

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Lord of Lorn and the False Steward A

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IT was the worthy Lord of Learen,
He was a lord of a hie degree;
He had noe more children but one sonne,
He sett him to schoole to learne curtesie.

Learning did soe proceed with that child,
I tell you all in veretie,
He learned more vpon one day
Then other children did on three,

And then bespake the schoole-master,
Vnto the Lord of Learne said hee,
I thinke thou be some stranger borne,
For the holy gost remaines with thee.

He said, I am noe stranger borne,
Forsooth, master, I tell it to thee;
It is a gift of Almighty God
Which he hath giuen vnto mee.

The schoole-master turnd him round about,
His angry mind he thought to asswage,
For the child cold answer him soe quicklie,
And was of soe tender yeere of age.

The child he caused a steed to be brought,
A golden bridle done him vpon;
He tooke his leaue of his schoolfellows,
And home the child that he is gone.

And when he came before his father,
He fell low downe vpon his knee:
'My blessing, father, I wold aske,
If Christ wold grant you wold gine it me.'

'Now God thee blesse, my sonne and my heire,
His servant in heauen that thou may bee!
What tydings hast thou brought me, child,
Thou art comen home so soone to mee?'

'Good tydings, father, I haue you brought,
Good tydings I hope it is to thee;

The booke is not in all scottlande
But I can reade it before your eye.'

A ioyed man his father was,
Euen the worthy Lord of Learne:
'Thou shalt goe into france, my child,
The speeches of all strange lands to learne.'

But then bespake the child his mother,
The Lady of Learne and then was shee;
Saies, Who must be his well good guide,
When he goes into that strange country?

And then bespake that bonnie child,
Vntill his father tenderlie;
Saies, Father, I'le haue the hend steward,
For he hath been true to you and mee.

The lady to concell the steward did take,
And counted downe a hundred pound there;
Saies, Steward, be true to my sonne and my heire,
And I will giue thee mickle mere.

'If I be not true to my master,' he said,
'Christ himselfe be not trew to mee!
If I be not true to my lord and master,
An ill death that I may die!'

The Lord of Learne did apparell his child
With bruche, and ringe, and many a thinge;
The apparrell he had his body vppon,
The: say was worth a squier's liuinge.

The parting of the younge Lord of Learne
With his father, his mother, his fellows deere,
Wold haue made a manis hart for to change,
If a Iew borne that he were.

The wind did serue, and the: did sayle
Over the sea into france land;
He vsed the child soe hardlie,
He wold let him haue neuer a penny to spend.

And meate he wold let the child haue none,
Nor mony to buy none, trulie;
The boy was hungry and thirsty both;
Alas! it was the more pittie.

He laid him downe to drinke the water

that was soe low beneath the brime;
He that was wont to haue drunke both ale and wine
Then was faine of the water soe thinne.

And as he was drinking of the water
That ran soe low beneath the brime,
Soe ready was the false steward
To drowne the bonny boy therin.

`Haue mercy on me, worthy steward!
My life,' he said, 'lend it to mee,
And all that I am heire vpon,'
Saies, `I will giue vnto thee.'

Mercy to him the steward did take,
And pulld the child out of the brime;
Euer alacke, the more pittye!
He tooke his clothes euen from him.

Saies, Doe thou me of that veluett gowne,
The crimson hose beneath thy knee,
And doe me of thy cordiuant shoone,
Are buckled with the gold soe free.

`Doe thou me off thy sattin doublett,
Thy shirtband wrought with glistering gold,
And doe mee off thy golden chaine,
About they necke soe many a fold.

`Doe thou me off thy veluett hat,
With fether in that is soe fine;
All vnto thy silken shirt,
that's wrought with many a golden seam.'

The child before him naked stood,
With skin as white as lilly flower;
For this worthy lords bewtie
He might haue beene a ladye's paramoure.

He put vpon him a lether cote,
And breeches of the same beneath the knee,
And sent that bony child him froe,
Service for to craue, truly,

He pulld then forth a naked sword
That hange full low then by his side;
`Turne thy name, thou villaine,' he said,
`Or else this sword shall be thy guide.'

`What must be my name, worthy steward?

I pray thee now tell it me:'

`Thy name shalbe Pore Disaware,

To tend sheepe on a lonelye lee.'

The bonny child he went him froe,

And looked to himselfe, truly;

Saw his apparrell soe simple vppon;

O Lord! he weeped tenderlye.

Vnto a shepard's house that childe did goe,

And said, Sir, God you saue and see!

Doe you not want a servant-boy,

To tend your sheepe on a lonelie lee?

`Where was thou borne?' the shepard said,

`Where, my boy, or in what country?'

'Sir,' he said, 'I was borne in fayre Scotland,

That is soe farr beyond the sea.'

`I haue noe child,' the shepard sayd;

`My boy, thoust tarry and dwell with mee;

My liuinge,' he sayd, aend all my goods,

I'le make thee heire of after mee.'

And then bespake the shepard's wife,

To the Lord of Learne thus did she say;

`Goe thy way to our sheepe,' she said,

`And tend them well both night and day.'

It was a sore office, O Lord, for him

That was a lord borne of a great degree!

As he was tending his sheepe alone,

Neither sport nor play cold hee.

Let vs leaue talking of the Lord of Learne,

And let all such talking goe;

Let vs talke more of the false steward,

That caused the child all this woe.

He sold this Lord of Learne's his clothes

For five hundred pound to his pay there,

And bought himselfe a suite of apparrell

Might well beseeme a lord to weare.

When he that gorgeous apparrell bought,

That did soe finelie his body vppon,

He laughed the bony child to scorne

That was the bonny Lord of Learne.

He laughed that bonny boy to scorne;
Lord! pittie it was to heare;
I haue herd them say, and soe haue you too,
That a man may buy gold to deere.

When that he had all that gorgeous apparrell,
That did soe finelie his body vpon,
He went a woing to the Duke's daughter of France,
And called himselfe the Lord of Learne.

The Duke of france heard tell of this,
To his place that worthy loirdr was come, truly;
He entertaind him with a quart of red Renish wine,
Saies, Lord of Learne, thou art welcome to me.

Then to suppierr that they were sett,
Lords and ladyes in thei degree;
The steward was sett next the Duke of France;
An vnseemlye sight it was to see.

Then bespake the Duke of france,
Vnto the Lord of Learne said hee there,
Sayes, Lord of Learne, if thou'le marry my daughter,
I'le mend thy liuing fiue hundred pound a yeere.

Then bespake that lady fayre,
Answered her father soe alone,
That shee would be his marryed wiffe
If he wold make her lady of Learne.

Then hand in hand the steward her he tooke,
And plight that lady his troth alone,
that she shold be his marryed wiffe,
And he wold make her the ladie of Learne.

Thus that night it was gone,
The other day was come, truly;
The lady wold see the robucke run,
Vp hills and dales and forrest free.

Then shee was ware of the younge Lord of Learne
Tending sheepe vnder a bryar, trulye.

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And thus shee called vnto her maids,
And held her hands vp thus an hie;
Sayes, Feitch me yond shepard's boy,

I'll know why he doth mourne, trulye.

When he came before that lady fayer,
He fell downe vpon his knee;
He had beene so well brought vpp
He needed not to learne curtesie.

`Where wast thou borne, thou bonny boy?
Where or in what countrye?'

`Madam, I was borne in faire Scotland,
That is soe farr beyond the sea.'

`What is thy name, thou bonny boy?
I pray thee tell it vnto mee;'

`My name' he sayes, 'is Poore Disaware,
That tends sheepe on a lonely lee.'

`One thing thou must tell mee, bonny boy,
Which I must needs aske of thee,
Dost not thou know the young Lord of Learne?
He is comen a woing into France to me.'

`Yes, that I doe, madam,' he said,
And then he wept most tenderlie;

`The Lord of Learne is a worthy lord,
If he were at home in his oune country.'

`What ayles thee to weepe, my bonny boy?
Tell me or ere I part thee froe:'

`Nothing but for a freind, madam,
That's dead from me many a yeere agoe.'

A loud laughter the ladie lought,
O Lord! shee smiled wonderous hie:
`I haue dwelled in France since I was borne;
Such a shepard's boy I did neuer see.

`Wilt thou not leaue thy sheep, my child,
And come vnto service vnto mee?
And I will giue thee meate and fee,
And my chamberlaine thou shalt bee.'

`Then I will leaue my sheepe, madam,' he sayd,
`And come into service vnto thee,
If you will giue me meate and fee,
Your chamberlaine that I may bee.'

When the lady come before her father,
Shee fell low downe vpon her knee;

`Grant me, father,' the lady said,
`This boy my chamberlaine to be.'

`But O nay, nay,' the duke did say,
`Soe my daughter it may not bee;
The lord that is come a woing to you
Will be offended with you and mee.'

Then came downe the false steward,
Which called himselfe the Lord of Learne, trulie;
When he looked that bonny boy vpon,
An angry man i-wis was hee.

`Where was thou borne, thou vagabond?
Where?' he sayd, aend in what country?'
Says, I was borne in fayre Scotland,
that is soe far beyond the sea.

`What is thy name, thou vagabond?
Haue done quicklie, and tell it to me;'
`My name,' he sayes, 'is Poore Disaware,
I tend sheep on the lonelie lee.'

`Thou art a theefe,' the steward said,
`And soe in the end I will prooue thee;'

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Then be-spake the ladie fayre,
`Peace, Lord of Learne! I doe pray thee;
for if noe loue you show this child,
Noe favor can you haue of mee.'

`Will you beleeeue me, lady faire,
When the truth I doe tell yee?
Att Aberdonie, beyond the sea,
His father he robbed a hundred three.'

But then bespake the Duke of France
Vnto the boy soe tenderlie;
Saies, Boy, if thou loue harsses well,
My stable-groome I will make thee.

And thus that that did passe vpon
Till the twelve monthes did draw to an ende;
The boy applyed his office soe well
Euery man became his freind.

He went forth earlye one morning

To water a gelding at the water soe free;
The gelding vp, and with his head
He hitt the child aboute his eye.

`Woe be to thee, thou gelding,' he sayd,
`And to the mare that foled thee!
Thou hast striken the Lord of Learne
A litle tinye aboute the eye.

`First night after I was borne, a lord I was,
An earle after my father doth die;
My father is the worthy Lord of Learne,
And child he hath noe more but mee;
He sent me over the sea with the false steward,
And thus that he hath beguiled mee.'

The lady was in her garden greene,
Walking with her mayds, trulye,
And heard the boy this mourning make,
And went to weeping, trulie.

`Sing on thy song, thou stable groome,
I pray thee doe not let for mee,
And as I am a true ladie
I wilbe trew vnto thee.'

`But nay, now nay, madam!' he sayd,
`Soe that it may not bee;
I am tane sworne vpon a booke,
And forsworne I will not bee.'

`Sing on thy song to thy gelding,
And thou doest not sing to mee;
And as I am a true ladie
I will euer be true vnto thee.'

He sayd, Woe be to thee, gelding,
And to the mare that foled thee!
For thou hast strucken the Lord of Learne,
A litle aboute mine eye.

First night I was borne, a lord I was,
An earle after my father doth dye;
My father is the good Loirdr of Learne,
And child he hath noe other but mee;
My father sent me over the sea with the false steward,
And thus that he hath beguiled mee.

`Woe be to the steward, lady,' he sayd,

`Woe be to him verrily!
He hath beene about this twelve months day
For to deceiue both thee and mee.

`If you doe not my councell keepe,
that I haue told you with good intent,
And if you doe it not well keepe,
farwell! my life is at an ende.'

`I wilbe true to thee, Lord of Learne,
Or else Christ be not soe vnto me;
And as I am a trew ladye,
I'le neuer marry none but thee.'

Shee sent in for her father, the Duke,
In all the speed that ere might bee;
'Put of my wedding, father,' shee said,
'For the loue of God, this monthes three.

'Sicke I am,' the ladye said,
'O sicke, and verry like to die!
Put of my wedding, father Duke,
for the loue of God, this monthes three.'

The Duke of France put of this wedding
Of the steward and the lady monthes three,
For the ladie sicke shee was,
Sicke, sicke, and like to die.

Shee wrote a letter with her owne hand,
In all the speede that euer might bee;
Shee sent it over into Scotland,
That is soe farr beyond the sea.

When the messenger came beffore the old Lord of Learne,
He kneeled low downe on his knee,
And he deliuered the letter vnto him,
In all the speed that euer might bee.

The first looke he looked the letter vpon,
Lo! he wept full bitterly;
The second looke he looked it vpon,
Said, False steward, woe be to thee!

When the Ladye of Learne these tydings heard,
O Lord! shee wept soe biterlye:
'I told you of this, now good my lord,
When I sent my child into that wild country.'

`Peace, Lady of Learne,' the lord did say,
`For Christ his loue I doe pray thee;
And as I am a christian man,
Wroken vpon him that I wilbe.'

He wrote a letter with his owne hand,
In all the speede that ere might bee;
He sent it into the lords in Scotland,
that were borne of a great degree.

He sent for lords, he sent for knights,
The best that were in the countrye,
To go with him into the land of France,
To seeke his sonne in that strange country.

The wind was good, and they did sayle,
Fiue hundred men into France land,
There to seeke that bonny boy
That was the worthy Lord of Learne.

They sought the country through and through,
Soe farr to the Duke's place of france land;
There they were ware of that bonny boy,
Standing with a porter's staffe in his hand.

Then the worshipfull, the: did bowe,
The serving-men fell on their knee,
They cast their hatts vp into the ayre
For ioy that boy that they had seene.

The Lord of Learne then he light downe,
And kist his child both cheeke and chinne,
And said, God blesse thee, my sonne and my heire!
The blisse of heauen that thou may winne!

The false steward and the Duke of France
Were in a castle-topp, trulie;
`What fooles are yond,' says the false steward,
`To the porter makes soe lowe curtesie?'

Then bespake the Duke of france,
Calling my Lord of Learne, trulie;
He sayd, I doubt the day be come
that either you or I must die.

They sett the castle round about,
A swallow cold not haue flone away;
And there they tooke the false steward
That the Lord of Learne did betray.

And when they had taken the false steward,
He fell lowe downe vpon his knee,
And craued mercy of the Loirdr of Learne
For the villanous dedd he had done, trulye.

`Thou shalt haue mercy,' said the Lord of Learne,
`Thou vile traitor, I tell to thee,
As the lawes of the realme they will thee beare,
Wether it bee for thee to liue or dye.'

A quest of lords that there was chosen,
To goe vppon his death, trulie;
There they iudged the false steward,
Whether he was guiltie, and for to dye.

The forman of the iury he came in,
He spake his words full lowd and hie;
Said, Make thee ready, thou false steward,
For now thy death it drawes full nie.

Sayd he, If my death it doth draw nie,
God forgiue me all I haue done amisse!
Where is that lady I haue loued soe longe?
Before my death to giue me a kisse.

`Away, thou traitor!' the lady said,
`Auoyd out of my company!
For thy vild treason thou hast wrought,
Thou had need to cry to God for mercye.'

First they tooke him and hangd him halfe,
And let him downe before he was dead,
And quartered him in quarters many,
And sodde him in a boyling lead.

And then they tooke him out againe,
And cutten all his ioynts in sunder,
And burnte him eke vpon a hyll;
I-wis the: did him curstlye cumber.

A loud laughter the lady laught,
O Lord! she smiled merrylie;
She sayd I may praise my heauenly king
That euer I seene this vile traytor die.

Then bespake the Duke of France,
Vnto the right Lord of Learne sayd he there;
Says, Lord of Learne, if thou wilt marry my daughter

I'll mend thy living five hundred a yeere.

But then bespake that bonie boy,
And answered the Duke quicklie,
I had rather marry your daughter with a ring of gold
Then all the gold that ere I blinket on with mine eye.

But then bespake the old Lord of Learne,
To the Duke of France thus he did say,
Seeing our children doe soe well agree,
They shalbe marryed ere wee goe away.

The Lady of Learne shee was sent for
Throughout Scotland soe speedilie,
To see these two children sett vpp
In their seats of gold full royallye.

Child #271

Verson A from Child from Percy

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