If You Ain't Got The Do-Re-Mi

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SFW CD 40195

PC 2007 Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

1. Wall Street Rag Ann Charters

2. Empty Pocket Blues (Barrel of Money Blues) Pete Seeger

I never had a pocket full of money,

I never had a ruby red ring,

All I ever had was you, babe,

To sit and listen to me sing.

I’ve got those blues,

The empty pockets blues.

(one more tim’, yeah)

I’ve got those blues,

The empty pockets blues.

I never had a barrel of money,

I never had a big Cadillac,

All I ever had was you, babe,
And that’s a fact.

I’ve got those blues,

The empty pockets blues,

(one more tim’)

I’ve got those blues,

The empty pockets blues.

Money, money, money, money

When will I make the grade?

I’m so broke that a dollar bill

Looks big as a window shade.

Some people got barrels of money

(that’s right, babe)

And bushels of ruby red rings

(oh, yes)

But they ain’t got little girl like mine,

And they don’t know how to sing.

I’ve got those blues,

(yeah)

The empty pockets blues.

I’ve got those blues,
The empty pockets blues.

(yeah)

Don’t put your money in a barrel
(oh, you know I won’t do that)
Don’t waste it on a ruby red ring
(I never waste money)
Give it all to your little girl
To fix your dinner while you sing.

I’ve got those blues,

(yeah)

The empty pockets blues.

(one more tim’)
I’ve got those blues,
The empty pockets blues.

Oh, money, money, money, money
When will I make the grade?
I’m so broke that a dollar bill
Looks big as a window shade.

Some people got barrels of money
(oh, some people)

And bushels of ruby red rings

(oh, yes)

But they ain’t got a little girl like mine,

And they don’t know how to sing.

I’ve got those blues,

(yeah)

The empty pockets blues.

I’ve got those blues,

The empty pockets blues!

3. Do-Re-Mi
Woody Guthrie, vocal and guitar
(From Folkways: The Original Vision SFW 40000, 1989/2005)

Lots of folks back East, they say, is leavin’ home every day,

Beatin’ the hot old dusty way to the California line.

’Cross the desert sands they roll, gettin’ out of that old dust bowl,

They think they’re goin’ to a sugar bowl, but here’s what they find—

Now, the police at the port of entry say,

“You’re number fourteen thousand for today.”

Chorus:

Oh, if you ain’t got the do re mi, folks, you ain’t got the do re mi,(Should there be hyphens, as in the song title?)

Why, you better go back to beautiful Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Georgia, Tennessee.
California is a garden of Eden, a paradise to live in or see;
But believe it or not, you won’t find it so hot
If you ain’t got the do re mi.

You want to buy you a home or a farm, that can’t deal nobody harm,
Or take your vacation by the mountains or sea.
Don’t swap your old cow for a car, you better stay right where you are,
Better take this little tip from me.
’Cause I look through the want ads every day,
But the headlines on the papers always say:

If you ain’t got the do re mi, boys, you ain’t got the do re mi,
Why, you better go back to beautiful Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Georgia, Tennessee.
California is a garden of Eden, a paradise to live in or see;
But believe it or not, you won’t find it so hot
If you ain’t got the do re mi.

4. Bill Morgan and His Gal
The New Lost City Ramblers: John Cohen, vocal and guitar; Tom Paley, vocal and banjo; Mike Seeger, fiddle
(From the New Lost City Ramblers, Vol. 5 Folkways 2395, 1963)

A man named William Morgan took his girl to see a play,
And on the journey homeward, they stopped into a cafe.
As soon as they got seated, Liza grabbed the bill of fare,
She called the waiter and she ordered everything was there.
Bill says, ‘I know you’re hungry, girl, and I don’t like to squeal,
But who do you suppose is going to pay for such a meal?

You may have known me pretty long, but you sure have got my initials wrong;

My name is Morgan, but it ain’t J.P.”

Chorus:

“My name is Morgan, but it ain’t J.P.

There is no bank on Wall Street that belongs to me.

You may have known me pretty long,

But you sure have got my initials wrong;

My name is Morgan, but it ain’t J.P.”

Bill Morgan married Liza, thinking he could change her ways,

But what she did to William, first, I’m most ashamed to say.

Whenever she’d go shopping, she’d buy everything she’d see,

And what she couldn’t pay for, had it sent home C.O.D.

Chorus:

“My name is Morgan, but it ain’t J.P.

There is no Texas oil well that belongs to me.

You may have known me pretty long,

But you sure have got my initials wrong;

My name is Morgan, but it ain’t J.P.”

One day six big delivery wagons back up to Bill’s door,

They asked him to accept the goods while they went back for more;
It didn’t take Bill very long to grab his hat and coat,

When Liza she returned again, she found this little note:

Chorus:

“My name is Morgan, but it ain’t J.P.
You must think I own a railroad company.
You may have known me pretty long,
But you sure have got my initials wrong;
My name is Morgan, but it ain’t J.P.”

4. One Meat Ball

Josh White, vocal and guitar
(from Free and Equal Blues SFW 40081, 1998; recorded 6 September 1944)

Little man walked up and down,
To find an eatin’ place in town.
He looked the menu thru and thru,
To see what a dollar bill might do.

Chorus:

One meat ball,
One meat ball,
One meat ball,
All he could get was one meat ball.
He told that waiter near at hand,
The simple dinner he had planned.
The guests were startled one and all,
To hear that waiter loudly call:

Repeat chorus.

Little man felt so ill at ease,
He said: "Some bread, sir, if you please."
The waiter hollered down the hall:
"You get no bread with your one meat ball."

Little man felt so very bad,
One meat ball is all he had.
And in his dreams he can still hear that call:
"You get no bread with your one meat ball."

6. Jim Fisk
June Lazare, vocal and guitar

(From Folk Songs of New York City Folkways 5276, 1966)
If you’ll listen awhile, I’ll sing you a song
About this glorious land of the free,
And the difference I’ll show twixt the rich and the poor
In a trial by jury, you see.
If you’ve plenty of “stamps” you can hold up your head
And walk out from your own prison door.
But they’ll hang you up high if you’ve no friends or gold.
Let the “rich” go, but hang up the poor.

In the trials for murder we’ve had now-a-days
The rich ones get off swift and sure.
While they’ve thousands to pay to the jury and judge,
You can bet they’ll go back on the poor.

Let me speak of a man who’s now dead in his grave,
A good man as ever was born.
Jim Fisk he was called, and his money he gave
To the outcast, the poor and forlorn.

We all know he loved both women and wine,
But his heart it was right, I am sure.
Though he lived like a “prince” in a palace so fine,
Yet he never went back on the poor.

If a man was in trouble, Fisk helped him along
To drive the “grim wolf” from the door.
He strove to do right, though he may have done wrong,
But he never went back on the poor.
Jim Fisk was a man who wore “his heart on his sleeve,”
No matter what people would say,
And he did all his deeds (both the good and the bad)
In the broad open light of the day.

With his grand six-in-hand on the beach at Long Branch
He cut a “big dash,” to be sure.
But “Chicago’s great fire” showed the world that Jim Fisk
With his “wealth” still remembered the poor.

When the telegram came that the homeless that night
Were starving to death, slow but sure,
His “Lightning Express” manned by noble Jim Fisk
Flew to feed all her hungry and poor.

Now what do you think of this trial of Stokes,
Who murdered this friend of the poor?
When such men get free, is there anyone safe
If they step from outside their own door?

Is there one law for the poor and one for the rich?
It seems so—at least so I say—-
If they hang up the poor, why—damn it—the rich
Ought to hang up the very same way.
Don’t show any favor to friend or to foe,
The beggar or prince at his door.
The big millionaire you must hang up also,
But never go back on the poor.

Oh! Shame on this “land of the free and the brave”
When such sights as this meet our eye!
The poor in their prisons are treated like slaves
While the rich in their cells they live high.

A poor devil “crazy with drink” they will hang
For a murder he didn’t intend,
But a wealthy assassin with “political friends”
Gets off, for he’s money to spend.

But if things go on this way, we’ll stand it no more.
The people will rise up in bands.
A vigilance committee we’ll raise on our shores
And take the law in our own hands.

7. Gallis Pole
Lead Belly, vocal and guitar

(From Bourgeois Blues: The Lead Belly Legacy, Vol. 2 SFW 40045, 1997; recorded October 1948 by Fredric Ramsey Jr. from a radio broadcast)

Hangman, hangman, hold it a little while,
I think I see my friends a-coming,
Riding many a mile.

Friends, you get me some silver; get a little gold,
What did you bring me, my dear friends, to keep me from the gallows pole?
What did you bring me— keep me from the gallows pole.

Couldn’t get you no silver,
Couldn’t get no gold,
You know that we’re too damn poor
To keep you from the gallows pole.

Hangman, hangman, hold it a little while,
I think I see my brother riding,
Riding many a mile.

Brother, get some silver,
Get a little gold?
What did you bring me, my brother, to keep me from the gallows pole?

Brother, I got some silver, brought a little gold.
Brought a little of everything to keep you from the gallows pole.
Yes, I brought you, to keep you from the gallows pole.

What did you, what did you,
Did you bring me— keep me from the gallows pole?

8. Brother, Can You Spare a Dime?
Joe Glazer, vocal and guitar with instrumental accompaniment

(From Folk Songs of the American Dream Collector 1954, 1994)

They used to tell me I was building a dream

And so I followed the mob.

When there was earth to plow or guns to bear,

I was always there, right on the job.

They used to tell me I was building a dream

With peace and glory ahead—

Why should I be standing in line, just waiting for bread?

Once I built a railroad, I made it run,

Made it race against time.

Once I built a railroad, now it’s done—

Brother, can you spare a dime?

Once I built a tower, up to the sun,

Brick and rivet and lime.

Once I built a tower, now it’s done—

Brother, can you spare a dime?

Once in khaki suits, gee, we looked swell

Full of that Yankee Doodle-de-dum.
Half a million boots went slogging through hell,
And I was the kid with the drum.

Say, don’t you remember, they called me Al,
It was Al all the time.
Why don’t you remember, I’m your pal—
Say, buddy, can you spare a dime?

Once in khaki suits, ah, gee, we looked swell
Full of that Yankee Doodle-de-dum.
Half a million boots went slogging through hell,
And I was the kid with the drum.

Say, don’t you remember, they called me Al,
It was Al all the time.
Why don’t you remember, I’m your pal—
Buddy, can you spare a dime?

9. Yankee Dollar
Lord Invader, vocal; accompanied by Felix and His Internationals: Gregory Felix, clarinet; Patrick McDonald Macbeth, cuatro; unknown fiddle and bass players

(From Calypso in New York SFW 40454, 2000)

10. If I Had a Million Dollars
Speckled Red, vocal and piano

(From The Barrelhouse Blues of Speckled Red Folkways 3555, 1961)
If I had a million dollars,
I know just what I would do.
I’d tie a string around the world
And bring all of it to you.
Those little things you pray for,
Whatever they may be,
I’d have enough to pay for
Them all, C.O.D.

If I spent a million dollars,
I know I would never care,
Because as long as you were mine,
I’d still be a millionaire.
That’s why I’m always dreaming,
Dreaming of what I would do
If I had a million dollars for you.

If I had a million dollars,
I know just what I would do.
I would tie a string around the world
And bring all of it to you.
Those little things you pray for,
Whatever they may be,
I’d have enough to pay for
Them all, C.O.D.
If I spent a million dollars,
I know I would never care,
Because as long as you were mine,
I’d still be a millionaire.

That’s why I’m always dreaming,
Dreaming of what I would do,
If I had a million dollars for you.

11. Nobody Knows You When You’re Down and Out
Rolf Cahn, vocal and guitar, Eric Von Schmidt, guitar
(From Rolf Cahn and Eric Von Schmidt Folkways 2417, 1961)

Once I lived the life of a millionaire,
Spent all my money, I just did not care.
Took all my friends out for a good time,
Bought bootleg whisky, champagne, and wine.

Then I began to fall so low,
Lost all my good friends, I did not have nowhere to go.
I get my hands on a dollar again,
I’m gonna hang on to it till that eagle grins.

‘Cause no, no, nobody knows you
When you’re down and out.
In your pocket, not one penny,

And as for friends, you don’t have any.

When you finally get back up on your feet again,

Everybody wants to be your old long-lost friend.

Said it’s mighty strange, without a doubt,

Nobody knows you when you’re down and out.

When you finally get back up on your feet again,

Everybody wants to be your good old long-lost friend.

Said it’s mighty strange,

Nobody knows you,

Nobody knows you,

Nobody knows you when you’re down and out.

12. If I Lose, I Don’t Care

The New Lost City Ramblers: John Cohen, vocal and banjo; Mike Seeger, fiddle; Tom Paley, guitar

(From The New Lost City Ramblers, Vol. 5 Folkways 2395, 1963)

I never thought I’d need you,

But now I find I’m wrong.

Come on back, sweet Mama,

Back where you belong.

I’ve rambled over town
To find that I can’t win.
Come on back and pick me up again.

Now if I lose (if I lose),
Let me lose (let me lose).
I don’t care (I don’t care)
How much I lose.
If I lose a hundred dollars
While I’m tryin’ to win a dime,
My baby, she’s got money all the time.

Of all the other gals I’ve known
There’s none to take your place,
‘Cause when I get into a jam,
They just ain’t in the race.
So now that you’re back here,
Let’s take another round.
With you here by my side,
Babe, the deal just can’t go down.

Now if I lose (if I lose),
Let me lose (let me lose).
I don’t care (I don’t care)
How much I lose.
If I lose a hundred dollars
While I’m tryin’ to win a dime,
My baby, she’s got money all the time.

Now if I lose (if I lose),
Let me lose (let me lose).
I don’t care (I don’t care)
How much I lose.
If I lose a hundred dollars
While I’m tryin’ to win a dime,
My baby, she’s got money all the time.

13. Banks of Marble
Pete Seeger, vocal and guitar
(From Gazette, Vol. 1 Folkways 2501, 1958)

I’ve traveled around this country
From shore to shining shore,
And it really makes me wonder
What the world is coming to.

I see the weary farmer
Just plowing up the loam,
And I see the auction hammer
A-selling off his home.

Chorus:
But the banks are made of marble,
With a guard at every door,
And the vaults are made of silver
That the workers sweated for.

More verses to add

14. The Old Arm Chair
E.G. “Gale” Huntington, vocal and guitar
(from Folk Songs of Martha’s Vineyard Folkways 2032, 1957)

1. My Granny, do you see, at the age of eighty-three,

One day was taken ill and soon she died;

And after she was dead,

The will to us was read,

By a Lawyer as we stood side by side.

To my Brother then I found,

She had left a Hundred pounds,

And the same unto my sister, I declare,

But when he came to me,

“Ah,” the Lawyer says, “I see,

She’s but left to you her Old arm chair.”

Chorus (sung after each verse):

Hey they tittered! how they chaffed!

How my brothers and my sisters laughed,
When they heard the Lawyer declare,
Granny only left to me her old arm chair.

2. Now I thought it hardly fair, yet I said I did not care,
And in the evening took the chair away;
The Neighbors at me laughed,
And my Brother at me chaffed,
And he said, “It will come [in] handy, John, one day
When you’re settled down in life,
Take some young girl for your wife,
And then you will be happy, I declare,
And when at home at night,
And your fire is burning bright,
You can sit down in your Old arm chair.”

3. What my brother said came true, for in about a year or two
I soon was settled down in married life;
I first a girl did court,
And then the ring I bought,
Took her to church and soon she was my wife.
Now the old girl and me,
We’re as happy as can be,
And when my work is over, I declare,
“Abroad I never roam,
And at night I stay at home,
And sit down in my Old arm chair.”

4. Now one night the chair I found had fallen to the ground,
   And the bottom had dropped out upon the floor;
   And there to my surprise,
   And right before my eyes,
   Laid some banknotes of ten thousand pounds or more.

   When my Brother heard of this,
   Now the fellow, I confess,
   And mad with rage he almost tore his hair,
   When I said, “Now brother Jim,
   Don’t you think it is a sin
   That you didn’t get the Old arm chair.”

15. The Money Rolls In
Derek Lamb, vocal and guitar with instrumental and vocal accompaniment

(from She Was Poor but She Was Honest: Nice, Naughty and Nourishing Songs of the
London Music Hall and Pubs Folkways 8707, 1962)

My father makes book on the corner,
My mother [granny] makes second-hand [bootlegger, illicit, synthetic] gin,
My sister makes love for a dollar [sells kisses to sailors],
My God [Oh, Lord; My word], how the money rolls in!

Chorus:
Rolls in, rolls in, my God, how the money rolls in, rolls in!

Rolls in, rolls in, my God, how the money rolls in!

My mother’s a bawdyhouse keeper;

Every night when the evening grows dim [action begins],
She hangs out a little red lantern [hangs a red light in the window].

My God, how the money rolls in!

My brother’s a poor [street] missionary [street-corner preacher].

He saves gorgeous [wayward, fallen] women [little girlies] from sin.

He’ll save you a blonde for five dollars [a guinea].

My God, how the money rolls in!

16. Business
Pete Seeger, vocal and banjo

(From Broadside Ballads, Vol. 2 Folkways 5302, 1963 / Best of Broadside SFW 40130, 2000)

Two million bushels of North African grain

Resold to Germany for Swiss francs

Paid for by a consortium of banks

With a deal in futures that the Stock Exchange

Unloads for coffee from Brazilian uplands

Destined for Paris. Before the whole deal sinks,
The checks written in indelible inks
Outrace Atlantic’s winter hurricanes.

At last, the coffee arrives, also the wheat.

Needless to say the deal was a success;

Who can deny that all of us have gained?

Our benefactors? Three trusts. They compete

For honor, glory, power and, of course,

Profits where all happiness is contained.

(Repeated)

17. If You Lose Your Money
Brownie McGhee, vocal and guitar; Sonny Terry, vocal and harmonica

(From Brownie McGhee and Sonny Terry Sing Folkways 2327, 1958 / SFW CD 40011, 1990)

18. Union Maid
The Almanac Singers, vocals with instrumental accompaniment

(From Talking Union and Other Union Songs Folkways 5285, 1955)

19. Greenback Dollar
Kilby Snow, autoharp; Mike Hudek, autoharp

(From Country Songs and Tunes with Autoharp Folkways 3902, 1969)

Once I loved a darling seaman

And he thought the world of me

Till another girl persuaded (him?);
Now he cares no more for me.

I don’t want your greenback dollar,
I don’t want your watch and chain,
All I want is your heart, darling.
Won’t you take me back again?

Many [straw] we made together
Down beside the deep blue sea.
If it’s in your heart to love another,
In my grave I’d rather be.

I don’t want your greenback dollar,
I don’t want your watch and chain,
All I want is my 32/20
Just to shoot out your dirty brain.

Poppa says we cannot marry,
Momma says he’ll never do.
If you ever learned to love me,
I will run away with you.

20. The Miller and His Sons
Horton Barker, vocal
There was an old miller by everyone known;
He had three sons was all nigh grown.
When he came to die and make his will,
He had nothing to give but an old tub mill.

He called up his eldest son.
He says, “My son, I’m almost done,
And if the mill to you I’d make,
Pray tell me how much toll you intend to take?”

“Oh dear father, my name is Heck,
And out of each bushel I’ll take one peck,
And every bushel I do grind
A very fine living at that I’ll find.”

“You are a fool,” the old man said.
“You have not fairly learned my trade.
The mill to you I will not give,
For never a miller at that can live.”

He next called up his second son.
He says, “My son, I’m almost done,
And if the mill to you I’d make,
Pray tell me how much toll you intend to take?”
“Oh dear father, my name is Ralph,
And out of each bushel I’d take one half,
And every bushel I do grind
A very fine living at that I’ll find.”

“You are a fool,” the old man said.
“You have not fairly learned my trade.
The mill to you I will not give,
For never a miller at that can live.”

He next called up his youngest son.
He says, “My son, I’m almost done,
And if the mill to you I’d make,
Pray tell me how much toll you intend to take?”

“Oh dear father, I am your son.
I’ll take three pecks and leave just one,
And if a good living at that I do lack,
I’ll take the other and swear to the sack.”

“You are my son,” the old man said,
“For you have fairly learned my trade.
The mill is yours,” the old man cried,
And he closed up his eyes and died.
21. **Penny’s Farm**  
Pete Seeger, vocal and banjo

(From *Darling Corey and Goofing-Off Suite* SFW CD 40018, 1993)

22. **Billy Grimes the Rover**  
The New Lost City Ramblers: Tom Paley, vocal and guitar; John Cohen banjo; Mike Seeger, fiddle

(From *The New Lost City Ramblers, Vol. 4* Folkways 2399, 1962)

> Tomorrow morn I’ll be sixteen,
> And Billy Grimes the rover
> Has popped the question to me, Ma,
> Wants to be my lover.

> And he’ll be here in the morning, Ma,
> He’ll be here quite early
> Take a pleasant walk with him
> Across the fields of barley.

> Oh daughter dear, you shall not go
> There is no use a-talkin’.
> You shall not go with Billy Grimes
> Across the fields a-walkin’.

> Imagine such presumption too,
The dirty, ugly rover.

I wonder where your pride has gone

To think of such a lover.

Oh Mama dear, I must confess

That Billy is quite clever.

With an ounce of gold we’d not be found

In this wide world all over.

Oh daughter dear, I am surprised

At this infatuation.

Think of having Billy Grimes—

It would be ruination.

Oh Mama dear, old Grimes is dead,

And Billy is the only

Surviving heir of all that’s left,

About six thousand yearly.

Oh daughter dear, I did not hear

Your last remark quite clearly.

Billy is a nice young lad,

And no doubt loves you dearly.
23. Ida Mae (The Social Security Song)
Joe Glazer, vocal and guitar with instrumental accompaniment

(From Folk Songs of the American Dream Collector 1954, 1994)

24. Last Gold Dollar
Bascom Lamar Lunsford, vocal and banjo

(From Ballads, Banjo Tunes, and Sacred Songs of Western North Carolina SFW CD 40082, 1996)

25. Black Dog Blues
The Stoneman Family: Ernest Stoneman, vocal and guitar; Hattie Stoneman, fiddle; Vann Stoneman, bass

(from Old Time Tunes from the South Folkways 2315, 1957)

26. I Don’t Want Your Millions
The Almanac Singers, vocals with instrumental accompaniment

(from Talking Union and Other Union Songs Folkways 5285, 1955)

I don’t want your millions, Mister,

I don’t want your diamond ring.

All I want is the right to live, Mister.

Give me back my job again.

Now, I don’t want your Rolls-Royce, Mister,

I don’t want your pleasure yacht.

All I want’s just food for my babies.

Give to me my old job back.
We worked to build this country, Mister,
While you enjoyed a life of ease.
You’ve stolen all that we built, Mister.
Now our children starve and freeze.

So, I don’t want your millions, Mister,
I don’t want your diamond ring.
All I want is the right to live, Mister.
Give me back my job again.

Think me dumb if you wish, Mister,
Call me green, or blue, or red.
This one thing I sure know, Mister,
My hungry babies must be fed.

Take the two old parties, Mister,
No difference in them I can see.
But with a Farmer-Labor Party
We could set the people free.

So, I don’t want your millions, Mister,
I don’t want your diamond ring.
All I want is the right to live, Mister.
Give me back my job again.
27. Pretty Boy Floyd
Woody Guthrie, vocal and guitar

(From Struggle SFW CD 40025, 1990)

If you’ll gather ‘round me, children,
A story I will tell
’Bout Pretty Boy Floyd, an outlaw.
Oklahoma knew him well.

It was in the town of Shawnee,
A Saturday afternoon,
His wife beside him in his wagon
As into town they rode.

There a deputy sheriff approached him
In a manner rather rude,
Vulgar words of anger,
An’ his wife she overheard.

Pretty Boy grabbed a log chain,
And the deputy grabbed his gun;
In the fight that followed
He laid that deputy down.

Then he took to the trees and timber
To live a life of shame;
Every crime in Oklahoma
Was added to his name.
But a many a starving farmer
The same old story told
How the outlaw paid their mortgage
And saved their little homes.

Others tell you 'bout a stranger
That come to beg a meal,
Underneath his napkin
Left a thousand dollar bill.

It was in Oklahoma City,
It was on a Christmas Day,
There was a whole carload of groceries
Come with a note to say:

“Well, you say that I’m an outlaw,
You say that I’m a thief.
Here’s a Christmas dinner
For the families on relief.”

Yes, as through this world I’ve wandered
I’ve seen lots of funny men;
Some will rob you with a six-gun,
And some with a fountain pen.

And as through your life you travel,
Yes, as through your life you roam,
You won’t never see an outlaw

Drive a family from their home.