

Rite of Passage

Conn MacNiell



In Hy - be-ri - a born to a fa - ther full wor - thy Who died fight - ing Nor - mans with a sword in his hand. My school - ing was then tak - en up by my un - cle A pi - rate more cle - ver than the scho - lars of France. He said I've seen a horse, a fine And - a - lus stal - lion, I've seen a blade of the good Span - ish steel I've seen a bon - net of Rhine - land gilt ir - on, And a cun - ning wrought hau - berk from o - ver the sea I've seen them all, I've seen them all - a - all. I've seen them all in my trav - els at sea.

In Hyberia born to a father full worthy
Who died fighting Normans with a sword in his hand.
My schooling was then taken up by my uncle
A pirate more clever than the scholars of France.

He said,

*I've seen a bonnet of Rhineland gilt iron,
And a cunning wrought hauberk from over the sea
I've seen them all, I've seen them all-a-all,
I've seen them all in my travels at sea.*

Now my eyes met the knights as we boarded his vessel
My rusty blade sundered by his first blow at me
As I bore him to the deck my wound burned like fire
But not quite as brightly as the things in my dreams.

I said,

*I'll have a horse, a fine Andalus stallion,
I'll have a blade of the good Spanish steel
I'll have a bonnet of Rhineland gilt iron,
And a cunning wrought haubert from over the sea
I'll have them all, I'll have them all-a-all,
I'll have them all with the ransom for thee.*

The ransom by law, well it went to my uncle
A tunic and dagger were all he gave me
I drank the French wine as the knights spoke of tourney
And the fine things and glories that waited for me.

Saying,

*I'll have a horse...
You'll have them all, You'll have them all-a-all,
You'll have them all if you come back with me.*

So I went with the knight for my heart was a lions'
But I had no skill with the horse or the lance
Through the pain and the shame of my training I chanted
My head hit the ground, or I stumbled at dance.

Saying,

*I'll have a horse...
I'll have them all, I'll have them all-a-all,
I'll have them all when I've mastered these deeds.*

The tournament field held both demons and angels
Men well scarred and ruthless And ladies full fair
My horse and my armour were much cause for laughter
But I laughed right back when I saw the knights there

*For one sat a horse a fine Andalus stallion,
One girt a blade of the good Spanish steel,
Another donned a bonnet of Rhineland gilt iron,*

*And a cunning wrought hauberk from over the sea
I'll have them all, I'll have them all-a-all,
I'll have them all when I've won them from ye*

Now the knights in the meadow they numbered 500
But midst that death's throng I saw clearly but three
The first one still carries my lance in his shoulder
The second and third lie well bitten by steel

Now, I'll have a horse, ...

*I have them all, I have them all-a-all,
I have them all and now all shall know me*

The ladies in the evening they looked on me frowning
Saying "Any wild beast can do the deeds that we've seen"
So I danced in the galliard and lilted a chanson
Now all the knights grow quite jealous of me

For, I'll have a horse...

*I have them all, I have them all-a-all,
I have them all, all the ladies I mean*

By torchlight we hearkened to tales of armed pilgrims
Who told us of wonders in the lands to the east
Where a butler through merit became Prince of Jaffa
I cried out "My lords brave a passage for me."

For, I'll have a horse, ...

*I have it all, I have it all-a-all,
I'll have it all, all the lands there for me*

My hauberk has warded a dozen barbed arrows
My stallion with hoofs shod in iron fells three
The blow of an emir is turned on my bonnet
My blade swift as lightening flies straight at his teeth

And, I'll have a horse, ...

*I have them all, I have them all-a-all,
I have them all, all his lands left to me*

My fief on the marches looks east on Damascus
A holding fit only for the fierce and the bold
And I need strong vassals with hearts like a lion's
To help me bring back what the caravans hold.

And, You'll have a horse, ...

*You'll have them all, You'll have them all-a-all
You'll have them all, all the spoils of the east*

*You'll have them all, You'll have them all-a-all
You'll have them all, if you come back with me.*