

Description of the scene

Under the moonlit, cloud-swept sky the night was as still as a silent shiver. Silhouettes of trees flailed their bent arms in the depths of the wood, casting long shadows awkwardly on the rain-soaked ground. Owls and bats crossed the woods as a distant clock struck midnight. Without a sound the highwayman's horse padded across the low dark undergrowth, making her way through the earthy, damp ferns.

The moon was a bouncing balloon, high in the sky, driven by the April wind. Like a stone in a drum, the highwayman's heartbeat echoed in the silence. His whole being was completely full of longing for the girl he loved. When he left the forest, a soft smile kissed his lips as he confidently anticipated seeing Bess.

At long last the hooves of his proud, sleek mare clattered like a guilty secret onto the harsh grey cobblestones.