

"TAM LIN"

Stage play and lyrics by Molly Anderson

Music by David Simpson and Anne-Marie Williams

October 2022

Cast of characters:

Tam Lin
Janet, his sweetheart/wife
Meg, her friend
Saunders, Meg's husband
Colin, her brother, who also loves Janet
The Queen of Elfland
Villagers
Elfin folk

Act 1
Scene 1

The Village of Carterhough (pronounced Carterhow) in c. 1550. The backdrop shows hills, bare and scraggy trees and perhaps a cottage and church (painted on gauze, with about a third of the stage behind). Front scenery is a barn or cowshed, a few sheep or cows, woodpile, etc. The villagers are working, the men chopping wood, cutting peat, milking cows, using scythes, ploughs, etc, the women feeding hens, washing clothes and children, cooking or preparing food, etc. The costumes are simple 1550 rural - no kilts - the older women with shawls over their heads. Janet is in the foreground, sewing her wedding veil and listening to the others.

MEN

*Working for a living is never-ending
Day after day each one the same.
Working for a living, living just for working,
A life of poverty and pain.*

ALL

*Working for a living, is never-ending
Day after day each one exactly the same.
Working for a living, living just for working,
And only death itself will ever make things change.
In Carterhaugh they never change.*

MEN

*You lift potatoes, plant the crops
You chop the wood, you milk the cows,*

SAUNDERS

And then, you do it all again

MEN

*You pull the plough, you mend the tack,
You burst your lungs, you break your back,
A few hours sleep, and then its morning again.*

ALL

*Working for a living, is never-ending
Day after day each one the same.
Working for a living, living just for working,
A life of poverty that starts and ends in pain.*

WOMEN

*You wash the clothes, you feed the hens,
You light the fire, you smack the bairns,*

MEG

A few hours sleep, and then you're pregnant again.

WOMEN

*You mend the shirts, you clean and cook,
The larder's bare, you lose your looks,
And only death will ever make things change.*

ALL

*Working, sleeping, grieving, sighing
Sometimes stealing, often lying
Years slip past and when you're dying
You'll only know
You wasted life and now you're finding
It's too late for any mending
There can be no happy ending
That's how it goes.*

*Working for a living, is never-ending
Day after day each one the same.
Working for a living, living just for working,
And only death can make things change.
In this cruel world they're never, ever going to change.*

The villagers carry on milking, etc.

MEG
Are you listening, Janet?

COLIN
This is no way to be talking, on a girl's wedding eve.
Pay them no mind, Janet. It's nothing but idle talk.

JANET
I hear them, but I don't listen. Such talk is idle.
Our life is here in Carterhaugh, working, yes, but also
loving. We know nothing better, so why complain? You
have Saunders, Meg – you have your children. That was
all the dream you ever wanted. To be the wife of Tam
Lin and the mother of his children will be enough of
a life for me. I love him.

MEG
Love? Love ends tonight in your marriage bed. Tomorrow
Tam Lin's good looks will count for nothing. Real
life starts tomorrow – work. pain. Grief.

COLIN
Hold your tongue, woman. Here comes Tam Lin now.

SAUNDERS
No, best not tell him what course his life will take
Tam has a wanderlust in him – he might just leave Janet
waiting at the church door for ever.

TAM LIN:
Never that. (kisses Janet) Janet and I will be wed tonight. What
nonsense have you all been talking?

SAUNDERS
No offence, Tam. We were just making a few observations
on the nature of life – and married bliss in particular.

TAM LIN
Save your sarcasm, Saunders. Janet and I love each other.

SAUNDERS
Maybe so. But what happens to love when the calf has
died – when the children are crying for food you haven't
got – when your pretty young sweetheart has become a
scolding matron?

The villagers have gathered round

VILLAGER 1
No more stolen kisses in the churchyard for you after
tonight, Tam Lin.

VILLAGER 2
No more dancing a reel – with every girl wishing Tam Lin
was her partner.

VILLAGER 3
No more walks in the dusk at springtime – with a different lass on
your arm every year.

VILLAGER 4

No more moonlit nights in the heather on the hillside.

TAM LIN

Quiet, all of you. Janet is the only girl for me now
- and for ever!

COLIN

Well said, Tam Lin!

SAUNDERS

Well enough, but it's only part of the story.

MEN

*Loving makes men merry, marriage makes them sorry.
Year after year their troubles grow.
Love holds out a promise, that is never answered,
And hearts grow hard when love is cold.*

WOMEN

*Love makes women marry, too soon we're sorry,
Year after year our families multiply and grow.
How quickly men deny the promises they made us,
When love is dead and gone then you can just forget
The foolish hopes you had before.*

MEN

*You tie a knot, you make a vow
You've thrown away your freedom now
Nothing you own is yours any more
You used to talk, you used to kiss*

VILLAGER 1

But now she's cross, her headache's worse

MEN

You're growing old, and you don't care anymore.

ALL

*Loving make us marry, marriage makes us sorry,
Year after year our troubles grow.
Love holds out a promise, one that's never answered,
Hearts learn to hate when love turns sour and then grows cold.*

WOMEN

*You swear a vow, you give your life
No more a woman just a wife,
Each year a child is born in sickness and pain.
The babies cry, the larder's bare,
There seems no place to turn for help, and you
Just wish that you were single again.*

ALL

*Fighting, sharing, kissing, crying,
Sometimes cheating, often lying,
Broken promises denying
Can this be love?
We made our vows with such abandon
It's too late for any mending
There can be no happy ending
That's how it goes.*

*Loving makes us marry, marriage makes us sorry,
Year after year our troubles grow.
Love holds out a promise, one that's never answered.
Hearts learn to hate when love grows old
Too soon sweet love turns sour and then grows cold.*

Tam Lin and Janet have been listening, standing one at each side of the front of the stage.

[Church Bells]

SAUNDERS

It's time for your wedding, Tam Lin. If you're still game for it? (Tam bridles) Right then, we'd best get the church decorated for them. At least we can give them a good start to married life.

MEG

Come on Janet. Fetch your wedding veil. I'll help you dress. You must look your best for your big night.

Exit all except Tam Lin. He starts to gather up his scythe, plough, etc.

TAM LIN

*You tie a knot, you make a vow
You've thrown away your freedom now
You find your time is not your own any more.*

*There must another place, a rich and pleasant land.
Where colours glow and songbirds play, a fair enchanted land.
There must be a life that's free,
There must be a life that's free*

ELFIN QUEEN (off-stage)
Tam Lin!

Tam Lin!

*In my enchanted country
Sunlight brightens every pleasure
Music charms the ear for ever
Nights belong to love.
In my far distant country
Freedom welcomes every pleasure
Moonlight guides the lips of lovers
Time stands still for love.*

[Orchestra rising finish to church bells]
Tam Lin slowly walks towards the song and glowing light behind gauze curtain.

TAM LIN
Janet!

He hesitates, torn between the two.

TAM LIN
Janet! You're beautiful!

JANET
Are you ready, Tam Lin?

TAM LIN
Yes, yes I'm ready.

Tam Lin goes to her, the light behind the gauze fades

JANET
No regrets already?

*You tie a knot, you make a vow
And you have lost your freedom now*

Is that the way it will be, Tam Lin'?

TAM LIN
(after hesitation)
No, no, of course not.
Not for us.

JANET
Perhaps it's true. But it's only a part of the truth.

*Loving, kissing, touching, sighing,
Sometimes laughing, sometimes crying,
Always sharing, always trying.*

This is our love.

JANET
*Like a dove in the storm, my heart flies to you.
Like a flower in the sun, I open to you.
Your love makes me Joyful, courageous and true,
Your strength is mine, for in love we are one.*

TAM LIN
*Like a dove in the storm, my heart flies to you.
Like the swallow in springtime I search for my home.
Your love makes me joyful, courageous and true,
And your truth is mine, for in love we are one.*

TAM LIN and JANET
*As children we played on the banks of the stream,
We followed the curlew through heather and glen.
Now love will join us as husband and wife,
To have and to hold, and to cherish for life.*

TAM LIN
Like a dove in the storm, my heart flies to you.

JANET
Like a flower in the sun, I open to you.

TAM LIN
Your love makes me joyful courageous and true,

JANET
Your truth is mine, for in love we are one.

TAM LIN and JANET
*As children we played on the banks of the stream,
We followed the curlew through heather and glen.
Now love will join us as husband and wife,
To have and to hold, and to cherish for life.*

*Whatever life holds you will always be there,
First in my heart for better or worse,
To share in our sorrows. To share in our joys.
With our sacred vow we unite in our love.*

Villagers have entered and now wait to lead them to the door of the church. They repeat the last verse as wedding hymn.

TAM LIN and JANET
*Whatever life holds you will always be there,
First in my heart for better or worse,
To share in our sorrows, to share in our joys.
With our sacred vow we unite in our love.*

Act 2
Scene 1

Orchestra plays short version of Working For a Living.
and the curtain rises on the village of Carterhaugh four years
later. Tam Lin with Saunders and Colin are chopping wood and
mending ploughs, etc.

TAM LIN
(Straightens up, eases his aching back)
Working for a living is never ending!

SAUNDERS
Don't say I didn't warn you.

TAM LIN
You did. Marriage! Three babies in four years - all of
them always hungry, always needing shoes - or something.
A roof that always needs mending, a wife that's always
worn out...

TAM LIN
*Loving makes men merry, marriage makes them worry,
Year after year their troubles grow.
Love holds out a promise, one that's never answered,
And hearts grow hard when love is cold.*

SAUNDERS
Funny, I always thought you'd be the one to get away from
Carterhaugh, Tam Lin. See something of the world - make
your fortune maybe.

TAM LIN
I thought so too - once. But I chose Janet.

COLIN
Janet chose you and you should realise how lucky you
are, Tam Lin.

Tam Lin and Saunders exchange looks and laugh, knowing that Colin is
still in love with Janet.

TAM LIN
You should have wed her yourself, then, Colin. Then
you'd know what Saunders and I are on about.

Tam Lin goes on singing, wearily, little or no accompaniment.
Saunders and Colin gather up their ploughs and things, say goodnight
and exit stage.

TAM LIN
*You tie a knot, you make a vow
You've thrown away your freedom now
You find your time its not your own any more.
The babies cry, the larder's bare,
There seems no place to turn for help, and you
Just wish that you were single again.*

TAM LIN
*I made a vow
For better or for worse
And gave away all my dreams.
Love makes us fools,
And mocks our weary lives.
Time robs us of our youth.
I made a promise then,*

*I set the course I'm on,
My options all are gone.*

*One vow
And I gave up all my dreams
Of one day being free.
There's another world
I never will explore
I'll never leave this place
To start anew.*

*Only a dream
To get away
To escape out of this place.
I've set the course I'm on,
I'll never leave this place
And start again*

*Dreaming is done
I've set the course I'm on
Time robs us of our youth.
And then he laughs,
And then he laughs,
And then he laughs,
And then he laughs.*

Tan sighs, and goes back to chopping up his woodpile.

TAM LIN
*There must be another world of happiness and love
There must be a better time when life is kind and fair.*

ELFIN QUEEN
(offstage, echoing call)
Tam Lin!

ELFIN QUEEN
Tam Lin!

TAM LIN
(looking around)
Who calls me?

ELFIN QUEEN
Tam Lin, I answered your call and I called you.

(lights behind gauze curtain hazily bright colours, sunlight, trees,
etc.)

Enter Queen of Elfland slipping through curtain.

Tam:
(crossing himself and drawing back)
Hail to thee, Mary Queen of Heaven!

ELFIN QUEEN
Oh no, Tam Lin. That name doesn't belong to me.
I'm but the Queen of fair Elfland that calls you.
Do you dare to follow me?

TAMLIN
No, Lady. I have a wife and three fine babies. I have
sheep to tend, land to plough. I'll not follow you I

know not where.

ELFIN QUEEN

Ah, lying Tam Lin. Didn't I listen to the longings
of your heart. Didn't I feel in my own flesh the
sharpness of your hunger for something more – the
bright colours of the sun, the song of birds and
flutes, the rapture of careless love?
Look, Tam Lin, look at my fair country.

(More lights behind the gauze show pretty Elfland).

Elfland. Where winter has no frost, roses have
no thorns, pleasure has no pain, words have no
bitter edge. Will you follow me, Tan Lin?

*In my enchanted country
Sunlight dapples wood and valley
Fireflies light each dusky hollow,
Nights belong to love.*

*In my far distant country
Freedom welcomes every pleasure
Moonlight guides the lips of lovers
Time stands still for love.*

*I'll feast you, on soft golden wine and honey,
Dress you, in garments of gossamer silk,
Wash you, in showers of rose-scented dewdrops
Love you
Love you from moonrise till morning.*

*Endless pleasures light this country
Apples ripe by crystal rivers,
Melodies linger on ears for ever,
Senses wake to sweet desire.*

*I'd tempt you, with beauty that never grows older,
Touch you, with fingers of thistledown fire
Kiss you, with lips that meet your surrender
Love you
Love you from moonlight till morning.*

TAM LIN

Lady, would you have me risk my immortal soul?

ELFIN QUEEN

(laughs)

Is Tam Lin afraid? So young, so strong,
so handsome – and yet afraid. Well – do you dare
to kiss my lips?

TAM LIN

(defiantly)

A kiss is something that will never
frighten me!

Tam Lin kisses her, and is immediately entranced.

ELFIN QUEEN

Now I will be sure of your strong young body. Now
you will follow me.

He follows her to the curtain, which half parts to show more of
Elfland behind.

ELFIN QUEEN

One warning, Tam Lin, before you enter. There
is no return from fair Elfland. Step through, and you

must serve me well for seven long years. Fail me and
you must pay a forfeit to Hell.

The Queen steps through the curtain. Tam Lin hesitates a moment, then follows.

The curtain parts completely, to reveal the Elfin Folk, all dressed in beautiful colours, eating fruit, drinking wine, most with their arms around each other. Some dance. The Queen winds herself around Tam Lin.

ELFIN QUEEN AND ALL FAERIES
*In this enchanted country
Sunlight brightens every pleasure
Music charms the ear for ever
Nights belong to love*

— End of Scene 1 —

Act 2
Scene 2

The village of Carterhaugh. It is St. Valentine's Day, 7 years later. Janet is sitting spinning in outside her cottage. Her three ragged children play or sleep in a corner.

Enter Meg – followed by villagers as she talks.

MEG

How long do you intend to sit moping on your own?
It's been seven years now since Tam Lin left you.

JANET

Left, or was carried off! I know how long it's been.
I've counted every day.

MEG

How long can you go on like this? Struggling for
a bare existence? You're worn out – your children
are hungry and in rags. You know Colin would marry you
tomorrow if you'd have him. Today is St. Valentine's
Day. Make a new start by coming to our village
dance with him.

JANET

But Tam Lin is my husband.

MEG

Tam Lin is gone! Colin would be a good father to
Tam Lin's children – he loves you, Janet.

JANET

I love Tam Lin!

VILLAGER 1

Tam Lin has gone!

VILLAGER 2

You can forget Tam Lin. He's left you flat.

VILLAGER 3

Think of yourself and your children Janet.

MEG

*You know what you should do
You know that he's walked out on you
The time for tears is done,
Now you must think of moving on
No matter what you say,
You know he threw your love away.
You gave that man your heart,
And he just broke your life apart.*

ALL

*Don't waste your tears regretting,
There's more to life than this.*

MEG

*He promised to be true,
He lied and made a fool of you.
Now that's all in the past,
Forget the bitter aftertaste.
It's time to start anew
I know what life can bring to you.
True love can still be yours,
If you'll forget these foolish tears.*

ALL

*Wake up. Shape up.
There's more to life than this.
It's time to take your chances
And look life in the face.*

*You know what you should do,
The future still looks good for you.
Find happiness again,
The love that's gone cannot return.
It's time to look around,
And get yourself up off the ground.
Go for the things you want,
Get out and grab life by the throat.*

*Forget the pain you've been through,
The bitter days you've seen,
Make up the time you've wasted,
Learn how to laugh again.
Your time for tears is over,
So many years remain.
Forget the past you've wasted,
And learn to live again.*

MEG

*Come on, Janet. It's St. Valentine's Day, and we're
going to the dance. Colin, persuade her to come.*

(Exit Meg and villagers)

COLIN

*Meg's right you know. Janet. You can't grieve for
Tam Lin for ever. He's been gone for seven years -
and heaven alone knows where! He won't come back!
Janet, you must know I've always loved you. Perhaps you
can never love me as you loved Tam Lin, but can't
you learn to trust me - to let me love you and care
for you?*

JANET

*I'm sorry, Colin. Tam Lin is my husband. And
I still love him. I know it's been seven years. But
you're wrong. He will come back one day - I know it, I
can feel it. Surely my love must bring him back to me?*

COLIN

*I must accept your answer - but Tam Lin doesn't deserve
your love, Janet. Where is he? And how will your love
reach him - wherever he is?*

Exit Colin.

JANET

*I made a vow
For better or for worse
And gave away, all my heart
Was I a fool
To love you as I did
To give you all I was, with no reserve?*

*I made a promise then
Too late to wonder now
If love should be deserved*

*Did I try
To change the way you were
To hold you here with me?*

*Did I try to tie you down
When you wanted to be gone
And trample on your dreams
Of being free?*

*I gave too much,
Or not enough,
To hold you, here with me*

*You wanted so much more
It wasn't mine to give
I offered all I had
And that was love*

*No matter where you're gone
No matter who you've found
One thing she'll never give
A love like mine*

A love as true as mine

A love as true as mine

- END OF ACT TWO -

Act 3
Scene 1

Elfland. Elfin folk enjoying themselves. The Queen draped around Tam Lin.

QUEEN

(gets up very imperiously)

Oh! Tam Lin you begin to bore me! Why is it you mortals are so limited and unimaginative? Has all your fire gone out after only four years in my service! Do we not seduce your senses with every pleasure? Do we not have beauty that never fades? Wine that intoxicates without inebriating?

Do we not play music sweeter than the finest flutes and tabors of your earthly courts? Offer you passion that is constantly renewed? And still you tire!

Ah you men! What feeble lily-livered creatures you are!
Come Oberon! Tam Lin is spent. You must entertain me until he is rested and recharged.

A handsome young faun goes and lies down with the Queen on a gilded couch. Tam Lin comes to the front of the stage.

TAM LIN

*She mocks me now, she taunts me now, though I have loved her well.
Her fickle fancy turns from me, her heart is hard as stone.
For this I left my wife and babes and wandered far from home,
For this I risked my peace with God, and my immortal soul.*

He is followed by Female Elfin Folk, who mock him.

ELF 1

Silly Tam Lin

ELF 2

Look at him sulking like a baby

ELF 3

Oh poor, poor Tam Lin

FEMALE ELFIN FOLK

*A man may be stalwart and six feet tall
A man so proud of his strength
But when he's put to the test in the game of love
He just crumbles to nothing at all*

*A man will swell up with his boastful talk
And a woman must tell him he's so grand
But his swaggering ways and his clever words
Are just promises written on sand*

*But when blizzards and storms lay waste to their dreams
It's we who must build them again*

*A man may be husky and six foot tall
So handsome and proud of his strength
Men think they are sovereign lords of all
That the winds will blow at their command*

*But it's we who have given him life
And it's we who will watch him die*

*He flaunts his immortal soul
His final vainglorious lie.
But put to the test in the game of love,*

He just crumbles to nothing at all.

*But it's we who have given him life
And it's we who will watch him die*

TAM LIN

Leave me alone! You're all heartless... unfeeling... inhuman...!

ELFIN QUEEN

*Let him be, my merry nymphs. His own sullen thoughts are fit enough
company for Tam Lin in his unpleasantness. Let him sulk. Like it or
not, he has three more long years to serve in my company.*

TAM LIN

*Catching moonbeams just to see them shine and slip away
Careless love can sicken though it's sweet like sugared fruit
Empty days grow tasteless, the games will sour and stale*

*She mocks me now, she taunts me now, though I have loved her well
Her fickle fancy turns from me, her heart is hard as stone.*

Careless love. Empty love.

Chasing pleasure like a shadow in a land that's only make believe.

*For this I risked my peace with God and my immortal soul
For this I left my wife and babes and wandered far from home
There must be, another land
My thoughts fly back to those I left so long ago, back home in
Carterhaugh.*

JANET (in the distance)

*Like a dove in the storm, my heart flies to you.
Like a flower in the sun, I open to you.
Your love makes me Joyful, courageous and true,
Your strength is mine, for in love we are one.*

TAM LIN

*I left the one who loves me
Yet still I hear her soft voice calling
Still I feel her constant yearning,
Calling me back home.*

*When alone and in sad silence
I feel the whisper of her sighing
In my dreams I see her sorrow
In her pain she calls me*

*My guilt condemns me
Yet I might hope to find forgiveness
through her gentle love.
And then my heart could be at peace*

*End this idleness, mend this apathy
Leave this life I am living.
Get down from this carousel and stand upon the ground
My heart can not find peace while I falter in vain regretting.*

*I broke her heart
I must go back
Mend the damage and heal the wounds
Go back again and make a new beginning*

*I know I love her.
In reckless haste I ran away,*

*Yet might I hope to find forgiveness
in her gentle love*

*When alone and in sad silence
I feel the whisper of her sighing
In my dreams see her sorrow
In her pain she calls me
In my soul I feel her sorrow
In her pain she calls me*

*I must go back
I broke her heart
Repair the damage and heal the wounds
Go back again and make a new beginning.*

*I hear her voice
She calls me back.
Repair the damage and heal the wounds
And find again the peace and tenderness of love.*

The Queen of Elfland rises and confronts him.

ELFIN QUEEN

Still sulking, Tam Lin? Is your little mortal pride wounded by my neglect? I can soon put that right!

She puts her arms round his neck, but he pushes her away. She withdraws, furious.

So! The earthling is rebellious! Come here!

Tam Lin sulkily goes to stand in front of her.

Kiss my feet.

He sulkily kisses her feet.

Kiss my lips.

He hesitates, then kisses her lips, and is immediately more amenable.

TAM LIN

Lady, your lips are nectarines, your hair is moonlight. Your eyes...

ELFIN QUEEN
Yes?

TAM LIN

Your eyes are sparkling rivers of water. Your body is sweet scented lilies. Your voice...

ELFIN QUEEN
Yes?

TAM LIN

Lady. You are every perfection. But (sinking to his knees) Madam, I am homesick. My heart aches to return to my home in Carterhaugh – to my friends, my children, my wife.

ELFIN QUEEN
(furious)

So! This is how you repay our hospitality!
You want to go home! To your dirty, damp and damned village. Your whingeing brats. Your colourless, gormless, spineless, whimpering little wimp of a wife!

TAM LIN
I must go back!

ELFIN QUEEN
And pay the price?

TAM LIN
The price?

ELFIN QUEEN
Did I not warn you, Tam Lin? That you must serve me well for seven long years? You have served only four years here in Elfland as yet. Did I not warn you, Tam Lin? Break your contract with me and you must pay a forfeit to Hell!

She turns her back and sweeps off to the rear of the stage. Tam Lin follows her.

TAM LIN
I must go back! I must go back!

The gauze curtain fall, Elfland is hidden, while the orchestra continues the theme of "I must go back". At the front of the stage we are in Carterhaugh. In Carterhaugh it is now 28 years later and Janet is old.

Scene 2

Janet is propped on a low bed and she looks old and ill. Saunders, Colin and few villagers are trying to comfort her as she is ill and dying.

MEG
Make your peace with God

SAUNDERS
Renounce Tam Lin

COLIN
Now God is calling you home and you must cast aside your loyalty to one who has wandered away.

SAUNDERS
Make your peace with God

MEG
Renounce Tam Lin

COLIN
He has abandoned you in life. Don't let him rob you also of your peace beyond the grave.

SAUNDERS
Make your peace with God

MEG
Renounce Tam Lin.

COLIN
Now, you are dying. God is calling you home. and you must make your peace with Him. Now God is calling you, and you must cast aside your loyalty and cease to love Tam Lin.

JANET
No! no!

I love him still. He is my husband still.
If he has left me in my life, I still can hope that he will come back
to comfort me at my death.

VILLAGER 2

After 28 years? And what comfort can Tam Lin give? If what people say
is true he has gone far beyond the bounds of earthly comfort. Think
of your own soul and make your own peace with God. There can be no
peace and no forgiveness for Tam Lin.

JANET

If there is peace for me, there must be peace for Tam Lin. By our
vows we were united for ever. If he has done wrong my love will plead
for him. If he is judged my love will intercede for him.

JANET

Tam Lin! Come home! Tam Lin!

*Like a dove in a storm. my heart calls to you.
Like a flower seeking water, my soul longs for you.
Wherever you wandered, whatever you've done,
Hear my love calling, still calling you home.
In sickness and sorrow I waited for you,
Through the long weary years I kept faith with you.
Now as I weaken with each aching breath
And yield to the winter of pitiless death.*

TAM LIN

(offstage)

*Like a dove in the storm, my heart flies to you,
Like the salmon in springtime I search for my home*

JANET

*I hear his voice calling, I know he is near!
My love will return, for in love we are one*

TAM LIN and JANET

*As children we played on the banks of the stream,
We followed the curlew through heather and glen
At last our love joined us as husband and wife
To have and to hold, and to cherish for life.*

*Like a dove in the storm, my heart flies to you.
Like the swallow in the springtime, I search for my home
Your love makes me joyful, courageous and true
And your truth is mine, for in love we are one.
Like a dove in the storm, my heart flies to you.
Like the salmon in the springtime I search for my home
Our love has joined us as husband and wife
In our love we are one in death as in life.*

(Offstage – Queen of Elfland's call)

ELFIN QUEEN

Tam Lin! You are mine!

TAM LIN

Janet calls me! I must go back!

ELFIN QUEEN

Tam Lin!

TAM LIN

I must go back!

Roll of drums, clash of cymbals, roll of thunder, flash of lightning.

Janet falls back dead. Villagers cower in terror, except for Meg who is holding Janet in her arms. Tam Lin steps through the curtain to a flash of lightning, etc.

TAM LIN
Janet!

MEG
Tam Lin! You are too late. She is dead.

TAM LIN
Janet!
(he takes her lifeless body in his arms)

MEG
(withdraws, looking at him in horror)
Tam Lin! What devil's work have you been on?
What fiend from hell has stayed the hand of time?
Janet is dead. The rest of us are old and frail.
While you have sold your soul and are forever young.
What fiend from hell has stolen your soul and stayed the hand of
time?

TAM LIN
Meg?
(he looks properly at old Janet)
Janet?

MEG
Yes. Meg. Janet. And Saunders, Colin, all of us are old. (she points
them out)
But you – Tam Lin! It's twenty-eight years that you've been gone. And
yet you come back still the same young man!

TAM LIN
Twenty-eight years!

(soliloquising)

Seven long years I must serve her the Queen of Elfland told me. Four
long years I Served in Elfland ... and that was seven times four in
Carterhough! That Elfin temptress tricked me!

VILLAGER 1
Tam Lin! What devil's work have you been on?
What fiend from hell has stayed the hand of time?

TAM LIN
My babies! What of my children?

MEG
Children! Your children all are grown and gone.
Killed in the war, or married, far from home.

VILLAGER 2
Your children are gone
and Janet mourned in sad despair alone.

TAM LIN
What devil's work have you been on?
What fiend from hell has stayed the hand of time?
What fiend from hell has stolen your soul and stayed the hand of
time?

Meg and the others withdraw to the furthest edge of the stage,
leaving Tam Lin alone in despair with Janet's body.

TAM LIN

*If I could change the skies and go back to the beginning
With an innocent map of the future
If I could re-write my life and find a rational pattern
Or discover a happy ending.*

*One day you're a young man who dreams of a life worth living
Searching for new horizons.
One day you're a lover, the next a husband, a father
Time has stolen the dream.*

*Time turns around and the moment is past
Time turns around, your chances are lost
The choices are made, the bridges are crossed
And the plans that you treasured have tarnished and crumbled away.*

*Is there ever a time when our choices are clear before us?
Unclouded by shifting emotions.
Is there ever a time when we measure the pain we cause,
When we follow a star of hope.*

*Did I try to cheat time, believe life lasted forever?
Or that wrongs could ever be righted?
Did I think that repentance could ever lead to forgiveness.
That wounds could ever be healed?*

*Is there nothing, nobody there?
Justice and mercy, are they just empty words?
Is there nothing, nobody there?
But echoes from a world that keeps spinning in uncaring time.
Is there nothing, no reason to live?
Can there ever be hope for the world?
Is it set in a pattern of pain and regret?
Or can love break the circle to free us and show us the way?*

ALL

*Is there nothing, nobody there?
Justice and mercy, are they just empty words?
Is there nothing, nobody there?
But echoes from a world that keeps spinning in uncaring time.
Is there nothing, no reason to live?
Can there ever be hope for the world?
Is it set in a pattern of pain and regret?
Or can love break the circle to free us and show us the way?*

As Tam Lin covers Janet's body, the villagers relent and come to help him. Music link into 'Like a Dove in the Storm' theme. As they lift the body on a stretcher bed. Saunders puts an arm round Tam Lin's shoulders in comfort as they carry Janet away.

END