

## The Cruel Miller

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My parents educated, good learning gave to me.  
They bound me to a miller, with which I did agree;  
Til I fell a-courting a pretty maid with a black and roving eye,  
I told her I would marry her if she with me would lie.

I courted her for six long months a little now and then  
I was ashamed to marry her, I being so young a man  
Till at length she proved with child by me and aloud to me did cry  
Saying, "Johnny dear come marry me or else for you I'll die."

I went unto her sister's house at eight o'clock at night  
And little did this fair maid think I owed her much in spite  
I asked her if she'd take a walk all in the meadows gay  
And there to sit and talk a while about our wedding day

I took a stick out of the hedge and struck her to the ground  
And soon the blood of innocence come raining from the wound  
She on her bended knees did fall and loud for mercy cried  
Saying, "Johnny dear don't murder me but think of our poor child."

I took her by her yellow locks and dragged her through the glen  
Until I came to a river's side and there I threw her in  
Now with the blood of innocence my hands and clothes were dyed  
Instead of being a breathless corpse she might have been my bride.

Arriving at my master's house at twelve o'clock at night  
My master rose and let me in by striking of a light  
He asked me and questioned me what stained my hands and clothes  
The answer that I had for him was the bleeding of my nose

I wishfully upon him looked but very little said  
And snatched the candle from his hand and straight went to my bed  
And all of that long night no comfort could I find  
For the burning flames of torment before my eyes did shine

All in a few days after my true love she was missed  
I was taken on suspicion and into prison cast  
Her sister prosecuted me for reason and for doubt  
Because that very evening we had been walking out

All in a few days after my true love she was found

A-floating by her brother's door who lives in Wexford town  
Where the judge and the jury both quickly did agree  
For murdering of my true love that hanged I'm to be

From Seeds of Love, Sedley  
Compiled from several 19th Century broadsides.