

Ye banks and braes o' bonnie Doon
How can ye bloom sae fresh and fair?
How can ye chant, ye little birds,
And I sae weary, fu' o' care.

Ye'll brek my heart, ye warbling birds
That wanton through the flowery thorn,
Ye mind me o' departed joys,
Departed, never to return.

Aft hae I roved by bonnie Doon to see the rose and woodbine twine,
And ilka bird sang o' its love
And fondly sae did I o' mine.

Wi' lichtsome hert I pu'd a rose
Fu' sweet upon its thorny tree
But my fause lover stole my rose,
And Ah! He left he thorn wi' me.

Instrumental

Repeat V2.

Peggy Kennedy was a daughter of Robert Kennedy of Daljarrock, factor to the Earl of Cassilis. Her older sister Helen was the wife of Burns' friend Gavin Hamilton. She contracted a secret marriage with Captain Andrew McDoual of Logan, Wigtownshire and had a daughter. He denied paternity and also that there had ever been such a marriage. He dropped Peggy, married the daughter of a Dumfriesshire laird and took over his father's estate. Peggy raised an action in Court of "Declarator of marriage" and for damages of seduction, but before the case was ended Peggy died, of a broken heart it is said.

The Constitutional Court of the Church declared the irregular marriage legal according to Scots Law, and legitimised the child. McDoual managed to get this overturned by the Court of Session, and the poor child was made illegitimate again. McDoual became MP for Wigtownshire. He seems to have been universally dislike, considered a blackguard, corrupt, untrustworthy, and anyone's for the buying of.

According to a letter from Burns the rudiments of the melody were written by James Miller, and finished by Stephen Clark (musical editor for the Scots Musical Museum). Miller had said he wanted to compose a Scots air and Clark had jokingly advised him to keep to the black keys of the harpsichord. The tune is pentatonic, and can in fact be played on the black notes.