Medieval Ballad
Its Origins

• The name comes from Old French *balade* (dancing song)
• Its musical origin can be traced back to the same tradition as the folk-song
• It is a form of *popular narrative verse*
• It employs a direct language
• It is transmitted orally
Its Structure (1)

- It is divided into smaller units called **stanzas**
- Each stanza is a **quatrain**: a stanza of four lines

*The king sits in Dumferline town*
*Drinking the blood red wine:*
*“O where will I get a good sailor*
*To sail this ship of mine?”*
Its Structure (2)

- Each line has got four beats

*The king sits in Dumferline town*
Its Structure (3)

• Stanzas are often followed by a refrain

“O where ha’ you been, Lord Randal my son?
And where ha’ you been, my handsome young man?”
“I ha’ been at the greenwood; mother, make my bed soon,
For I’m wearied wi’ hunting and fain wad lie down”

“An’ wha met ye there, Lord Randal my son?
An’ wha met you there, my handsome young man?”
“O I met wi’ my true-love; mother, make by bed soon,
For I’m wearied wi’ hunting an’ fain wad lie down”
Its Content

- Most of the times tells about a tragical event
- It includes supernatural elements
- It may be based on some real historical events or on some well-known legendary figures