

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Driver Boy

The Driver Boy

While passing by a house one night, I heard a painful cry,
And gazing in I saw a sight that soon bedimmed my eye.
A boy was kneeling on the floor, his age was scarce fourteen,
Upon his pale but handsome face the mark of death was seen.
His father, stern and cruel, with a horsewhip in his hand
Had beat the boy in such a way that he could scarcely stand;
Because he'd come home from the mines with sickness he complained,
And as each blow descended, oh! the poor boy cried in pain.

cho: "Oh! do not whip me, Papa dear, for I've done nothing wrong,
Oh! spare me this time, Papa please, I won't be with you long,
For I'm too weak to drive a mule, my iittle bones are sore;
I will always love you Papa dear; don't beat me any more."

In underground the boy did toil from early morn till night,
His little limbs were growing weak; he could not stand the fight
'Gainst hunger and ill treatment, which no strong man could endure,
So he was forced to leave his work though he begged from door to door.
His mother pleaded, but in vain, to spare her hope and pride.
"Oh! do not kill my darling boy, beat me instead," she cried.
The villain bade her stand aside, her pleadings were in vain,
Again the whip descended and the boy cried out again:

The little fellow then crept off to his cold bed on the floor.
He prayed that God would take him to that bright and golden shore.
"And please forgive my father, for I love him still," said he,
"And he was drunk and ugly or he would not ill-use me."
The parents were soon startled by a wild despairing cry;
They both rushed, frantic, to the room wherein lay their boy,
The father soon repented and these were the words he said:
"Oh! God, I am a murderer!" For his driver boy was dead.

Tune: The Little Shoeblick

From Minstrels of the Mine Patch, Korson

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