This song is from Marjory Kennedy - Fraser’s “Songs of the Hebrides”. These are three verses from a traditional song which would have had many more verses. The remainder of the verses probably lie in an archive somewhere but we can only guess what the story might be. Reading Marjory Kennedy – Fraser’s footnotes tend to suggest that the mermaid fell in love with a mortal man and had child by him. She cannot be united with her lover, all that remains of their love is her daughter. This is her lullaby.

Part of the notes are as follows:
The Swan is “the daughter of the twelve moons” (Nighean an da luan deug) the Seals are “the children of the King of Lochlann [Norway] under spells” (Clann Righ Lochlainn fo gheasa) and the Mallard is under the Virgin’s protection; hence all three are “sacred”, and not even the reivers would meddle with the “tenderling” left under such protection.