

Child Waters (Child 63A)

- 1 CHILDE Watters in his stable stoode,
And stroaket his milke-white steede;
To him came a ffaire young ladye
As ere did weare womans wee[de].
- 2 Saies, Christ you saue, good Chyld Waters!
Sayes, Christ you saue and see!
My girdle of gold, *which* was too longe,
Is now to short ffor mee.
- 3 ‘And all is with one chyld of yours,
I ffeelee sturre att my side;
My gowne of greene, it is to strayght;
Before it was to wide.’
- 4 ‘If the child be mine, Faire Ellen,’ he sayd,
‘Be mine, as you tell mee,
Take you Cheshire and Lancashire both,
Take them *your* owne to bee.
- 5 ‘If the child be mine, Ffaire Ellen,’ he said,
‘Be mine, as you doe sweare,
Take you Cheshire and Lancashire both,
And make *that* child *your* heyre.’
- 6 Shee saies, I had rather haue one kisse,
Child Waters, of thy mouth,
Then I wold haue Cheshire and Lancashire both,
That lyes by north and south.
- 7 ‘And I had rather haue a twinkling,
Child Waters, of *your* eye,

Then I wold haue Cheshire and Lancashire both,
To take them mine oune to bee.'

8 'To-morrow, Ellen, I must forth ryde
Soe ffarr into the north countrye;
The ffairest lady *that* I can ffind,
Ellen, must goe with mee.'
'And euer I pray you, Child Watters,
Your ffootpage let me bee!'

9 'If you will my ffootpage be, Ellen,
As you doe tell itt mee,
Then you must cutt your gownne of greene
An inche aboue your knee.

10 'Soe must you doe your yellow lockes,
Another inch aboue your eye;
You must tell noe man what is my name;
My ffootpage then you shall bee.'

11 All this long day Child Waters rode,
Shee ran bare ffoote by his side;
Yett was he neuer soe curteous a *knight*
To say, Ellen, will you ryde?

12 But all this day Child Waters rode,
Shee ran barffoote thorow the broome;
Yett he was neuer soe curteous a *knight*
As to say, Put on your shoone.

13 'Ride softlye,' shee said, 'Child Watters;
Why doe you ryde soe ffast?
The child *which* is no mans but yours
My bodye itt will burst.'

- 14 He sayes, Sees thou yonder water, Ellen,
That fflowes from banke to brim?
'I trust to god, Child Waters,' shee said,
'You will neuer see mee swime.'
- 15 But when shee came to the waters side,
Shee sayled to the chinne:
'Except the *lord* of heauen be my speed,
Now must I learne to swime.'
- 16 The salt waters bare vp Ellens clothes,
Our Ladye bare vpp he[r] chinne,
And Child Waters was a woe man, good *Lord*,
To ssee Faire Ellen swime.
- 17 And when shee ouer the water was,
Shee then came to his knee:
He said, Come hither, Ffaire Ellen,
Loe yonder what I see!
- 18 'Seest thou not yonder hall, Ellen?
Of redd gold shine the yates;
There 's four and twenty ffayre ladyes,
The ffairest is my wordlye make.
- 19 'Seest thou not yonder hall, Ellen?
Of redd gold shineth the tower;
There is four and twenty ffaire ladyes,
The fairest is my paramoure.'
- 20 'I doe see the hall now, Child Waters,
That of redd gold shineth the yates;
God giue good then of *your* selfe,
And of *your* wordlye make!

- 21 'I doe see the hall now, Child Waters,
That of redd gold shineth the tower;
God giue good then of *your* selfe,
And of *your* paramoure!'
- 22 There were four and twenty ladyes,
Were playing att the ball,
And Ellen, was the ffairest ladye,
Must bring his steed to the stall.
- 23 There were four and twenty faire ladyes
Was playing att the chesse;
And Ellen, shee was the ffairest ladye,
Must bring his horsse to grasse.
- 24 And then bespake Child Waters sister,
And these were the words said shee:
You haue the prettyest ffootpage, brother,
That euer I saw with mine eye;
- 25 'But *that* his belly it is soe bigg,
His girdle goes wonderous hye;
And euer I pray you, Child Waters,
Let him goe into the chamber with mee.'
- 26 'It is more meete for a little ffootpage,
That has run through mosse and mire,
To take his supper vpon his knee
And sitt downe by the kitchin fyer,
Then to goe into the chamber with any ladye
That weares soe [rich] attyre.'
- 27 But when thé had supped euery one,
To bedd they took the way;
He sayd, Come hither, my little footpage,
Harken what I doe say.

- 28 And goe thee downe into yonder towne,
And low into the street;
The ffairest ladye *that* thou can find,
Hyer her in mine armes to sleepe,
And take her vp in thine armes two,
For filing of her ffeete.
- 29 Ellen is gone into the towne,
And low into the streete;
The fairest ladye *that* shee cold find
Shee hyred in his armes to sleepe,
And tooke her in her armes two,
For filing of her ffeete.
- 30 'I pray you now, good Child Waters,
That I may creepe in att *your* bedds feete;
For there is noe place about this house
Where I may say a sleepe.'
- 31 This [night] and itt droue on afterward
Till itt was neere the day:
He sayd, Rise vp, my litle ffoote-page,
And giue my steed corne and hay;
And soe doe thou the good blacke oates,
That he may carry me the better away.
- 32 And vp then rose Ffaire Ellen,
And gaue his steed corne and hay,
And soe shee did and the good blacke oates,
That he might carry him the better away.
- 33 Shee layned her backe to the manger side,
And greiuouslye did groane;
And *that* beheard his mother deere,
And heard her make her moane.

- 34 Shee said, Rise vp, thou Child Waters,
I thinke thou art a cursed man;
For yonder is a ghost in thy stable,
That greiuouslye doth groane,
Or else some woman laboures of child,
Shee is soe woe begone.
- 35 But vp then rose Child Waters,
And did on his shirt of silke;
Then he put on his other clothes
On his body as white as milke.
- 36 And when he came to the stable-dore,
Full still *that* hee did stand,
That hee might heare now Faire Ellen,
How shee made her monand.
- 37 Shee said, Lullabye, my owne deere child!
Lullabye, deere child, deere!
I wold thy father were a king,
Thy mother layd on a beere!
- 38 'Peace now,' he said, 'good Faire Ellen,
And be of good cheere, I thee pray,
And the bridall and the churching both,
They shall bee vpon one day.'