

# Robert Burns, Five Carlins

Five Carlins

(Robert Burns)

There was five carlins in the South,  
They fell upon a scheme,  
To send a lad to London town,  
To bring them tidings hame.  
Not only bring them tidings hame,  
But do their errands there;  
And aiblins gowd and honor baith  
Might be that laddie's share.  
There was Maggie by the banks o Nith,  
A dame wi pride eneugh;  
And Marjorie o' the Monie Lochs,  
A carlin auld and teugh.  
And Blinkin Bess of Annandale,  
That dwelt near Solway-side;  
And Brandy Jean, that took her gill,  
In Galloway sae wide.  
And Black Joan, frae Crichton-Peel,  
O' gipsy kith an kin:  
Five wighter carlins were na found  
The South countrie within.  
To send a lad to London town,  
They met upon a day;  
And monie a knight, and monie a laird,  
This errand fain wad gae.  
O, monie a knight, and monie a laird,  
This errand ain wad gae;  
But nae ane could their fancy please,  
O, ne'er a ane but tway!  
The first ane was a belted Knight,  
Bred of a Border band;  
And he wad gae to London Town,  
Might nae man him withstand.  
And he wad do their errands weel,  
And meikle he wad say;  
And ilka ane at London court  
Wad bid to him Guid-day.  
The neist cam in a Soger youth  
And spak wi' modest grace;  
And he wad gang to London Town,  
If sae their pleasure was  
He wad na hecht them courtly gifts,  
Nor meikle speech pretend;  
But he wad hecht an honest heart  
Wad ne'er desert his friend.-  
Now wham to chuse, and wham refuse,  
At strife thir Carlins fell;  
For some had Gentle Folk to please,  
And some wad please themsel.-  
Then up spak mim-mou'd Meg o'Nith,  
And she spak up wi'pride,  
And she wad send the Sodger-lad  
Whatever might betide.-  
For the Auld Gudeman o'London Court,  
She didna care a pin;  
But she wad send the Sodger-lad,  
To greet his eldest son.-  
Then started Bess of Annandale,  
A deadly aith she's taen,  
That she wad vote the Border-knight,  
Tho' she should vote her lane.-  
'For far-off fowls hae feathers fair,  
'And fools o' change are fain;

'But I hae try'd this Border-knight,  
'I'll try him yet again.  
Says black Jan frae Crichton-peel,  
A Carlin stoor and grim;  
&quot;The Auld Gudeman, or the Young Gudeman,  
For me may sink or swim.&quot;  
&quot;For fools will prate o' Right and Wrang,  
While knaves laugh them to scorn;  
But the Solder's friends hae blawn the best,  
So he shall bear the horn.&quot;  
Then Brandy Jean spak o'er her drink,  
Ye weel ken, kimmers a',  
The Auld Gudeman o' London Court,  
His back's been at the wa':  
And mony a friend that kiss'd his caup,  
Is now a fremit wight;  
But it's ne'er be sae wi' Brandy Jean,  
We'll send the Border-knight.'  
Then slaw rase Marjory o' the lochs,  
And wrinkled was her brow;  
Her ancient weed was russet-grey,  
Her auld Scots heart was true.-  
There's some Great Folk set light by me,  
I set as light by them;  
But I will send to London town  
Whom I lo'e best at hame.'-  
So how this weighty plea may end,  
Nae mortal wight can tell:  
God grant the king, and ilka man,  
May look weel to themsel.-  
tune: Chevy Chase (269)  
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