

WATTY AND MEG

OR THE

Wife Reformed.

A TALE.



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WATTY AND MEG.

Keen the frosty winds were blawin,
Deep the snaw had wreath'd the ploughs,
Watty, wearied a' day sawin,
Danner't down to Mungo Blue's.

Dryster Jock was sitting cracky,
Wi' Pate Tamson o' the hill,
Come awa, quo' Johnny, Watty,
Faith we'se hae anither gill.

Watty, glad to see Jock Jabos,
And sae mony neebours roun',
Kicket frae his shoon the snaw ba's,
Syne ayont the fire sat down.

Owre a broad, wi' bannocks heapit,
Cheese and stoups and glasses stood;
Some were roarin, ithers sleepit,
Ithers quietly chew'd their cude.

Jock was sellin Pate some tallow,
A' the rest a racket hel',
A' but Watty, wha, poor fallow,
Sat and smoket by himsel.

Mungo fill'd him up a toothfu',
Drank his health and Meg's inane,
Watty, puffing out a mouthfu',
Pledg'd him wi' a dreary grane.

What's the matter, Watty, wi' ye?
Troth your chafts are fa'ing in,

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 Something's wrang, I'm wae to see you,
 Gudesake but ye're desperate thin.

Ay, quo' Watty, things are alter'd,

But it's past redemption now;

Lord! I wish I had been halter'd,

When I married Maggy Howe.

I've been poor and vext and raggy,

Tried wi' troubles no that sma';

Them I bore, but marrying Maggy,

Laid the cap-stane o' them a'.

Night and day she's ever yeiping,

Wi' the weans she ne'er can gree;

When she's tir'd wi' perfect skepin,

Then she flies like fire on me.

See you, Mungo, when she'll clash on,

Wi' her everlasting clack,

Whiles I've had my neive in passion

Lifted up to break her back.

O for gudesake keep frae' cuffs;

Mungo shook his head, and said,

Weel I ken what sort o' life it's,

Ken ye, Watty, how I did?

After Bess and I were kippelt,

Soon she grew like ony bear.

Brak my shins, and when I tippelt

She har't out my very hair.

For a wee I quietly knuckelt,

But whan naething wad prevail,

Up my claes and cash I buckelt;

Bess, for ever fare ye weel,

Then her din grew less and less ay,
 Faith I gart her change her tuz;e;
 Now a better wife than Bessy
 Never stept in leather sheen.

'Try this, Watty, when ye see her
 Raging like a roaring flood;
 Swear that moment that ye'll lea her,
 That's the way to keep her gude:

Laughing, sangs, and lasses' skirls
 Echoed now out thro' the roof,—
 Done quo' Pate, and then his earls
 Nail't the dryster's waukit loof.

I' the tharag o' stories telling,
 Shaking hands, and ither cheer,
 Swith! a chap comes on the hallan,
 Mungo, is our Watty here?

Maggie's sweel kent tongue and hurry
 Darted through him like a knife,
 Up the door flew like a fury,
 In cam Watty's scaulding wife:

Nasty gude-for-naething being,
 O ye snuffy drucken sow,
 Bringing wife and weans to ruin,
 Drinking here wi' sic a crew.

Deil nor your twa legs were broken,
 Sic a life nae flesh endures,
 Toiling night and day to slocken
 You, ye dyvor and your whores.

Rise, ye drucken beast o' Bethel,
 Drink's your night and day's desire;

Rise this precious hour, or with thy
 Fling your whisky i' the fire,
 Watty heard her tongue in halloo,
 Paid his groat wi' little din,
 Left the house, while Maggy follow'd,
 Flytin' at the road ahin,
 Folk frae every door cam laupin,
 Maggy curs't them aye and a',
 Clappit wi' her hands, and stampin,
 Lost her bachel's i' the snaw,
 Hame at length she turn'd the givel,
 Wi' a face as white's a clout,
 Raging like a very devil,
 Kicking stools and chairs about.
 Ye'll sit wi' your limmers round ye,
 Hang you, Sir, I'll be your death;
 Little hauls my hands, confound ye,
 But I cleave you to the teeth.
 Watty, wha midst this oration,
 Ee'd her wiles, but durstna speak,
 Sat like patient resignation,
 Trembling by the ingle cheek,
 Sad his wee drap brose he suppet,
 Maggy's tongue gae'd like a bell,
 Quietly to his bed he slippit,
 Sighing aften to himsel,
 Name are free frae some vexation,
 Ilk ane has his ill's to dree,
 But thro' a' the hale creation
 Is a mortal vex' like me.

A' night lang he row't and gauntet,
 Sleep or rest he coudna tak,
 Maggy aft wi' horror hauntet,
 Munn'ing startet at ill's back.

Soon as e'er the morning peepit,
 Up raise Watty, waeiu' chieff!
 Kiss'd the weans while they sleepit,
 Wauken'd Meg and sought fareweel.

Fareweel Meg, and O may Heaven
 Keep you ay within his care,
 Watty's heart ye've lang been grieving,
 Now he'll never vex you mair.

Happy could I been beside you,
 Happy baith at morn and e'en,
 A' the ill's did e'er betide you,
 Watty ay turn't out your frien'.

But ye ever like to see me
 Vext and sighing, late and air;
 Fareweel Meg, I've sworn to leave thee,
 So thou'lt never see me mair.

Meg, a' sabbin' sae to lose him,
 Sic a change had never wist,
 Held his hand close to her bosom,
 While her heart was like to burst.

O my Watty will ye lea' me,
 Friendless, helpless to despair!
 O for this ae time forgie me,
 Never will I vex you mair.

Ay, ye've aft said that, and broken
 A' your vows ten times a week;

Na, na, Meg; see there's a token
 Glittering on my bonnet check,
 Owre the seas I march this morning,
 Listed, tested, sworn an' a',
 Fore'd by your confounded ginning;
 Fareweel, Meg, for I'm awa.
 Then poor Maggy's tears and clamour
 Cush't afresh, and louder grew,
 While the weans wi' mournfu' yammer,
 Round their sabbin mithier flew.
 Thro' the yirth I'll wander wi' you;
 Stay, O Watty, stay at hame;
 Here upon my knees I'll gie you
 Ony thing ye like to name.
 See your poor young lammies pleadin,
 Will ye gang, to break our heart,
 No a house to put our head in,
 No a friend to tak our part.
 Ilka word cam like a bullet,
 Watty's heart begoud to shake,
 On a kist he laid his wallet,
 Dighted baith his een, and spake:
 If ance mair I could by writing,
 Lea' the sodgers and stay still,
 Wad ye swear to drap your flyting?
 Yes, O Watty, yes I will,
 Then quo' Watty, mind be honest,
 Ay to keep your temper strive;
 Gin ye break this dreadfu' promise,
 Never mair expect to thrive.

