Allison Gross

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Oh, Allison Gross, that lives in yon tower
The ugliest witch in the north country
Has trysted me one day up in her bower
And many fair speech she made to me

She stroked my head and she combed my hair
And she set me down softly on her knee
Says, "Gin ye will be my leman so true
Sae many braw things as I would ye gi'"

She showed me a mantle of red scarlet
With golden flowers and fringes fine
Says, "Gin ye will be my leman so true
This goodly gift it shall be thine"

"Away, away, you ugly witch
Hold far away and let me be
I never will be your leman so true
And I wish I were out of your company"

She next brought me a sark of the softest silk
Well wrought with pearls about the band
Says, "Gin ye will be my ain true love
This goodly gift you shall command"

She showed me a cup of the good red gold
Well set with jewels so fair to see
Says, "Gin ye will be my leman sae true
This goodly gift I will ye gi'"

"Away, away, you ugly witch
Hold far away and let me be
For I wouldna aince kiss your ugly mouth
For all the gifts that you could gi'"

She's turned her right and round about
And thrice she blew on a grass-green horn
And she swore by the moon and the stars abeen
That she would gar me rue the day I was born

Then out she has taken a silver wand
And she's turned her three times round and round

She's muttered such words till my strength it failed
And I fell down senseless upon the ground

She's turned me into an ugly worm
And gard me toddle around the tree
And aye, on ilka Saturday night
My sister Maisry came to me

With silver basin and silver comb
To comb my head upon her knee
Before I had kissed her ugly mouth
I'd rather have toddled about the tree

But as it fell out on last Halloween
When the seely court was riding by
The queen lighted down on a rowan bank
Not far frae the tree where I wont to lie

She took me up in her milk white hand
And she's stroked me three times on her knee
She changed me again to my ain proper shape
And I nae more maun toddle about the tree

Child #35
Recorded by Steeleye Span, Parcel of Rogues
SOF

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