



Angela Carter and Folk Music

This is the English version text of *Lucy Wan* - which Angela sang. It is unpunctuated, which Angela preferred as it allows free interpretation by the singer:

LUCY WAN

Fair Lucy she sits at her father's door
A-weeping and making moan
And by there came her brother dear
What ails thee Lucy Wan

I ail and I ail dear brother she said,
I'll tell you the reason why
there is a child between my two sides
Between you dear Billy and I

And he has drawn his good broad sword
that hung down by his knee
And he has cutted off fair Lucy Wan's head
and her fair body in three.

Oh I have cutted off my greyhound's head
And I pray you pardon me
Oh this is not the blood of our greyhound
But the blood of our Lucy

Oh what will you do when your father comes to know
My son pray tell to me
I shall dress myself in a new suit of blue
And sail to a far country

Oh what will you do with your houses and your lands
My son pray tell to me
I shall leave them all to my children so small
And one by two by three

Oh when will you turn to your own wife again
My son pray tell to me
When the sun and the moon rise over yonder hill
And I hope that will never never be

Chris Molan notes:

This is the first song that I recall Angela singing in 1963, while she and Paul were still running Ballads and Broad sides at the Bear in Hotwells. That year we'd all been learning material from the wonderful *The Penguin Book of English Folksongs* (1959) which included the song which Angela used for her dissertation as well as 'Lucy Wan'. This folk song was collected from the singing of Mrs Dann, Cottenham, Cambs. (JFDSS 1 53) and is the only oral version found in England and Scotland since 1827, being no. 51 in Child Collection.

The editor of the book was A.L.L (Bert) Lloyd, "Father" of the national folksong revival, and Paul Carter's colleague at Topic Records. In the same year, Angela heard Bert tell 'Mr Fox' at The Bear in Hotwells. On the sleeve notes to his 1956 LP *The Foggy Dew and Other Traditional English Love Songs*, Bert wonders: "Is he that dreadful Mr Fox in the English folk-tale, the elegant gentleman whose bedroom was full of skeletons and buckets of blood?" This question will resonate with anyone who has read Angela Carter's adaptation of the Bluebeard folk tale, "The Bloody Chamber"

<https://mainlynorfolk.info/lloyd/songs/reynardine.html>.