

## The Gay Goshawk (Child 96A)

- 1 'O WELL 's me o my gay goss-hawk,  
That he can speak and flee;  
He 'll carry a letter to my love,  
Bring back another to me.'
- 2 'O how can I your true-love ken, 5  
Or how can I her know?  
Whan frae her mouth I never heard couth,  
Nor wi my eyes her saw.'
- 3 'O well sal ye my true-love ken, 10  
As soon as you her see;  
For, of a' the flowrs in fair Englan,  
The fairest flowr is she.
- 4 'At even at my love's bowr-door 15  
There grows a bowing birk,  
An sit ye down and sing thereon,  
As she gangs to the kirk.
- 5 'An four-an-twenty ladies fair 20  
Will wash and go to kirk,  
But well shall ye my true-love ken,  
For she wears goud on her skirt.
- 6 'An four and twenty gay ladies 25  
Will to the mass repair,  
But well sal ye my true-love ken,  
For she wears goud on her hair.'
- 7 O even at that lady's bowr-door 25  
There grows a bowin birk,  
An she set down and sang thereon,  
As she ged to the kirk.
- 8 'O eet and drink, my marys a', 30  
The wine flows you among,  
Till I gang to my shot-window,

An hear yon bonny bird's song.

- 9 'Sing on, sing on, my bonny bird,  
The song ye sang the streen,  
For I ken by your sweet singin  
You're frae my true-love sen.' 35
- 10 O first he sang a merry song,  
An then he sang a grave,  
An then he peckd his feathers gray,  
To her the letter gave. 40
- 11 'Ha, there 's a letter frae your love,  
He says he sent you three;  
He canna wait your love langer,  
But for your sake he 'll die.
- 12 'He bids you write a letter to him; 45  
He says he 's sent you five;  
He canno wait your love langer,  
Tho you 're the fairest woman alive.'
- 13 'Ye bid him bake his bridal-bread,  
And brew his bridal-ale, 50  
An I'll meet him in fair Scotlan  
Lang, lang or it be stale.'
- 14 She 's doen her to her father dear,  
Fa'n low down on her knee:  
'A boon, a boon, my father dear, 55  
I pray you, grant it me.'
- 15 'Ask on, ask on, my daughter,  
An granted it sal be;  
Except ae squire in fair Scotlan,  
An him you sall never see.' 60
- 16 'The only boon, my father dear,  
That I do crave of the,  
Is, gin I die in southin lands,  
In Scotland to bury me.

- 17 'An the firstin kirk that ye come till, 65  
Ye gar the bells be rung,  
An the nextin kirk that ye come till,  
Ye gar the mess be sung.
- 18 'An the thirdin kirk that ye come till, 70  
You deal gold for my sake,  
An the fourthin kirk that ye come till,  
You tarry there till night.'
- 19 She is doen her to her bigly bowr, 75  
As fast as she coud fare,  
An she has tane a sleepy draught,  
That she had mixed wi care.
- 20 She 's laid her down upon her bed, 80  
An soon she 's fa'n asleep,  
And soon oer every tender limb  
Cauld death began to creep.
- 21 Whan night was flown, an day was come,  
Nae ane that did her see  
But thought she was as surely dead  
As ony lady coud be.
- 22 Her father an her brothers dear 85  
Gard make to her a bier;  
The tae half was o guide red gold,  
The tither o silver clear.
- 23 Her mither an her sisters fair 90  
Gard work for her a sark;  
The tae half was o cambrick fine,  
The tither o needle wark.
- 24 The firstin kirk that they came till, 95  
They gard the bells be rung,  
An the nextin kirk that they came till,  
They gard the mess be sung.

- 25 The thirdin kirk that they came till,  
They dealt gold for her sake,  
An the fourthin kirk that they came till,  
Lo, there they met her make! 100
- 26 'Lay down, lay down the bigly bier,  
Lat me the dead look on;'  
Wi cherry cheeks and ruby lips  
She lay an smil'd on him.
- 27 'O ae sheave o your bread, true-love, 105  
An ae glass o your wine,  
For I hae fasted for your sake  
These fully days is nine.
- 28 'Gang hame, gang hame, my seven bold brothers,  
Gang hame and sound your horn; 110  
An ye may boast in southin lans  
Your sister 's playd you scorn.'