

Sleep, Little Daughter

Source:
John Bierhorst
Songs of the Chippewa
New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1974

Sway a - way a - way to sleep, _____

lit - tle daugh - ter, go to sleep.

Oh, sway a - way a - way a - way

a - way a - way, swing-ing a - way oh, _____

lit - tle daugh - ter, go to sleep.

2. Turn and dip away to sleep,
Little one I safely keep.
Oh, dip away away away
Away away, swinging away oh,
Little one I safely keep.

3. Out away and back to me,
Have no fear, I care for thee.
Oh, out away away away
Away away, swinging away oh,
Have no fear, I care for thee.

Background Information

"If the lodge be roomy and high as lodges sometimes are, the cradle is suspended to the top poles to be swung. If not, or the weather be fine, it is tied to the limb of a tree, with small cords made from the inner bark of the linden, and a vibratory motion given to it from head to foot by the mother or some attendant. The motion thus communicated is that of a pendulum or common swing, and may be supposed to be the easiest and most agreeable possible to the child. It is from this motion that the leading idea of the cradle song is taken.

Schoolcraft, Henry Rowe, *Nursery and Cradle Songs of the Forest Oneota* (1845)