

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## Barley Straw

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'Tis of a jolly old farmer  
Who lived in the west country.  
He had the finest daughter  
That ever my eyes did see.

'Tis of a rich young squire,  
'Was living there close by,  
And he found he wouldn't be easy  
Until he'd had a try.

So he dressed himself as a tinker  
And he travelled on his way.  
Until he came to the farmer's house  
'Was standing there close by.

"Oh, have you got any kettles or  
Pots or pans to mend.  
Oh, have you got any lodgings  
Me being a single man".

"Oh, yes" replied this pretty fair maid,  
Not thinking any harm.

"Oh, you can stay with us all night  
If you sleep in our old barn".

So after tea was over  
And she went to make his bed,  
The tinker following after  
He stole her maidenhead.

The tinker, he being nimble  
He jumped up and he barred the door,  
And she spent all night in the tinkers arms  
Amongst the Barley Straw.

"Oh, since you've slept with me all night  
Don't think of me none the worse".  
He's put his hand in his pocket and  
Pulled out a heavy purse.

"Here's fifty pound I will give to you  
To pay the nurse's fee,

And if ever I came this way again,  
Fair maid I will marry thee".

"Oh, since you cannot now marry me,  
Pray tell to me your name.  
Likewise your occupation  
And where and whence you came".

He's whispered softly in her ear  
"Oh they call me Davey Shore,  
And if ever I came this way again,  
You'll remember the Barley Straw".

Now six month being over,  
And the nine month coming on,  
This pretty little fair maid  
Is the mother of a son.

Her father cried "Oh, daughter dear,  
Who has done you this harm".  
"Oh, I'm afraid it was the old tinker  
Who slept in our old barn".

Recorded by Martin Carthy  
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