

The Louvin Brothers:
Knoxville Girl (1958 version)

"I met a little girl in Knoxville,
That town we all know well,
And every Sunday evening,
Out in her home I'd dwell.

"We went to take an evening walk,
About a mile from town,
I picked a stick up off the ground,
And knocked that fair girl down.

"She fell down on her bended knees,
For mercy she did cry,
'Oh Willard dear don't kill me here,
I'm unprepared to die.'

"She never spoke another word,
I only beat her more,
Until the ground around me,
Within her blood did flow.

"I took her by her golden curls,
And I drug her round and round,
Throwing her into the river,
That flows through Knoxville town.

"Go down go down you Knoxville girl,
With the dark and roving eye,
Go down go down you Knoxville girl,
You can never be my bride.

"I started back to Knoxville,
Got there about midnight,
My mother she was worried,
And woke up in a fright.

"Saying 'Son what have you done,
To bloody your clothes so?',
I told my anxious mother,
I was bleeding at my nose."

"I called for me a candle,
To light myself to bed,
I called for me a handkerchief,
To bind my aching head.

"I rolled & tumbled the whole night through,
As troubles was for me,
Like flames of hell around my bed,
And in my eyes could see.

"They carried me down to Knoxville,
And put me in a cell,
My friends all tried to get me out,
But none could go my bail.

"I'm here to waste my life away,
Down in this dirty old jail,
Because I murdered that Knoxville girl,
That girl I loved so well."

The Bloody Miller (c. 1686) /
The Berkshire Tragedy (1744)

"By chance upon an Oxford lass,
I cast a wanton eye,
And promised I would marry her
If she with me would lie.

"Thus I deluded her again,
Into a private place,
Then took a stick out of the hedge,
And struck her in the face.

"But she fell on bended knee,
For mercy she did cry,
'For heaven's sake don't murder me,
I am not fit to die.'

"From ear to ear I slit her mouth,
And stabbed her in the head,
Till she poor soul did breathless lie,
Before her butcher bled.

"And then I took her by the hair,
To cover the foul sin,
And dragged her to the river side,
And threw her body in.

"Thus in the blood of innocence,
My hands were deeply dyed,
And shined in the purple gore,
That should have been my bride.

"Then home unto my mill I ran,
But sorely was amazed,
My man thought I had mischief done,
And strangely on me gazed.

"How came you by that blood upon,
Your trembling hands and clothes?'
I presently to him replied,
'By bleeding at the nose.'

"I wishfully upon him looked,
But little to him said,
I snatched the candle from his hand,
And went unto my bed.

"There I lay trembling all the night,
For I could take no rest,
And perfect flames of hell did flash,
Like lightening in my face.

"The justice too perceived my guilt,
Nor either would take bail,
But the next morning I was sent,
Away to Reading gaol.

"So like a wretch my days I end,
Upon the gallows tree,
And I do hope my punishment,
Will such a warning be,
That none may ever after this,
Commit such villainy."

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