

Hank Snow

"The Face On The Barroom Floor"

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Recorded by Hank Snow

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'Twas a balmy summer evening and a goodly crowd
was there
Which well-nigh filled Joe's barroom on the corner of
the square
And as songs and witty stories came through the open
door
A vagabond crept slowly in and posed upon the floor.
"Where did it come from?" Someone said. "The wind
has blown it in?"
"What does it want?" another cried, "Some whiskey,
rum or gin?"
"Here, Toby, seek him, if your stomach's equal to the
work!"
"I wouldn't touch him with a fork, why, he's as filthy as
a Turk."
This badinage the poor wretch took with stoical good
grace
In fact, he smiled as though he thought he'd struck the
proper place
"Come, boys, I know there's kindly hearts among so
good a crowd
Why, to be in such good company would make a
deacon proud."
"Give me a drink - that's what I want - I'm out of funds,
you know
When I had cash to treat the gang, this hand was never
slow
What? You laugh as tho' you thought this pocket never
held a sou
Why, I was fixed as well, my boys, as anyone of you."
"There, thanks - that's braced me nicely - God bless
you one and all
Next time I pass this good saloon, I'll make another call
Give you a song? No, I can't do that - my singing days
are past
My voice is cracked and my throat's worn out and my
lungs are going fast.
"Say, Give me another whiskey and I'll tell you what I'll
do

I'll tell you a funny story and a fact I promise, too
That I was ever a decent man, not a one of you would
think
But, I was some four of five years back - say, give us
another drink.
"Fill her up, Joe, I want to put some life into my frame
Such little drinks, to a bum like me, are miserably tame
Five fingers - there, that's the scheme - and corkin'
whisky, too
Well, here's luck, boys; and landlord, my best regards
to you.
"You've treated me pretty kindly and I'd like to tell you
how
I came to be the dirty sot you see before you now
As I told you once, I was a man with a muscle, frame
and health
And, but for a blunder, ought to have made
considerable wealth.
"I was a painter - not one that daubed on bricks and
wood
But an artist and for my age, was rated pretty good
I worked hard at my canvas and I was bidding fair to
rise
'Coz gradually I saw the star of fame before my eyes.
"I made a picture perhaps you've seen, 'tis called the
'CHASE OF FAME'

It brought me fifteen hundred pounds and added to
my name
And then I met a woman - now comes the funny part
With eyes that petrified my brain and sunk into my
heart.
"Why don't you laugh? it's funny that the vagabond you
see
Could ever love a woman and expect her love for me
But 'twas so, and for a month or two, her smiles were
freely given
And when her loving lips touched mine it carried me to
heaven.
"Boys, did you ever see a girl for whom your soul you'd
give
With a form like the Milo Venus, too beautiful to live
With eyes like the purest of diamonds and a wealth of
chestnut hair?
If so, 'twas she, for there never was another half so
fair.
"I was working on a portrait one afternoon in May
Of a fair-haired boy, a friend of mine, who lived across
the way
And Madeline admired it and much to my surprise
Said she'd like to know the man that had such dreamy

eyes.

"It didn't take long to know him and before the month
had flown

My friend had stole my darlin' and I was left alone
And ere a year of misery had passed above my head
The jewel that I had treasured so, had tarnished and
was dead.

"That's why I took to drink, boys - why, I never saw you
smile

I thought you'd be amused and laughing all the while
Why, what's the matter - friend? There's a teardrop in
your eye

Come, laugh like me; why 'tis only babes and women
that would cry.

"Say, boys, if you'd give me just another whiskey, I'll
really be glad

And I'll draw right here a picture of the face that drove
me mad

Give me that piece of chalk with which you mark the
baseball score

And you shall see the lovely Madeline upon the
barroom floor."

Another drink and with chalk in hand the vagabond
began

To sketch a face that well might buy the soul of any
man

And then as he placed another lock upon the shapely
head

With a fearful shriek, he leaped and fell across the
picture - dead.

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