Vain And Careless

Natalie Merchant

Lady, lovely lady,
Careless and gay!
Once when a beggar called
She gave her child away.
The beggar took the baby,
Wrapped it in a shawl,
"Bring her back," the lady said,
"Next time you call."
Hard by lived a vain man,
So vain and so proud,
He walked on stilts
To be seen by the crowd.
Up above the chimney pots,
Tall as a mast,

And all the people ran about
Shouting till he passed.
"A splendid match surely,"
Neighbours saw it plain,
"Although she is so careless,
Although he is so vain."
But the lady played bobcherry,
Did not see or care,
As the vain man went by her
Aloft in the air.
This gentle-born couple
Lived and died apart.
Water will not mix with oil,
Nor vain with careless heart.

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