

The South Wind

(All The Tunes In The World, An Gaoth Andheas, I Have a Secret to Tell Thee,
Southwind, The Wind From The South, The Southern Breeze.)

AABAAB

Trad. Irish – FF Version

Rhythm: waltz

Notes: There is a story behind this song, according to the Fiddler's Companion;

O'Sullivan states that little is known of the author of the original Gaelic song, save that he was a native of Irrul, County Mayo, named Domnhall Meirgeach Mac Con Mara (Freckled Donal Macnamara). The late fiddler Junior Crehan (1908–1998) told a story about how the air was learned by the west Clare musicians. It seems that a ghost ship was bringing back to Ireland the souls of the Wild Geese (i.e. Irish exiles) who had been killed in battle. As the vessel proceeded around southwest Cork it was driven up the west coast by a southern breeze and the ghosts of the Wild Geese could be heard chanting this tune, which was picked up by musicians on the coast of Clare who witnessed the event. The song begins:

A ghaoth andeas na mbraon mbog glas
 A ni gach faithe féarmhar
 Bheir iasg ir eas is grian i dteas
 Is lion is meas ar ghéagaibh
 Más sios ar fad mar mbinn féin seal
 Is mianach leat-sa séide
 Cuirim Ri na bhFear dhod chaomhaint ar neart
 'S tu/ir don tir sin blas mo bhéil-se

O wind from the south with the soft clear drops
 You that make every sward grassy
 Bring the fish to the waterfall, give heat to the sun
 And abundance of fruit to the branches

It is far to the north where I once lived
That you are minded to blow
May the King of Power preserve you in strength
And give the taste of my mouth to that country

And from the Session;

Lyrics

South wind of the gentle rain, you banish winter weather
Bring salmon to the pool again, the bees among the heather
If northward now you mean to blow, as you rustle soft above me
God speed be with you as you go and a kiss for those that love me

From south I come with velvet breeze, my word all nature blesses,
I melt the snow and strew the leas (meadows) with flowers and warm caresses;
I'll help you to dispel your woes, with joy I'll take your greeting
And bear it to your loved Mayo upon my wings so fleeting.

My Connaght famed for wine and play, So leal, so gay, so loving,
Here's my fond kiss I send today, Borne on the wind in its roving.
These Munster folk are good and kind, Right royally they treat me,
But this land I'd gladly leave behind, With your Connaght pipes to greet me.

And Finally there is this – also from the Session;

South Wind, Ewan McVicar version

The lyrics I referred to were written by Ewan McVicar. This is what he says about it:
"The All The Tunes In The World air is an amended version of The South Wind – key difference is that the original has more notes at the end of each line, and in some phrases. The song was written for Jim Daily, who would not stop playing tunes at closing time – when at last he did he would start to 'diddle' the tunes to me, while the publican told me to stop him! The publican could tell that there was no use him trying to talk sense to a fiddle player, but I play guitar so am clearly more sensible. My lyric as given above, except that I wrote and sing 'playtime is done', not 'o'er', which was Janet Russell's amendment in her wonderful recording of the song. By the way, the 'gantry' is the frame behind the bar where the bottles and glasses hang. Best regards." Ewan

All the tunes in the world
(Ewan McVicar)

Lay down the borrowed guitar
Lay down the fiddle and bow
You'd like one more drink from the bar
But the manager says you must go.

CHORUS:

And all the tunes in the world
Are dancing around in your head
But the clock on the gantry says playtime is o'er
You'll just have to sing them instead.

Lay down the jig and the reel

Lay down the planxty and slide
Everyone knows how you feel
But there's no time to take one more ride.

The barmaid has put on her coat
And the barman has emptied the slops
The manager's pals are afraid
The music will bring in the cops.

Everyone here feels the same
Oh yes, you deserve one more tune
But you know the rules of the game
It's time to go howl at the moon.