

Sandy Denny

"Matty Groves"

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A holiday, a holiday, and the first one of the year.
Lord darnell's wife came into church, the gospel for to hear.

And when the meeting it was done, she cast her eyes about,
And there she saw little matty groves, walking in the crowd.

"come home with me, little matty groves, come home with me tonight.
Come home with me, little matty groves, and sleep with me till light."

"oh, I can't come home, I won't come home and sleep with you tonight,
By the rings on your fingers I can tell you are lord darnell's wife."

"what if I am lord darnell's wife? lord darnell's not at home.
For he is out in the far cornfields, bringing the yearlings home."

And a servant who was standing by and hearing what was said,
He swore lord darnell he would know before the sun would set.

And in his hurry to carry the news, he bent his breast and ran,
And when he came to the broad mill stream, he took off his shoes and swam.

Little matty groves, he lay down and took a little sleep.
When he awoke, lord darnell he was standing at his feet.

Saying "how do you like my feather bed? and how do you like my sheets?
How do you like my lady who lies in your arms asleep?"

"oh, well I like your feather bed, and well I like your sheets.
But better I like your lady gay who lies in my arms asleep."
"well, get up, get up," lord darnell cried, "get up as quick as you can!
It'll never be said in fair england that I slew a naked man."

"oh, I can't get up, I won't get up, I can't get up for my life.
For you have two long beaten swords and I not a pocket-knife."

"well it's true I have two beaten swords, and they cost me deep in the purse.
But you will have the better of them and I will have the worse."

"and you will strike the very first blow, and strike it like a man.
I will strike the very next blow, and I'll kill you if I can."

So matty struck the very first blow, and he hurt lord darnell sore.
Lord darnell struck the very next blow, and matty struck no more.

And then lord darnell he took his wife and he sat her on his knee,
Saying, "who do you like the best of us, matty groves or me? "

And then up spoke his own dear wife, never heard to speak so free.
"i'd rather a kiss from dead matty's lips than you and your finery."

Lord darnell he jumped up and loudly he did bawl,
He struck his wife right through the heart and pinned her against the wall.

"a grave, a grave!" lord darnell cried, "to put these lovers in.
But bury my lady at the top for she was of noble kin."

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