SLEEP I CAN GET NANE

Robert Burns is undoubtedly best known for his poems, but his music is wonderful. Burns collected old Scottish folk songs and airs, and set many of his poems to music. He would often compose a poem with a particular tune in mind, so I think we can fairly call him a songwriter as well as a poet. Burns was probably capable of composing a good tune, but most of the time he borrowed tunes for the songs he wrote – a legitimate use of the folk process. Burns also wrote in Scots dialect, so this beautiful song needs a little translation, though it is well worth learning a few new words. You can hear an excellent rendering of this song by English singer-songwriter Maria Barham at the link below.

AYE WAUKIN O

By Robert Burns

G Em D
Summer's a pleasant time; flowers of ev'ry colour.
C D Em C D
The water rins o'er the heugh, and I long for my true lover.
D G
Aye, waukin oh.

Chorus:
G D Em
Waukin – still and weary. Sleep, I can get nane.
C D
For thinkin' on my dearie.
D G
Aye, waukin, oh.

When I sleep I dream. When I wake I'm eerie.
Sleep I can get nane – for dreamin' of my dearie.

Chorus

Lanely night comes on. All the lave are sleepin'.
I think on my bonie lad; and I blear my eyes wi' weepin'.
Aye, waukin oh.

Chorus

Waukin – Waking *Heugh* – A steep crag or cliff *All the lave* – All the rest