

The Cruel Mother

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There was a lady lived in York
Oh, the rose and the lindsay oh
She fell in love with her father's clerk
Away by the greenwood side-e-o

He loved her up, he loved her down
He loved her 'til he filled her womb

She leaned her back against an oak
First it bent and then it broke

She leaned her back against a thorn
There she's had two bonnie babes born

She had ta'en her wee pen knife
With it she's ta'en those sweet babes lives

She's taken a handkerchief from her pleat
And made it into a winding sheet

She's laid them under a marble stone
And she has ga'ed a maiden home

As she was passing her father's hall
She saw two boys aplaying at ball

Oh bonnie boys, gin you were mine
I'd dress you up in silks sae fine

Oh cruel mother, when we were thine
You neither dressed us coarse nor fine

Oh bonnie boys, can you tell to me
What kind of death I am to die

Seven years a bird in the wood
Seven years a fish in the flood

Seven years the tongue of a bell
Seven years in the depths of Hell

Welcome, welcome bird in the wood

Welcome, welcome fish in the flood

Welcome, welcome warning bell

But God save me from the depths of Hell

Child #20 A mixed version from several singers, such as Baez
and Redpath

SOF