

Folk & Traditional Song Lyrics

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The Lamenting Maid (Curragh of Kildare)

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The yellow leaves do fly from the trees so high,
Upon the ground I see they do fall,
The man that I adore has lately left the shore,
Which grieves my poor heart worse than all.

The winter's gone and past, and the summer's come at last,
And the small birds are on every tree,
The hearts of those are glad while mine is very sad,
Since my true love is absent from me.

Farewel my dearest dear until another year,
Till the sweet spring I hope I shall see,
The linnet and the thrush will charm in the bush,
And the cuckow will charm in the tree.

I'll put on my cap and black fringe all around my neck,
Rings on my fingers then I will wear,
Straitway I will repair to the county of Kildare,
And there I shall have tidings of him(1).

My father he was great in a plentiful estate,
He has forc'd my true love from me,
How cruel could he be to force my love to sea,
I'm afraid I shall never see him more.

The livery I will wear and comb down my hair,
Then I dress in my velvet so green,
Straitway will repair to the county of Kildare,
Tis there I shall have tidings of him.

With patience I did wait till they'd run for the plate(1),
And thinking young Johnson for to see,
Fortune prov'd unkind to this sweetheart of mine,
Now he's gone to the lowlands from me.

Farewel my joy and heart, since you and I must part,
You are the fairest that ever I did see,
I never did design to alter my mind,
Tho' you are below my degree.

In the merry month of June if my jewel will return,
Garlands of flowers then I'll have,

Lilies, pinks and roses a garland I'll prepare,
And I'll wear it for my dear Johnson's sake.

From a broadside in the Madden Collection, now in the University Library in Cambridge; reprinted in "Later English Broadside Ballads", ed. Holloway & Black, 1975. Believed to be eighteenth or early nineteenth century because, although undated, it does not show the font and style changes which were typical of the early nineteenth century printing of broadsides.

1. The races on the plain of Kildare were a great gathering-place for people from all over Ireland.

Very similar to the broadside "The Irish Lovers" in the same collection.

-DAD
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