

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Bent Sae Brown

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There are sixteen lang miles, Im sure,
Between my love and me;
There are eight o them in gude dry land,
And other eight by sea.

Betide me life, betide me death,
My love Ill gang and see;
Altho her friends they do me hate,
Her love is great for me.

If my coat Ill make a boat,
And o my sark a sail,
And o my cane a gude tapmast,
Dry land till I come till.

Then o his coat hes made a boat,
And o his sark a sail;
And o his cane a gude tapmast,
Dry land till he came till.

He is on to Annies bower-door,
And tirdled at the pin:
O sleep ye, wake ye, my love, Annie,
Yell rise, lat me come in.

O who is this at my bower-door,
Sae well that kens my name?
It is your true-love, Sweet Willie,
For you Ive crossd the faem.

I am deeply sworn, Willie,
By father and by mother;
At kirk or market where we meet,
We darna own each other.

And I am deeply sworn, Willie,
By my bauld brothers three;
At kirk or market where we meet,
I darna speak to thee.

Ye take your red fan in your hand,
Your white fan ower your een,

And ye may swear, and save your oath,
Ye sawna me come in.

Ye take me in your arms twa,
And carry me to your bed;
And ye may swear, and save your oath,
Your bower I never tread.

Shes taen her red fan in her hand,
The white fan ower her een;
It was to swear, and save her oath,
She sawna him come in.

Shes taen him in her arms twa,
And carried him to her bed;
It was to swear, and save her oath,
Her bower he never tread.

They hadna kisssd, nor love clapped,
As lovers do when they meet,
Till up it waukens her mother,
Out o her drowsy sleep.

Win up, win up, my three bauld sons,
Win up and make ye boun;
Your sisters lovers in her bower,
And hes but new come in.

Then up it raise her three bauld sons,
And girt to them their brand,
And they are to their sisters bower,
As fast as they coud gang.

When they came to their sisters bower,
They sought it up and down;
But there was neither man nor boy
In her bower to be foun.

Then out it speaks the first o them:
Well gang and lat her be;
For there is neither man nor boy
Intill her companie.

Then out it speaks the second son:
Our travels a in vain;
But mother dear, nor father dear,
Shall break our rest again.

Then out it speaks the third o them,

An ill death mat he die!
Well lurk amang the bent sae brown,
That Willie we may see.

He stood behind his loves curtains,
His goud rings showd him light;
And by this ye may a weell guess
He was a renowned knight.

Hes done him to his loves stable,
Took out his berry-brown steed;
His love stood in her bower-door,
Her heart was like to bleed.

O mourn ye for my coming, love?
Or for my short staying?
Or mourn ye for our safe sindring,
Case we never meet again?

I mourn nae for your here coming,
Nor for your staying lang;
Nor mourn I for our safe sindring,
I hope well meet again.

I wish ye may won safe away,
And safely frae the town;
For ken you not my brothers three
Are mang the bent sae brown?

If I were on my berry-brown steed,
And three miles frae the town,
I woudna fear your three bauld brothers,
Amang the bent sae brown.

He leint him ower his saddle-bow,
And kissd her lips sae sweet;
The tears that fell between these twa,
They wat his great steeds feet.

But he wasna on his berry-brown steed,
Nor twa miles frae the town,
Till up it starts these three fierce men,
Amang the bent sae brown.

Then up they came like three fierce men,
Wi mony shout and cry:
Bide still, bide still, ye cowardly youth,
What makes your haste away?

For I must know before you go,
Tell me, and make nae lie;
If yeve been in my sisters bower,
My hands hall gar ye die.

Tho Ive been in your sisters bower,
I hae nae fear o thee;
Ill stand my ground, and fiercly fight,
Aud shall gain victorie.

Now I entreat you for to stay,
Unto us gie a wad;
If ye our words do not obey,
Ise gar your body bleed.

I have nae wad, says Sweet Willie,
Unless it be my brand,
And that shall guard my fair body,
Till I win frae your hand.

Then two o them stept in behind,
All in a furious meed;
The third o them came him before,
And seizd his berry-brown steed.

O then he drew his trusty brand,
That hang down by his gare,
And he has slain these three fierce men,
And left them sprawling there.

Then word has gane to her mother,
In bed where she slept soun,
That Willie had killd her three bauld sons,
Amang the bent sae brown.

Then she has cut the locks that hung
Sae low down by her ee,
Sae has she kiltit her green claithing
A little aboon her knee.

And she has on to the kings court,
As fast as gang coud she;
When Fair Annie got word o that,
Was there as soon as she.

Her mother, when before the king,
Fell low down on her knee;
Win up, win up, my dame, he said,
What is your will wi me?

My wills they are not sma, my liege,
The truth Ill tell to thee;
There is ane o your courtly knights
Last night hae robbed me.

And has he broke your bigly bowers?
Or has he stole your fee?
There is nae knight into my court
Last night has been frae me;

Unless twas Willie o Lauderdale,
Forbid that it be he!
And by my sooth, says the auld woman,
That very man is he.

For he has broke my bigly bowers,
And he has stole my fee,
And made my daughter Ann a whore,
And an ill woman is she.

That was not all he did to me,
Ere he went frae the town;
My sons sae true he fiercly slew,
Amang the bent sae brown.

Then out it spake her daughter Ann,
She stood by the kings knee:
Ye lie, ye lie, my mother dear,
Sae louds I hear you lie.

He has not broke your bigly bowers,
Nor has he stole your fee,
Nor made your daughter Ann a whore;
A good woman Ill be.

Altho he slew your three bauld sons,
He weel might be forgien;
They were well clad in armour bright,
Whan my love was him lane.

Well spoke, well spoke, the king replied,
This tauking pleases me;
For ae kiss o your lovely mouth,
Ill set your true-love free.

Shes taen the king in her arms,
And kisssd him cheek and chin;
He then set her behind her love,

And they went singing hame.

Child #71

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