

## Gowd Tree an Siller Tree

Lang lang syne, in days that naebodie can mynd o nou, the war glaumerie in the warld. An wi the glaumerie, aw the burds an beiss an the fishes coud speak, an fowk coud unnerstaun an speak wi thaim.

Weill, syne, ferr awa the war an island in the gret blue wattirs o the sie. This island haed a keing o its ain, an the Keing haed a queen an a littil princess for himsell cawed Gowd Tree, that wes the bonniest littil lass ye ever cuid see. An she haed a frein o hir mither's ti luik eftir hir an play wi hir—Siller Tree wes hir name an the Queen loued hir weill. Sae the tyme gaed in brawlie, or ae ill day the Queen fell seik. Nane coud pit hir ti richts, an weill she kent she maun die. Sae she cawed the Keing til hir chaumer, an said til him:

“Syre, suin Ah maun leive ye, an oor dear Gowd Tree, foraye, but ye maunna be douncuisten. Ye maun mairrie guid Siller Tree an she wul luik eftir an care for oor littil dochter, for she loues hir weill. Promiss me ye wul dae this, Fergus!”

Nou the Keing wesna than mukkil taen up wi Siller Tree, but he coud see that naething ither wad pleise the Queen., sae he promisst, an suin the pur wumman died richt aneuch. An eftir a whyle, the guid Keing keepit his promiss an mairrit Siller Tree for his dochter's sake, sae the island haed a queen again. An mair sae, for Siller Tree wes the bonniest queen in the haill warld. An she kent this hersell bi glaumerie.

In the verra middil o the island the war a glen wi trees in it: heich birks an fek o derk rowans fair hingin wi berries. An in the hert o this glen the war a wal. Fell deep an derk it wes, wi cauld, cauld wattir doun in it. An thare in the cauld wattir, bade a wyce auld trout. An it wes this same trout that keepit tellin the Queen that she wes the bonniest queen in the haill warld, sumthing she wes aye gled ti hear. He wes a ferlie trout an the Queen kent he wad aye tell hir the truth whanever she spierit at him:

“Trout! Trout! Ma braw trout, tell me strecht, im Ah no the bonniest queen in aw the warld?”

An the trout wad soum slawlie up the wattir, an doun the wattir, an syne he wad keik his fish heid oot the wattir an say:

“Ay, ye ir that. The'r naebodie sae fair, naewhaur in aw the warld!”

An syne the Queen wad gang hir road hame again, weill content. But as the years gaed by, the Queen's face grew aulder as is the wey o things. Hir skin runkilt an she beguid ti fash. But littil Gowd Tree gat bonnier an bonnier, an the Queen didna lyke that ava, for she wes jaeluss bi naitur. An syne the day cam whan thare wes Princess Gowd Tree, fair growne up. An Ai, but she wes bonnie! She wes bonnie as a fresh flouer in Spring an as blyth as the sunshein. An afore verra lang, the prince frae juist owre the wattir cam owre an spierit the Keing for hir haund in mairriage.

But the Keing said: “Mercie, Gowd Tree is juist a bit lassie yit, but cum you back neist year an ye can hae ma blissin gin she gries ti mairrie ye!”

Sae the prince gaed ti see Gowd Tree an she lykit him fyne. Thay made a paction for ti be mairrit, syne he gaed back hame owre the wattir til his ain kintrie.

Gowd Tree wes that bonnie that fowk war never duin speikin about hir bewtie, an Siller Tree didna lyke that at aw. Ye see she coudna byde oniebodie ti hae mair bewtie nor hirsell.

Ae day, Siller Tree coud thole it na langir that awbodie soud delyte in Gowd Tree’s bewtie. Sae awa she gaed til the glen ti spier at the wyce auld trout anent hirsell. She luikit down intil the cauld, cauld wattir an cryit til the ferlie trout:

“Trout, trout! Ma braw trout, tell me strecht, im Ah no the bonniest queen in aw the world?”

An the wyce auld trout soumed slawlie up the wattir, an syne he keikit his fish heid oot the wattir an spak. But this tyme, listen til his aunser!

“Na, Na, ye irna! Nae fears! Gowd Tree, yeir guid-dochter, is bonnier nor ye—a sicht bonnier.

Sae he soumed awa an wad say nae mair. The Queen gaed strecht hame an taen til hir bed in a blek tid, an frae than on she said never a wurd, an taen naither byte not sowp,

An whan the Keing cam ben ti whaur she lay in hir mukkil gowden bed, wi its bowster o soft rose silk, he taen hir haund an spierit at hir:

“My, whit ails ye the-day, ma bonnie Siller Tree? Whit can Ah dae for ti help ye?”

The Queen regairdit him wi gray gled’s een for a lang whyle, an syne she said:

“Ah’l tell ee whit ye can dae. Fesh me the hert o yeir dochter, the hert o Gowd Tree! Fesh you it ti me on a siller ashet!”

The auld Keing cuid haulie credit his ain lugs. He wes fair dumfounert, but he gethert hirsell an said:

“The h-h-hert o Gowd Tree, did Ah hear ye say?”

An the Queen noddit hir bonnie heid..

“Ay, the hert o Gowd Tree on a siller ashet. Gin ye dinna, Ah sal dee.”

An fient anither wurd wad she say. Sae the Keing gaed awa wi a sair hert, mummlin til hissell, “The wumman’s shuirlye no wyce.” But eftir a wee whyle he thocht o a ploy.

The first thing he did wes ti send Gowd Tree oot o herm’s wey, owre the wattir til hir prince, an thare thay war mairrit in saicret. Syne he sent a loun up the craigs ti claucht a billie-gait an whan the laddie cam doun wi it, the Keing cut oot its hert an cairrit it in a siller ashet til the Queen. Ai, but she wes gled ti see it! She thocht it wes the hert o Gowd Tree, dae ye see? An up she rase oot hir bed as weill an bonnie as ever she wes—the bonniest queen in the haill warl, or sae she thocht.

Weill nou, tyme gaed in an Siller Tree thocht she wad gang again ti see the auld trout. Juist ti mak shuir, ye ken. Sae awa she gaed til the glen wi the birks an the rowans wi thair reid berries, an she stuid bi the wal an cryit doun til the trout:

“Trout! Trout! Ma braw trout, tell me strecht, im Ah no the bonniest queen in aw the warld?”

An the wyce auld trout soumed slawlie up the wattir an doun the wattir, an syne he keikit his fish heid oot the wattir an said:

“Na, Na, ye irna! Nae fears! The clock never rins back! Gowd Tree, yeir guid-dochter, is bonnier nor ye, wi yeir runkilt face. A guid sicht bonnier! The Queen felt a rush o bluid til hir heid. She coudna credit hir ain lugs.

“Gowd Tree,” she said. “But Gowd Tree is deid! Ah ett the hert o hir on a siller ashet, a year cum Sunday.”

But the wyce auld trout juist soumed slawlie up the wattir an doun the wattir an said:

“Na, Na, ye didna! Yon wes the hert o a billie-gait. Gowd Tree is mairrit on a gret prince the tither syde o the wattir. Bonnie Gowd Tree!”

An he soumed awa an wad say nae mair.

Awa hame, hoyed the Queen, in a blek, blek tid an she gart the Keing mak reddie a ship, for she ettillt ti sail owre the wattir an pey a veisit on hir guid-dochter, dear Gowd Tree. An weill the Keing kent that she maun hae fund oot anent his joukerie-pawkerie wi the gait’s hert, sae he wes feart ti say ‘Na’, an gied hir the ship. The Keing wes a bit o a soft merk, ye see! Sae the Queen sailed awa athort the wattir or she cam ti the mainland whaur Gowd Tree bade in a grund touer wi the prince hir man.

The prince wes awa at the huntin this day, but Gowd Tree wes at hame luikin oot the winnok. An whan she saw hir guidmither cummin she wes feart an cryit on hir auld kimmer:

“Kimmer! Kimmer! Cum you here at aince! Here ma guidmither cum ti the mainland an she wul kill me, sae she wul. She disna lyke me nou, an see, frae the luik o hir, she is unco roused!” But the auld kimmer lowdent Gowd Tree, sayin:

“Atweill, she winna. She wul no git the chaunce. We sal lock ye in the chaumer here an she wul no can herm ye.”

An thay did juist that. Thay lockit up Gowd Tree an whan Siller Tree cam in she coudna finnd hir guid-dochter oniewhaur, tho she cryit on hir awhaur an chappit at ilka dure o aw tha chaumers aw owre the gret touer Hinnerlie, she cam til the dure o the chaumer whaur Gowd Tree wes dernit, an thare she stappit an listent. Syne she said:

“Ay, ye wul be in here Ah’m thinkin. Wul ye no cum oot ti walcum yeir guid frein, Siller Tree? Na---? Weill than, at least pit yeir pinkie throu the kiehole sae that Ah nicht kiss it! Ma dear lass---!”

Weill nou, Gowd Tree thocht til hirsell: “Whit herm coud the be in that, shuirle?”

Sae she stak hir pinkie throu the kiehole. An at aince, the ill-hertit Siller Tree jaggit a puzint skelf richt intil it! An Gowd Tree fell down deid, the tither syde the dure. The ill-hertit queen hoyed back til hir ship as fest as she cuid rin, an sailed awa, athort the wattir, or she wan hame again But never a wurd said she ti Gowd Tree’s faither, the Keing.

Bi this tyme, aw wes dule an wae in the prince’s touer an whan the prince cam hame an fand his dear Gowd Tree deid, his hert wed lyke ti brek. But she kythed that bonnie, he coudna beir ti lair hir, sae he laid hir corp in a gless kist an keepit it in a byuss chaumer aw til itsell. Sae the days gaed by, an eftir a whyle, the prince wes that dowie an lanesum, he ettilt ti tak anither wyfe.

Houanever, afore mairriein again, he haed a notion ti tak yae lest keik at Gowd Tree. Sae ae forenicht, he gaed inti the chaumer whaur she wes liggin as bonnie as ever. He opent the lid o the gless kist ti hae a richt guid luik at hir, an here whit did he see, but the puzzint skelf in Gowd Tree’s pinkie. In juist ae glisk, the prince poued it oot an thare wes Gowd Tree as gleg an weill as ever she wes. The war gret rejycin in the touer that nicht, Ah can tell ye.

But aye oot on the eyland owre the wattir wes Siller Tree wi hir blek hert. An ae day she thocht she wad gang aince mair an see the ferlie trout in the wal. Sae awa she gaed ti the glen wi its heich siller birks, an derk rowans hingin fou wi reid berries, an whan she wes thare, she cryit on the trout whaur he lay in the shaidaes in the cauld wattir:

“Trout! Trout! Ma bonnie trout, tell me strecht, im Ah no the bonniest queen in aw the world?”

An the wyce auld trout soumed slawlie up the wattir an doun the wattir, an syne he keikit his fish heid oot the wattir an said:

“Hou monie tymes div Ah hae ti tell ye? Na, Na, ye irna! Nae fears! Gowd Tree, yeir guid-dochter, is bonnier nor ye—ferr bonnier”.

The Queen coudna credit whit she haird. “Gowd Tree?” she skraicht, “but Gowd Tree is deid. Ah pat a puzzint skelf intil hir pinkie masell, a year cum Sunday!”

“Did ye nou?” said the wyce auld trout? Ah ken naething aboot that, but she is never deid. No hir!” Syne he soumed awa an wad say never a wurd mair.

At this, the Queen wes feimin an awa she gaed in a blek, blek tid ti mak reddie hir ship. Syne she sailed awa an awa owre the wattir or she cam in sicht o the touer whaur Gowd Tree bade.

Again Gowd Tree saw hir cummin frae the winnok an she wes unco feirt. Sae she ran ti finnd hir kimmer an said til hir:

“See doun thare, thare ma guidmither cummin! She wul shuirly kill me this tyme, sae she wul.”

But the auld kimmer wesna feirt for Siller Tree—no hir! She said:

“She wul never git the chauce. Cum on, dinna be blate, we wul gang doun an meet hir on the forelaund!”

An awa gaed the kimmer an Gowd Tree doun ti the the wattir’s edge. An suin, Siller Tree staupt doun on the grund an spak til hir guid-dochter, bonnie Gowd Tree. Doucelyke she spak, but hir hert wes fou o ill-wull.

“Bonnie Gowd Tree, ma dou, ir ye no gled ti see me? See Ah hae brocht ye a byuss waucht o gowden wyne, the whilk wul keep ye bonnie foraye.”

Gowd Tree stuid quaet, but hir kimmer spak strecht ti the ill-hertit queen:

“Ye ir guid as weill as bonnie, Queen Siller Tree. But in thir pairts, whan fowk gie a gift o wyne, thay aye tak the first sowp thairsells. The’r nae offence. It is juist oor wey o daein here, ye wul unnerstaun.”

Siller Tree opent hir een wyde. Syne she smirtilt back doucelyke ti the kimmer. “Syne, gin that is guid mainners, that is whit Ah wul dae.”

Sae the ill-hertit Siller Tree pat the bottil til hir mou an made oot ti beb at the gowden wyne. But as fest as ye lyke, the kimmer ran ahint Siller Tree an gruppit hir ticht wi hir left airm. Syne, wi hir richt haund she tuimed the haill o the puzzint wyne doun Siller Tree’s thrappil. At aince the ill-hertit queen foundert an dee’d on the forelaund. Gowd Tree wes sauf forever an foraye!

Thay cairrit the deid queen back ontil hir ship an sent it sailin awa oot o sicht athort the wattir, an it wes seen nae mair. An frae that day forrit, bonnie Gowd Tree an hir prince leaved thegither blyth an content.