

A. C. Swinburne (1837-1909)

9 *Duriesdyke*

The rain rains sair on Duriesdyke,
Both the winter through and the spring;
And she that will gang to get broom thereby
She shall get an ill thing.

The rain rains sair on Duriesdyke, 5
Both the winter through and the summer day;
And he that will steek his sheep thereby
He shall go sadly away.

“Between Crossmuir and Duriesdyke
The fieldhead is full green; 10
The shaws are thick in the fair summer,
And three wallheads between.

“Flower of broom is a fair flower,
And heather is good to play.”
O she went merry to Duriesdyke, 15
But she came heavy away.

“It’s I have served you, Burd Maisry,
These three months through and mair;
And the little ae kiss I gat of you,
It pains me aye and sair. 20

“This is the time of heather-blowing,
And that was syne in the spring;
And the little ae leaf comes aye to red,
And the corn to harvesting.”

The first kiss their two mouths had, 25

Sae fain she was to greet;
The neist kiss their two mouths had,
I wot she laughed fu' sweet.

“Cover my head with a silken hood,
My feet with a yellow claith; 30
For to stain my body wi' the dyke-water,
God wot I were fu' laith.”

He's happit her head about wi' silk,
Her feet with a gowden claith;
The red sendal that was of price, 35
He's laid between them baith.

The grass was low by Duriesdyke,
The high heather was red;
And between the grass and the high heather,
He's tane her maidenhead. 40

They did not kiss in a noble house,
Nor yet in a lordly bed;
But their mouths kissed in the high heather,
Between the green side and the red.

“I have three sailing ships, Maisry, 45
For red wheat and for wine;
The main topmast is a bonny mast,
Three furlongs off to shine.

“The foremast shines like new lammer,
The mizzenmast like steel; 50
Gin ye wad sail wi' me Maisry,
The warst should carry ye weel.[”]

“Gin I should sail wi' you, Lord John,
Out under the rocks red,
It's wha wad be my mither's bower-maiden 55

To hap saft her feet in bed?

“Gin I should sail wi’ you, Lord John,
Out under the rocks white,
There’s nane wad do her a very little ease
To hap her left and right.” 60

It fell upon the midwinter,
She gat mickle scaith and blame;
She’s bowed hersell by the white water
To see his ships come hame.

She’s leaned hersell against the wind, 65
To see upon the middle tide;
The faem was fallen in the running wind,
The wind was fallen in the waves wide.

“There’s nae moon by the white water,
To do me ony good the day; 70
And but this wind a little slacken,
They shall have a sair seaway.

“O stir not for this nied, baby,
O stir not at my side;
Ye’ll have the better birth, baby 75
Gin ye wad a little abide.”

c. 1859

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