

Swinging on a Birch Tree

Swinging on a birch-tree
To a sleepy tune,
Hummed by all the breezes
In the month of June!

Little leaves a-flutter
Sound like dancing drops
Of a brook on pebbles, –
Song that never stops.

Up and down we seesaw:
Up into the sky;
How it opens on us,
Like a wide blue eye!

You and I are sailors
Rocking on a mast;
And the world's our vessel:
Ho! she sails so fast!

Blue, blue sea around us;
Not a ship in sight;
They will hang out lanterns
When they pass, to-night.

We with ours will follow
Through the midnight deep;
Not a thought of danger,
Though the crew's asleep.

O, how still the air is!
There an oriole flew;
What a jolly whistle!
He's a sailor, too.

Yonder is his hammock
In the elm-top high:
One more ballad, messmate!
Sing it as you fly!

Up and down we seesaw;
Down into the grass,
Scented fern, and rosebuds,
All a woven mass.

That's the sort of carpet
Fitted for our feet;
Tapestry nor velvet
Is so rich and neat.

Swinging on a birch-tree!
This is summer joy,
Fun for all vacation, –
Don't you think so, boy?

Up and down to seesaw,
Merry and at ease,
Careless as a brook is,
Idle as the breeze.

~ *Lucy Larcom* ~