

# LOREENA MCKENNITT

From the Quinlan Road recording *The Mask And Mirror*

## THE BONNY SWANS

*Words traditional, arranged and adapted by Loreena McKennitt*

*Music by Loreena McKennitt*

A farmer there lived in the north country  
a hey ho bonny o  
And he had daughters one, two, three  
The swans swim so bonny o  
These daughters they walked by the river's brim  
a hey ho bonny o  
The eldest pushed the youngest in  
The swans swim so bonny o

Oh sister, oh sister, pray lend me your hand  
with a hey ho a bonny o  
And I will give you house and land  
the swans swim so bonny o  
I'll give you neither hand nor glove  
with a hey ho a bonny o  
Unless you give me your own true love  
the swans swim so bonny o

Sometimes she sank, sometimes she swam  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
Until she came to a miller's dam  
the swans swim so bonny o

The miller's daughter, dressed in red  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
She went for some water to make some bread  
the swans swim so bonny o

Oh father, oh daddy, here swims a swan  
with a hey ho and a bonny o

It's very like a gentle woman  
the swans swim so bonny o  
They placed her on the bank to dry  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
There came a harper passing by  
the swans swim so bonny o

He made harp pins of her fingers fair  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
He made harp strings of her golden hair  
the swans swim so bonny o  
He made a harp of her breast bone  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
And straight it began to play alone  
the swans swim so bonny o

He brought it to her father's hall  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
And there was the court, assembled all  
the swans swim so bonny o  
He laid the harp upon a stone  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
And straight it began to play lone  
the swans swim so bonny o

And there does sit my father the King  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
And yonder sits my mother the Queen  
the swans swim so bonny o  
And there does sit my brother Hugh  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
And by him William, sweet and true  
the swans swim so bonny o  
And there does sit my false sister, Anne  
with a hey ho and a bonny o  
Who drowned me for the sake of a man  
the swans swim so bonny o

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