

## The Silkie of Sule Skerry

In Norway land there lived a maid  
“Hush, baloo lillie” this maid began  
“I know not where my bairn’s father is  
By land or sea does he traivel in”

It happened on a certain day  
When this fair maid lay fast asleep  
That in came a guid grey silkie  
And sat him doon at her bed feet

Saying “Awak, awak ma fair pretty maid  
For oh how sound as thou dost sleep  
I’ll tell thee whaur yer bairn’s faither is  
He’s lyin close at your bed feet”

“I pray ye tell tae me your name  
An tell me whaur your dwelling is?”  
“My name it is guid Hein Mailer  
I earn ma livin oot ower the sea”

“I am a man upon the land  
I am a silkie in the sea  
And when I’m far from every strand  
My dwellin ‘tis on Sule Skerry”

“Alas, alas this weary fate  
This weary fate that’s been laid on me,  
That a man should come frae the West o Hoy  
Tae the Noraway lands tae hae a bairn by me”

He said “Ye’ll nurse ma little wee son  
For seiven lang years upon yer knee  
And at the end o seiven lang years  
I’ll come back again wi white money

And she has nursed his little wee son  
For seiven lang years upon her knee  
And at the end o seiven lang years  
He’s cam back again wi the nourrice fee

He said “ I’ll pit a chain roon his neck  
An a gey gowd chain oh it will be  
And if ever he comes tae the Noraway lands  
Ye’ll hae a guid guess on who is he”

An he said “Ye’ll wed a gunner guid  
An a gey guid gunner it will be  
And he’ll gae oot on a May morning  
He’ll shoot your son and the grey silkie”

And she has wed a gunner guid  
An a gey guid gunner it was he  
And he went oot on a May morning  
He shot the son and the grey silkie

“Alas, alas this woeful fate  
This weary fate that’s been laid on me”  
She sobbed and sighed and bitter cried  
Her tender hert did brak in three