

SONGS OF THE CHILDREN OF LIR

Four Irish Ballads
2-Part Treble Chorus and Piano

BRUCE TRINKLEY

SONGS OF THE CHILDREN OF LIR

Four Irish Ballads For 2-Part Treble Chorus and Piano

1. I've a Secret to Tell	1
2. My Home's on the Mountain	4
3. Barney O'Hea (for the sassy young women in the choir)	7
4. The Leprechaun	16

ARRANGER'S NOTE

The arrangements were written during a residency at Dorland Mountain Arts Colony in Temecula, California, in July 1998. The folk songs are drawn from *The Minstrelsy of Ireland, 206 Irish Songs*, arranged for voice and piano by Alfred Moffat and published in London in 1897.

Lir, in Irish mythology, is the personification of the sea. In the 19th century, Irish writers frequently referred to the Irish people as "The Children of Lir".

The following is included as a footnote to *The Leprechaun* in Moffat's collection:

Dr. Joyce obtained this air from the singing of a native of the county of Limerick in 1853. With reference to the ballad, I cannot do better than quote Dr. Joyce's note to the song. "The Leprechaun is a very tricky little fellow, usually dressed in a green coat, red cap and knee-breeches, and silver shoe-buckles, whom you may sometimes see in the shades of evening, or by moonlight, under a bush; and he is generally making or mending a shoe; moreover, like almost all fairies, he would give the world for *pottheen* (strong drink). If you catch him and hold him he will, after a little threatening, show you where treasure is hid, or give you a purse in which you will always find money. But if you once take your eyes off him, he is gone in an instant; and he is very ingenious in devising tricks to induce you to look round. It is very hard to catch a Leprechaun, and still harder to hold him. I never heard of any man, who succeeded in getting treasure from him, except one, a lucky young fellow named MacCarthy, who, according to the peasantry, built the Castle of Carrigadrohid, near Macroom in Cork, with the money. . . "

SONGS OF THE CHILDREN OF LIR

I've a Secret To Tell Poem by Thomas Moore (1779-1852)

I've a secret to tell thee, but hush! not here,
O not where the world its vigil keeps:
I'll seek, to whisper it in thine ear,
some shore where the spirit of silence sleeps,
where summer's wave unmurm'ring dies,
nor fay can hear the fountain's gush;
where, if one note her nightbird sighs,
the rose says, chiding, "Hush, sweet, hush!"

There mid the deep silence of that hour,
when stars can be heard in ocean's dip,
thyself shall, under some rosy bower,
sit mute, with thy finger on thy lip:
like him, the boy, who born among the flowers
that on the Nilestream blush,
sits ever thus, his only song,
to earth, to heaven, "Hush, all hush!"

My Home's on the Mountain Poem by Joseph Fitzgerald

My home's on the mountain, my dance by the fountain,
the music I dote on is sung by the rill.
The gambols I squander are by the well yonder,
where leans the grey oak at the foot of the hill.
Of the flowers of the willow I weave my light pillow,
my slumbers are winged, and fleeting, and blest,
and sunlight adorning the bowers of young morning,
I wing my way back to the hills I love best.

I love to rove only at midnight when lonely,
and play with the moon in the old Abbey wall.
The olden days seeming, methinks, the harp's dreaming,
its longfaded dirges in bower and in hall.
Where youth's grave lies wrinkled, with snow garland sprinkled,
I love to still linger till twilight appears,
wherever woe weepeth, or fair virtue sleepeth,
they belong not to night, they're my own dewy tears.

Barney O'Hea Words and melody by Samuel Lover (1797-1868)
Now let me alone, though I know you won't, impudent Barney O'Hea!
It makes me outrageous, when you're so contagious,
and you'd better look out for the stout Corney Creagh,
for he is the boy that believes I'm his joy;
so you'd better behave yourself, Barney O'Hea,
Impudent Barney, none of your blarney, impudent Barney O'Hea!

I hope you're not going to Bandon fair, to Bandon fair,
for indeed I'm not wanting to meet you there, impudent Barney O'Hea!
For Corney's at Cork, and my brother's at work,
and my mother sits spinning at home all the day,
for no one will be there of poor me to take care,
so I hope you won't follow me, Barney O'Hea.
Impudent Barney, none of your blarney,
impudent Barney O'Hea, impudent Barney O'Hea!

But as I was walking up Bandon street, up Bandon street,
just who do you think that myself should meet, but impudent Barney O'Hea!
He said I looked killin', I called him a villain,
and bid him that minute get out of my way.
He said I was joking, and grinned so provoking,
I could not help laughing with Barney O'Hea.
Impudent Barney, he has the blarney,
impudent Barney O'Hea, impudent Barney O'Hea!

He knew twas all right when he saw me smile, he saw me smile,
for he is a rogue up to ev'ry wile,
Bothering Barney, he has the blarney,
to make a girl Mistress O'Hea, to make a girl Mistress O'Hea!

The Leprechaun Poem by P. W. Joyce (1827-1914)
In a shady nook one moonlight night, a leprechaun I spied;
with scarlet cap and coat of green; a cruiskeen by his side.
"Twas tick, tack, tick, his hammer went upon a weeny shoe;
and I laughed to think of a purse of gold; but the leprechaun's laughing too!

With tiptoe step and beating heart, quite softly I drew nigh;
there was mischief in his merry face; a twinkle in his eye.
He hammered and sang with tiny voice, and drank his mountain dew;
and I laughed to think he was caught at last, but the leprechaun's laughing too!

As quick as thought I seized the elf, "Your leprechaun purse!" I cried;
"The purse!" he said, "tis in your hand, that lady at your side!"
I turned to look; the elf was off! Then what was I to do?
O, I laughed to think what a fool I'd been; and the leprechaun's laughing too!