

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## The Girl in the Dilger Case

The Girl in the Dilger Case

Once I was young and sweet as the roses;  
Out on the street so gaudy and gay.  
I went first to the dance hall, from there to the whore house,  
And now from the whore house I go to my grave.

Send for my mother to sit by my bedside,  
Send for the preacher to pray over me,  
Send for the doctor that heals me so easy,  
Send for the young man that I like to see.

The Ninth Street\* girls will carry my coffin,  
The Eighth Street walkers will sing a sweet song;  
Give them each a bunch of red roses  
To keep me from smelling as they carry me along.

\*Ninth Street - Dr. Wilgus believes this should  
read Green Street.

(Sung by D.K. Wilgus)

This Kentucky variant of The Bad Girl's Lament appears to have been adapted to fit the circumstances of a local incident. The exact relationship of the young prostitute of the ballad to the Dilger referred to in its title is unclear. Wilgus supplied the following information with the text:- "Dilger had been a policeman and a private bouncer in a low class variety theatre. He was a husky, virile, rather good-looking chap of about 35. He was surprised in a bawdyhouse by two policemen. He killed them both and was subsequently executed for the crime."

The text sung here was collected by E.C. Perrow from Jack Sykes of Louisville, Kentucky, in 1915, and is presently part of the Western Kentucky Folklore Archive. Dr. Wilgus has set the text to a conventional tune for ballads in the 'Rake' cycle.

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