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Riley's Courtship

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Was on a pleasant morning
All in the bloom of spring
When the cheerful songsters
In concerts they did sing.

The primrose and the daisy
Bespangled every one,
In an arbour I espied her,
My fair colleen bawn.

I stared awhile amazed,
Perched up with surprise,
On her with rapture gazed,
While from her bright eyes

She shot such killing glances
My heart away was gone,
She ravished all my senses,
My fair colleen bawn.

Politely I address'd her,
"Hail, matchless fair maid,
You have with grief oppressed me
And I am much afraid.

Unless you cure my anguish
That now is in its dawn,
You'll cause my sad overthrow,
My fair colleen bawn."

And with a gentle smile
She replied unto me,
"I cannot patronize
Dear Willie over thee.

"My father he is wealthy
And gives severe command,
If you'll but gain his favour
I'll be your colleen bawn."

In rapture I embraced her,

We swore eternal love,
And nought could separate us
Except the powers above.

I hired with her father
And left my friends on land,
That in pleasure I might gaze on
My fair colleen bawn.

I served in port twelve months
Right faithfully and just,
Although not used to labour
Was true unto my trust.

I valued not my wages
And would not it demand,
Oh, I could live for ages
With my fair colleen bawn.

One morning as her father
And I walked out alone,
I asked him for his daughter,
Saying, "Sir, it is well known,

"I have a well-stocked farm,
500 pounds in land,
Which I'll share with your daughter
My fair colleen bawn."

Her father full of anger
Most scornfully did frown,
Saying, " Here are your wages,
Now, sir, depart this town."

Increasing still his anger
He bid me quick begone,
"Oh, none but a rich squire
Shall wed my colleen bawn."

I went unto his daughter
And told her my sad tale,
Oppressed with grief and anguish
We both did weep and wail.

She said, " My dearest Riley,
The thought I can't withstand,
That with sorrow you must leave
Your dear colleen bawn."

A horse I did get ready
All in the silent night,
Having no other remedy
We quickly took our flight.

The horse he chanced to stumble
And threw us both along,
Confused and sorely bruised me
And my dear colleen bawn.

Again we quickly mounted
And swiftly rode away,
O'er lofty hills and mountains
We travelled night and day.

Her father swift pursued us
With his well-chosen band,
And I was overtaken with
My dear colleen bawn.

Committed straight to prison
There to lament and wail
And utter my complaints to
A dark and dismal jail,

Loaded with heavy iron
Till my trial does come on,
But I'll bear the utmost malice
For my dear colleen bawn.

If it should please kind fortune
Once more to set me free,
For well I know my charmer
Is constant unto me.

In spite of her father's anger,
His cruelty and scorn,
I hope to win my heart's delight
My fair colleen bawn.

TRIAL

"Come, rise up, Willie Riley,
Now come away with me,
I mean for to go with you
And leave this countree.

"I'll forsake my father's dwelling,
His houses and rich land,

And go along with you, my dear,
To a fair colleen bawn."

O'er lofty hills and mountains
Along the handsome dale,
Through shady groves and mountains,
Rich meadows and sweet vales,

We climbed the rugged woods and
Went over silent lawns,
But I was overtaken with
My dear colleen bawn.

They hurried me to prison,
My hands and feet they bound,
Confincd me like a murderer
With chains unto the ground.

But this hard, cruel treatment
Most cheerfully I'll stand,
Ten thousand deaths I'll suffer for
My dear colleen bawn.

In came the jailor's son
And to Riley he did say,
"Rise up, unhappy Riley,
You must appear to-day

"Proud Squire Follard's anger
And power to withstand,
I 'm afraid you'll suffer sorely
For your dear colleen bawn.

"This is the news, young Riley,
Last night I heard of you,
The lady's oath will hang you
Or else will set you free."

"If that be so," said Riley,
Some hope began to dawn,
"Oh, I never can be injured
By my dear colleen bawn."

The lady she is sensible,
And in her tender youth,
If Riley has deluded her
She will declare the truth.

Then like a spotless angel

Before them she did stand,
"You are welcome here," says Riley,
"My dear colleen bawn."

About the noble Fox
Who stood attentive by,
"Gentlemen of the jury,
In justice we reply,

"To hang a man for love
Is foul murder, you may see,
Oh, spare the life of Riley,
And banished let him be."

"But stop, my lord, he stole her
Bright jewels and nice ring,
Gold watch and diamond buckle,
And many costly things.

"I gave them to my daughter,
They cost me L 1000
When Riley was first taken
These things with him were found."

"Oh no, my lord, I gave them
As a token of true love,
He never stole my jewels,
I swear by all above.

"Oh, if you have them, Riley,
Pray send them home to me."
"I will, my honoured lady,
With many thanks to thee."

"There is one ring among them
I wish for you to wear,
It is set with costly diamonds
And plaited with my hair.

"In token of true friends
Wear it on your right hand,
Think on my broken heart, love,
When in a foreign land."

MARRIAGE,

All tender-hearted lovers
Attend unto my theme,
The hardships of young Riley

I mean now to explain.

Who, for stealing of an heiress
'Fore the court did stand,
Ordered for transportation
Unto a foreign land.

The daughter of Squire Follard
This lady proved to be,
Beautiful as an angel,
And born of high degree.

For her young Willie Riley
Both night and day doth wail,
Loaded with heavy irons
Confined in Sligo jail.

Like a poor malefactor
Transported he must be,
The lady cried, "Dear Riley,
Your face I ne'er shall see.

"My cruel-hearted father,
Thou weren't the only one
That banished Willie Riley
From his poor colleen bawn."

Her father in a passion
Unto his daughter said,
"For your foul disobedience
You shall be conveyed

"Unto a lonesome chamber,
To there repent the deed,
Twelve months on bread and water
You shall be forced to feed"

Then unto a dark chamber
His daughter he did bide,
With nothing but coarse blankets
And straw whereon to lie.

She says, "My dearest Riley,
'Tis for my sake alone
That you with grief and sorrow
In Sligo jail doth mourn."

Three nights this lonely lady
In grief and sorrow spent,

Till overcome with anguish
She quite distracted went.

She wrung her hands and tore her hair,
Crying, "My only dear,
My cruel-hearted father
Hath used you most severe."

Unto a private madhouse
They hurried her away,
Where she was heard each morning
For to weep and pray

Her chains loud she'd rattle,
And then would cry and rave,
"For me poor Willie Riley
Is treated like a slave.

"Alas, dear Billy Riley,
If I could once more see,
But for my father's anger
I'd try to set you free.

"I could hold you in my arms,
From you I'd never part,
For though I'm here confined,
Young Riley has my heart."

Now we will leave this fair one
In sorrow for awhile,
And speak of Willie Riley
Confined in Sligo jail.

Who with twenty other criminals
To Dublin marched away,
Who went on board a transport,
And straight to Botany Bay.

When in Dublin they arrived
They were conveyed to jail,
Until the transport ship
Was ready for to sail.

Then Riley cried, " Squire Follard,
You cruel-hearted man,
In Bedlam lies your daughter
My dear colleen bawn."

But fortune to poor Riley

Happened to prove kind,
While he lay in Ireland,
A thought came in his mind.

A petition from the prison
Unto the parson sent,
Unto the Lord Lieutenant
Whose heart it did relent.

The noble Lord Lieutenant
Unto the prison haste,
And here young Willie Riley
He speedily released.

With him unto Bedlam
Straightway he went anon
Likewise released his jewel,
His fair colleen bawn.

As soon as the lady
Did her true love behold,
She in her snowy arms
Young Riley did enfold

Her senses soon revived;
They for the parson sent,
Who married this young couple
Unto their heart's content.

A license from the Primate
Was got immediately,
And constant William Riley
Was mated to his lady.

A feast was then prepared
Which lasted four days long,
Success attend young Riley
And his young colleen bawn.

Soon as the old man heard it
His old heart did relent,
He cried, "For my offences
I sorely do repent,

"But now you shall live happy
With me in Sligo town,
A fortune I will give thee
Of 30,000 pounds.

As it is God's will
I leave no child but thee,
I beg it as a blessing
That you will live with me.

"And at my death you shall possess
My horses and rich land,
My blessings on you, Riley,
And our dear colleen bawn."

Laws M10

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