sufficient had been spent, her words, one weekday morning early,
As she departed one last time, were these: "You know my thoughts. Farewell, and thank you, Shirley."

The buzz around the office that December was the competition:
Who would be appointed as VP of Finance, a new position?
And, since she had been quite discreet, no one suspected she'd a hand in
A losing candidate's appointment to be region head for Winnipeg and Brandon.

At that year's Christmas party, Bill was halfway through his fourth Manhattan
When he plopped himself in the chair next to the one that Barbara sat in
And said, "The restaurants aren't too good, I hear, and winds are icy chilling.
If you can cook and caulk and want a kid, you could move in with me if you'd be willing."

One night, she woke at ten to three from dreams of rare good times together,
Turned on CBC for the news, and caught the Manitoba weather,
And what she heard gave her a minor twinge of sorrow and repentance:
He was a jerk, there was no doubt of that, but Winnipeg was such a cruel sentence.

In February, she received a phone call made by a recruiter,
Who had heard about her smart trading and thought other jobs might suit her.
He placed her with a growing firm where she had prospects for promotion
And had a window from which she could see the fleet of yachts out sailing on the ocean.

Now, I am not in management, but still, I wonder what the sense is:
Letting shoddy work pass, in order to reduce the firm's expenses.
Here's one example that we found, well known to those of us who yet work:
The twisted pairs from Barb's and Bill's old desks cross several times before they join the network.

A more traditional view of Barbara Ellen could be found on these web sites in January 2001:

<http://www.contemplator.com/folk2/brballen.htm>
<http://www.acronet.net/~robokopp/english/inlondon.htm>
<http://www.bartleby.com/101/389.html>
<http://members.nbc.com/elstongunn/barbara.html>
<http://www.geocities.com/soakbear/baballad.htm>

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Printed in January 2001