

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Bonny Birdie

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1 There: was a knight, in a summer's night, diddle
Was riding oer the lee, diddle
An there he saw a bonny birdy,
Was singing upon a tree.
O wow for day ! diddle
An dear gin it were day ! diddle
Gin it were day, an gin I were away !
For I ha na lang time to stay. diddle

An dear gin it were day !

2 'Make best, make hast, ye gentle knight,
What keeps you here so late ?
Gin ye kent what was doing at hame,
I fear you woud look blate.'

3 'O what needs I toil day an night,
My fair body to kill,
Whan I hae knights at my comman,
An ladys at my will ?'

4 'Ye lee, ye lee, ye gentle knight,
Sa loud 's I hear you lee;
Your lady 'a a knight in her arms twa
That she lees far better nor the.'

5 'Ye lee, you lee, you bonny birdy,
How you lee upo my sweet
I will tak out my bonny bow,
An in troth I will you sheet.

6 'But afore ye hae your bow well bent,
An a' your arrows yare,
I will flee till another tree,
Whare I can better fare'

7 'O whare was you gotten, and whare was ye cleeked?
My bonny birdy, tell me:.'
'O I was cleeked in good green wood,
Intill a holly tree;
A gentleman my nest herryed,
An ga me to his lady.

8 'Wi good white bread an farrow-cow milk
He bade her feed me aft,
An ga her a little wee simmer-dale wanny,
To ding me sindle and saft.

9 'Wi good white: bread an farrow-cow milk
I wot she fed me nought,
But wi a little wee simmer-dale wanny
She dang me sair an aft:
Gin she had deen as ye her bade,
I woudna tell how she has wrought'

10 The knight he rade, and the birdy flew,
The live-lang simmer's night,
Till he came till his lady's bowr-door,
Then even down he did light:
The birdy sat on the crap of a tree,
An I wot it sang fu dight.

11 'O wow for day ! diddle
An dear gin it were day ! diddle
Gin it were day, an gin I were away'
For I ha na lang time to stay.

12 'What needs ye lang for day,
An wish that you were away
Is no your hounds i my cellar,
Eating white meal an gray ?'
O wow, etc.

13 'Is nae your steed in my stable,
Eating good corn an hay?
An is nae your hawk i my perch-tree,
Just perching for his prey ?
An is nae yoursel i my arms twa?
Then how can ye lang for day?'

14 'O wow for day ! diddle
An dear gin it were day !
For he that's in bed wi anither man's wife
Has never lang time to stay. diddle

15 Then out the knight has drawn his sword,
An straked it oer a strae,
An thro and thro the fa'se knight's waste
He gard cauld iron gae:
An I hope ilk ane sal sae be servd
That treats ane honest man sae.

from Child
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