

Wave Over Wave

words and music © 1982 by Jim Payne

The musical score is written in G major and 2/4 time. It begins with an 'Introduction' of four measures. The main melody is on a treble clef staff, and the lyrics are written below it. Chord symbols (C, D, Em, G, Am, Bm) are placed above the staff to indicate the accompaniment. The lyrics are: 'Me name's Ab-el Rogers a share-man am I On a three mast-ed schoon-er from Twill-ing-ate Isle I've been the world o-ver north south east and west But the mid-dle of no where's where I like it best. Where it's wave o-ver wave sea o-ver bow I'm as hap-py a man as the sea will al-low There's no ot-her life for a sail-or like me but to sail the salt sea bo-ys sa-il the sea There's no oth-er life but to sail the salt sea'.

Me name's Abel Rogers a shareman am I
On a three-masted schooner from Twillingate Isle
I've been the world over north south east and west
But the middle of nowhere's where I like it best

Chorus:

Where it's wave over wave
Sea over bow
I'm as happy a man as the sea will allow
There's no other life for a sailor like me
But to sail the salt sea, boys, sail the sea
There's no other life but to sail the salt sea

The work it is hard and the hours are long
My spirit is willing my back it is strong
And when our work's over then wiskey we'll pour
We'll dance with the girls upon some foreign shore

I'd leave my wife lonely ten months of the year
She made me a home and raised my children dear
But she'd never come out to bid farewell to me
Or ken why a sailor must sail the salt sea

I've sailed the wide ocean four decades or more
And many times wondered what I do it for
I don't know the answer it's pleasure and pain
With life to live over I'd do it again

Monologue to "Wave Over Wave"

text © 1982 by Janis Spence



Well, I can't complain. I haven't had it as hard as some, God knows. And for the bit of time you've been around in the past 16 years, well, you've been a good man.

I remember the year we married. It was a good year; you were working for my father and it seems to me that I had you all to myself every minute of every day, and all the sweet long hours of the night. I think that was the happiest year of my life.

But by the spring of the following year, just after my birthday it was, you got to itching after something, and in no time at all you'd gone down and signed up on the Mary Eleanor. It was then I knew that I was married to a sailor. I couldn't even bring myself to go down and say goodbye to you:

Now I'm not complaining, we've always had a roof over our heads and we've never wanted for very much. I always said now that I never had it as hard as May. Her husband, Jack, would only be home one or two days out of every year. That's when he was working the coastal boats. My dear, when he'd come home on the Prospero she'd have to go down there and get him cause he was too blind drunk to make his way home by himself. And I'll never forget the night I was over at Nan's, the night Poppy Rogers came home. Poppy Rogers-- gone 11 years-- we hadn't heard a word from him, we didn't know what had happened to him, sure we'd give him up for dead. Well, that night Nan just looked out the window and saw him coming up the path and all she said was "Put the kettle on, Frank's home."

But I do wish you'd been here with me when Gary died. My God that was a terrible winter. The flue, epidemic proportions they said on the radio. I remember the Mom and I laid him out, oh you're mother came over too. I think Gary was her favorite, really. That night I sot up with him, I sot up in that big old chair your brother made, and I must have dozed off, because around 4 or 5 o'clock in the morning I woke up, and just for an instant you were there, you were bending over him kissing his cheek.

Well, you were in port 6 months later and you gave me Kevin. And Kevin had the croup, he coughed and he bawled for a solid year straight, he had me raftered, he had me clear drove off me head. The following year you were only home for a week; I got Rose out of that visit.

But you were always sending me lovely presents. Sometimes a year would go by and I'd have no word, no letters or such but always bits and pieces from here there and everywhere. A lovely shawl arrived for me in the mail this morning. 3 yards of beautiful colored silk. I wonder where it's from. Spain, Morocco, some place I've never been, sure I've never been off Twillingate. It's gorgeous. And the smell of it. It puts me in mind of warm winds, and people speaking in foreign tongues. But where am I going to wear it? I suppose I'll put it on now when I go out in the garden digging up a few turnips or when I'm making a bit of soap out of lye.

Well, I'll go and light the candle for you now. It'll always be here to guide you home. I'll always be here for you, God willing. You know when all's said and done, for the bit of time you've been around in our married life, well, you're the only man I've ever had. You're the only man I've ever wanted.