

Traditional & Folk Songs with lyrics & midi music

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The Merchant and the Beggar Wench

The Merchant and the Beggar Wench

Come all ye jolly plooman lads,
And I'll tell you a tale
As merry a tale as ere befell
A merchant's son in the north did dwell
And for a living he was forced to sell.

cho: Lillie fal de dal, lillie fal de day

He's ta'en wi' him as we are told
The sum of five hundred pounds in gold
And on the road he chanced to spy
A beggar wench with a rolling eye.

She asked him for some relief
With smiles of sorrow and tears of grief
She said I've neither house nor home
And for living I'm forced to roam

If ye would tell to me your name
And where is the country to which ye belong
If ye wi me this nicht would lie
I would wi money you supply.

She wisna lang ere she gave consent
And so this two to the inn they went
The landlord laughed to see him kiss
A beggar wench in a ragged dress.

He call'd for brandy of the best
Brought by the landlord in great haste
They drank it out in bumpers three
The jolly beggar wench and he.

And after that the sipper dressed
Brought by the lady in great haste
And after that they went to bed
But the merchant slept as if he were dead.

So in the morning the beggar rose
A@d dressed himself in the merchant's clothes
She's ta'en his watch, and his gold likewise

And she went away with the golden prize.

She's left nothing in the room
But a ragged petticoat and a goon
Bits of bread and tobacco too
And she's went away with the golden shoe

She down the stair like a spirit flew
Ten guineas to the landlord threw
She's never been heard of until this day
Lillie fal de dal, lillie fal de day.

In the morning the merchant rose
And dressed himself in the beggar's clothes
And on the road he cursed and swore
He would never lie wi' a beggar more.

From the Duncan-Grieg Collection

Note: G-D tune transcription was incomplete; last two measures
of chorus reconstructed by RG; first verse has extra line--
Can be sung by repeating first line of tune. RG