

The Jealous Lover

This seems to be the most popular of all the songs that Laws classified as North American in his *American Ballads from British Broad-sides*. It is more typical of British murder ballads than American, but it has not been found in Britain. Most American ballads are more realistic and less poetic than this one.

This is also unusual among the murder ballads because the cause is said to be jealousy; usually it is because the man gets the girl pregnant and doesn't want to marry her, which seems to be the case here, although the murder comes after she has the child, rather than before. Also, it is usually the man who tricks the girl into going into the woods, not, as here, the girl who suggests it.

The girl is usually called "Floella" or "Florella"; here she is Louella. The ballad usually ends with the second verse, or one in which the man is imprisoned. The gallows was apparently the singer's own addition.

—Edith Fowke

Sung by William Drumm, Hamilton

Transcribed by Dick Richardson

The moon was shining brightly
And the stars were shining too.
Up to her cottage window
A jealous lover drew.

She said, "Come love, let's wander
And plan our wedding day."
The night being dark and dreary
He did not want to stray.

Through green groves and valleys
They wandered for a while,
She always pleading,
A-pleading for her child.

"Retrace your steps, no, never;
No more those woods you'll roam,
But say farewell forever
To parents, friends, and home."

She down on her knees and pleading,
A-pleading for her life,
While in her loving bosom
He plunged a fatal knife.

She died not broken-hearted
Nor did in sorrow dwell,
But in one moment parted
From the one she loved so well.

Way down in yonder valley
Where flowers fade and bloom,
There lies my sweet Louella
In the cold and solemn dew [tomb].

He on the gallows swinging,
Upon the gallows high,
For the murdering of his sweetheart
On the fourteenth of July.

The moon was shin-ing bright-ly and the stars were shin-ing too-, up
to her cot-tage win-dow a jealous lov-er drew

In 1935 Cecil and I met at a dance in the Knob Hill dance hall. I saw him in the hall and I thought he was a nice looking fellow but too young for me. Soon he asked me for a dance, so we talked and danced. I found out I was only two years older than he was. He kissed me while we were dancing, so then I thought he must think the same about me as I did about him. This was in December and before the evening was over he asked me if he could take me to a dance in Winfield on January 3. I said yes, so that is how our romance started.

Bertha Platz, Packhorse to Pavement (Buck Lake, Alberta)