

The Blind Harper

Kate Rusby

Have you heard of the blind harper,
Now he lived in Hogmaven town,
He went down to fair England,
To steal King Henry's wanton Brown.

First he went unto his wife,
With all the haste as go could he,
This work he said will never go well,
Without the help of our good grey mare.

Said she, you take the good grey mare,
She'll run o'er hills both low and high,
Go take the halter in your hose,
And leave the foal at home with me.

He's up and went to England gone,
He went as fast as go could he,
And when he got to Carlisle gates,
Who should be there but King Henry.

Come in, come in you blind harper,
And of your music let me hear,
But up and said the blind harper,
I'd rather have a stable for my mare.

The king looked over his left shoulder,
And he said unto his stable groom,
Go take the poor blind harper's mare,
And put her beside my wanton brown.

Then he's harped and then he sang,
Til he played them all so sound asleep,
And quietly he took off his shoes,
And down the stairs he did creep.

Straight to the stable door he's gone,
With a tread so light as light could be,
When he opened and went in,
He found thirty steeds and three.

He took the halter from his horse,
And from his purse he did not fail,
He slipped it over the wanton's nose,
And tied it to the grey mare's tail.

Then he let her loose at the castle gates,
She didn't fail to find her way,
She went back to her own colt foal,
Three long hours before the day.

Then in the morning, at fair daylight,
When they had ended all their cheer,
Behold the wantong brown had gone,
So had the poor blind harper's mare.

Oh, Alas, said the blind harper,
Ever als that I came here,

In Scotland I've got a little colt foal,
In England they stole my good grey mare.

Hold your tongue said King Henry,
And all your mournings let them be,
You shall get a far better mare,
And well paid shall our colt foal be.

Again he harped and again he sang,
The sweetest music he let them hear,
He was paid for a foal that he never lost,
And three times worth the good grey mare.

He was paid for a foal that he never lost,
And three times worth the good grey mare