

The Great Silkie

Based upon Child Ballad 113

G F G
An earthly n ouris sits and sings,
Em Am D Bm
And aye she sings "ba lily wean."
C Bm Am Em
Little Ken I my bairnis father,
Am Em F G
Far less the land that he saps in.

Then in steps he to her bed fit,
And a grumley guest I'm sure was he,
Saying, here I am, thy bairny's father,
Although I be not comely.

I am a man upon the land,
And I am a silky in the sea,
And when I'm far and far from land,
My home it is in Sule Skerry.

It was na weel, quo the maiden fair,
It was na weel, indeed quo she.
That the great silky from Sule Skerry
Should hae come and aught a bairn ta me.

Then he has taken a purse of gold,
And he has pat it upon her knee,
Saying, gie to me my little young son,
And take thee up thy nourris fee.

It shall come to pass on a summer's day,
When the sun shines hot on every stone,
That I shall take my little young son
And teach him for to swim the foam.

And thou shall marry a proud gunner,
And a proud gunner I'm sure he'll be,
And the very first shot that ever he'll shoot
He'll kill both my young son and me.

Alas, alas, the maiden cried,
This weary fate's been laid for me;
And then she said and then she said,
I'll bury me in Sule Skerry.