

# Hobthrush

Note: This song has a simple plucked accompaniment which could be played on violin, dulcimer or other plucked strings. Alternatively chords are suggested. The chant can be sung in between verses or throughout.



Chant:

Sto-ckings to be darned floors to be scrubbed I work my fin-gers to the

Dm A Dm A Dm A

bo - ne. bo - ne. 1. A black-bird sung - out - side the door, its voice like mol - ten

Dm A Dm A

(continue accompanying in this way)

ho - ney I said, "You'll not en - tice me out, not for gold or mo - ney, for

I have work to do in - side The li - lac tree - can bloom. I have a man - to

Gm D Gm D Gm D Gm Dm A

sa - tis - fy, a churn, a tub, a loom.

Dm A Dm A Dm

Chant:

Stockings to be darned,  
floors to be scrubbed;  
I work my fingers to the bone

1. A blackbird sung outside the door,  
its voice like molten honey;  
I said, "You'll not entice me out,  
not for gold nor money,  
for I have work to do inside.  
The lilac tree can bloom:  
I have a man to satisfy -  
a churn, a tub, a loom.

2. I opened up the kitchen door:  
scrubbed clean - the floor of slate;  
all burnished were the candlesticks  
above the glowing grate.  
The saucepan was a-boiling  
fresh corns upon the cob;  
the water was a-scolding  
in the kettle on the hob.

3. I came to love my Hobthrush well  
who made my house so fine;  
I left him gifts of spicy loaf  
and elderberry wine:  
he'd strip the beds without complaint  
and polish up the floor,  
until my husband caught a glimpse  
of Hobthrush round the door.

4. "Ragged are his fusty clothes,  
his jacket dull as sage;  
tattered are his stockings,  
his hat caved in with age."  
I made a cap of scarlet felt  
stuck with a pheasant's feather;  
I knitted leaf-green stockings  
sheer in any weather.

5. I cut a coat of velvet brown;  
and left all by the hearth.  
I came down in the morning  
to the smell of fresh-turned earth.  
The jacket gone, the stockings gone,  
and gone the soft brown coat,  
my house a mess - the liquid song  
had left the blackbird's throat.