



Ririro

READ ANYWHERE, ANYTIME

On Halloween

Janet Little

Some folk in courts for pleasure sue,
An' some ransack the theatre:
The airy nymph is won by few;
She's of so coy a nature.
She shuns the great bedaub'd with lace,
Intent on rural jokin
An' spite o' breeding, deigns to grace
A merry Airshire rockin,
Sometimes at night.

At Halloween, when fairy sprites
Perform their mystic gambols,
When ilka witch her neebour greets,
On their nocturnal rambles;
When elves at midnight-hour are seen,
Near hollow caverns sportin,
Then lads an' lasses aft convene,
In hopes to ken their fortune,
By freets that night.

At Jennet Reid's not long ago,
Was held an annual meeting,
Of lasses fair an' fine also,
With charms the most inviting:
Though it was wat, an' wondrous mirk,
It stopp'd nae kind intention;
Some sprightly youths, frae Loudon-kirk,
Did haste to the convention,
Wi' glee that night.

The nuts upon a clean hearthstane,
Were plac'd by ane anither,
An' some gat lads, an' some gat nane,
Just as they bleez'd the gither.
Some sullen cooffs refuse to burn;
Bad luck can ne'er be mended;

But or they a' had got a turn,
The pokeful nits was ended
Owre soon that night.

A candle on a stick was hung,
An' ti'd up to the kipple:
Ilk lad an' lass, baith auld an' young,
Did try to catch the apple;
Which aft, in spite o' a' their care,
Their furious jaws escaped;
They touch'd it ay, but did nae mair,
Though greedily they gaped,
Fu' wide that night.

The dishes then, by joint advice,
Were plac'd upon the floor;
Some stammer'd on the toom ane thrice,
In that unlucky hour.
Poor Mall maun to the garret go,
Nae rays o' comfort meeting;
Because sae aft she's answered no,
She'll spend her days in greeting,
An' ilka night.

Poor James sat trembling for his fate;
He lang had dree'd the worst o't;
Though they had tugg'd and rugg'd till yet,
To touch the dish he durst not.
The empty bowl, before his eyes,
Replete with ills appeared;
No man nor maid could make him rise,
The consequence he feared
Sae much that night.



Wi' heartsome glee the minutes past,
Each act to mirth conspired:
The cushion game perform'd at last,
Was most of all admired.
From Janet's bed a bolster came,
Nor lad nor lass was missing;
But ilka ane wha caught the same,
Was pleas'd wil routh o' kissing,
Fu' sweet that night.

Soon as they heard the forward clock
Proclaim 'twas nine, they started,
An' ilka lass took up her rock;
Reluctantly they parted,
In hopes to meet some other time,
Exempt from false aspersion;
Nor will they count it any crime,
To hae sic like diversion
Some future night.

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