

Oi Dai

Kuin oisin omilla mailla
Oman pellon pientarilla,
Oi dai oman pellon
Oman pellon pientarilla

Toisin lintu laulelisin,
Toisin kukkusin käkönen,
Oi dai toisin kukkusin
Toisin kukkusin käkönen

Omat kuuset kuuntelisi,
Omat oppisi petäjät,
Oi dai omat oppisi
Omat oppisi petäjät

Nyt oon mailla vierahilla,
Tuiki tuntemattomilla,
Oi dai tuiki tuntemattomilla
Tuiki tuntemattomilla

Miss ei lennä meien linnut,
Eikä vaaku mein varikset,
Oi dai eikä vaaku mein
Eikä vaaku mein varikset

Mihin jouvun mie polonen,
Jouvuin joutsen-joukostani,
Oi dai jouvuin joutsen
Jouvuin joutsen-joukostani

Haihuin hanhiparvestani,
Haihuin hanhiparvestani
Oi dai haihuin hanhiparvestani
Haihuin hanhiparvestani

Tok mie lintu laulelisin
Sekä kukkusin käkönen
Oi dai sekä kukkusin
Sekä kukkusin käkönen

Oi Dai

I wish I was back home.
I, the cuckoo,
would sing in a different way.

The spruces would listen to me.
The pine trees would learn from me

Now I'm in a foreign land
and can no longer hear my crows.

I left my flock of swans.
I vanished from my flock of geese.

(this translation is from Varttinä's website)

Note from Dr. C:

This song has ancient Karelian origins. Karelia is a region in Eastern Finland and Western Russia and has its own language (related to Finnish). The phrase "Oi Dai" doesn't seem to have any perfectly translatable meaning (not even in Finnish) but apparently, it's generally considered to be an indication of emphasizing or exclaiming the words—kind of like verbal exclamation points.

e.g., The spruces would listen to me. The pine trees would learn from me.
Oh! The pine trees would learn from me!

As a side note, ancient Finno-related cultures, due to their earth-worshipping roots were big into birds relating to spiritual things, i.e., messengers of the gods, etc. In fact, a "soul bird" was said to deliver the soul to a baby and fly it away at death. Also, the cuckoo is important here. The poet, being in a foreign land, relates to the cuckoo. Cuckoos don't build nests. They lay a single egg in another bird's nest where eggs already are. When the cuckoo hatches, it pushes the parent's real chicks out of the nest and gets all the food and care. So the singer would not be singing like a cuckoo if he/she were back home.