

Air far al al o

Oran luaidh le Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh (mas fìor).

Air far al al ó

Leader

O hao ri ri ó

Air far al al ó

Chorus

O hao ri ri ó

Siuthadaibh, siuthadaibh, a mhnathan,

Come on, you women,

O ho hì iù ó

Air far al al ó

O hao ri ri ó

Luaidhaibh athaiseach leam. O ho hì...

waulk effortlessly with me.

Tha sinne ‘n seo ceathrar

There are four of us here,

Urta bharrachd air triùir

one more than three.

Cha b’ fhuilear dhuinn ochdnar

There should be eight of us,

‘S urra choltach air stiùir

with a skillful one steering.

Ach ma théid sinn air adhart

But if we go ahead

Nì sinn tadhal ‘san Dùn

we can visit the castle

Far bheil Ruaidhridh mac Iain

where Roderick son of John is,

Mac athar mo rùin

the son of a father who is dear to me.

Fiach am faigh sinn a’ bhiorlinn

Perhaps we’ll get the galley

No ‘m faod e tabhairt dhùinn

if he will give it to us.

Mura faigh sinn a’ bhiorlinn

If we don’t get the galley

Fiach am faigh sinn am bàta

perhaps we’ll get the boat

Chaidh a chàradh as ùr.

that has just been repaired.

“Chan fhaigh sibh a’ bhiorlinn

“You won’t get the galley –

‘S chan fhaod mi tabhairt dhùibh

I can’t give it to you.

‘S ann a gheibh sibh a’ choite

You’ll get the dinghy –

‘S i bu choltaiche dhùibh

That’s more suitable for you!

Nuair a dh’fhalbhas na Faoilich

When winter is over

Théid na saoir os a cionn.”

the carpenters will see to her.”

Gu dé niste nì mise

What shall I do

Ma bhristear mo ghlùn?

if my knee is broken?

Ma bhristear gum bristear

It certainly is broken –

Ma bhristear ‘s oil leam.

unpleasant for me!

Cha dean mi ceum astair

I can’t go a step

Gun tacsar ri m’ chùl

without support at my back.

‘S mi ‘m bothan gun tughadh

I am in a hut that needs thatching

‘S an t-snigh’ os mo chionn.

with the drips on my head.

Siuthadaibh, siuthadaibh, a mhnathan

Refrain: 1st time solo, 2nd time chorus. ♩ = 120

Air fair al al o O hao ri ri o.
Siuthad - aibh, siuthad - aibh, a mhnath - an, O ho hi i iu o
Air fair al al o O hao ri ri o.
Luadh - aibh aigh - ear - ach leam, O ho hi i iu o
Air fair al al o O hao ri ri o.



Loch Dunvegan

This song is reputed to be by the great 17th century bard, Màiri nighean Alasdair Ruaidh. It's in the collection of Skye songs* gathered by Frances Tolmie, who says in a note: "The incident commemorated in this waulking song must have been of great importance at the time of its occurrence." Nah – we think they were having a laugh!

Sgioba Luaidh have found by experience that if there are only four at the waulking board it's quite hard to keep the cloth under control. Eight is an ideal number. But hey! with eight you could crew a galley. "Come on, girls, let's go up to Dunvegan and ask the chief for a loan of his galley to go for a wee sail!" The chief's galley – his pride and joy, his status symbol – crewed by these scruffy women? Not likely! "Tell you what – I'll give you the wee dinghy!" And their laughter echoes down the centuries to us!

Our version is from *Hebridean Folksongs** vol 1, p94, the most complete version of the words we could find.

*See [Bibliography](#)