Binnorie (Two Sisters)

(alternate:)

BINNORI.2

(alternate:)

BINNORI.3

(alternate:)

BINNORI.4

Binnorie (Two Sisters)

There were twa sisters sat in a bow'r
    Binnorie, O Binnorie
There cam a knight to be their wooer.
    By the bonnie mill-dams of Binnorie.

He courted the eldest wi' glove and ring
But he lo'ed the youngest aboon a'thing.

He coorted the eldest wi' broach and knife
But he lo'ed the youngest aboon his life.

The eldest she was vexed sair
And sore envied her sister fair.

The eldest said to the youngest ane:
"Will you go and see our father's ships come in"

She's ta'en her by the lily hand
And led her down to the river strand.

The youngest stude upon a stane
The eldest cam' and pushed her in.

She took her by her middle sma'
And dashed her bonny back to the jaw.

"Oh sister, sister reach your hand
And ye shall be heir of half my land"

"Oh sister, I'll not reach my hand
And I'll be heir of all your land."

"Shame fa' the hand that I should take
It's twined me, and my world's make."

"Oh sister, reach me but your glove
And sweet William shall be your love."
"Sink on, nor hope for hand or glove
And sweet William shall better be my love."

"Your cherry cheeks and your yellow hair
Garr'd me gang maiden ever mair."

Sometimes she sunk, sometimes she swam
Until she cam to the miller's dam.

The miller's daughter was baking bread
And gaed for water as she had need.

"O father, father, draw your dam!
There's either a mermaid or a milk-white swan."

The miller hasted and drew his dam
And there he found a drown'd woman.

Ye couldna see her yellow hair
For gowd and pearls that were sae rare.

Ye coldna see her middle sma'
Her gowden girdle was sae braw.

Ye couldna see her lily feet
Her gowden fringes were sae deep.

A famous harper passing by
The sweet pale face he chanced to spy.

And when he looked that lady on
He sighed, and made a heavy moan.

"Sair will they be, whate'er they be
The hearts that live to beat for thee."

He made a harp o' her breast bone
Whose sounds would melt a heart of stone.

The strings he framed of her yellow hair
Their notes made sad the listening ear.

He brought it to her father's ha'

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There was the court assembled there.

He layed the harp upon a stane
And straight it began to play alane.

"O yonder sits my father the King
And yonder sits my mother, the queen."

"And yonder stands my brother Hugh
And by him, my William, sweet and true."

But the last tune that the harp played then
Was: "Woe to my sister, false Helen"

From Bronson, Singing Tradition of Child's Popular Ballads
Version from Bruce and Stokoe, 1882.

Recorded by Dyer-Bennett
Child #10

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