

The Wife of Usher's Well

By Anonymous

There lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she,
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them o'er the sea.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
When word came to the canine wife,
That her three sons were gane.

They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
When word came to the carline wife,
That her sons she'd never see.

'I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor flashes in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood.'—

It fell about the Martinmas,
When nights are lang and mirk,
The carline wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o' the birk.

It neither grew in syke nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh;
But at the gates o' Paradise,
That birk grew fair enough.

“Blow up the fire, my maidens!
Bring water from the well!
For a' my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well.”—

And she has made to them a bed,
She's made it large and wide;
And she's ta'en her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bed-side.

Up then crew the red red cock

And up and crew the gray;
The eldest to the youngest said,
“ ’Tis time we were away.

The cock he hadna craw’d but once,
And clapp’d his wing at a’,
Whan the youngest to the eldest said,
“Brother, we must awa.

“The cock doth craw, the day doth daw,
The channerin’ worm doth chide;
Gin we be mist out o’ our place,
A sair pain we maun bide.

“Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre!
And fare ye well, the bonny lass,
That kindles my mother’s fire.”