

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## The Cruel Sister

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There lived a lady by the North Sea shore  
Two daughters were the babes she bore  
One grew as fair as in the sun  
So cold, dark, grew the elder one

A knight came riding to the ladies' door  
He travelled far to be their wooer  
He courted one with gloves and rings  
But the other he loved above all things

"Oh, sister, sister won't you walk with me  
To see the ships sail o'er sea"  
And as they walked the windy shore  
The dark girl pushed her sister o'er

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam  
Crying "Sister, reach to me your hand  
Oh sister, sister please let me live  
And all that's mine I'll surely give

"It's your own true love I want, and more  
That thou shalt never come ashore"  
And as she floated like a swan  
The salt sea bore her body on

Two minstrels walked by the windy strand  
They saw her body float to land  
They made a harp of her breast bone  
Who's sound would melt a heart of stone

They took three strands of her yellow hair  
And with them strung this harp so rare  
They took this harp to her father's hall  
There to play before them all

But when they set the harp upon a stone  
It began to play alone  
The first song sang a doleful sound  
"The bride her younger sister drowned"

The second string, when this they tried  
In terror sits the black haired bride

The third string sang beneath their bow  
"And now her tears will surely flow"

Child #10

version by David Webb

The Twa Sisters, of course, but odd. AJS

AJS

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