

John Logan (1748-88)

1 *The Braes of Yarrow*

‘Thy braes were bonny, Yarrow stream!
‘When first on them I met my lover;
‘Thy braes how dreary, Yarrow stream!
‘When now thy waves his body cover!
‘For ever now, O Yarrow stream! 5
‘Thou art to me a stream of sorrow;
‘For never on thy banks shall I
‘Behold my love, the flower of Yarrow.

‘He promised me a milk-white steed,
‘To bear me to his father’s bowers; 10
‘He promised me a little page,
‘To ’squire me to his father’s towers;
‘He promised me a wedding-ring,—
‘The wedding-day was fix’d to-morrow;—
‘Now he is wedded to his grave, 15
‘Alas, his watery grave, in Yarrow!

‘Sweet were his words when last we met;
‘My passion I as freely told him!
‘Clasp’d in his arms, I little thought
‘That I should never more behold him! 20
‘Scarce was he gone, I saw his ghost;
‘It vanish’d with a shriek of sorrow;
‘Thrice did the water-wraith ascend,
‘And gave a doleful groan thro’ Yarrow.

‘His mother from the window look’d, 25
‘With all the longing of a mother;
‘His little sister weeping walk’d
‘The green-wood path to meet her brother:
‘They sought him east, they sought him west,
‘They sought him all the forest thorough; 30
‘They only saw the cloud of night,

‘They only heard the roar of Yarrow!

‘No longer from thy window look,
‘Thou hast no son, thou tender mother!
‘No longer walk, thou lovely maid! 35
‘Alas, thou hast no more a brother!
‘No longer seek him east or west,
‘And search no more the forest thorough;
‘For, wandering in the night so dark,
‘He fell a lifeless corse in Yarrow. 40

‘The tear shall never leave my cheek,
‘No other youth shall be my marrow;
‘I’ll seek thy body in the stream,
‘And then with thee I’ll sleep in Yarrow.’
The tear did never leave her cheek, 45
No other youth became her marrow;
She found his body in the stream,
And now with him she sleeps in Yarrow.

1781

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