

# The Magic Of The Harp

## "Raw" English translation of the Danish ballad lyrics

1. Villemand and his beautiful bride  
**refrain 1:** *The string is of gold*  
they played golden 'Tavl' (1) in her house  
**refrain 2:** *So delightfully he played for his virgin.*
2. Each time a golden 'Tavl' ran on the table  
the virgin cried so many tears.
3. Why do you cry for the red gold ?  
you had better cry for being my bride.
4. Why do you cry because I'm not rich ?  
you should rather think that I can't be your equal.
5. I don't cry for for the red gold  
it is my will to be your bride.
6. I don't cry, for you are rich  
and you are fully my equal.
7. I cry far more for 'Blide' (2)  
that I must pass.
8. There my two sisters sank  
when they were preparing their wedding.
9. You should not cry for 'Blide'  
My swains will ride together with you.
10. My swains shall ride with you  
a hundred on each side.
11. This I shall do to your honour  
twelve knights will guide your horse.
12. He put golden shoes on her horse  
and then she rides towards the bridge of 'Blide'
13. When she came to the middle of the bridge  
her horse slipped on its golden shoes.
14. Her horse slipped on fifteen nails  
the virgin sank in the rapid stream.
15. All knights grasped at her saddle  
but noone could save the beautiful virgin.
16. The virgin reached up her white hand  
my noble lord, help me ashore.
17. May God and the Holy Spirit Help you

- for I can not help you.
18. Villemand talks to the swain  
get my golden harp for me.
  19. Villemand took his harp by hand  
he goes for to stop the stream.
  20. He played with such skill  
that no birds moved on their twigs.
  21. He stroke his harp so loudly  
that it was heard in all estates.
  22. The bark fell off the oak trees  
and the horns off the roaring beasts.
  23. The bark fell off the birches  
and the spire off the church of Mary.
  24. Then he stroke the harp with such anger  
that he teared his bride out of the arms of the troll.
  25. Then he stroke his harp to the bottom  
thus forcing the troll up from the ground.
  26. The troll went up from the ground  
with the bride of Villemand in his mouth.
  27. Not only his bride  
but also her beautiful sisters.
  28. Villemand, Villemand, take your bride  
and let me alone with my sorrow.
  29. Villemand took the virgin at home  
he played for her so joyfully.
  30. Villemand played but the stick did stand  
everyone went to the wedding but noone left.
  31. Villemand played until the quint (3) burst  
then his harp got another sound.
  32. The bride who was earlier secretly stolen  
she bore a son for Villemand the next year.
  33. Any young fellow capable of striking the harp  
will not allow his bride to be taken from him.

Refrain 1 and 2 form the 2nd and 4th verse of each stanza.

- 1) 'Tavl' denotes the board as well as the man of an ancient game
- 2) 'Blide' is the name of a mythical river
- 3) 'Quint' is the fifth string of a stringed instrument