Headnote

The lyrics for this song were part of a discarded draft of Act III ridiculing the Abbot, who has instructed Manfred to “devote thyself / To penance, and with gift of all thy lands / To the Monastery.” In response, Manfred presents the greedy Abbot with a casket. When the Abbot opens it, out pops the demon Ashteroth singing this song (Manfred, 2017. 64) Bishop kept “The Witches’ Carnival” by placing it at the end of the scene with the Witch of the Alps. The comic grotesque of Byron’s lyrics and Bishop’s melodic shifts effectively prepare for the arrival at the Hall of Arimanes. Rescuing this discarded song, Bishop has preserved “the one detail of Manfred lifted directly from Faust” (Cochran, Manfred n36; Hewitt, Byron, Shelley and Goethe’s Faust). Byron’s lines on the ravens parallel Faust’s flight past the raven stone (gallows) where witches have gathered (Faust 4399-4404). The lines on the dance of the witches draws from the Walpurgis Night (Faust 3958-4015). Even without the sense of vast space conjured by the full orchestra, this reduction preserves the sprightly energy of Bishop’s setting and his concern with echoing the established musical tropes of witchery.

- Frederick Burwick
The Witches Carnival

Lord Byron

Allegro Moderato

SOPRANO

ALTO

TENOR

BASS

Piano

The Witches Carnival

Henry R Bishop
sits on the Raven stone,

sits on the Raven stone,

And his black wing flits on the milk white bone,
milk white bone,

To and fro' as the night winds blow,

The car-cass of th'assassin swings,

And there alone, on the raven stone,
The raven
flaps his dusky wings

The raven
flaps his dusky wings

flaps his dusky wings

flaps his dusky wings
And there alone, on the raven stone

The raven flaps his wings

And there alone, on the raven stone

The raven flaps his wings
wings.

The fet-
ters

The fet-
ters

The fet-
ters
creak and his e-bon beak

croaks to the

creak and his e-bon beak

croaks to the

close of the hol-low sound

And this is the

close of the hol-low sound

And this is the
tune by the light of the moon

To which the witches dance

The witches dance their

To which the witches dance

The witches dance their


cheerily cheerily cheerily merri-ly merri-ly merri-ly merri-ly speeds the ball

merri-ly speeds the ball merri-ly speeds the ball speeds the ball

merri-ly speeds the ball merri-ly speeds the ball speeds the ball
The dead in their shrouds and the

Demon in clouds,

The dead in their shrouds and the

Demon in clouds,
Flock to the witches' carnival
Flock to the witches' carnival, the

Flock to the witches' carnival
Flock to the witches' carnival, the

dead flock to the carnival
Flock to the witches carnival

dead flock to the carnival
Flock to the witches carnival

139

143

147
Flock to the witches carni-val,

Principal Soli

The dead

Flock to the witches carni-val,
dead flock to the
dead flock to the
carnival Flock to the witches carnival
carnival Flock to the witches carnival
Flock to the witches carnival
Flock to the witches carnival, The
dead flock to the carnival
dead flock to the carnival

The
flock to the witches carnival,

flock to the witches carnival,

flock to the witches carnival,

flock to the witches carnival,

flock to the witches carnival,

The

Flock to the witches carnival

The
carnival, the, carnival, flock
carnival, the, carnival, flock
to the witches carnival
to the witches carnival
Flock to the witches Carnival

Flock to the witches Carnival

212

Flock to the witches Carnival

Flock to the witches Carnival

216

Flock to the witches Carnival

Flock to the witches Carnival