

Tam Lin

Steeleye Span

oh, i forbid you maidens all
that wear gold in your hair.
to come or go by carterhaugh
for young tam lin is there.

if you go by carterhaugh
you must leave him a wad.
either your rings or green mantle
or else your maidenhead.

she's away o'er gravel green
and o'er the gravel brown.
she's away to carterhaugh
to flower herself a gown.

she had not pulled a rosy rose
a rose but barely one.
when by came this brisk young man
says, lady let alone.

how dare you pull my rose, madam?
how dare you break my tree?
how dare you come to carterhaugh
without the leave of me?

well may i pull the rose, she said
well may i break the tree.
for carterhaugh it my father's
i'll ask no leave of thee.

oh, in carterhaugh, in carterhaugh
oh, in carterhaugh, in carterhaugh

he's taken her by the milk-white hand
and there he's laid her down.
and there he asked no leave of her
as she lay on the ground.

oh tell me, tell me, then she said
oh tell me who art thee.
my name it is tam lin, he said
and this is my story.

as it fell out upon a day
a-hunting i did ride.
there came a wind out of the north
and pulled me betide.

and drowsy, drowsy as i was
the sleep upon me fell.
the queen of fairies she was there
and took me to herself.

oh, in carterhaugh, in carterhaugh
oh, in carterhaugh, in carterhaugh

at the end of every seven years

they pay a tithe to hell.
and i'm so fair and full of flesh
i'm feared 'twill be myself.

tonight it is good halloween
the fairy court will ride.
and if you would your true love win
at miles cross, you must bide.

oh, in carterhaugh, in carterhaugh
oh, in carterhaugh, in carterhaugh

gloomy was the night
and eerie was the way.
this lady in her green mantle
to miles cross she did go.

with the holy water in her hand
she cast the compass round.
at twelve o'clock the fairy court
came riding o'er the mound.

first came by the black steed
and then came by the brown.
then tam lin on the milk-white steed
with a gold star in his crown.

she's pulled him down into her arms
and let the bridle fall.
the queen of fairies she cried out
young tam lin is away.

they've shaped him in her arms
an adder or a snake.
she's held him fast and feared him not
to be her earthly mate.

they've shaped him in her arms again
fire burning bold.
she's held him fast and feared him not
till he was iron cold.

they've shaped him in her arms
to a wood black dog so wild.
she's held him fast and feared him not
the father of her child.

they've shaped him in her arms at last
into a naked man.
she's wrapped him in the green mantle
and knew that she had him won.

the queen of fairies she cried out
young tam lin is away.

had i known, had i known, tam lin
long before, long before you came from home.
had i known, i would have taken out your heart
and put in a heart of stone.

had i known, had i known, tam lin
that a lady, a lady would steal thee.
had i known, i would have taken out your eyes

and put in two from a tree.

had i known, had i known, tam lin
that i would lose, that i would lose the day.
had i known, i would have paid my tithe to hell
before you'd been won away.