



Scottish
Opera

THE TALE O' TAM O' SHANTER

Music by Karen MacLver Lyrics by Ross Stenhouse
Illustrations by Iain Piercy

Lyrics



The Tale o' Tam o' Shanter

Music by Karen MacIver. Lyrics by Ross Stenhouse.
with quotations from Robert Burns' Tam o' Shanter

CHARACTER GROUPS:

1. THE TAVERN CREW
2. THE STORMY CREW
3. THE COVEN CREW

CHARACTERS:

- Robert Burns/Tam o' Shanter
- Kate (Tam's wife)
- Nannie/Cutty Sark (The Witch)

CONTENTS & ORDER*

Prologue	(Robert Burns)
Song 1: Beware!	(All Groups/ Kate, Nannie and Tam)
Transition A: Tam into the Tavern	(Tam o' Shanter)
Song 2: The Terrible Tavern	(Tavern Crew & Tam)
Transition B: Tam out of the Tavern	(Tam o' Shanter)
Song 3: The Warning Storm	(Stormy Crew & Tam)
Transition C: The Apparition	(Tam o' Shanter)
Song 4: Witches Brew	(Coven Crew & Nannie)
Song 5: The Chase	(All Groups, Nannie & Tam)
Bows	(All)

*Prologue and Transitions are performed by Scottish Opera cast

Song 1: **Beware!**

(All groups & Kate))

STORMY CREW

Ah, Tam...

TAVERN/COVEN CREW

Take care...

STORMY CREW

Of drink...

TAVERN/COVEN CREW

Beware...

ALL GROUPS

Take care! Beware!

KATE

Beware!

ALL GROUPS (SPOKEN)

The De'il had business on his hand...

ALL GROUPS (SUNG)

'Was in the market town of Ayr,
Tam drinks and drinks,
Without a care,
He'll not stop from one week,
'Til the next,
Tam would drink until he's sick.

ALL GROUPS, TAM & NANNIE

Beware! Beware! Beware!
Beware of the night,
Of ghosts,
And ghouls,
And things that might bite,
Take care,
Or you'll get more
Than a fright.

ALL GROUPS (SUNG)

Ah, Gentle dames, it gars me greet,
To think how many counsels sweet,
How many lengthened, sage advices,

KATE

I'll nurse my wrath!
Keep it warm for you...

Drunken..

Blellum!,

Why do husbands never think of their poor wives
Who sit at home and lead such miserable lives,
Chew their ragged fingers right down to the bone,
And worry that their husbands never will come home.

Blellum and a skellum, skellum and a blellum.

Bluster and a blether, blether and a bluster!

KATE

I'll nurse my wrath!

ALL GROUPS (SPOKEN)

The husband frae the wife despises.

KATE

Keep it warm for you

ALL GROUPS (SUNG)

Beware! Beware! Beware!
The night has no moon,
It's black,
As pitch,
By late afternoon,
Take care or you'll,
Be deep drowned in Doon.

Drunken..
Blellum!,
Why do husbands never think of their poor wives
Who sit at home and lead such miserable lives,
Chew their ragged fingers right down to the bone,
And worry that their husbands never will come home.
Blellum and a skellum, skellum and a blellum.
Bluster and a blether, blether and a bluster!

STORMY CREW

Waaaaaah!

TAVERN CREW

Woooooo!

STORMY CREW

Weeeeeee!

ALL GROUPS

Beware! Beware! Beware!
Beware of the night,
Of ghosts and ghouls,
And things that might bite,
Take care, or you'll get,
More than a fright!

HAA!

[Applause]

TRANSITION A: Tam goes into the Tavern

(Tam & Tavern Crew)

TAM (SUNG)

First when Kate was ma care
Heav'n I thought was in her air
Now we're married,
Speir nae mair!
Whistle over the lave o'it!

TAVERN CREW (SPOKEN)

Booo! Rubbish!! Ad-libs freely

[Segue]

Song 2: **The Terrible Tavern**

(Tavern Crew & Tam)

(Clapping Routine)

TAVERN CREW

Ha ha ha ha ha!

Who would want to work all day,
When you can sit with friends all day?
When you can sit with friends all day,
Who would want to work?

Let me raise a glass to you,
While you and me get roarin' fu',
You and me get roarin' fu',
I'll raise a glass to you!

With faithful pals and friendly cheer,
We'll tell a tale and shed a tear,
Tell a tale and shed a tear,
With pals and friendly cheer!

We'll spin a reel and dance along,
Before we sing another song,
Before we sing another song,
Spin and dance along!

TAM

Blast the storm outside,
For in here we'll bide,

TAVERN CREW

And we'll warm our backsides by the fireside.

TAM

And we'll gather here,
And we'll raise a cheer,

TAVERN CREW

And we'll laugh as thunderclaps grow ever near!

Let me raise a glass to you,
While you and me get roarin' fu',
You and me get roarin' fu',
I'll raise a glass to you!

Who would want to work all day,
When you can sit with friends all day?
When you can sit with friends all day,
Who would want to work?

And we'll dance and sing,
Forget everything,
Over all our revels,
Tam O' Shanter's king!

TAM

But our pleasures are,
Just like poppies spread,
When you seize the flow'r,
Its pretty bloom is shed.

TAVERN CREW

And we'll dance and sing,
Forget everything,
Over all our revels,
Tam o' Shanter's king!

TAM

But our pleasures are
Just like poppies spread,
When you seize the flow'r,
Its pretty bloom is shed.

(Clapping Routine)

TAVERN CREW

Ha ha ha ha ha!

TAVERN CREW AND TAM

Before we have to hit the trail,
We'll tell our friends another tale,
Tell our friends another tale,
Before we hit the trail!

Now the clock has struck midnight,
The wicked storm is at its height,
The wicked storm is at its height,
The clock has struck midnight!
AW!

[Applause]

Transition B: Tam out of the Tavern

(Tam)

TAM (SHIVERING)

Brrr, Brrr, Brrr..... ad-lib

(Musical Phrase)

Tam whistles the musical phrase...

(Musical Phrase repeats)

Tam whistles it again.

[Segue]

Song 3: **The Warning Storm:** (Stormy Crew, *in two groups*, & Tam)

ALL STORMY CREW

Plish, splash, plosh!

GROUP 1: Plish, splash, plosh!

GROUP 2: Plish, splash, plosh!

ALL STORMY CREW

Ooh-oooh-oooh-oooh!

Aah-aah-aah-aah!

Plish, splash, plosh!

GROUP 1: Plish, splash, plosh!

GROUP 2: Plish, splash, plosh!

ALL STORMY CREW

When the north wind blows,

Like a tornado,

And the clouds are black and there's no moon,

Plish, splash, plosh!

There's a lightening flash,

And a thunder crash,

And the icy rain comes pelting down and down,

Plish, splash, plosh!

Ooh-oooh-oooh-oooh!

Aah-aah-aah-aah!

TAM

Every groaning tree seems to laugh at me,

Every flash of lightening shows a ghastly face.

ALL STORMY CREW

Are you frightened now?

Every branch and bough,

Seems to reach out for you in the witching hour,

Spur poor Maggie on,

While you sing a song,

Hold your bonnet fast,

In the icy blast,

On and on you lurch,

To the haunted church,

Where the ghosts and ghouls cry,

Aah-aah-aah-aah!

Ooh-oooh-oooh-oooh!

Aah-aah-aah-aah! Ooh-oooh-oooh-oooh!

Aaaah!

AAAAHAHAHA!!!

Think of all the evil things that happened here,
On this haunted road to Shanter farm.

ALL STORMY CREW & TAM

From that old stone wall someone hang'd theirsel',
And the hunters found the murdered bairn right there,

ALL STORMY CREW

It was on that stone that Charlie's neck was broke,
In a dreadful blizzard that he choked,
And this evil storm has all their ghosts awoke.
And the wind grows worse,
Howls like Satan's curse,
And the rain and the snow,
And the winds blow and blow,
In the night.

Aah-aah-aah-aah!
Ooh-ooh-ooh-ooh!
Aah-aah-aah-aah!
Aaaargh!
AAAAH!

In the black, black night,
Shines a bright, bright light,
From the haunted Kirk o' Alloway,
There's a hellish sound,
And it loud resounds,
Sounds like ghosts or witches all at play.

(Instrumental section)

ALL STORMY CREW

Are you scared of spooks?
Will you have a look?
Are you scared?
Will you dare?
Will you dare?

[Applause]

TRANSITION C: THE APPARITION

(Tam)

TAM (SPOKEN)

Oh, Maggie

Ah don't know about you

But I'm thinking that we should shoot the craw...

(Instrumental section)

There she birls before ma eyes

That Cutty Sark!

Ah'm hypnotised!

[Segue]

Song 4: **Witches Brew**

(Coven Crew & Nannie/Cutty Sark)

COVEN CREW

Ah, Tam!
Come on!
Don't be, afraid,

Ah, Tam!
Come on!
Don't be, afraid,

John Barleycorn,
Has made you bold enough,
For unco' sights.

The grimmest ghosts and ghouls,
All in a dance,
Upon the flair,
See warlocks, witches, hags,
All in a dance,
All were there!

Sat upon a window seat,
The De'il himsel'
Provides a ghastly beat,
A sly ol' dog he,
Screwed the pipes and gart them skirl,
'Til roof and rafters a' did dirl,
Black and grim and large.

Ah, Tam!
You've made,
A big, mistake.

Ah, Tam!
Come on,
Are you, afraid?
For all the whisky in the world,
Is not enough for this!

Who watch with cold, dead eyes,
All in a row, around this scene?
But corpses holding lamps,
They're all aglow,
Faces green!

NANNIE/CUTTY SARK

To spur Maggie on to the light,

And you will see,
A strange and unco' sight.

They all were there!

You're thinkin' that, Maggie was right.

You are not bold,
It's only drunkenness!

With faces green!

There upon the ghastly table,
Blood soaked knives,
That throats did mangle, hatchets,
Ropes that hanged some folks,
And more!

With witches, warlocks,
Mangled throats,
And more!

COVEN CREW

Ah, Tam!
Don't watch!
Ah, Tam!
Don't look!

Ah, Tam!
Don't watch!
Ah, Tam!
Don't look!
Before your very eyes,
Will this dark dance,
Grow darker still?

NANNIE/CUTTY SARK

A sight to drive sober men mad,

Don't look, don't watch

These birlin' beasts,
Will surely,
Make you ill

(De'il's Bagpipe instrumental)

COVEN CREW

With hornpipes, jigs and reels,
All in a sweat the dancers flew,
And to the stinking air,
Most of their clothes they threw,
Roasting in our ghastly coven.
Hotter than some hellish oven.
Aaaargh!!

NANNIE/CUTTY SARK

Hotter than some hellish oven.
Aaaargh!!

[Applause]

TAM (SPOKEN)

Well done Cutty Sark!!

[Segue]

Song 5: **The Chase**

(All Groups, Nannie/Cutty Sark & Tam)

NANNIE (SPOKEN)

Ah, Tam

Ah, Tam

Thou'll get thy fairin!

In Hell they'll roast thee like a herrin'!

TAM (SPOKEN)

Now do thou speedy utmost, Meg

And win the key-stane of the brig.

COVEN CREW & NANNIE/CUTTY SARK (SPOKEN IN RHYTHM)

Following you,

We're following you,

We're right on your tail,

And we'll catch up with you two.

What did you do?

Oh what did you do?

You spied on our coven,

And now you must pay the full price,

You'll pay with your life!

Jump over hedge, gallop through field,

You're splashing through puddles and splattered with mud,

What's the use?

We're gaining on you!

COVEN CREW

As all of Satan's crew follow you out,

we'll scream and shout,

The thud of hearts and hooves,

Even the storm our cries drown out.

STORMY AND TAVERN CREW

As all of Satan's crew follow you out,

they'll scream and shout,

The thud of hearts and hooves,

Even the storm their cries drown out.

NANNIE/CUTTY SARK

Keep up the race, don't drop your pace,

We must catch him before he's crossed the bridge!

TAM

Come on!

Come on!

We're almost there!

ALL

Come on!
Come on!

For over running stream,
Even a burn,
They cannot cross,
Oh, Nannie, all is lost.

TAM (SPOKEN)

1,2,3.....JUMP!!!

NARRATOR OR ROBERT BURNS V/O (SPOKEN)

*For Nannie, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble Maggie press'd
And flew at Tam wi furious ettle
But little wist she Maggie's mettle
A spring brought off her master hale
But left behind her ain grey tail
That carlin caught her by the rump
And left poor Maggie scarce a stump*

ALL GROUPS (SUNG)

But just before we thought that Tammy was lost,
Our Nannie grabbed the tail of the horse,
And ripped and tore the hairy thing off.

Beware! Beware! Beware!
When cold midnight chimes,
Of ghosts and ghouls and things made of slime,
Don't worry, Tam...

NANNIE/CUTTY SARK

We'll get you next time!

ALL

Beware whene'er to drink you are inclined,

ALL

Or scanty Cutty Sarks run in your mind.

ALL

Remember Tam's poor mare!

[Applause]