

## ALISON CROSS/GROSS – Child ballad 35

Traditional, based on pipe tune "The Bonny Lassie Gan tae the Fair"

Arranged by Corrina Hewat who learnt it (when in *Chantan* trio) from Elspeth Cowie who learnt it from Lizzie Higgins.

It was collected from the singing of Lizzie Higgins, recorded around 1986. Learnt from her father, from learnt it from his mum, who's headmaster was Gavin Greig, the folksong collector. Alison Cross/Gross was from Inverness-shire or Morayshire, circa 15th century. She was a wealthy woman, plain-looking not ugly, kind not cruel, lonely. She was a shapeshifter, often seen as a hare darting through the fields.

**ALL TUNE** 1. Auld Alison Cross, she lives in yon tower, the ugliest witch in the north countrie  
She's trysted me ae day 'til her bower, an' mony's the speech she's made tae me

2. She showed me a mantle o reid scarlet, wrocht wi gowd and fringes fine

**SOPRANOS (harm on 3rd)** "Gin ye'll be my leman sae true, this gudely gift, it shall be thine"

**ALL CHORUS x 2 (with HARMS)** Awa, awa ye ugly witch, Haud far awa and let me be  
Afore I'll kiss yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree

3. She showed me a sark o the saftest silk, weel wrocht wi pearls abune the band

**SOP (harm on 3rd)** "Gin ye'll be my leman sae true, this gudely gift's at your command"

4. She showed me a cup o the gude reid gowd, weel wrocht wi jewels sae fair and fine

**SOP (harm on 3rd)** "Gin ye'll be my leman sae true, this gudely gift, it shall be thine"

**ALL CHORUS x 2 (with HARMS)** Awa, awa ye ugly witch, Haud far awa and let me be  
Afore I'll kiss yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree

**ALTO & HARMS (Sheee)** 5. She's ta'en oot her grass-green horn. She blew it three times loud and shrill  
Swore by the moon and the stars abune, she'd gar me rue the day I ever was born

6. She's ta'en oot her silver wand. She straked it three time o'er her knee  
She's muttered sic words as my senses failed, I fell doon senseless tae the grund

**ALL TUNE** Awa, awa ye ugly witch, Haud far awa and let me be  
Afore I'll kiss yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree

**ALL TUNE** 7. Wi silver basin an silver kaim tae kaim my heidie upon her knee,  
Aye on ilka Saturday nicht auld Alison Cross she comes tae me.

**HARMONY ONLY** Awa, awa... ye ugly witch, ...let me  
Beeeeeeeeeee ... yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree

**TUNE JOINS** Awa, awa ye ugly witch, Haud far awa and let me be  
Afore I'll kiss yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree

**TUNE** 8. It fell upon last Halloween when the seely coorts came riding by  
The queen's lichtit doon a gowany bank, nae far fae the tree whaur I did lie

**ALL TUNE (diff melody)** 9. She's lifted me in her milk white hand. She straked me three times o'er her knee  
She's turned me back tae ma proper shape, nae mare tae toddle around the tree

**CHORUS TUNE & HARM** Awa, awa ye ugly witch, Haud far awa and let me be  
Afore I'll kiss yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree

**HARMONY ONLY** Awa, awa... ye ugly witch, ...let me  
Beeeeeeeeeee ... yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree

**TUNE & HARM** Awa, awa ye ugly witch, Haud far awa and let me be  
Afore I'll kiss yer ugly mou, I'd rather toddle around the tree (slow ending)