



KelticDead Music

Stories, Tunes and Songs in the Traditions of our Celtic Dead

To the Four Ayrts to Guide Us, and
For the Four Winds to Get Us There!

The mission of the **KelticDead Music** initiative is to find tunes and songs from around the world that have Celtic, Folk, World, Americana, and Seafaring origins, and arrange them into simple sheet music formats for folk musicians to use and share. In addition, the KDM initiative provides the in-depth stories with possible lyrics for a more complete music-education experience.

*All the selections and sheet music content provided in the **KelticDead Music** initiative are from traditional, made-public, made-public with credits, or cited credits where applicable. This material content is from various internet sources and the personal interpretations of the subject is provided by **Patrick O-Shaun Young, KelticDead Music**. All graphics are either public domain or cited where applicable. Validation and verification are left up to the reader.*

In the Wind and Rain

The title of this folk melody “In the Wind and Rain,” is one version of many that comes out of the tale of two sisters (“Twa Sisters” which first appeared in a “broadside” in 1656). Other versions include; “The Cruel Sister,” “The Bonnie Milldams of Binnorie,” “The Bonny Bows o’ London,” “Binnoria and Sister,” and “Dear Sister.” All of them speak of a tale about jealousy and murder.

Because of the origins of the tale from Northern Europe in Scandinavia the ballad also appeared in a collection of ballads in 1806, “Jamiesons’s Popular Ballads.”

The tale begins with two sisters having very opposite personalities. They are both part of a royal family with kingships involved with marriage. The older sister is ambitious, and extremely possessive. She is set to marry a Knight, who by direction of their stations, would be king some day.

The younger sister is fair-haired, with a sweet personality, and is the favorite of her father. She was not aware nor cared about affairs of state.

Unfortunately, the Knight in question secretly falls in love with the younger sister, and promises to marry her instead of the older sister. The older (darker) sister learns of the secret, and becomes extremely jealous, and plots to kill her younger sister.

In the northern European version of the tale, the older sister summons her younger sister to come with her to some cliffs overlooking the sea, telling the younger girl that her father is returning from a trip overseas and that they might see his ship coming home. Once upon the cliff, the dark sister pushes the younger girl over the cliff into the ocean below amid the waves crashing upon the rocks.



A made public picture of a dead girl floating in water, “A Bonny Swan,” by Sarahmet.

In the Wind and Rain

**Twa Sisters came out of County Clare
Oh, in the dreadful wind and rain.
Johnny gave one a golden ring
While in the dreadful wind and rain.**

**Sisters came along a raging stream
Out in the dreadful wind and rain.
The dark one pushed the fair one in
Out in dreadful wind and rain.**

**Watched her sister until she drowned
Cryin' in the dreadful wind and rain.
Fair one floated to the rocky shore
Oh, in the dreadful wind and rain.**

**There she lay on the river bank
Oh, Lyin' in the wind and rain.
Bones washed up by the river tides
Bein' in the dreadful wind and rain.**

**Soon, came along a fiddler man
Out in the dreadful wind and rain.
Found her bones just lyin' there
Lyin' in the dreadful wind and rain.**

**Made white pegs from her finger bones
Oh, in the dreadful wind and rain.
Made the fiddle from her small breast bone
Out in the dreadful wind and rain.**

**Strung that fiddle with her long white hair
Out in the dreadful wind and rain.
Only tune that fiddle would play
Was in the dreadful wind and rain**

**Fiddle was heard by her sister dark
Out in the dreadful wind and rain.
Struck her dead like a heart of stone
Dyin' in the dreadful wind and rain.**

The younger girl is alive in the waters below and pleads with her older sister for mercy, but the dark sister turns a deaf ear to her pleas and leaves her younger sister to drown.



The Knight and the girl's father were unaware of what the older sister had done, and the dark girl would have gotten away with it, had it not been for a harp that was made by an itinerate musician from the bones of the younger sister. By chance the harp was donated to the King at the hall of the dark girl's wedding reception to the Knight.

The harp suddenly began to resonate and "play" a gruesome tune that mimicked voices which revealed to all what the older sister had done. The harp condemned the older sister who was consequently put to death for her actions.

In other versions of this ghostly tale (especially in northern European countries), the itinerate musician found the bleached bones on the shoreline and made a whistle/flute. The whistle was presented to dark sister at the wedding reception, and when she tried to play it, It began to pour blood from the instrument and a voice in hall revealed the murder to all.

In that tale, the older girl was drawn and quartered by four horses. A much grislier end, but it was an effective way of telling others that murder had consequences.

In the Wind and Rain

When this grisly tale migrated to America, the setting of the story changed from cliffs and oceans to the two girls walking along a raging creek in a violent storm. The same theme existed where the older (dark) girl had become jealous of the younger sister getting a proposal ring from a “Johnny,” and she pushed her younger sister into the river to drown.



The instrument was mixed. In some stories the girl's bleached bones and her long white hair was made into a harp. In other versions (including the one presented in this broadside) the itinerate musician was a “fiddler man” who made a gruesome fiddle from girl's bones and hair.

Also, there was blend of folk stories around this same theme that described the fair-haired girl floating down the river into a miller's pond. The miller accidentally pulled the girl out of the pond with a fish hook, which scared him, and he ran away to leave the girl's bones to be bleached on the shoreline of the pond.

Like the harp in other versions, when the fiddle was presented to the older sister, it began to play, and the sound also killed the older sister in a stormy night, just like the one in which the dark girl committed the crime. In short, the fiddle itself killed the older sister.



Again, the theme is that committing murder has a consequence.

In the Wind and Rain

Twa Sisters

Arrangement by KelticDead Music

Northern European - Appalachian



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ExUMyRssSk8>

KelticDead Music Group Players:

A lively tune and song for a gruesome tale about murder.

Shaun Young arranged the sheet music, and adjusted the lyrics of the song to play with it. He uses an Irish-Tuned, Low Octave Bouzouki to set the rhythm and beat, an MK1 Low Octave D Whistle, a Kerry Mezzo D whistle, a Seydel Low D diatonic blues harmonica, a bodhran, as well as voice and chorus parts.

Earnie Taft featured the fiddle in this melody, and

Alan Beck provided a guitar to ensure rhythm and depth.

For this and other “KDM Story Broadside” visit
<https://kelticdeadmusic.org/story-broadside/>



Shaun Young



Earnie Taft



Alan Beck

KelticDead Music Initiative

is a private, on-line music-education initiative. All the music projects are recorded with live, acoustic instruments and performed in accordance with simplified sheet music arranged in eight bar formats (whenever possible) in accordance with the guidelines that are within the Celtic music traditions. For more music videos and stories visit ...

<https://KelticDeadMusic.org>