

## Fear a' Bhata

1. I climb the mountain and scan the ocean  
For thee, my boatman, with fond devotion  
When shall I see thee? today? tomorrow?  
Oh! do not leave me in lonely sorrow.

**Chorus:**

O, my boatman, *na horo aila*, (3x)  
May you await thee where'er thou sailest.

2. Broken-hearted, I droop and languish,  
And frequent tears show mg bosom's anguish;  
Shall I expect thee tonight to cheer me?  
Or close the door, sighing, sad and weary.

3. From passing boatmen I'd fain discover  
If they have heard of or seen my lover;  
They never tell me - I'm only chided,  
And told my heart has been sore misguided

4. My lover promised to bring his lady  
A silken gown and a tartan plaidie,  
A ring of gold which would show his semblance  
But, ah! I fear me for his remembrance.

5. That thou'rt a rover my friends have told me,  
But not the less to my heart I hold thee;  
And every night in my dream I see thee,  
And still at dawn will the visions flee me.

6. I may not hide it - my heart's devotion  
Is not a season's brief emotion;  
Thy love in childhood began to seize me  
And ne'er shall fade until death release me.

7. My friends oft tell me that I must sever  
All thoughts of thee from my heart forever;  
Their words are idle - my passions, swelling,  
Untamed as ocean, can brook no quelling.

8. My heart is weary with ceaseless wailing,  
Like wounded swan when her strength is failing  
Her notes of anguish the lake awaken,  
By all her comrades at last forsaken.

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*Fear a' Bhata* (meaning 'the boatman' is a Scots Gaelic song by Sìne NicFhionnlaigh (Jean Finlayson) of Tong on Lewis in the outer Hebrides who composed it for a fisherman she was courting. They were married soon after. This translation from the Gaelic is by Lachlan MacBean and appears in Moffat's **Minstrelsy of the Scottish Highlands**.

I learned it from Ann Muir, Ed Trickett and Gordon Bok on their **All Will Be Well Again** album.