

Tam Lin (Child 39A)

- 1 O I forbid you, maidens a',
That wear gowd on your hair,
To come or gae by Carterhaugh,
For young Tam Lin is there.
- 2 There 's nane that gaes by Carterhaugh
But they leave him a wad,
Either their rings, or green mantles,
Or else their maidenhead.
- 3 Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has broded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she 's awa to Carterhaugh,
As fast as she ca hie.
- 4 When she came to Carterhaugh
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But away was himsel.
- 5 She had na pu'd a double rose,
A rose but only twa,
Till up then started young Tam Lin,
Says, Lady, thou 's pu nae mae.
- 6 Why pu's thou the rose, Janet,
And why breaks thou the wand?
Or why comes thou to Carterhaugh
Withoutten my command?
- 7 'Carterhaugh, it is my ain,
My daddie gave it me;
I 'll come and gang by Carterhaugh,
And ask nae leave at thee.'

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- 8 Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has snooded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she is to her father's ha,
As fast as she can hie.
- 9 Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the ba,
And out then cam the fair Janet,
Ance the flower amang them a'.
- 10 Four and twenty ladies fair
Were playing at the chess,
And out then cam the fair Janet,
As green as onie glass.
- 11 Out then spak an auld grey knight,
Lay oer the castle wa,
And says, Alas, fair Janet, for thee
But we 'll be blamed a'.
- 12 'Haud your tongue, ye auld fac'd knight,
Some ill death may ye die!
Father my bairn on whom I will,
I 'll father nane on thee.'
- 13 Out then spak her father dear,
And he spak meek and mild;
'And ever alas, sweet Janet,' he says,
'I think thou gaes wi child.'
- 14 'If that I gae with child, father,
Mysel maun bear the blame;
There 's neer a laird about your ha
Shall get the bairn's name.
- 15 'If my love were an earthly knight,
As he 's an elfin grey,
I wad na gie my ain true-love
For nae lord that ye hae.

- 16 'The steed that my true-love rides on
Is lighter than the wind;
Wi siller he is shod before,
Wi burning gowd behind.'
- 17 Janet has kilted her green kirtle
A little aboon her knee,
And she has snooded her yellow hair
A little aboon her bree,
And she 's awa to Caterhaugh,
As fast as she can hie.
- 18 When she cam to Caterhaugh,
Tam Lin was at the well,
And there she fand his steed standing,
But away was himsel.
- 19 She had na pu'd a double rose,
A rose but only twa,
Till up then started young Tam Lin,
Says Lady, thou pu's nae mae.
- 20 Why pu's thou the rose, Janet,
Amang the groves sae green,
And a' to kill the bonie babe
That we gat us between?
- 21 'O tell me, tell me, Tam Lin,' she says,
'For 's sake that died on tree,
If eer ye was in holy chapel,
Or Christendom did see?'
- 22 'Roxbrugh he was my grandfather,
Took me with him to bide,
And ance it fell upon a day
That wae did me betide.
- 23 'And ance it fell upon a day,
A cauld day and a snell,
When we were frae the hunting come,

That frae my horse I fell;
The Queen o' Fairies she caught me,
In yon green hill to dwell.

- 24 'And pleasant is the fairy land,
But, an eerie tale to tell,
Ay at the end of seven years,
We pay a tiend to hell;
I am sae fair and fu o' flesh,
I 'm feard it be mysel.
- 25 'But the night is Halloween, lady,
The morn is Hallowday;
Then win me, win me, an ye will,
For weel I wat ye may.
- 26 'Just at the mirk and midnight hour
The fairy folk will ride,
And they that wad their true-love win,
At Miles Cross they maun bide.'
- 27 'But how shall I thee ken, Tam Lin,
Or how my true-love know,
Aman sae mony unco knights
The like I never saw?'
- 28 O first let pass the black, lady,
And syne let pass the brown,
But quickly run to the milk-white steed,
Pu ye his rider down.
- 29 'For I 'll ride on the milk-white steed,
And ay nearest the town;
Because I was an earthly knight
They gie me that renown.
- 30 'My right hand will be gloved, lady,
My left hand will be bare,
Cockt up shall my bonnet be,
And kaimd down shall my hair,
And thae 's the takens I gie thee,

Nae doubt I will be there.

- 31 'They 'll turn me in your arms, lady,
Into an esk and adder;
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
I am your bairn's father.
- 32 'They 'll turn me to a bear sae grim,
And then a lion bold;
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
As ye shall love your child.
- 33 'Again they 'll turn me in your arms
To a red het gaud of airn;
But hold me fast, and fear me not,
I 'll do to you nae harm.
- 34 'And last they 'll turn me in your arms
Into the burning gleed;
Then throw me into well water,
O throw me in wi speed.
- 35 'And then I 'll be your ain true-love,
I 'll turn a naked knight;
Then cover me wi your green mantle,
And cover me out o sight.'
- 36 Gloomy, gloomy was the night,
And eerie was the way,
As fair Jenny in her green mantle
To Miles Cross she did gae.
- 37 About the middle o the night
She heard the bridles ring;
This lady was as glad at that
As any earthly thing.
- 38 First she let the black pass by,
And syne she let the brown;
But quickly she ran to the milk-white steed,
And pu'd the rider down.

- 39 Sae weel she minded whae he did say,
And young Tam Lin did win;
Syne coverd him wi her green mantle,
As blythe 's a bird in spring.
- 40 Out then spak the Queen o Fairies,
Out of a bush o broom:
'Them that has gotten young Tam Lin
Has gotten a stately groom.'
- 41 Out then spak the Queen o Fairies,
And an angry woman was she:
'Shame betide her ill-far'd face,
And an ill death may she die,
For she 's taen awa the boniest knight
In a' my companie.
- 42 'But had I kend, Tam Lin,' she says,
'What now this night I see,
I wad hae taen out thy twa grey een,
And put in twa een o tree.'