

# Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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## Clerk Sanders

Clerk Sanders

Oh it was a sad and a rainy night  
And the rain did rain from town to town  
Clerk Saunders and his lady gay  
Were a' walkin' through the fields so brown

"Oh a bed, a bed," Clerk Saunders cried, "A bed, a bed for you and me"  
"Oh never a bed," says the gay lady "Until it we'd to married be."

For it's I have seven brothers bold  
And unto you they bear no good will  
And if they catch you in my bower  
Oh they'd value not your blood to spill

Oh, I'll take the sword out from my scabbard  
And slowly, slowly lift up the pin  
That you might swear and save your oath  
That you never let Clerk Saunders in

Then take me up all in your arms  
And carry me unto your bed  
That you might swear and save your oath  
Clerk Saunders never i' your bower did tread

So he's taken his sword out from his scabbard  
And slowly, slowly lifted the pin  
That she might swear and save her oath  
That she never let Clerk Saunders in

Then she's taken him up in her two arms  
And carried him unto her bed  
That she might swear and save her oath  
Clerk Saunders never i' her bower did tread

And then it's in an' came her brothers bold  
And all their torches burning bright  
Says they we have but the one sister  
And see she's lying with a knight

And then it's up'n spoke the first o' them  
I know they have been lovers dear  
And up'n spoke the next o' them  
Oh they've been in love for many's the year

And then it's up'n spoke the third o' them  
T'would be a shame these two to twain  
And up'n spoke the fourth o' them  
Oh it's a sin to kill a sleeping man

And then it's up'n spoke the fifth o' them  
I swear they'll never be harmed by me  
And up'n spoke the sixth o' them  
Oh we'll take our leave and we'll go our way

And then it's up'n spoke the seventh brother  
Saying though there be no man but me  
I bear the brand all in my hand  
Shall surely make Clerk Saunders die!

And then he's taken in out his nut brown sword  
And drawn it three times through the straw  
And through and through Clerk Saunders' body  
Oh he's got that rusty rapier go!

And they have lain all night in each other's arms  
Until the day began to dawn  
And kindly to him she did say  
Oh it's time my love that you were away

Oh you are the sleepest young man  
That ever my two eyes did see  
For you've lain all night all in my arms  
And I'm sure it is a shame to be

And then she's drawn the blankets to the foot  
And turned the sheets unto the wall  
And then she's seen his bloody wounds  
And his two gray eyes all pale and cold

And it's cursed be my bloody brothers!  
Aye'n an ill death may he die!  
For you dared not fight him in the field  
But you slew him as he laid with me

And it's I will do for my love's sake  
What many a lady will not do  
Seven long years shall come and go  
Before I wear stocking or I wear shoe

And there's never a shirt goes on my back  
And never a comb goes in my hair  
Never a fire nor a candle light

Shine in my bower anymore

Child #69

Transcribed from 'Ashes and Diamonds' -- June Tabor

MP

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