

The Rantin Dog the Daddie o't

Robert Burns

About this Song:

This song was written by Robert Burns, and in his book the Scots Musical Museum, Burns explains that early in his life the song was sent 'to a young girl, a very particular acquaintance of mine, who was at that time under a cloud'. It is thought that this song was written for Elizabeth Paton who was a servant maid in his mother's house.

This song is from the point of view of a woman, who is having a baby and is asking rhetorical questions such as who will take the blame with her and who will give her a baby a surname.

There are two tunes for this song, a faster livelier one which we are doing as I feel it is more suitable for the context of the story, and another softer, gentler tune. The tune I have favoured is 'Whare'll Oor Guidman Lie?'.

Language:

| | | | | | |
|---------------|---|----------------------------------|--------|---|-----------|
| Aa | = | All | Ma | = | My |
| Caut | = | Call It | Mair | = | More |
| Cloots | = | Clothes | Nae | = | No |
| Craic | = | Talk entertainingly | Ower | = | Over |
| Creepie Chair | = | Cutty stool, chair of repentance | Rantin | = | Merry |
| Faut | = | Fault | Tae | = | To |
| Fidgin Fain | = | Feel Beautiful | Tent | = | Attend to |
| Gie | = | Give | Wha | = | Who |
| Groanin Maut | = | Ale brewed to celebrate a birth | Whar | = | Where |

Arrangement:

This song is in five parts, which for ease I have called TUNE, HIGH, LOW, HIGH FRILLY and LOW FRILLY.

To add interest to the song and build up the arrangement, I usually repeat the song twice and stagger the introduction of the harmonies, as following:

Verse 1: TUNE only
Verse 2: TUNE only
Verse 3: T + LOW
Verse 4: T + L + HIGH
Verse 1 (repeat): T + L + H + LOW FRILLY
Verse 2 (repeat): T + L + H + LF + HIGH FRILLY
Verse 3 (repeat): T + L + H + LF + HF
Verse 4 (repeat): T + L + H + LF + HF

Other techniques that make this song stand out a little is to do a rallentando on the last three words of the third line of verse four (repeat) "ower again". You can then speed up to normal tempo for line four and finish sharply on the word "o't".