

Seeger Pete

"The Silver Dagger"

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The Silver Dagger

Young men an' maidens, pay attention

To these here lines I'm a-goin' to tell,

They are the truth, if ever spoken,

About a young an' beautiful girl.

A young man courted a handsome lady,

He loved her more than he loved his life;

He ofttimes made her the solemn promise

That she should be his lawful wife.

But when his parents come to know this,

They strove to part therm night an' day.

"Oh son, oh son, don't be so foolish,

She is too pore," they would ofttimes say.

He fell upon his knees before them,

Sayin', "Father, mother, pity me,

Don't take from me my precious jewel,

For she is all the world to me."

An' when the lady come to know this,

She quick resolved what she would do;

She wandered forth from the busy city,

Its love an' pleasure she no more knew.

She wandered down by the flowin' river,
For three long days in a deep despair;
She told her friends farewell forever,
An' then for death she did prepare.
She gazed a moment up to heaven,
Wherein her soul should find its rest;
She then drewed out the silver dagger
An' pierced it through her snow-white breast .
The young man at the roadside near her,
He thought he heard his true love cry;
He run around as one distracted,
"Oh love, I fear you're a-goin' to die."
He then picked up the bloody weapon,
An' pierced it through his own true heart:
Oh, let this be a woeful warnin',
To all that would true lovers part.
A double coffin was directed,
Their hands placed on each others' breast:
An' now the lovers lie a-sleepin'
Together in eternal rest.

Note: Not to be confused with "Drowsy Sleeper"
ballads, which

are also called "Silver Dagger". One of the high points
in

my folkie experience was hearing Ellen Stekert do a
Pete-

Seeger-type Mob singalong of this, which reached its

climax

with an impassioned "Let us take our silver daggers,
And plunge

them etc." RG

From Ozark Folksongs, Randolph

Collected from Leone Duvall, MO, 1923

@love @suicide

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RG

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