

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Bottomless Well

Bottomless Well
(Shel Silverstein)

They say there he sits in his big white wicker rocker,
Eatin' candy-coated cashews, sippin' orange lemonade,
While a sweet young thing fans the flies from off his eyebrows.
He's dozin' in the green Cataupa shade.
Lord, they say that Jesse Langtree's got it made.

Little bit south of the Okachobee
There's a story that the swamp folks tell
About a mean old man named Jesse Langtree
And a sweet young maid and a bottomless well.
That water's cold but that don't matter
How deep it is... no one can tell.
Just drop a stone you never hear it splatter.
It just falls down, down, forever in the bottomless well.

Through fifteen miles of snakes and gators
With a raging fever and the trembling chills.
I wandered lost through the Okachobee
And there I seen her sittin' there by the bottomless well.

Yeah, now there he sits in his big white wicker rocker
Eatin' his candy-coated cashews, sippin' orange lemonade
While that sweet young thing fanned the flies from off his eyebrows.
He's dozin' in the green Cataupa shade.
Lord, I swear that Jesse Langtree got it made.
Let's hear it for Jesse now.

I asked her for a drink of water,
And Jesse slept... me and her we talked a spell.
She said that she was his wife and daughter.
Lord love her,
But his heart was cold, cold and dark as the bottomless well.

And as he slept, I bent to kiss her.
I heard a loud and jealous yell.
Felt my head explode in darkness.
Two big hairy arms picked me up and dragged me to the bottomless well.

Well, I woke up in fear and trembling.
I was staring down into the jaws of hell
As he held me high above his shoulders.

Gonna throw me down, down, down to the bottomless well.

Now here I sit in Jesse's big white wicker rocker
Eatin' his candy-coated cashews, sippin' his orange lemonade
While that sweet young thing fans the flies from off my eyebrows.
I'm dozin' in the green Cataupa shade
Enjoying things that Jesse Langtree made.
God bless you, Jesse.

Now some folks say that sweet thing pushed him,
But I was there and I swear, he fell.
But it ain't murder 'cause he ain't dead, 'cause he's still a'fallin'...
Going down, down, forever in the bottomless well.
Going down, down, down, down, down
Bye, Jesse!

from Bobby Bare's 1973 album, "Lullabys, Legends and Lies"

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