

MUSIC

Cape Breton's Diversity in Unity

Mo Nighean Dubh

Sèist

Mo nighean dubh, tha bòidheach dubh
Mo nighean dubh na trèig mi;
Ged theireadh càch gu robh thu dubh,
Cho geal 's an gruth leam fhèin thu.

1. Moch Là Coinnle anns a' mhadainn,
'M leaba 's mi gun èirigh,
Gum facas òigh an taice rium,
'S a gnùis mar dhealt air gheugan.

2. Tòisichidh mi aig do chasan,
Gus do mhais' a leughadh;
Didòmhaich a' dol dhan chlachan,
Bean do dhreach cha lèir dhomh.

3. Stocainn gheall air rogha dealbha
Air do chalpa glè-gheal;
Brògan barra-chul 's bucaill airgid;
'S tu falbh mar dhealbh na grèine.

4. Seang chorp fallainn mar shneachd mheallainn
Nò mar chanach slèibhe;
Mar fhaoileig chladaich ri là gaillinn
Air chuan mhara 'g èirigh.

5. 'S math thig gùn 's an fhasan dhuit,
Cho math 's a tha 'n Dùn Èideann,
Mu d' mheadhan caol ga theannachadh,
'S a' chamhanaich 's tu 'g èirigh.

6. Do shùilean mar na dearcagan,
Do ghruaidh mar lasair cèire,
Cùl do chinn air dhreach an fhithich,
'S rùn mo chridhe fhèin thu.

7. Falt dubh dualach, trom, neo-luaidhte
'N ceangal sguaid air m' euchdaig;
Gura bòidheach e mu d' chluasan,
'S cha mheas' an cuailean brèid e.

8. Do shùil ghorm chorrach fo d' chaol mhala
Bho 'n tig sealladh èibhinn,
Mar dhealt camhanaich as t-earrach,
'S mar dhriùchd air madainn Chèitein.

9. 'S olc a rinn do chàirdean orm,
'S rinn iad pàirt ort fhèin dhe,
Nuair chuir iad às an dùthaich mi,
'S mi 'n dùil gum bithinn rèidh riut.

10. 'S ged nach dèan mi fìdhleireachd,
Nì mi sgrìobhadh 's leughadh,
Mo làmh gun dèanainn searmon dhuit
Nach talaicheadh neach fon ghrèin air.

11. Cha dèan mi tuilleadh molaidh ort,
Ach 's tu mo rogha cèile;
'S ann ort a tha 'n cùl fàinneagach,
Mar sud 's am bràighe glè-gheal.

Translation:

My Black-Haired Lass

Chorus

My beautiful black-haired lass
Do not forsake me;
Though others say you are dark,
To me you are as white as crowdie.

1. Early on Candlemas morning,
In my bed before I arose,
A maiden was seen close by me,
Her countenance like the dew on branches.

2. I will start at your feet,
To describe your beauty;
On Sunday going to the village,
I cannot see a woman of your appearance.

3. White stockings of excellent design
On the calves of your legs;
Laced shoes with silver buckles;
As you walk like a picture in the sun.

4. A slender healthy body like a snowflake
Or like the cotton of the moorland;
Like a seagull on the shore on a stormy day
Rising over the waves of the sea.

5. You look good in a fashionable gown,
As elegant as any in Edinburgh;
Tightening it around your slender waist
As you arise in the early dawn.

6. Your eyes are like the berries,
Your cheek like the flame from a candle,
The back of your head like the colour of the raven;
You are my heart's desire.

7. Black, curly, heavy, natural hair
Tied like a sheaf on my beloved;
It is beautiful around your ears
And made even better by the head-dress.

8. Your twinkling blue eyes under your slender forehead
Emit a delightful radiance,
Like the dawn dew of spring
And the dew of a May morning.

9. Your relatives did an evil thing to me,
And partly to you also,
When they drove me out of the district,
As I was hoping to be your friend.

10. Although I cannot play the fiddle,
I can read and write;
I assure you that I would preach a sermon for you
That no one on earth could find fault with.

11. I will not lavish further praise on you,
But you are my chosen wife;
You have ringlets in your hair,
And neck of pure-white skin.

Recording:

[Mo Nighean Dubh](#), 1973. Finlay Cameron. T-642. Beaton Institute, Cape Breton University.