

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Bamboo Brier

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or Bramble Briar or Jealous Brothers

Across Bridgewater a rich man lived,
He had three sons and a daughter fair;
He divided up their equal portion,
Seven thousand pounds was his daughter's share

Seven thousand was his daughter's portion,
The maid being brisk and a comely dame:
She fancied a young man who plowed the ocean,
And unto him she bestowed the same.

One night, as they were sitting courting,
Her two brothers chanced to overhear
They vowed the courtship should be broken
Or send him headlong to his grave.

So early next morning they forced him hunting,
Over high hills and lofty mountains,
Through silent places quite unknown
Until they came to bamboo briers,
Where they did him kill and slay.

As soon as they returned from hunting,
She quickly asked for the servant-man:
"You seem to whisper, what makes me ask you,
Pray, brothers, tell me, if you can."

"We lost him in our game of hunting
His face again you will nevermore see
We lost him in the bamboo briers,
His face, his face, you'll see no more "

Early next morning she started to hunt him
Over hills and lofty mountains,
Through silent places quite unknown
Until she came to the bamboo briers,
There she found him killed and slain.

Three days and nights she stayed there with him
kissing him just as he lay:
"One grave will bury us both my darling;
I'll stay here with you until I die."

Three days and nights she stayed there with him
Seeking life for her sad mourn:
She felt sharp hunger come creeping o'er her,
And back home she was forced to return.

When she returned from where they were hunting
They quickly asked, "Where's the servant-man?"
"You cursed villains did that murder,
And for the crime you both shall hang."

Then they both darkened their faces
They walked slowly off down by the seaside
The fearful waves rushed from the ocean
And caused their faces from this world to hide

From Folk-Songs of the South by John Harrington Cox.
Collected from Hannah Moore who learned it from her mother,
Hannah Ross, a native of Virginia.
closely related to Bruton Town

DT #309
Laws M32
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