“Danny Boy (Londonderry Air)”
Arrangement for solo guitar by Ted Greene, 1985-12-04

Here is Ted’s beautiful arrangement of “Danny Boy” for solo guitar that he wrote in 1985. In 1977 he recorded another version of it for his Solo Guitar album, and it’s considered by many to be a guitar masterpiece. This arrangement is not a transcription from that album, but instead a much simplified version that he used when teaching this song to his students. It includes many similar chord moves that appear on the recording, and will serve as an aid if you want to transcribe it from the album. Listen to Ted play it in order to get the general feel of the arrangement and some of his fills.

I’ve included Ted’s original page and his lead sheet, plus my compilation pages that align his chord diagrams with standard notation. I put the lyrics for “Londonderry Air” as the first verse, and “Danny Boy” as the second verse. Please note that there are a couple of places where Ted deviates from the given melody, and I’ve marked these with red notes. As with many of his arrangements for students, Ted did not include the names for the chords; that was the homework for the student. I’ve added the names in red.

Ted provided a few alternate variations for some of the passages, and I’ve aligned those variations above the main arrangement to make it easy to see how they fit together. For the last measure on p.2, either play the D chord and end with the G – F#m – Em – D, or go back to the head and play the “2nd time” A7sus to A9 pickup for a repeat. I indicated to play a D chord at the very end, even though Ted didn’t write this. I’m guessing he thought that was obvious, or he may have left it open-ended to allow a point for an interlude and/or modulation.

This is one of my favorite of Ted’s arrangements, and I’d be bold enough to say that if you could only learn one of his arrangements, this would be one of the best choices – it’s quintessential Ted Greene.

I hope these pages make it easy and fun to learn and play this piece.

Enjoy!
--Pau
Would God I were the tender apple blossom That floats and falls from off the twisted bough, to lie and faint within your silken bosom, with in your silken gone and all the flowers dying, 'tis you, 'tis you must bosom, as that does now! Or would I go and I must bide. But come you
were a little burnished apple

back when summer's in the meadow,

pluck me, gliding by so cold,

valley's hushed and white with snow.

while sun and shade your robe of lawn will dapple,

there in sunshine or in shadow,

your robe of lawn, and your hair's spun gold.

Oh Danny boy, Oh Danny boy I love you so.
LONDONDERRY AIR
(Would God I Were The Tender Apple Blossom)

Would God I were the tender apple blossom
That floats and falls from off the twisted bough,
To lie and faint within your silken bosom,
As that does now!

Or would I were a little burnished apple
For you to pluck me, gliding by so cold,
While sun and shade your robe of lawn will dapple,
Your robe of lawn,

And your hair's spun gold.