

A Mhàiri bhàn òg

Òran da chèile nuadh-phosda
Song to his bride

Donnchadh Bàn Mac an t-Saoir

Rann 1

A Mhàiri bhàn òg 's tu 'n òigh th' air m' aire

Rim bheò bhith far am bithinn fhèin,

O fair young Mary, you're the girl that I mean

To have in my life wherever I am,

On fhuair mi ort còir cho mòr 's bu mhath leam

Le pòsadh ceangail' on chlàir,

Since I obtained my right to you, strong and sure,

With marriage ties from the clergy,

Le cumhnantan teann, 's le banntaibh daingeann,

'S le snaidhm a dh' fhanas nach tràig:

With firm contracts and secure bonds,

And with a knot that will remain and not be forsaken:

'S e d' fhaotainn air làimh, le gràdh gach caraid

Rinn slàinte mhaireann am chrè.

Obtaining your hand, with your family's blessing

Gives me health for life until the grave.

Rann 2

Chaidh mi don choill' an robh croinn is gallain

Bu bhoillsgeil sealladh mun cuairt;

I went to the wood where trees and saplings

Were a radiant sight all around;

'S bha miann mo shùl do dh' fhiùran barraicht'

An dlùths nam meanganan suas:

And my eye desired an excellent sapling

Enclosed in the branches above:

Geug fo bhlàth o bàrr gu talamh,

A lùb mi farasta nuas;

A bough in blossom from its tip to the ground,

Which I bent gently down towards me;

Bu duilich do chàch gu bràth a gearradh,

'S e 'n dàn dhomh 'm faillean a bhuaìn.

It would be hard for another ever to cut it,

When it was destined for me this sapling to pluck.

Rann 3

Chuir mi air thùs ort iùil is aithne

Le sùgradh ceanalta suairc;

I first grew to understand and know you

Through affectionate, gentle wooing;

Nuair theannainn riut dlùth bu chùbhraidh d' anail

Na ùbhlan meala gam buain;

Whenever I came near more fragrant was your breath

Than honey-sweet apples freshly-picked;

Cha bhiodh sgeul-rùin a b' iùil dhomh aithris,

A b' fhiù nach mealladh i bhuaim:

There was no secret I could tell,

Which she could not inveigle out of me;

Nan cuireadh i cùl rium 's diùltach baileach,

Bu chùis dhomh anart is uaigh.

And if she ever turned away and rejected me altogether,

I'd be good for nothing but the shroud and the grave.

òigh - girl; **aire** - mind; **bheò** - life; **far** - where; **bithinn** - I will be; **fhèin** - self; **fhuair** - got, obtained; **ort** - on you; **còir** - right, claim; **cho** - so; **mòr** - great; **mhath** - good; **leam** - with me; **pòsadh** - marriage; **ceangail'** - tied; **chlèir** - clergy; **cumhnantan** - contracts; **teann** - tight, fast; **banntaibh** - bonds; **daingeann** - firm, strong; **snaidhm** - knot; **fhanas** - remain, stay; **trèig** - forsake, abandon; **fhaotainn** - getting, obtaining; **làimh** - hand; **gràdh** - love; fondness; **gach** - each; **caraid** - relative; **rinn** - make; **slàinte** - health; **mhaireann** - lifetime; **chrè** - clay (grave);

Chaidh - went; **choill'** - wood; **croinn** - trees; **gallain** - saplings; **bhoillsgeil** - shining; **sealladh** - sight; spectacle; **mun cuairt** - around; **miann** - desire; **shùl** - eye; **fhiùran** - branch, sapling; **barraicht'** - surpassing; excelling; **dlùths** - close, dense; **meanganan** - branches; **suas** - above; **geug** - branch, bough; **bhlàth** - blossom; **bàrr** - tip, crown; **talamh** - ground; **lùb** - bend; **farasta** - gentle; **nuas** - down to me; **duilich** - difficult; hard; **chàch** - others; **gu bràth** - ever; **gearradh** - cut; **dàn** - fate; destiny; **dhomh** - to me; **faillean** - sapling; **bhuaìn** - harvest; pluck;

Chuir - put, grow; **thùs** - beginning; **ort** - on you; **iùil** - direction, way; **aithne** - know; **sùgradh** - flirt, court; **ceanalta** - gentle; **suairc** - kind, affectionate; **nuair** - when; **theannainn** - I would come near; **riut** - to you; **dlùth** - near, close; **chùbhraidh** - fragrant; **anail** - breath; **ùbhlan** - apples; **meala** - honey; **buain** - picked; **sgeul-rùin** - secret; **iùil** - find way; **dhomh** - to me; **aithris** - tell; **fhiù** - worth; **mealladh** - beguile; **bhuaim** - from me; **cuireadh** - would put; **cùl** - behind, away; **rium** - with me; **diùltach** - reject; **baileach** - completely; **chùis** - cause; **anart** - shroud; **uaigh** - grave;

Rann 4

Nam faighinn an-dràst do chàradh daingeann

An àite falaicht' on eug;

If I could now place you safely

In a place hidden from death;

Ged thigeadh e d' dhàil is m' fhàgail falamh,

Cha b' àill leam bean eil' ad dhèidh;

If it came near you, leaving me forsaken,

I would want no other woman after you;

Cha toir mi gu bràth dhut drànndan teallaich,

Mun àrdaich aileag do chlàibh,

I will never offer you fireside bickering,

Or heaving and sobbing in your breast,

Ach rogha gach mànrain, gràdh is furan,

Cho blàth 's a b' urrainn mo bheul.

But the finest of wooing, love and caressing,

As warm as my lips can manage.

faighinn - could get; **an-dràst** - now;
chàradh - arrange, place; **daingeann** - strong,
safe; **àite** - place; **falaicht'** - hidden; **eug** -
death; **Ged** - if; **dhàil** - meet, come near;
fhàgail - leaving; **falamh** - empty, hollow; **àill**
- want, wish; **leam** - with me; **bean** - woman;
eil' - other; **dhèidh** - after; **toir** - give; **gu**
bràth - ever; **dhut** - to you; **drànndan** -
grumbling; **teallaich** - fireside; **àrdaich** - raise,
heave; **aileag** - hiccup, sob; **chlàibh** - ribcage;
breast; **rogha** - best; **gach** - each, every;
mànrain - loving talk; **gràdh** - love; **furan** -
welcome, fondle; **blàth** - warm; **urrainn** -
able; **bheul** - mouth;

These are four verses from the original seventeen verses that Duncan Ban MacIntyre(1724 - 1812) composed for his bride Mary. She was the daughter of Nicol MacIntyre who was the keeper of an inn on the site of what is now the Inveroran Hotel to the south of Loch Tulla in Argyllshire. Mary died two years after her husband and lies buried beside him in Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh, along with several of their children.

Some authorities believe this to be one of the finest Gaelic love songs and Rann 2 in particular is often highly praised.