

Sawney Bean

Steady

Lionel McClelland

The musical score is written on two staves in G major (one sharp). The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp (F#), and a 4/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'Steady'. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The second staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 2/4 time signature. The melody continues with quarter notes D5, E5, and F#5. The third staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one sharp, and a 4/4 time signature. The melody continues with quarter notes G5, A5, and B5. The lyrics are written below the notes. Chords are indicated above the notes: Bm, F#, Bm, A, Bm, Bm, A, Bm.

Go ye not by Ga-llo-wa co-me bide a while my
6 frein' I'll tell you o' the dan-gers there Be-ware o Saw-ney Bean

Go ye not by Gallowa, come bide a while, my frein,
I'll tell ye o the dangers there. Beware o Sawney Bean.

There's nae body kens that he bides there for his face is seldom seen
But tae meet his eye is tae meet your fate at the hands o Sawney Bean.

For Sawney he has taen a wife and he's hungry bairns tae wean
And he's raised them up on the flesh o men in the cave of Sawney Bean.

An Sawney's sons are young an strong and their blades are sharp and keen
Tae spill the blood o travellers wha meet wi Sawney Bean.

So if you ride frae there tae here, be ye wary in between
Lest they catch your horse and spill your blood in the cave o Sawney Bean

They'll hing ye ap an cut yer throat an they'll pick yer carcass clean
An they'll yase yer banes tae quiet the weans in the cave o Sawney Bean.

But fear ye not, oor Captain rides on an errand o the Queen
And he carries the writ of fire and sword for the head o Sawney Bean.

They've hung them high in Edinburgh toon an likewise a their kin
An the wind blows cauld on a their banes an tae hell they a hae gaen.

A gruesome tale of the fabled family of cannibals who lived in a cave near Girvan. The legend may have a kernel of truth as medieval South West Scotland was certainly a wild and lawless place in parts but the story has grown over many retellings. Possibly not one for younger children but a scary delight for others. This song was written by local musician Lionel McClelland and recorded here with suitably eerie filmic soundscape.

Activity: write your own gruesome tale set in your local area!