The Cruel Mother

Child Ballad 20

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G           D              G
There was a lady, lived in York,
      D7             G
All a lone and alone y,
                            D       C
She fell in love with her father's clerk,
Dm                    G
Down by the greenwood sidey.
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She loved him up, she loved him down,
All alone and aloney
She loved him till he filled her arms
Down by the greenwood sidey.

She leaned her back against an oak, All alone, etc.
First it bent and then it broke. Down, etc.

She leaned her back against a thorn,
And there she had two fine babies born.

She pulled down her yellow hair,
She bound it around their feet and hands.

She pulled out a wee penknife,
Stabbed those two babes to the heart.

She laid them under a marble stone,
Then she turned as a fair maid home.

One day she was sitting in her father's hall,
She saw two babes come playing at ball.

Babes, oh babes, if you was mine,
I'd dress you up in scarlet fine.

Mother, oh, mother, it's we was yours,
Scarlet fine was our own heart's blood.

You wiped your penknife on your shoe,
The more you wiped, more red it grew.

You laid us under a marble stone,
Now you sit as a fair maid home.

Babes, oh, babes, it's Heaven for you,
Mother, oh, mother, it's Hell for you.