

Keyhole in the Door

As sung by
Lewis Winfield Mood
07-21-1941 Plainfield, WI

The image shows a musical score for the song 'Keyhole in the Door'. It consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are written below the notes. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: 'We left the par-lor ear-ly and of course 'twas scarce-ly nine, and by some great good for-tune her door was nest to mine. And I like bold Co-lum- bus strange re-gions to ex- plore, I took my po-si- tion by the key-hole in the door.'

Verse 1.

We left the parlor early, and of course 'twas scarcely nine
And by some great good fortune, her door was next to mine.
And I like a bold Columbus, strange regions to explore,
I took my position by the keyhole in the door.

Verse 2.

I waited there in silence upon my bended knee,
I waited there in silence and I waited patiently.
She first took off her collar and she dropped it on the floor,
And then I watched her pick it up, through the keyhole in the door.

Verse 3.

Then up before the fire, her pretty feet to warm
With nothing but a chemise on to hide her graceful form.
She took off the chemise and I'll ask for nothing more.
It's a fact, I saw her do it through the keyhole in the door.

Verse 4.

The down upon the pillow she laid her little head,
The angels they watched over her 'til darkness round her spread.
I knew the show was o'er, for I could see no more.
A telescope is nothing, boys, to a keyhole in the door.

Transcription and lyrics from the Helene Stratman-Thomas Collection.

Critical Commentary

Transcription by Peters, p. 294.

Editor's notes:

Alton Morris writes, "I have been unable to find this song of a Peeping Tom in print, though I am positive it is of a type adapted to vaudeville use. The well-known songsters of the 1850's to 1890's do not give it. I include it here on Mr. Feaster's [his informant, age 75] testimony that the song was popular among the young men of his generation. At a square dance given in 1940, at the University of North Carolina, one of the novelty numbers sung by a guest artist was 'Keyhole in the Door,' with numerous deviations from the Florida variant" (Morris 150).

Huntington, Gale. *Songs that Whalemen Sang*. Barre, Mass.: Barre Publishers, 1964.

Morris, Alton C., ed. *Folksongs of Florida*. Transcriptions by Leonhard Deutsch. Gainseville: University of Florida Press, 1950. different tune.

Peters, Harry B., ed. *Folk Songs out of Wisconsin: An Illustrated Compendium of Words and Music*. Madison, WI: The State Historical Society of Wisconsin, 1977.

K.G.