

The Wife of Usher's Well

Bellowhead

There lived a wife at Usher's Well
And a wealthy wife, a wife was she
She had three stout and stalwart sons
And she sent them out over the sea
They had not been a week from her
A week, a week but barely one
When word it came to the carline wife
That her three sons, her sons were gone
They had not been a week from her
A week, a week but barely three
When word it came to the carline wife
That her three sons she'd never see
"I wish the wind may never cease
Nor fashes, nor fashes in the flood
Till my three sons come home to me
In earthly flesh, in flesh and blood!"
It fell about on the Martinmas,
When nights were long and dark
The carline wife's three sons came home
And their hats were of the bark
It neither grew in syke nor ditch
Nor yet in any wood
But at the gates of Paradise
The birch trees where they stood
"Blow up the fire, my maidens three!
Bring water, bring water from the well!
For all my house we shall feast this night!
Since my three sons, my sons are well!"
And she has made for them a bed

She's made it large and she's made it wide

She's took her mantle thereabout

She's down, sat down at their bedside

Up then crew the red, red cock

Then up and crew the rooster grey

The eldest to the youngest said

"Tis time, tis time we were away"

The cock he had not crowed but once

And clapped his wings, his wings and all

When the youngest to the eldest said

"Oh Brother, brother we must away"

"The cock does crow, the day does dawn

The channering worm does chide

And we must be out of our place

A sore pain we must bide"

"And fare thee well to our mother dear

Farewell to barn and byre

And fare thee well to the bonny lass

That kindles my mother's fire!"

Instrumental

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When nights were long and dark

The carline wife's three sons came home

And their hats were of the bark