

Thomas Tickell (1685-1740)

1 *Lucy and Colin*

Of Leinster, fam'd for maidens fair,  
Bright Lucy was the grace;  
Nor ere did Liffy's limpid stream  
Reflect so fair a face.

Till luckless love, and pining care 5  
Impair'd her rosy hue,  
Her coral lip, and damask cheek,  
And eyes of glossy blue.

Oh! have you seen a lily pale, 10  
When beating rains descend?  
So droop'd the slow-consuming maid;  
Her life now near its end.

By Lucy warn'd, of flattering swains, 15  
Take heed, ye easy fair:  
Of vengeance due to broken vows,  
Ye perjured swains, beware.

Three times, all in the dead of night, 20  
A bell was heard to ring;  
And at her window, shrieking thrice,  
The raven flap'd his wing.

Too well the love-lorn maiden knew  
That solemn boding sound;  
And thus, in dying words, bespoke  
The virgins weeping round.

'I hear a voice, you cannot hear, 25  
Which says, I must not stay:

I see a hand, you cannot see,  
Which beckons me away.

By a false heart, and broken vows,  
In early youth I die. 30  
Am I to blame because his bride  
Is thrice as rich as I?

Ah Colin! give not her thy vows;  
Vows due to me alone:  
Nor thou, fond maid, receive his kiss, 35  
Nor think him all thy own.

To-morrow in the church to wed,  
Impatient, both prepare;  
But know, fond maid, and know, false man,  
That Lucy will be there. 40

Then bear my corse; ye comrades, bear,  
The bridegroom blithe to meet;  
He in his wedding-trim so gay,  
I in my winding-sheet.'

She spoke, she dy'd;—her corse was borne, 45  
The bridegroom blithe to meet;  
He in his wedding trim so gay,  
She in her winding-sheet.

Then what were perjur'd Colin's thoughts?  
How were those nuptials kept? 50  
The bride-men flock'd round Lucy dead,  
And all the village wept.

Confusion, shame, remorse, despair,  
At once his bosom swell:  
The damps of death bedew'd his brow, 55  
He shook, he groan'd, he fell.

From the vain bride (ah bride no more!)  
The varying crimson fled,  
When, stretch'd before her rival's corse,  
She saw her husband dead. 60

Then to his Lucy's new-made grave,  
Convey'd by trembling swains,  
One mould with her, beneath one sod,  
For ever now remains.

Oft at their grave the constant hind 65  
And plighted maid are seen;  
With garlands gay, and true-love knots  
They deck the sacred green.

But, swain forsworn, whoe'er thou art,  
This hallow'd spot forbear; 70  
Remember Colin's dreadful fate,  
And fear to meet him there.

1725

(From Thomas Percy, ed. *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry: Consisting of Old Heroic Ballads, Songs, and Other Pieces of Our earlier Poets; Together with Some Few of Later Date*. Vol. 3. With Memoir and Critical Dissertation by the Rev. George Gilfillan. Edinburgh: James Nichol, 1858. A rpt. entire from Percy's last edition of 1794)