

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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Lady Isobel

Lady Isobel

'Twas early on a May morning
Lady Isobel combd her hair;
But little kent she, or the morn
She woud never comb it mair.

'Twas early on a May morning
Lady Isobel rang the keys;
But little kint she, or the morn
A fey woman she was.

Ben it came her step-mother,
As white 's the lily flower:
'It's tauld me this day, Isabel,
You are your father's whore.'

'O them that tauld you that, mother,
I wish they neer drink wine;
For if I be the same woman
My ain sell drees the pine.

'And them that's tauld you that, mother,
I wish they neer drink ale;
For if I be the same woman
My ain sell drees the dail.'

'It may be very well seen, Isabel,
It may be very well seen;
He buys to you the damask gowns,
To me the dowie green.'

'Ye are of age and I am young,
And young amo my flowers;
The fairer that my claithing be,
The mair honour is yours.

'I hae a love beyond the sea,
And far ayont the faem;
For ilka gown my father buys me,
My ain luv sends me ten.'

'Come ben, come ben now, Lady Isobel,
And drink the wine wi me;

I hae twa jewels in ae coffer,
And nae o them I'll gie ye.'

`Stay still, stay still, my mother dear,
Stay still a little while,
Till I gang into Marykirk;
It's but a little mile.'

When she gaed on to Marykirk,
And into Mary's quire,
There she saw her ain mother
Sit in a gowden chair.

`O will I leave the lands, mother?
Or shall I sail the sea?
Or shall I drink this dowie drink
That is prepar'd for me?'

`Ye winna leave the lands, daughter,
Nor will ye sail the sea,
But ye will drink this dowie drink
This woman's prepar'd for thee.

`Your bed is made in a better place
Than ever hers will be,
And ere ye're cauld into the room
Ye will be there wi me.'

`Come in, come in now, Lady Isabel,
And drink the wine wi me;
I hae twa jewels in ae coffer,
And ane o them I'll gie ye.'

`Stay still, stay still, my mother dear,
Stay still a little wee,
Till I gang to yon garden green,
My Maries a' to see.'

To some she gae the broach, the broach,
To some she gae a ring;
But wae befa her step-mother!
To her she gae nae thing.

`Come in, come in now, Lady Isabel,
And drink the wine wi me;
I hae twa jewels in ae coffer,
And ane o them I'll gie ye.'

Slowly to the bower she came,

And slowly enterd in,
And being full o courtesie,
Says, Begin, mother, begin.

She put it till her cheek, her cheek,
Sae did she till her chin,
Sae did she till her fu fause lips,
But never a drap gaed in.

Lady Isabel put it till her cheek,
Sae did she till her chin,
Sae did she till her rosy lips,
And the rank poison gaed in.

`O take this cup frae me, mother,
O take this cup frae me;
My bed is made in a better place
Than ever yours will be.

`My bed is in the heavens high,
Amang the angels fine;
But yours is in the lowest hell,
To drie torment and pine.'

Nae moan was made for Lady Isabel
In bower where she lay dead,
But a' was for that ill woman,
In the fields mad she gaed.

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Version in Child
LMP