

Standing Stones

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In one of these lone Orkney Isles
There dwelled a maiden fair,
Her cheeks were red and her eyes were blue
She had yellow curling hair.

Which caught the eye and then the heart
Of one who never could be
A lover of so true a maid
Or fair a form as she.

Across that lake in Sandwick
Dwelled a youth she held most true,
And ever since her infancy
He had watched those eyes so blue.

The land runs out into the sea.
It's a narrower neck of land.
Where weird and grim the standing stones
In a circle there they stand.

One bonny moonlight Christmas Eve
They met at the sad place.
With heart of glee and the beams of love
Were shining on her face.

Her lover came and grasped her hand
And what loving words they said.
They talked of future's happy days
As through the stones they strayed.

They walked towards the Lover's Stone
And through it passed their hands.
They plighted there a constant troth.
Sealed by love's steadfast bands.

He kissed his maid and he then watched her
That lonely bridge go o'er,
For little, little did he think
He would see his darling more.

He turned his face toward his home,
That home he never did see.

And you shall have the story,
As it was told to me.

When a form upon him sprang
With dagger gleaming bright,
It pierced his heart; his dying screams
Disturbed the silent night.

The murderer was the one who wished
That maiden's heart to gain,
And unnoticed he had seen them part
And he swore he would give her pain.

This maid had nearly reached her home,
When she was startled by a cry,
And she turned to look around her
And her love was standing by.

His hand was pointing to the stars
And his eyes gazed at the light,
And with a smiling countenance
He vanished from her sight.

She gained her home, but well did she know
That her faithful love was dead,
She spoke to none, but she pined away,
Not a smile on her face was seen,
And with outstretched arms she went to meet him
In a brighter place.

Collected by Peter Kennedy in the Orkneys
Recorded on Folksongs of Britain Vol 7
SOF