

Banks Of Claudy

(Loreena McKennitt version)

Words & Music:
Traditional Irish
Arr: Loreena McKennitt

As I walked out one morning all in the month of May
Down by a flowery garden I carelessly did stray

I overheard a young maid in sorrow did complain,
All for her absent lover who plows the raging main.

I boldly stepped up to her and put her in surprise.
I know she did not know me, I being in disguise.

I says, "Me charming creature, my joy, my hearts delight,
How far have you to travel this dark and dreary night?"

"I'm in search of a faithless young man. Johnny is his name.
And along the Banks of Claudy I'm told he does remain."

"This is the Banks of Claudy fair maid where on you stand.
But don't depend on Johnny for he's a false young man.

Oh don't depend on Johnny for he'll not meet you here.
But tarry with me in yon green woods no danger need you fear

Oh it's six long weeks or better since Johnny left the shore
He's crossing the wild ocean where the foam and the billows roar

He's crossing the wild ocean for honour and for fame.
But this I've beard, the ship was wrecked all on the coast of Spain."

Oh it's when she heard this dreadful news she flew into despair
By the wringing of her milk white hands and the tearing of her hair.

Saying "If Johnny he is drowned no man on earth I'll take,
But through lonesome groves and valleys I'll wander for his sake."

Oh it's when he saw her loyalty no longer could he stand
He flew into her arms saying "Betsy I'm the man."

"Saying Betsy I'm the young man the cause of all your pain
But since we've met on Claudy Banks we'll never part again."