

Zach's Songbook

Songs for folks. Songs I like to play the way I like to play `em

September 17, 2017

I noticed that a lot of times when people would come over to play music, there was a lot of time spent looking up chords and lyrics. And since it's folk music, most of the time the version on the internet would be different from the version I know, which would cause a bit of confusion.

Thus, I decided to make my own songbook to keep around the house, for when people come over to play music and want to sing or play along with my versions of songs.

I'm not a real musician, and I never really play from song books or play exactly the same thing twice, so everything here is more of just a suggestion rather than what to play exactly. I also make no guarantee that any of my versions of songs will match anyone else's. If you want their version, get their songbook 😊

As far as I can tell, all of the songs in this book are either in the public domain, copylefted, or written by yours truly.

The latest version of this book can be found at <http://www.zachcapalbo.com/projects/songbook.html>

The source code for this booklet can be found at <https://gitlab.com/zach-geek/songbook>

The songbook, the source code, and any songs here that I've written can be copied and shared under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike license. <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/>

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1. Ain't Got No Home In This World

I wrote this song early into my senior year of college, when I was rather unsatisfied with my lot in life—overworked and underpaid. I obviously drew from Woody Guthry's "I Ain't Got No Home", which I wanted to sing, but felt it was too political to express what I wanted, which at the time I felt was more an existential calamity. I also drew on classic hobo ballads, dreaming of just up and wandering away from all my studies and responsibilities.

Key of C

Zach Capalbo



Csus2 Am
My shoes is all torn up my toes is stickin' out,
Csus2 Gsus2
If I don't get some whiskey, gonna go up the
spout.
Csus2 Am
I ain't got no jacket, I ain't got no tie,
Csus2 Gsus2 Csus2
And I ain't got no home in this world.

Chorus:

Csus2 F
I ain't got no home in this world
Csus2 Gsus2
I ain't got no home in this world
Csus2 Am
My money is gone and my toes is cold
Csus2 Gsus2 Csus2
And I ain't got no home in this world.

My friends have all gone and I can't get them
back.

My company now's just a cigarette pack.
But I ain't got a light, I just got a dark,
And I ain't got no home in this world.

I ain't got no sweethearts; I ain't got no sweets.
I think my poor heart has been missin' some
beats.

I'll dream up some love, 'neath an old willow tree
'Cause I ain't got no home in this world.

But I am happy, I ramble and roam
And them that don't like me they leave me alone.
I'll pluck on my banjo; I'll sing and I'll shout
That I ain't got no home in this world.

When I'm in the graveyard, and I'm laid to rest
And everyone there thinks I'm happy and blessed
Won't have no more money, won't have no
banjo—

But I'll have a home in this world!

2. The Unquiet Grave

This is a real old one. I first heard it in a collection of Vaughan Williams folk songs, then later on a recording by Luke Kelley. This version here takes the tune of Kingsfold, which is possibly my favorite melody, and is also the setting for a number of other songs, including "Star of the County Down", "Dives and Lazarus", and "If you Could Hie to Kolob".

Key of Am

Traditional



Am C G
The Wind doth blow today my love
Am G
And gently falls the rain
Am C G
I never had but one true love
Am G Am
And in cold clay she is lain.
C G C
I'll do as much for my true love
Am G
As any young man may.
Am C G
I'll sit and morn upon her grave
Am G Am
For twelve months and a day.

When twelve months and a day were done
A voice began to speak
Who is it that sits upon my grave
And will not let me sleep?
Tis I, tis I, thine own true love
That sits upon your grave;
I came to seek of your sweet lips
Once kiss is all I crave.

You seek one kiss of my clay cold lips
But my breath is earthy-strong
If you had one kiss of my lily-white lips
Your time would not be long.
My Time be long my time be short
Ten-thousand years or a day:
May God in heaven have all my soul,
But I'll kiss your lips of clay.

See down in yonder garden green?
Love, where we were used to walk:
The fairest flower that e'er was seen
Is withered to the stalk.
The stalk is withered dry my love!
So shall our hearts decay!
So make yourself content my love,
Until death calls you away!

3. I wish I was a mole in the ground

Key of C

Traditional



C
 I wish I was a mole in the ground
 F C
 Yeah, I wish I was a mole in the ground
 F
 If I's a mole in the ground, I'd root that mountain
 C
 down
 G C
 I wish I was a mole in the ground

 Oh, Kimby wants a nine-dollar shawl
 Yeah Kimby wants a nine-dollar shawl
 When I come o'er the hill with a forty-dollar bill
 It's honey, where ya been so long?

 I been in the bin so long
 Yeah I've been in the bin so long
 I been in the bin with the rough and rowdy men
 And I ain't goin' back again

I don't trust no railroadin' man.
 No I don't trust no railroadin' man.
 'Cause a railroadin main, he will kill you when he
 can
 And drink up your blood like wine.

Oh Kimby, let your hair grow down
 Oh Kimby, let your hair grow down
 Let your hair grow down, and your bangs curl all
 around
 Oh Kimby, let your hair grow down

I wish I was a lizard in the spring
 Yeah, I wish I was a lizard in the spring
 If I's a lizard in the spring, I'd hear my darling sing
 I wish I was a lizard in the spring.

Well I wish I was a mole in the ground.
 Yeah I wish I's a mole in the ground.
 'Cause I's a mole in the ground, I'd root that
 mountain down.
 I wish I was a mole in the ground.

4. The Blackest Crow

I heard this song at the first folk jam I ever went to, in Cambridge, MA.

Key of Em

Traditional



D Em G
The time draws near, my dearest dear
G Em
When you and I must part
D Em G
How little you know, of the grief and woe
G Em
Of my poor aching heart
G D Em
Each night I suffer for your sake:
C G Em
You're the one I love most dear!
D Em G
I wish that I was going with you,
G Em
Or you were staying here.

I wish my breast was made of glass
Wherein you might behold
Upon my heart your name is writ
In letters made of gold.
In letters made of gold, my love—
Believe me when I say,
You are the one I will adore
Until my dying day.

The blackest crow that ever flew
Would surely turn to white:
If ever I were false to you
Bright day return to night.
Bright day return to night, my love,
The elements would mourn.
If ever I were false to you
The sea would rage and burn.

And when you're on some distant shore
Think of your absent friend.
And when the wind blows high and clear,
A line to me pray send.
And when the wind blows high and clear
Pray send a note to me.
That I might know by your handwrite
How time has gone with thee.

5. Wayfarin' Stranger

I like this one. It's very bleak—death is the only release from the troubles of the world.

Key of Em

Traditional



Em
I am a poor, wayfarin' stranger
D Em
Been travelin' through this world of woe!
Em
And there's no sickness, toil nor danger
D Em
In that bright land to which I go.
C G
I'm goin' there to meet my mother;
C B
She said she'd meet me when I come.
Em
I'm only going over Jordan
D Em
I'm just'a goin' over home.

I know dark clouds will gather o'er me.
I know my way is rough and steep.
But golden fields lie out before me
Where God's redeemed, their vigils keep.
I'm goin' there to meet my father;
I'm goin' there no more to roam.
I'm only going over Jordan.
I'm just'a goin' over home.

I'll soon be free from all my trials.
My body restin in the old churchyard.
I'll drop the cross of self denial
And enter into my great reward.
I'm goin' there to see my savior
To sing his praises ever more
I'm just'a going over Jordan
I'm just'a goin' over home.

7. Two Sisters

This is an old, British song originally that made it's way across the ocean. You can see how the different continents left their mark on the song.

Key of G

Traditional



G D G
 There was an ol' woman lived by the sea shore,
 C G C
 Bow and balance to me
 C G C G
 There was an ol' woman lived by the sea shore,
 D G
 Her number of daughters was one two three four.
 G D G C G
 And I'll be true to my love if my love will be true
 D G
 to me.

There was a young man come there to see them
 Bow and balance to me!
 There was a young man come there to see them,
 And the oldest one got stuck on him
 And I'll be true to my love if my love will be true
 to me

He bought the youngest a beaver hat
 Bow and balance to me!
 He bought the youngest a beaver hat
 And the oldest one got mad at that
 And I'll be true to my love if my love will be true
 to me

Oh sister oh sister, let's walk the seashore...
 And watch the ships as they sail on o'er...

As those two sisters walked down the seashore...
 The oldest pushed the youngest o'er...

Oh sister oh sister come lend me your hand...
 And you may have Willie and all of his land...

I never I never will lend you my hand...
 But I'll have Willie and all of his land..

Sometimes she sank and sometimes she swam...
 Until she came to the ol' mill dam...

Oh miller oh miller go draw your dam...
 There's either a mermaid or a swan...

The miller he got his fishin' hook...
 And fished that maided right outta the brook...

Oh miller oh miller here's five gold rings...
 If you'll put me safe on shore again...

The miller received those five gold rings...
 And pushed the maiden in agains...

The miller was hung by his own mill gate...
 For drowning little sister Kate...

Yes I'll be true to my love if my love'll true to me.

8. Sourwood Mountain

This is a Howell song. He usually sings it, so I'm just guessing at the words he sings (except the Hi-Ho-Diddle-aye-day—everyone sings that!)

Key of G

Traditional



G C G
 Rooster crows on Sourwood Mountain
 G D7 G
 Hi Ho Diddle aye day
 G C G
 So many pretty girls you can't count 'em
 G D7 G
 Hi Ho Diddle aye day
 G D7 G C G
 Rooster crows on Sourwood Mountain
 G
 Hi Ho . . .
 G D7 G C G
 So many pretty girls you can't count 'em
 G D7 G
 Hi Ho Fiddle aye day

My true love's across the river
 Hi Ho Diddle aye day
 Few more days and I'll be with 'er
 Hi Ho diddle aye day
 Rooster crows on Sourwood Mountain
 Hi Ho . . .
 So many pretty girls you can't count 'em
 Hi Ho Fiddle aye day

Big dog bark and the little one bites you
 Hi Ho Diddle aye day
 Big girl courts and the little one spites you
 Hi ho diddle ah day
 Rooster crows on Sourwood Mountain...

My true love lives 'cross the holler
 Hi ho diddle aye day
 She won't come and I won't foller
 Hi ho diddle aye day
 Rooster crows on Sourwood Mountain...

10. The Night Visiting Song

This song is very similar in style and content to "I'm a Rover". The timing's off on the typesetting here.. (corrections welcome!)

Key of C

Traditional



C F C G C
I must away now; I can no longer tarry
This morning's tempest I have to cross
I will be guided without a stumble
Into the arms I love the most.

And when he came to his true love's window
He knelt down gently upon a stone;
He's whispered lowly through her bedroom win-
dow:
Is my true lover within at home.

She's raised her up from her down soft pillow
She's thrown her arms around her breast
Says who is that at my bedroom window,
Disturbing me of my long nights rest?

Wake up, wake up, love! It is thine own true lover.
Wake up wake up, love, and let me in!
For I am tired love, and oh so weary,
And more than near drenched to the skin.

She's raised her up from her down-soft pillow.
She's raised her up and she's let him in,
And they were locked in each other's arms
Until that long night was past and gone.

And when that long night was past and over
And when the small clouds began to grow
They both shook hands and embraced each other
Then he saddled and mounted and away did go.

I must away now; I can no longer tarry
This morning's tempest I have to cross
I will be guided without a stumble
Into the arms I love the most.

11. Wild Mountain Thyme

Although this is very pretty song, there exist absolutely ridiculous and silly hand motions to it, which you can pick up if you keep questionable company around Somerville, MA. (The typesetting of the melody here is a mess. It's really not as hard as it looks!)

Key of G

Traditional



Well the ^G summer time is coming
And the trees are sweetly blooming
And the wild mountain thyme
Grows around the blooming heather.
Will ya go, lassie, go?

Chorus:

And we'll all go together
To pluck wild mountain thyme
All around the blooming heather
Will you go, lassie, go?

I will build my love a bower
By the clear crystal fountain
And around it I will pile
All the flowers of the mountain.
Will you go, lassie, go?

I will range through the wilds
And the dark glens so dreary
And return with the spoils
To the bower of me deary
Will you go, lassie, go?

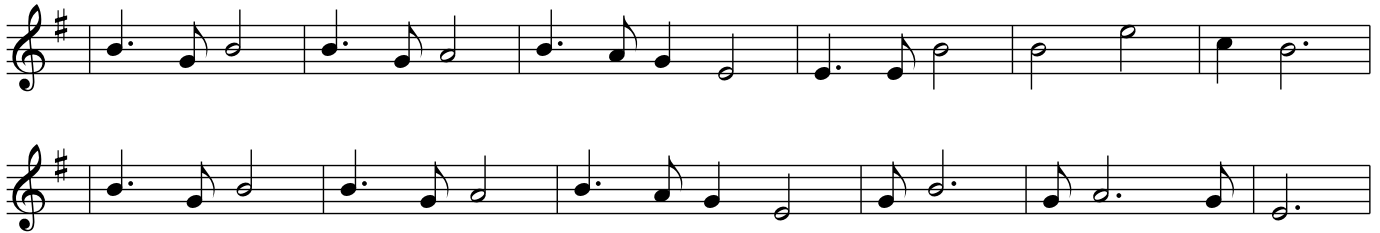
If my true love she were gone
I would surely find another
To pluck wild mountain thyme
All around the blooming heather
Will you go, lassie, go?

12. Saint James' Infirmary

This is another old one with a long and storied past spanning two continents. Maddie usually sings this one, but these are the words as best I can remember them.

Key of Em

Traditional



Em D Em
I went down to the St. James Infirmary
C B
And I saw my baby there—
Em D Em
Stretched out on a long white table—
Em D Em
So cold, so pale, so fair.

Chorus:

Em D Em
Let her go, let her go, God bless her
C B
Wherever she may be.
Em D Em
She can search this wide world over
Em D Em
But she'll never find a sweet man like me.

I went down to old Joe's barroom,
On the corner by the square
They were serving the drinks as usual,
And the usual crowd was there.

When I die, go and bury me low down.
In a box cut suit and a Stetson hat
With a twenty dollar gold piece round my watch
chain
So the boys'll know I died standin' pat.

Get six gamblers to carry my coffin
Six chorus girls to sing me a song
Put a twenty-piece jazz band on my hearse wagon
To raise Hell as we go along

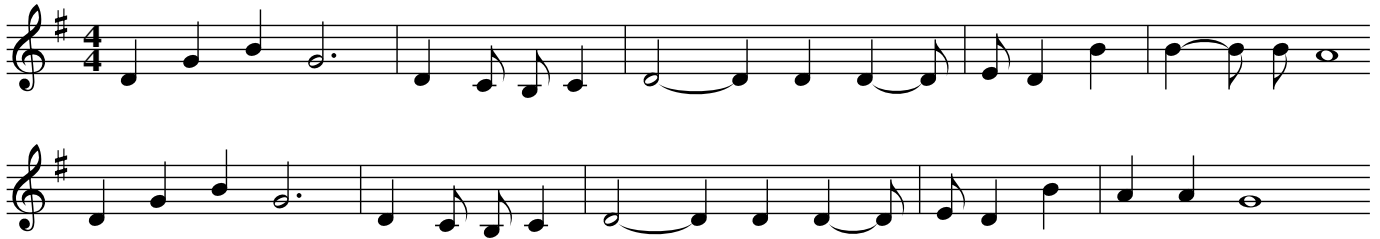
Now that's the end of my story
Let's have another round of booze
And if anyone should ask you just tell them
I've got the dying crapshooter blues.

13. Raggle Taggle Hippy

This song is based on a true story about a friend's chance encounter with what could have been the man of her dreams.

Key of G

Zach Capalbo



G C G
That VW Van went rolling along
G D
A-rolling down to Portland-Oh
G C G
And out of that van came a beard with a man:
G D G
He was a raggle, taggle, hippy-oh

G C G
He says how do you like my flannel shirt
G D
How do you like my skinny jeans-Oh?
G C G
How do you like my environmental work:
G D G
I am a raggle, taggle, hippy-oh.

Well do I like your flannel shirt
Well do I like your skinny jeans, Oh
But tell me about your environmental work
If you be a raggle taggle hippy-oh

He says, I've planted ten sustainable farms
In nine different countries oh
I've held eight baby seals in my arms
I am a raggle, taggle, hippy Oh

I've cleaned pollution from the seven salt seas
I've slept on six world wonders oh
I've lived with five loving families
I am a raggle taggle hippy Oh

I've hosted four earth festivals
I've held three protests in prison oh
I've biked across two continents
I am a raggle taggle hippy oh

But there is one thing that I lack
I'm pining for a lady-Oh
To share this life of poverty
And be a raggle taggle hippy Oh

So won't you go along with me
And we'll all go down to Portland Oh
And live in a commune by the sea
and we'll all be raggle taggle hippies Oh

14. The JAF Song

I wrote this song in lieu of an essay for a college class, much to the consternation of the professor, who dubbed it "The Ballad of a Wan Cynic's Chic"

Key of G

Zach Capalbo

The musical score for "The JAF Song" is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody starts on G4, moves to A4, then B4, and continues with a series of eighth and quarter notes. The second staff continues the melody, featuring a half note G4 and a half note F#4. The third staff continues with a series of eighth notes. The fourth staff concludes the piece with a half note G4.

G C G
 A long time ago, a man was named Plato
 G D7
 His thoughts are as ancient as his bones
 G
 He said the truth is out there
 C G
 But he never said quite where
 D7
 So we're left to wonder where the forms are
 G
 found.

Chorus:

G
 So let's just drink our beer,
 C G
 And let it not come near
 D7
 Let's not think about it anymore.
 G C G
 Faith and reason, it's all so out of season
 G D7 G
 Comes God or brain after or before?

 Next came Aristotle, he should have sipped the
 bottle
 He was a moralist right true.
 He said we needed virtue,
 And that the vices hurt you.
 But if you hold your breathe your face turns blue.

 Is it good to be alone and call brother monks your
 own,
 As Saint Benedict would have us think?
 Is the life of the mind worth leaving all behind
 Or should we live in slothful luxury?

 I once read a man, whose name was St. Augustine
 He said "Credo ut intelligam"
 Sed ego non credo, ergo non intelligo.
 Quomodo credo si non intelligavi?

 'Twas John Calvin said, man's goodness is all dead
 His reason is corrupt and all depraved.
 But I don't believe him, I think he's got flawed rea-
 sons
 Why should an apple knock us in the head?

Old man Aquinas, I'm so glad he is behind us
 His view of nature was so high
 His God orders all, even as before the fall,
 But tales of evil simply are too tall.

And Dante pictured hell, and he did it just as well
 With everyone and their brother there.
 Although it is quite crude to be tortured in the
 nude
 Politicians must ensure the bad guys fell.

Now let us see Descartes, if he's not been blown
 apart
 Into inside and outside by his thoughts
 He said if we see stuff, we will never know
 enough
 To prove we know even one small part.

Was Milton's apple puce, could it be made to
 juice?
 Is it the same crime to drink as to eat?
 With the serpent he entwined all his wisdom and
 the rhyme
 Leaving Man and God to claim the second place

Old Blaise has not my praise
 He was silly anyways
 His rambling thoughts just do not persuade
 If we must place a bet, I've got one better yet
 Let's just sit doing nothing all our days

Kierkegaard was weird; many lives he's seared
 With his nonsense about the leap of faith.
 My jumping is all done and my legs won't even
 run
 And the paradox no longer has a place.

Peter Berger said that modernity was led
 by the factors of pluralization
 He himself has claimed to be a heretic in name
 And his structures of belief now are fragile.

Now all we've got is science; in it we place reliance
 But it cannot satisfy our deepest thoughts.
 It's all energy and atoms, but why it cannot
 fathom—
 So we call our God to fill the gaps once more!

15. Angelina Baker

Add lyrics as needed.

Key of D

Traditional

Angelina Baker,
Age of 23
I should have married Angeline,
But she would not marry me.

Her Father was a baker,
They called him Uncle Sam.
I never will forget that girl,
Until I drink a dram

Angelina Baker,
Age of 33
I gave her sugar candy
But she would not marry me

Do do do do do do doo
Do do do do dooo
Do do do do do do do doo
do do do do do doo

Angelina Baker,
Age of 83
I should have married Angeline,
But she would not marry me.

16. Down By the Sally Gardens

Key of G

Traditional



^G ^D ^C ^G
Down by the sally gardens
^C ^G ^D ^G
My love and I did meet
^G ^D ^C ^G
She passed those sally gardens
^C ^D ^G
On her two snow white feet
^G ^D ^C ^G ^D ^C ^G
She bid me take love easy
^C ^G ^C ^G
As the leaves grow on the tree—
^G ^D ^C ^G
But I was young and foolish
^C ^G ^D ^G
And with her I could not agree.

In a field down by the river
My love and I did stand
And upon my weary shoulder
She placed her snow-white hand
She bid me take life easy
As the grass grows on the weirs—
But I was young and foolish
And with her I could not agree.

18. Shady Grove

I'm not sure I'd go so far as to call this one a love song..



Gm F
Peaches in the summer time
Gm Gm
Apples in the fall—
Bb F
If I don't get the one I want
Gm
I don't want none at all

Chorus:

Shady Grove, my true love
Shady Grove my darlin!
Shady Grove, my true love
I'm going back to Harlan

Every night when I get home
My wife, I try to please her
The more I try, the worse she gets
Damned if I don't leave her

First time I saw Shady Grove
She was standing in the door
Shoes and stockings in her hand
And her little bare feet on the floor.

When I was a little boy
I wanted a barlow knife—
Now I want little Shady Grove
To say she'll be my wife

Wish I had a needle and a thread
Fine as I could sew:
I'd sew that pretty girl to my side
And down the road we'd go.

Wish I had a banjo string
Made of golden twine:
Every tune I played on it
I'd wish that gal were mine.

19. Bonaparte Crossing the Rhine

My favorite (of the many) variation on the name for this tune is "Bonaparte Crossing the Rockies"

Key of D

Traditional

20. The Girl I Left Behind Me

This is an Enrique tune. I let him do the real melody. This is just what I play.

Key of G

Traditional

21. Cumberland Gap

There are words for this. Some of them are racist. I just mumble "Cumberland Gap, Cumberland Gap! Yadayadaydayayada Cumberland Gap" if I feel like singing along when I play it. There's also a catchy Old Crow song set to this tune.

Key of D Traditional

D Bm D

A D A D

D G D G D

22. The Road To Lisdoonvarna

Key of D Traditional

12/8

23. Cripple Creek

Key of G

Traditional

Musical notation for "Cripple Creek" in G major, 4/4 time. The piece consists of two staves. The first staff contains the melody, starting with a repeat sign and ending with a double bar line and repeat dots. The second staff contains the accompaniment, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

24. Carolan's Welcome

Key of Em

Traditional

Musical notation for "Carolan's Welcome" in E minor, 3/4 time. The piece consists of eight staves. The first staff contains the melody, starting with a repeat sign and ending with a double bar line and repeat dots. The subsequent staves contain the accompaniment, featuring a rhythmic pattern of eighth and sixteenth notes.

25. Lonesome is I

Key of C

Mississippi John Hurt



Chorus:

Lonesome is I, I wished I could die
Nobody cares for me!
Lonesome is I, I wished I could die
Nobody cares for me!

One bright moon night, the moon shining bright
When you and I made love—
Your love was not true, I'll say that to you
I'm off like a turtle dove.

Oh my darling, oh my dear
How you treat me mean!
Oh my darling, oh my dear
-mumbling-

26. Let the Mermaids Flirt With Me

Key of G

Mississippi John Hurt

The image displays a musical score for the song "Let the Mermaids Flirt With Me" by Mississippi John Hurt. The score is written in the key of G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is composed of eighth and quarter notes, with some phrases spanning across bar lines. The notation includes various note values, rests, and phrasing slurs. The overall style is characteristic of early 20th-century folk music.

G G
I got blues out on the ocean
C C
I got blues all in the air
C C
Can't stay here much longer
G D
I ain't got steam boat fare!
G G
When my earthly trials are over
C C
Throw my body out in the sea.
Save all the undertaker bills—
Let the mermaids flirt with me!

I do not wake for pleasure
Rest and peace I know no more.
The only reason why I wake at all
Is to drive the world from my door!
When my earthly trials are over
Throw my body out in the sea.
Save all the undertaker bills—
Let the mermaids flirt with me!

Now my wife controls our happy home
And a sweet heart I cannot find
The only thing I can call my own
Is a troubled and a worried mind!
When my earthly trials are over
Throw my body out in the sea.
Save all the undertaker bills—
Let the mermaids flirt with me!

I got blues all in my body
My darling has forsaken me
If I ever wanna see her face again
I'd have to swim across the sea!
When my earthly trials are over
Throw my body out in the sea.
Save all the undertaker bills—
Let the mermaids flirt with me!

I got blues out on the ocean
I got blues all in the air
Can't stay here much longer
I ain't got steam boat fare!
When my earthly trials are over
Throw my body out in the sea.
Save all the undertaker bills—
Let the mermaids flirt with me!

27. Pretty Saro

Key of C

Traditional



When I first come to this country
Eighteen and forty nine
I saw many fair lovers
But never saw mine
I looked all around me
And saw I was quite alone
And me a poor stranger
And a long ways from home.

Well I wish I was a poet
And could write in a fine hand
I'd send my love a letter
So she might understand
I'd send it by the river
Where the swift waters flow
And I'd think of my darling
Wherever I go

Well me true love she won't have me
And this I can understand
For she wants some free holder
But I have no land
I cannot maintain her
On silver and gold
And many of the other fine things
That my love's house could hold

Well I wish I was a turtle dove
Had wings and I could fly
I'd away to my lover's lodging
Tonight I'd draw nigh
And there in her fair arms
I'd lie there all the night
And look through them little windows
For the dawning of the day

So fair you well my father
Fair you well to my mother too
For I'm going for to ramble
This whole wide world through
And when I get weary
I'll sit down there and cry
And think on pretty Saro
Pretty Saro, my bride