

## To Muireadach Albanach Ó Dálaigh

My soul parted from me last night,  
M'anam do sgar riomsa a-raoir.  
In the grave, a pure dear body  
A kind, refined soul was taken  
From me, a linen shroud about her.

Ah, Muireadach Albanach,  
I fear the lack of poetry in these English words,  
A translation doesn't rise and fall like the Gaelic seasons,  
Or like the precious breath of the one you loved:  
All those centuries ago.

A fair white flower has been plucked,  
From the weak and tumbled stalk.  
The love of my heart is bent,  
M'aonar a-nocht damsha, a Dhé.  
Tonight I am alone, God.

But, Muireadach Albanach,  
I wonder who it was you truly loved back then?  
The beauty you speak of, that was half of you,  
Was it a wife, a lover, or more?  
Old Scotland itself.

My heart, the shadow split from me,  
My body's splintered in two.  
One of my hands, one of my eyes,  
She was half my very soul:  
Falamh lom an domhán donn.

Forgive me, Muireadach Albanach,  
Scotland has fallen asleep these eight hundred year,  
And the music of Gaelic belongs only in a museum,  
Or in the Highlands and the forgotten places:  
Your words just echo here.

King of the churches and bells,  
The King of hosts and of roads,  
In his anger, he's taken her.  
Ar dtocht don fhinn mhaisigh mhoill,  
I'm weary speaking of it.

But Muireadach Albanach,  
Mourn for us who have lost our way,  
Forgotten how to care as you showed us,  
Who let the flames of your passion reduce to embers:  
Forgive us, Muireadach Albanach.

People, do not restrain me,  
The sound of weeping's no sin.  
Fierce bare bones come to our house,  
Ar sgaradh dár roghrádh rom,  
Tonight I am alone, God.  
M'annar a-nocht damsha,  
Tonight we are alone.

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A response to *M'anam do riomsa a-raoir* [*Elegy on Mael Mhedha, His Wife*]  
by Muireadhach Albanach Ó Dálaigh: c. 1200-1224