

Hunting the Wren

$\text{♩} = 400$

"What- 'll we do?" says Ris- ky Rob. "What' ll we do?" says Ro- bin to Bob.

5 "What- 'll we do?" says Jack- all - a - lone. "What' ll we do?" says ev - 'ry - one.

"What'll we do?" says Risky Rob.

"What'll we do?" says Robin to Bob.

"What'll we do?" says Jack-all-alone.

"What'll we do?" says everyone.

"We'll hunt the wren." says Risky Rob.

"We'll hunt the wren." says Robin to Bob.

"We'll hunt the wren." says Jack-all-alone.

"We'll hunt the wren." says everyone.

"How'll we shoot her?" says Risky Rob.

"How'll we shoot her?" says Robin to Bob.

"How'll we shoot her?" says Jack-all-alone.

"How'll we shoot her?" says everyone.

"Sticks and stones," says Risky Rob.

"Bows and arrows," says Robin to Bob.

"Big guns and cannons," says Jack-all-alone.

"That's how we'll do it," says everyone.

"How'll we carry her?" says Risky Rob.

"How'll we carry her?" says Robin to Bob.

"How'll we carry her?" says Jack-all-alone.

"How'll we carry her?" says everyone.

"Four strong men's shoulders," says Risky Rob.

"Horse and wagon," says Robin to Bob.

"A big eighteen-wheeler," says Jack-all-alone.

"That's how we'll do it," says everyone.

"How'll we cook her?" says Risky Rob.

"How'll we cook her?" says Robin to Bob.

"How'll we cook her?" says Jack-all-alone.

"How'll we cook her?" says everyone.

"Pots and pans," says Risky Rob.

"Bloody great cauldrons," says Robin to Bob.

"A microwave oven," says Jack-all-alone.

"That's how we'll do it," says everyone.

"How'll we carve her?" says Risky Rob.
"How'll we carve her?" says Robin to Bob.
"How'll we carve her?" says Jack—all-alone.
"How'll we carve her?" says everyone.

"Knives and forks," says Risky Rob.
"Hatchets and cleavers," says Robin to Bob.
"Gas-driven chainsaws," says Jack—all-alone.
"That's how we'll do it," says everyone.

"Who'll come to dinner?" says Risky Rob.
"Who'll come to dinner?" says Robin to Bob.
"Who'll come to dinner?" says Jack—all-alone.
"Who'll come to dinner?" says everyone.

"The King and the Queen," says Risky Rob.
"The House and the Senate," says Robin to Bob.
"All of New England," says Jack—all-alone.
"Invite the whole world," says everyone.

"Eyes to the blind," says Risky Rob.
"Legs to the lame" says Robin to Bob.
"Ribs to the poor" says Jack—all-alone.
"Bones to the dogs" says everyone.

It was believed that the wren's song betrayed St. Stephen, hiding from pursuit, to martyrdom. Thus on St. Stephen's Day, December 26, a wren was traditionally killed, and a group of boys would carry it in procession from house to house. Hunting the Wren is our reworking of the wrenning song found in many parts of Britain (and in America, where it survives as Billy Barlow). [Notes from Nowell Sing We Clear.]

Hunting the Wren

"Manx Ballads & Music," (1896) edited by A. W. Moore, has these translated verses which may have formed the basis for Barrand and Roberts' version.

We'll away to the wood, says Robin to Bobbin;
We'll away to the wood, says Richard to Robin.
We'll away to the wood, says Jack of the Land;
We'll away to the wood, says everyone.

What shall we do there? says Robin to Bobbin;
Repeat these lines as above.

We will hunt the wren, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
Where is he? where is he? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
In yonder green bush, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
I see him, I see him, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
How shall we get him down, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
With sticks and stones, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
He is dead, he is dead, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.],
How shall we get him home? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
We'll hire a cart, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
Whose cart shall we hire? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
Johnny Bill Fell's, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
Who will stand driver? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
Filley the Tweet, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
He's home, he's home, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
How shall we get him boil'd? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
In the brewery pan, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
How shall we get him in? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
With iron bars and a rope, says Robin to Bobbin
He is in, he is in, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
He is boil'd, he is boil'd, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
How shall we get him out? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
With a long pitchfork, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
He is out, he is out, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
Who's to dine at the dinner? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
The King and the Queen, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
How shall we get him eat? says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
With knives and forks, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]
He is eat, he is eat, says Robin to Bobbin. [& etc.]

The eyes for the blind, says Robin to Bobbin.
The legs for the lame, says Richard to Robin;
The pluck for the poor, says Jack of the land;
The bones for the dogs, says every one.

The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
We have caught, St. Stephen's Day, in the furze;
Although he is little, his family's great,
I pray you, good dame, do give us a treat.