

# Delia

(a.k.a. "Delia, Oh, Delia", "Diele" or "Delie Gone" )

Words & Music:  
probably Blind Willie McTell

*This has been covered by Bob Dylan and Martin Simpson and was inspired by the story of 14-year-old Delia Green, who was shot & killed on Christmas Eve, 1900 by her 15-year-old lover, Moses Houston. There are many lyric variations. The first one given is from Blind Willie McTell's Library of Congress recording. A "rounder" is a shifty, dissolute person...one of the gamblers, most likely.*

*"Delia's Gone" is another song written about her death. It was written by the calypso singer known as "Blind Blake (Blake Alphonso Higgs) and tells the story from the perspective of her killer. Pete Seeger & Johnny Cash have famous covers of that song.*

C  
Delia was a gambler, gambled all around  
C F  
She was a gambling girl, she laid her money down.  
C G7 C  
She's all I got is gone.

Delia's dear ol' mother took a trip out West  
When she returned, little Delia hadd gone to rest.  
She's all I got is gone.

Delia's mother weeped, Delia's father moaned  
Wouldn't have hurt so bad if that child died at home.  
She's all I got is gone.

Delia, Delia, how can it be?  
You say you love them rounders and don't love me.  
She's all I got is gone.

Kenny, he's in a barroom, drinking from a silver cup.  
Delia, she's in the graveyard, and may not never wake up.  
She's all I got is gone.

Rubber-tired buggy, double-seated hack,  
Takin' Delia to the cemetery, but failed to bring her back  
She's all I got is gone.

Delia, oh, Delia! Poor girl, she's gone  
Oh, how I hate that she left me all alone.  
She's all I got is gone.

Judge said to Kenny, "What's the fuss about?"  
"On account of the gamblers tryin' to drive me out."  
She's all I got is gone.

Kenny said to the Judge, "What may be my fine?"  
"I done told you, poor boy, you got ninety-nine."  
She's all I got is gone.

High upon the housetops, high as I can see.  
Looking at them rounders, looking out for me.  
She's all I got is gone.

Kenny lookin' high, Kenny lookin' low,  
Shot poor Delia with that hateful .44  
She's all I got is gone.

### **Another lyric variation:**

Delia, Delia, how can it be?  
You love that old rounder, but you don't love me  
Well, that's one more rounder gone

Delia, Delia sitting all around  
Some of your old rounders gonna pay my way back home  
Sitting on the housetop, high as I can see  
You love that old rounder, but you don't love me

Delia's poor mother took a trip out West  
When she returned, Delia lyin' in rest  
Delia's mother wept, Delia's father moaned  
They'd have wanted their poor child to die at home  
Rubber tired buggy, two-seated hack,  
took Delia to the graveyard, never brought her back

Kenny lookin' high, Kenny lookin' low,  
Shot poor Delia with that hated .44  
Delia, Delia, wouldn't take no one's advice  
Last words I heard her say were, 'Jesus Christ!'  
Judge said to Kenny, 'Here's a natural fact:  
you going to wait in jail till Delia come back'

Kenny's in the basement, drinking from a silver cup  
Delia's in the graveyard, never come back up  
Kenny said to judge, 'What's the fuss about?  
Just that no good woman trying to put me out'

## **Martin Simpson variation:**

*You'll need a tab of his incredible arrangement, you can find it on his site.*

Delia was a gambler, gambled all around  
Delia a gambling girl, she laid her money down.  
All the friends she ever had are gone.

Delia was a-gambling, playin' her last throwdown.  
When old Curly came by and blowed poor Delia down.  
All the friends she ever had are gone.

Delia, Delia, how can it be?  
You wanted every no-good joker, but you never had time for me.  
All the friends she ever had are gone.

Delia's mama wept, Delia's papa moaned.  
You know it just wouldn't-a seemed so bad if the child had died at home.  
All the friends she ever had are gone.

Delia was a gambler, gambled all around  
Delia a gambling girl, she laid her money down.  
All the friends she ever had are gone.

*[instrumental first line]*  
Delia a gambling girl, she laid her money down.  
All the friends she ever had are gone.

# Bob Dylan variation:

Tabbed by Eyolf Østrem

Capo 2nd fret (original key D major)

Chords:

C x32013 in the intro, otherwise x32010

F9 xx3213 in the intro, otherwise normal F

Cviii xxx988 Fv xxx565 Ciii xxx553

Giii xxx433 C/g 332010 "G7" 3x0010

It should be mentioned that Dylan isn't always dead certain about neither how long to strum F before "all the friends I ever had are gone", nor about now to play the descending riff. But hey, he's an artist, man, you gotta give him that.

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Intro (same accompanying pattern in all the verses):

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      C          F9          C          F9          C
      | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . . |
|-3-----3-----3-----3-----3-----|
|-1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----|
|-0-----2-----0-----2-----0-----|
|-2-----3-----2-----3-----2-----|
|-3-----3-----3-----3-----3-----|
|-----|
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      Cviii Fv Giii Giii F
      | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
|-8-----5-----3-----3-3--1-----|
|-8-----6-----3-----5-3--1-----|
|-9-----5-----4-----5-4--2-----|
|-----3-----|
|----- (3) -----|
|----- (1) -----0--1-----|
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      C          "G7"          C          Csus4          C
      | . . . | . . . | . . . | . . .
|-0-----0-----0-----0-----0-----|
|-1-----1-----1-----1-----1-----|
|-0-----0-----0-----0-----0-----|
|-2-----0-----3-----2-----0-----2-----|
|-3-----x-----x-----x-----x-----3-----|
|-3-----3-----3-----3-----x-----|
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      C          F9          C          F9          C
Delia was a gambling girl, gambled all around
Cviii Fv Giii Ciii Giii F
De- lia was a gambling girl, she laid her money down.
C/g          "G7"          C          Csus4          C
All the friends I ever had are gone.
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Delia's dear ol' mother took a trip out West  
When she returned, little Delia'd gone to rest.  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

Delia's Daddy weeped, Delia's momma moaned  
Wouldn't have been so bad if the poor girl died at home.  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

Curtis's looking high, Curtis's looking low  
He shot poor Delia down with a cruel forty-four.  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

High upon the housetops, high as I can see  
Looking for them rounders, looking out for me.  
All the friends I ever had are gone

Men in Atlanta, trying to pass for white  
Delia's in the graveyard, boys, six feet out of sight.  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

Judge says to Curtis, "What's this noise about?"  
"All about them rounders, Judge, tryin' to cut me out."  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

Curtis said to the judge "What might be my fine?"  
Judge says, "Poor boy, you got ninety-nine."  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

Curtis' in the jailhouse, drinking from an old tin cup  
Delia's in the graveyard, she ain't gettin' up.  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

Delia, oh Delia, how can it be?  
You loved all them rounders, never did love me.  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

Delia, oh Delia, how could it be?  
You wanted all them rounders, never had time for me.  
All the friends I ever had are gone.

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