

Òran Step

(Sgeama Cruthachadh Obrach)

Ged a tha mi fàs aosta
'S craiceann m' aodainn air ciaradh
'S an geamhradh greannach le dhùire
A' teannadh dlùth ri mo chrì ochan,
Tha mi 'm-bliadhna cho spòrsail
Ri gille-òg ann am fì or-ghaol —
Ged bhiodh fàinneachan òir
Air mo mheòirean 'nan ceudan,
'S mi nis aig Step.

Ged tha mi fo mhùigeachd
A-muigh air chùlaibh na mòintich
Gun daoine tighinn dlùth dhomh
A nì rium sùgradh no còmhradh,
Tha eunlaith nan speuran
Air an éideadh cho bòidheach
'S iad gach là rium ag éigheach:
“Siud thu, eudail a Dhòmhnail —
Tha thu aig Step.”

Thig an t-airgead dhomh feumail:
Gheibh mi léin' agus còta,
Théid mi 'nam éideadh
Mar na reultan le leòmachd;
Gheibh mi botal deoch làidir
A nì slànach' dha m' dhòchas
'S a chuireas sradag 'nam thàlann
Air chor 's gun càin mi gu'm brògan
Muintir Step.

The Step Song

(Jobs Creation Scheme)

Though I'm growing old
With the skin of my face getting paler
And surly winter with its dourness
Coming close to my territory,
This year I'm as active
As a love-torn adolescent —
As if I had gold rings
On my fingers in hundreds,
Being now with Step.

Though I get moody
Out at the back of the hill
With no-one coming near me
For diversion or converse,
The birds of the skies
Are so beautifully clad
As they cry to me daily:
“Oh it's you, Donald darling —
And you're with Step.”

The money will be useful:
I'll get a shirt and a coat,
And when I dress up
I'll be posh like the filmstars;
I'll get a bottle of hard stuff
To salvage my hopes
And put a spark to my talents
For tearing strips off those Step folk
Down to their shoes.

Cha b'è càineadh a dh'fheumainn:
Tha iad reusanta 's uasal,
Thug iad furtachd dha m' éiginn
Nuair nach dèanainn feum anns a' chruaidh-ghleac;
Nuair thig MacAsgaill Di-Haoine
Tillidh aoibh, 's teichidh gruaman —
Sann a dh'fhàsas mi aotrom
A-muigh air aodann nan cruadhach
Aig obair Step.

Sann a thilleas an òige
Agus dòighealachd ùr thugam,
'S théid mi cuairt sì os gu m' eòlas
Mu chòrs Àird nan Srùban;
Nuair théid a' cheist a chur dòigheil
Bidh freagairt shònraicht' gam ionnsaigh
'S nì mi Raonaid a phòsadh —
Ged bhiodh m' òg-bhean fo dhiombadh
Aig muinntir Step.

Nì sinn dachaigh an Rònaigh
Far 'n gin eòrna 's buntàta:
Bidh iasg dhe gach seòrsa
A' snàmh mu chòrsa nam bàgh ann;
Ged a shéideadh an tuath-ghaoth
Gheibh sinn uamha bhios sàbhailt' —
Fads bhios m' òg-bhean ri m' ghualainn
Cha bhi gruaimean gu bràch orm
'S mi aig Step.

Not that I should complain:
They're reasonable and polite,
They helped me out in my crisis
When the struggle defeated me;
When MacAskill comes on Friday
Cheer will return, gloom will flee —
Indeed I'll grow quite light-hearted
Out there on the rockface
Working for Step.

My youth will come back
With new expectations,
And down I'll go to my friends
Round the Àird nan Srùban shore;
When the question's put properly
I'll get a positive reply
And I'll marry Rachel —
Though my bride might annoy
The folk from Step.

We'll make a home in Ronay
Where potatoes and barley take:
All sorts of fish will be swimming
Round the shores of the bays there;
Though the north wind may blow
We'll find a cave that's secure —
While my bride's at my shoulder
I'll never be gloomy
Since I'm with Step.

FREAGAIRT RAONAIÐ

Cha b' e seann daoine riaslach
Bu mhiann leam air chluasaig
Ach òganach ciatach
A chumadh rian air mo bhuidhean,
'S a thigeadh dhachaigh Di-Haoine
An déidh a shaothair a bhuannachd
'S a chuireadh ceud not air a' bhòrd dhomh —
'S chan e ròcais na truaighe
A tha aig Step!

Tha sgall ort gu d' chùlaibh
'S chan eil thu flùrach bho d' bhialaibh,
Tha dearbhadh 'nad ghnùis
Nach d' chuir thu ùidh anns an t-siabann;
'S mas e cùl Eilein Rònaigh
Àite còmhnaidh do mhiann-sa,
Se mo ghuidhe 's mo dhòchas
Gun dèan na ròin ann do stialladh
'S mar sin leat.

AN CO-DHÙNADH

Fàsaidh feur air na raointean,
Fàsaidh fraoch air a' mhòintich,
Tillidh Bealltainn is faoilteach
Gu Uibhist ghaolach Chlann Dhòmhnail,
Bidh lì onadh is tràghadh
Mar as gnàth anns na h-òban
Agus sinne ann an sàmhchair,
Air ar càramh fo fhòidean
'S gun chuimhn' air Step.

Dòmhnall Aonghais Bhàin

RACHEL'S ANSWER

It's not an old man who's troublesome
That I'd like on my pillow
But a young man who's wholesome
And a match for my virtues,
Who'd come home on Fridays
Well paid for his labour
And put a hundred pounds on the table —
Not that miserable pittance
You get from Step!

From behind you're a baldie
And from the front you're no flower,
There is proof in your face
That in soap you've no interest;
And if the back end of Ronay
Is the home of your dreams,
I just pray and hope
The seals have you for breakfast there
And so bye bye.

THE CONCLUSION

Grass will grow on the fields
And heather on moorland,
May and wolftime will return
To darling Uist of Clan Donald,
Tides high and low
Will flow through inlets as usual
As we lie in silence,
Placed under the sods
Without memory of Step.

Donald MacDonald