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Poem

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FRENCH NEGRO FOLK POEMS

ST. MALO ON THE GALLOWS

Ah! young folk, come to mourn
 For poor St. Malo on the gallows.
 They hunted him with their dogs
 And shot him down with a gun.
 They hauled him from the cypress swamp,
 His arms tied behind him
 And his hands bound in front.
 They tied him to a horse's tail
 And dragged him right on off.
 Before those gentlemen in the Cabildo
 He was accused of making a plot
 To cut the heads off all the whites.
 They asked him who his comrades were,
 And poor St. Malo said nothing at all.
 The judge read out his sentence,
 And ordered a gallows built.
 They pulled the horse, the cart moved on
 And poor St. Malo was left hanging alone!

The sun was already an hour up
 While he was hanging on the levee.
 They left his body swinging there
 To feed the buzzards from the air.

P O E M

Get ribbon cane.
 Yes sir, I say,
 Try all you can
 To buy a steam engine.

Madame went to the store
 To take her case to a lawyer.
 Mr. O. J. Momette is trying
 To get a steam engine.

Translated by CALVIN CLAUDEL