

The Demon Lover

A Scottish Ballad

By Unknown

O where have you been, my long, long love,
This long seven years and more?
'O I'm come to seek my former vows
Ye granted me before.'

'O hold your tongue of your former vows,
For they will breed sad strife;
O hold your tongue of your former vows,
For I am become a wife.'

He turned him right and round about,
And the tear blinded his e'e:
'I wad never hae trodden on Irish ground,
If it had not been for thee.

'I might hae had a king's daughter,
Far, far beyond the sea;
I might have had a king's daughter,
Had it not been for love o' thee.'

'It ye might have had a king's daughter,
Yoursel' ye had to blame;
Ye might have taken the king's daughter,
For ye kend that I was nane.

'If I was to leave my husband dear,
And my two babes also,
O what have you to take me to,
If with you I should go?'

'I hae seven ships upon the sea,
The eighth brought me to land;
With four-and-twenty bold mariners,
And music on every hand.'

She has taken up her two little babes,
Kissed them baith cheek and chin;
'O fare ye weel, my ain two babes,
For I'll never see you again.

She set her foot upon the ship,

No mariners could she behold;
But the sails were o' the taffetie,
And the masts o' the beaten gold.

She had not sailed, a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
When dismal grew his countenance,
And drumlie¹ grew his e'e.

They had not sailed a league, a league,
A league but barely three,
Until she espied his cloven foot,
And she wept right bitterlie.

'O hold your tongue of your weeping,' says he,
'Of your weeping now let me be;
I will show you how the lilies grow
On the banks of Italy.'

'O what hills are yon, yon pleasant hills,
That the sun shines sweetly on?'
'O yon are the hills of heaven,' he said,
Where you will never win.'

'O whaten a mountain is yon,' she said,
'All so dreary wi' frost and snow?'
'O yon is the mountain of hell,' he cried,
'Where you and I will go.'

He struck the tapmast wi' his hind,
The foremast wi' his knee;
And he brak that gallant ship it twain,
And sank her in the sea.

¹ Dark, discoloured.