

The Kingston Trio, South Coast

Chorus:

South Coast, the wild coast, is lonely. You may win at the game at Jolon,
But the lion still rules the barranca, and a man there is always alone.

My name is Juan Hano de Castro. My father was a Spanish grandee,
But I won my wife in a card game, when a man lost his daughter to me.

I picked up the ace. I had won her! My heart, which was down at my feet
Jumped up to my throat in a hurry- Like a warm summers' day, she was sweet.
(Chorus)

Her arms had to tighten around me as we rode up the hills from the South.
Not a word did I hear from her that day- or a kiss from her pretty red mouth.

We came to my cabin at twilight. The stars twinkled out on the coast.
She soon loved the valley- the orchard- but I knew that she loved me the most.
(Chorus)

Then I got hurt in a landslide with crushed hip and twice-broken bone.
She saddled our pony like lightning- rode off in the night, all alone.

The lion screamed in the barranca; the pony fell back on the slide.
My young wife lay dead in the moonlight. My heart died that night with my
bride.
(Chorus)

Daughters were possessions, to be bet away or arranged marriages for; also, note the use of "young wife" in the final stanza. Her shyness- "had to tighten"- and her silent reticence but adaptable "soon loved..." indicates no previous marriage, and "lost his daughter to me" indicates her origin, whereas "to hell with the lords o'er the sea" seems thrown in. If this man were a sailor, why would he have established orchards?

Just a thought. I'd really like to see the original music if it were available. The concept of betting away a daughter was my first exposure to the concept of women as property and the song stuck with me my whole life. (I was the oldest and only daughter and I was afraid of the possibility; I was 9 and the chorus, except for one word, and the storyline, and the tune have stayed with me for the last 25 years; it influenced my major "women's studies")