

"Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabelle" (French: *Un flambeau, Jeannette, Isabelle*) is a Christmas carol which originated from the Provence region of France in the 16th century. The song is usually notated in 3/8 time. The carol was first published in 1553 in France, and was subsequently translated into English in the 18th century. The song was originally not a song to be sung at Christmas, but rather dance music for French nobility. In the carol, visitors to the stable have to keep their voices down so the newborn can enjoy his dreams. To this day in the Provence region, children dress up as shepherds and milkmaids, carrying torches and candles to Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, while singing the carol. (Words & translation found on Wikipedia.)

English

*Bring a torch, Jeanette, Isabelle!
Bring a torch, to the stable run
Christ is born. Tell the folk of the village
Jesus is born and Mary's calling.
Ah!* Ah! beautiful is the Mother!
Ah! Ah! beautiful is her child
Who is that, knocking on the door?
Who is it, knocking like that?
Open up, we've arranged on a platter
Lovely cakes that we have brought here
Knock! Knock! Knock! Open the door for us!
Knock! Knock! Knock! Let's celebrate!
It is wrong when the child is sleeping,
It is wrong to talk so loud.
Silence, now as you gather around,
Lest your noise should waken Jesus.
Hush! Hush! see how he slumbers;
Hush! Hush! see how fast he sleeps!
Softly now unto the stable,
Softly for a moment come!
Look and see how charming is Jesus,
Look at him there, His cheeks are rosy!
Hush! Hush! see how the Child is sleeping;
Hush! Hush! see how he smiles in dreams!*

(*) The word *Hark!* or *Hush* is sometimes substituted for *Ah!*

French

*Un flambeau, Jeanette, Isabelle --
Un flambeau! Courons au berceau!
C'est Jésus, bonnes gens du hameau.
Le Christ est né; Marie appelle!
Ah! Ah! Ah! Que la Mère est belle,
Ah! Ah! Ah! Que l'Enfant est beau!
Qui vient la, frappant de la porte?
Qui vient la, en frappant comme ça?
Ouvrez-donc, j'ai pose sur un plat
Des bons gateaux, qu'ici j'apporte
Toc! Toc! Toc! Ouvrons-nous la porte!
Toc! Toc! Toc! Faisons grand gala!
C'est un tort, quand l'Enfant sommeille,
C'est un tort de crier si fort.
Taisez-vous, l'un et l'autre, d'abord!
Au moindre bruit, Jésus s'éveille.
Chut! chut! chut! Il dort à merveille,
Chut! chut! chut! Voyez comme il dort!
Doucement, dans l'étable close,
Doucement, venez un moment!
Approchez! Que Jésus est charmant!
Comme il est blanc! Comme il est rose!
Do! Do! Do! Que l'Enfant repose!
Do! Do! Do! Qu'il rit en dormant!*