

ALLT AN LOCHAIN UAINE
(The burn of the green lochan)

by UILLEAM RIDIRE-NAOMH

Aig Allt an Lochain Uaine,
Ged bha'n t-aite fuar,
Bha'n fhardach fuasach blath
Ged thigeadh gaoth 'on thuath orm
'Us cathadh luath o'n aird.
Bha Allt an Lochain Uaine
Le' fhuaim ga m' chur gu pramh.

Mo chailin bhoidheach chuach-bhuidhe,
Na biodh ort gruaim no greann,
Ged tha mi a' dol as m' eadail
Ma's beò dhomh thig mi ann;
S' nuair bhios damh na croic
Ri boilich anns a' ghleann,
Cha d-thoirinn blas do phoig
Air stor nan Innsean thall.

Oidhche dhomh 's mi a' m' aonar
'S mi' comhnuidh anns a' ghleann,
Ann am bothan beag nan sgod
Far an cluinnear boilich mheann,
Air leam fhein gun cuala mi
Fuaim a' dol fo m' cheann
Ag innseadh dhomh 'bhi 'sealltainn
Gun robh an tòir 's a' ghleann.

Dh'eirich mi le buaireadh
'Us thog mi suas mo cheann;
Gach badag 'bha mu'n cuairt domh,
Chuir mi mu'm' ghuailinnibh teann.
Bha 'Nigh'n a' chornail'* shuas uam
A choisinn buaidh 's gach am;
'Us thuirt i 'Na biodh gruaim ort !
Ma's ruaig e, na bi mall.'

Shiubhail mi gach caochan
 O Laogha gu Carn-Mhaim,
 'Us bheachdaich mi gach aon diubh,
 Nach bitheadh daoine annt'.
 Mu'n d'fheuch i air aon charn,
 Ghrad dh'aithnich mi 'san uair sin
 Am 'Madadh Ruadh'† 's a' ghleann.

Labhair mi le ceile,
 'Us dh'eisd mi ris gach allt,
 Mar fhreagrath iad d'a cheile,
 'Us iad gu leir gun chainnt.
 Labhair mi ri m' Uachdaran
 'Thug uillt a' cruas nam beann;
 Le comhnadh 'n Fhir 'chaidh cheusadh,
 Cha bhi mi fein a'm fang.

By the stream of the green lochan,
 though cold was the situation,
 I once had my dwelling which was remarkably warm
 although the piercing North winds often blew
 the drifting snow from the brows of the mountains.
 The gurgling of the burn of the green lochan
 soothed me to sleep.

O beautiful, yellow-haired maiden,
 fret not nor frown,
 though I should leave the place which I love,
 for I shall again return;
 and when the stag of the hill
 is heard proclaiming in the glen,
 I would not exchange the kiss of thy lips
 for all the treasure of the low country.

One night alone
 and resident in the glen,
 sole occupant of that lonely shieling
 where the roes are heard proclaiming,
 I thought I heard
 a sound below my uneasy pillow
 telling me to be watchful,
 for the hunt was already in the glen.

I rose with anger
and lifted up my head;
I buckled on my accoutrements,
fast about my shoulders.
The Colonel's daughter * stood at my right hand
– she who ever behaved well in extremity;
and she said "Be not fearful!
if it comes to pursuit, be not slow."

I travelled the course of every stream
from the Lui to Carnavaime,
and I narrowly explored every hollow,
that might conceal the pursuers;
and before the sun lit up one cairn,
I quickly perceived
that 'Reynard' † was already in the glen.

I sank into serious meditation,
and listened to every stream,
as if they were answering each other,
and they entirely without language.
I spoke to my Lord
who caused the streams to issue in the rocky parts
of the mountains;
through the merits of Him who was crucified
I shall be rescued from difficulty.

* The Colonel's daughter is a figurative name for his favourite rifle, the constant companion of his wanderings, which had been presented to the bard by Colonel Grant of Rothiemurchus.

† The 'Reynard' is the bard's way of describing the gamekeeper.

