

# The Cinder King

By Anonymous

*The following was sent me [M. G. Lewis] anonymously; the Reader will of course observe, that it is a burlesque imitation of the ballads of "the Erl-King," and "the Cloud King."—*

"Who is it that sits in the kitchen, and weeps,  
"While tick goes time clock, and the tabby-cat sleeps;  
"That watches the grate, without ceasing, to spy  
"Whether purses or coffins will out of it fly?"—

'Tis Betty; who saw the false tailor, Bob Scott,  
Lead a bride to the altar; which bride she was not:  
'Tis Betty; determined love from her to fling,  
And woo, for his riches, the dark Cinder-King.

Now spent tallow-candle-grease fatten'd the soil,  
And the blue-burning lamp had half wasted its oil,  
And the black-beetle boldly came crawling from far,  
And the red coals were sinking beneath the third bar;

When, "one" struck the clock—and instead of the bird  
Who used to sing cuckoo whene'er the clock stirr'd,  
Out burst a grim raven, and utter'd "caw! caw!"  
While puss, though she 'woke, durst not put forth a claw.

Then the jack fell a-going as if one should sup,  
Then the earth rock'd as though it would swallow one up;  
With fuel from hell, a strange coal-skuttle came,  
And a self-handled poker made fearful the flame.

A cinder shot from it, of size to amaze,  
(With a bounce, such as Betty ne'er heard in her days,)  
Thrice, serpent-like, hiss'd, as its heat fled away,  
And lo! something dark in a vast coffin lay.

—"Come Betty!"—quoth croaking that non-descript thing,  
—"Come bless the fond arms of your true Cinder-king!  
"Three more Kings, my brothers, are waiting to greet ye,  
"Who,—don't take it ill!—must at four o'clock eat ye.

“My darling! it must be, do make up your mind;  
We element brothers, united, and kind,  
“Have a feast and a wedding, each night of our lives,  
So constantly sup on each other’s new wives.”—

In vain squall’d the cook-maid, and pray’d not to wed;  
Cinder craunch’d in her mouth, cinder rain’d on her head,  
She sank in the coffin with cinders strewn o’er,  
And coffin nor Betty saw man any more.