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THE KING O THE BLACK ART :
A Study of the Tales of a Group
of Perthshire travellers
in their social context.

Appendix B

Nov 86

THE KING O THE BLACK ART:

A Study of the Tales of a Group
of Perthshire travellers
in their social context

VOL III

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Willie MacPhee SD 1981²' Videotape

II.1 MISTRESS BUMBEE

John Stewart

In this auld foggy dyke, there was a Mistress Bumblee steyed, an her three weans, ye see. An oh! she'd a lovely wee hoose, lovely fire kennel in it, glitterin enow, as bonnie a wee hoose as ye could wish, dry, in this foggy dyke, an well up off the ground it was. An the fog kept it nice and warm.

So anyway, she would go away oot an she would gather as much meat an stuff as she could, an take it back, an the weans'd be rinnin roon aboot on the floor an dancin an cairryin on, waitin on their mither comin hame, ye see. And when she cam in, she wad pit her things away, make them meat an that, an boil the kettle for them, an till the day day.

So the next day, away she goes. She says, "Noo I'll no be lang," she says. "A'm away doon the glen," she says, an she says, "A'll no be lang till A'm back." She says, "Hae the kettle boilin for me."

So she comes oot an she, "Bzzzz - bummmmmmm," here an bummin there, an she's gatherin this an gatherin that, ye see, away tae the fit o the glen. But oh boy it came on a thunder and lightnin storm, ye see. An the rain was lashin doon, an she got that wet, she was only, "Bumm-" an faain, "Bumm-" an faain, ye see, an she was loadit wi what she had been gatherin. So she's got aneth this leaf tae dry hersel, but na! the rain was too heavy.

An she says, "If I could get," she says, "tae the King o the Pishmools," - that's an ant - a wee - the auld fashioned word for them was a pishmool, ye see. "If I could get tae the King o the Pishmools," she said, "A would maybe get a hot drink fae him, an a place tae dry masel oot, afore A got hame."

So she buzzes an bums an crawls an creeps an jumps, but her wings is that wet, she cannae rise, ye know. But down she goes aneth this big chestnut trees, an there was the King o the Pishmool's castle. It wis a big heap o the mools ye see. So up she goes to the door, an she knocks at the door an out the pishmool butlers came. What would she want?

She says, "Away in an ask the King," she says, "wad he let me in tae dry masel," she says. "It come on a thunder storm as ye see," she says, an she says, "A cannae get hame," she says, "ma wings is that wet," she says, "and A wad like," she says, "if he wad let me in," she says, "an gie me somethin warm tae drink," she says, "an get masel dried, till A get hame tae the weans."

So the butler pishmools, they goes in an they're away two, three minutes an oot they comes. They says, "No, he won't let ye in at aa. Ye'll have tae manage. He turns an he told us tae tell ye, 'Where ye got your summer's honey, ye can go an get your winter quarters'."

"Aw haw!" says the Bumblee, "if that's the way o it," she says, "there's nae use o me sittin here, dependin on him, the big baggit pishmool that he is!"

So she bums an bums an bums an she - oy boy! - gin she come oot o the trees, the sun startit tae come oot, an she jumped up on tap o this auld flat stane, an the sun came oot an she buzzed aboot till her wings dried, an she bzzzzzz - bummmmmmed away home, ye see.

So she cam in an the weans had the kettle boilin an the fire was liftin lovely an bright inside her wee hoose. So she gives the weans their meat an sits an she's tellin them aboot this big auld, fat-baggit pishmool that wadnae gie her a thing. "A could hae been gotten deid,"

she says, "but," she says, "A'll mind o him. But anyway, there's a lang road there's no a turnin," she says.

But aboot a week or so after that, maybe a fortnicht, it was a lovely mornin, but it started the samen rain an thunder again, an mist, when there was a knock at the Bumbee's door at the dyke. So some o the wee young bumbees - a wee lassie - went oot. An she come in an she says, "It's two pishmools at the door," she says, "Mam."

She says, "Wait an A'll get them pishmools." She went oot an they says, "Oh the King was oot up on the hill shootin the day, lookin for stuff - game - an the mist came doon an he's lost half his shootin party, an he wants tae see if ye would let him in, tae get something tae eat and drink, before he goes home." Ye See?

She says, "Aye," she says, "where is he?" The big baggit pishmool, he come owre tae the door. She went inside an she says, "Jist wait there a minute." She went in an there was a kettle o boilin water on the fire, an she took it oot, an she jist poured it owre the top o the pishmool. Aw, the screams an the roars an the strips o skin was comin off him an blisters! Ye see? Noo they has tae cairt him away, the butlers an aa them that wis there. Down they cairts him home an aa the word goes roon, aa the birds an aa the insects an aa the things o the day's aa talkin aboot the King bein burned, an he's lyin expectit for death, ye see.

Down the Bumbee buzzes doon an she chaps at the door [knocks]. She says, "Do you mind," she says, "when ye telt me tae go an get - where A made ma summer's honey, tae go an get ma winter's quarters? Well," she says, "you've got it noo. An A've got a dry hoose, an a hoose like a hoose, although it's no maybe as big as yours. But," she says, "when I'm dry an fine inside," she says, "your place is drooned wi the draps aff the trees," she says. "That's my word tae ye." So away she comes an the next day her an the weans was oot on the top o the foggy dyke, lookin doon at the King o the Pishmools gettin buried, wi them aa trailin him along this wall. An they dug his grave an shoved him into't, covered him wi bits o leaves an things, an happed him owre. An the Bumbee an her weans lived in that dyke, happy ever after.

II.2 THE BEARD

Willie MacPhee

Oncet upon a time, was was an old man and an old woman lived on the edge of a big forest and they had three sons, and they lived in a wee small croft there. So things get that bad sometimes that the family has to be go away and look for work for theirselves, ye see. So the eldest brother says, "I think," he says, "boys," he says, "we'll go away," he says, "an look for a job for wursel," he says, "an let the old folk bide here till we come back," he says, "an we'll bring them some money back."

Second young brother says, "Ah, a good idea," he says. "We'll jist do that."

So they got packed up an away they went, these brothers, ye see; one John, one Willie and one George. So away they went along this road till aw! they traivelt many miles and it started tae get dark on them.

So the oldest brother says, "Wullie," he says, "I think," he says, "the best thing we could dae, boys," he says, "is go off the road a bit," he says, "into the shelter o the wood," he says, "an kennle a big fire," he says, "an put up there for the night."

(The other) brother says, "That's fair enough," he says. "We'll go into the wood," he says, "an look for a shelter bit."

So they went away, the three o them, away right intae the wood. Oh an they wandert a good bit in this wood. It started tae get bushy and thick - big trees. They went away in then an they kennlet this big fire an they had a sup o somethin. I don't know what it was but they had their supper an they lay doon, ye see.

Very early in the mornin they wakent up an when they wakent up oh! it was that thick mass of trees aa roon about them they didnae ken what direction they'd come or what direction they had to go, ye see.

"Oh," he says, "I don't know what wey we come in here last night," he says, "or where we've to go. What direction did we come in?" he asked the other two. Oh, nane o them said whit wey they'd come in.

He says, "We'll strike this way," he says, "I think," he says, "this is the road we went, we come in."

So off they set in through this wud, away in, an they traivelt on an they traivelt on, in through this wud. The further they were going in through this wud the thicker it was gettin, an the, an the closer an denser the bushes were gettin. But they traivelt on oh; for six or seven oors. Naw! they couldnae come back on tae the road again. They were goin away the opposite direction. An they come right - an they were that tired tired they couldnae go no further, so this yin the auldest yin says, "You sit there a minute boys," he says, "kennle a fire an I'll see the reek off a distance," he says. An he says, "I'll go away in here," he says, "I'm the freshest. An I'll go an see'f I can come back to the road again."

The other two said, "Very well." They kennlet this big fire an they're sittin. Oh an he was away about anither hour, two hours, an he finally came back.

"Naw," he says, "A cannae get tae the road," he says, "A don't know where the road is," he says. "But A come across a nice wee hut in here," he says. An he says, "We could pass the night in there."

Oh this other two, this is right up this other two's street, ye see, so they made tae this hut anyway. When they came into the hut oh! there was a table an chairs, a big bed, plenty meat in the presses an everything's [indistinct word] ye see.

The auldest yin says, "I wonder," he says, "who bides here." He says, "There must ha been some'dy bidin here lately because," he says, "there's plenty o meat in the press there," he says, "plenty water, plenty everything, plenty tea and sugar," he says, "Must ha been somebody biding here."

The other yin says, "Ah well, I don't care who's biding onyway," he says, "I'm gonnae have some - some'hin tae eat."

So they made theirself a tightener-up an they spent the night onyway there. The oldest brother says, "Look," he says, "seein we're here," he says, "we're as well stoppin as goin ony farther," he says. An he says, "We can trap an hae - get some skins an things," he says, "an that'll make good money for - we'll take back."

The other one says, "Aw, that's all right," he says. "We'll jist do that."

"Well," says the auldest yin, he says, "you John, you're the youngest," he says. "You stop an watch the hut the day till we go away huntin," he says, "an hae oor supper ready comin back." Ye see.

The other two says, "That's all right." Away the two went an John bidit the hut ye see. So John's cookin this meat' it was a big potful o meat, a big potful o tatties, a big pot made - full o soup - three big pots on this big fire. An he's stirring these pots an singin away, when a chap comes to the door.

"Oh," he says, "that'll be the boys back," he says, "A better open the door tae them." He opens the door an lookit out. This was a wee man - that size. He says, "Hallo."

"Hallo," the wee man says.

John says, "Are you the man belongin to this hut? You belang tae this hut?"

"Oh no me," he says. "I don't belong to this hut at aa," he says. "This is no ma hut. But he says, the wee man says, "I'm very hungry, I could do wi some'hin tae eat."

"Oh," says John, "come away in," he says. "Plenty here for everybody," he says. "Come away in."

So the wee man come in, an John fillt a big basin tae him, big bowl thing full o soup and gien him that. Fullt anither big plate full o beef an tatties an gien him that. Oh the wee man was jist seconds, he was [makes supping noise] away wi't in seconds.

He says, "that was good," he says, "John," he says, "I could do wi a bit more."

"Oh," says John, "Ye'll get some more," he says. John gien him a second helpin; all gone again! He jist [supping noise] Second away again. Done both o them.

He says, "Ye can fairly eat, wee man, tae be a wee man!"

"Oh," he says, "I can eat," he says. "I want some more off ye."

"Oh'm afraid," he says, "ye canny get ony mair," he says. "Jist a drop left for ma brothers," he says, "comin back."

He says, "Ye'll have tae give me some mair."

"Well, I'll gie ye a wee drop," John says. Got him up another drop soup, some mair beef an potatoes. Gien this wee man up. Oh, jist seconds and it wis away again!

John looked at the thing. "Something cockeyed here," he says, "in this wee man."

The wee man says, "Look," he says, "I need some more."

"Oh," John says, "look here," he says, "wee man," he says, "ye canny get no more," he says, "I've jist this much left for ma brothers," he says. "Ye can't have no more."

He says, "Ye better give me some more," he says, "or it'll be worse for ye, if ye don't give me some more."

John says, "You better slip yersel," he says, "afore I gie ye a damn good kickin oot the door."

"Oh dae ye think ye could gie me a kickin?" he says.

"Aye," says Joh, "I think I could," he says. John a big strong young man y'know an this man's only this size (indicates small height). [J

"I could kick ye," he says. "Ye better slip yersel," he says.

Ah, he wouldnae go. He says, "Are ye gonnae gie me the rest o the meat that's in the pot," he says, "or A'm gonnae take it oot o yer hide?"

So John says, "Ye're no gettin it," he says. "The best thing ye can dae is take it oot o ma hide."

The wee man startit tae him an John's punchin him here an punchin him there. Na! He's no making a - nut doin no'hin tae this wee man. But this wee man startit head down like this an near endit John's death, near was the cause o his death. Brak every bone in his body: An he's lyin out for the count, saw to the rest o the meat, ate everything that was lyin. So John's lyin in a corner, he's lyin murnin, "Oh, oh, oh," an the blood's comin oot o 'him, aa brecken, see. "Oh," he's goin, "oh!"

Chap comes to the door again. "Oh," he says, "there he's back again! He's comin tae kill me this time!" he says. But naw! it was his brothers back an yin o them had a deer across his back, the auldest yin had a deer, the other yin had a couple o foxes.

The auldest brother. "What happened tae you?" he says. "Whit's happened t'ye? Whit're ye doin lyin in a corner? Where's our supper?"

He says, "Wait a minuet till A tell ye." He says, "I had a good supper there waitin on yese," he says, "an there a wee man come to the door the day", he says, "an I gien him the half o what was there," he says, "an he nearly endit ma days, he near kilt me," he says, "an he took the lot, he's away wi the lot. He ate the lot."

"Aaaaah," says the second auldest brother, he says. He says, "He must - he must have suppit the lot," he says, "an he jist went an fell against stanes tae let on," he says.

"A'm tellin you," says John, he says, "that wee man," he says, "wad kill the three of us," he says, "by comin back."

"Well," says Geordie, "he'll need tae kill me the morn," he says. "You go oot an hunt the morn wi Willie," he says, "an A'll wait on 'im tae see whit happens."

Same thing happent again. The ither brither had this three pots boilin fu o meat an soup an aathing. The ither two wis away. Back this wee man comes again. Chap, chap at the door. Geordie says, "Were you here yesterday?"

"Aye," the wee man says, "I was here yesterday. I was here yesterday."

He says, "Were you the man that ate a' wir meat?"

"Oh," he says, "I never ate much meat," he says. "I just got a wee drop fae your brother."

"Oh I see," he says. "An what dae ye want mebbe?"

He says, "I want ma dinner?"

"Oh, come in," Geordie says, "an get some dinner."

Poor Geordie didnae ken whit wis goin tae happen tae him. Well, anyway, the wee man come in an Geordie gien him a bowl o soup an a big plate o meat an tatties. Aw, jist seconds - it was away! Second helpin jist seconds away! Third helpin - seconds away!

THE BEARD

Geordie says, "I doubt," he says, "there's somethin cockeyed here," he says. "I doubt there's a bit i truth in what ma brother was sayin."

Wee man says, "Gie me the rest," he says, "Ye'll have tae gie me the rest."

"Awwwww," says Geordie, "ye cannae have the rest."

"Oh," says he, "I'll need tae get the rest," he says. "Ye'll need tae gie me the rest." An he says, "A'm gonnae do the same on you as I done on your brother."

"Well," he says, "ye maybe ha managed him" he says, "but A'm a wee bit aulder than him an A'm bigger," he says, "A doot," he says, "A'll gie ye a bit tougher fa'."

But anyway, he got - he got the lot, anyway. This wee man ate the lot again. An he startit tae Geordie. An if he gien the younger brother a bad beatin he gien Geordie a worse beatin. He near kilt him a'thegither. Near endit his days.

The two of them came back again, in frae huntin, an Willie the eldest brother luckit. He says, "Did ye - does this wee man get you tae?"

He says, "There's a wee man here," he says, "comes here an he's no human," he says, "somethin cock-eyed about him" he says, "he's no human."

"Aaaaah," says Willie, "ye must hae been sleepin when the man came in," he says, "an he kickit his sock (?)" he says, "an took the lot." He says, "Ye must hae been lyin sleepin."

He says, [noise on tape] ... "wee man come in and ate the lot."

Willie says, "I'll wait the day," he says, "an see this wee man when he comes."

Away he goes, two youngest brothers an the auldest brother was left. Auldest brother says, "I think there must be somethin in this right enough," he says. "I'll need tae see intae this."

This day Willie was left in he made this big orjurous pot full o soup, packit it full o soup, a bigger pot full o tatties an more beef, aboot three times the quantity, jist comin ready tae the boil, lovely and tasty. This chap comes to the door again.

Willie goes to the door an lucks. "Oh it's you."

"Aye," he says, "it's me."

He says, "You were here - you were here yesterday," he says, "an you were here the day before."

"That's right," the wee man says.

An he says, "You ate wir dinner the day yesterday and the day before yesterday."

"That's right," the wee man says, "an A'll eat yours today, an A'm goin tae sort ye oot tae."

"Oh A doot - A doot that," says Willie. "A doubt ye couldnae do that mate," he says, "'cause," he says, "I think Am'm too much for ye," he says. "A'm bigger than ony o the other two," he says, "an A'm too strong," he says, "An A'll sort ye oot." An he startit so they gaed on. But he says, "Come away first an get somethin tae eat," he says, "before ye start giein me a batin."

So the wee man come in an Willie took this great bowl - a great inorjurous bowl an fillt it full o soup tae him an gien him aw! a great lot o tatties an a great big lump o beef. An he sat doon an he pit this lot doon, ye see. Willie says, "Are ye wantin more?"

He says, "I want some more."

He gien 'im't an gien 'im't till he gien him the lot. This wee man had a belly on him like that, ye see?

But there wis jist a wee drainins lyin in the pot for the other two brothers. We man says, "Ye'll have tae," he says, "gie me the rest o that," he says. "Ye'll not gie me the lot," he says.

"Aw," says Willie, "ye're no gettin the lot," he says. "Ye've had your share," he says, "an ye're not gettin no more," he says, "An A'll have tae keep this little -"

"Well," he says, this wee man says, "if ye're no gaun tae gie't," he says, "ye better get your jacket off an see what ye can dae."

"Oh, but," Willie says, "A can dae this," he says, "very easy."

But however the wee man started. But by good luck the ither two brothers didnae go so very far away this day an they come back early. But him an - Willie an this wee man's fightin an oh! this wee man's knockin hell oot o Willie, off a' directions. Willie's trying his best but as God had it, these brothers came back in time, ye see. An they come in an the three o them set aboot this wee man. An this wee man had a long baird on him, a long white baird like that. Oh an he was gettin that hot, Willie made a grab an he got a haud o his baird, this wee man, wi his two hands like this, an the other two's kickin at him an Willie's haudin this baird til 'im.

Wee man says, "Aw," he says, "I've had enough. I've had enough had enough," he says. "Let me go, let go ma baird," he says.

"Naw," says Willie, "ye're no gettin go wi this baird," he says, "I've got ye cockled when I've got ye by this baird."

"For any sakes," the wee man says, "A'll gie ye anything in the world if ye'll let go ma baird."

"No," says Willie, "I'm not lettin go your baird. The baird's comin aff by the root," he says, "A'm pullin it fae the root off."

The wee man says, "A'll gie ye gold and A'll gie ye silver if ye can cairry - cairry away," he says, "an diamonds an rubbies, if he let go ma baird."

"No," Willie says, "A'm no lettin go your baird."

The wee man says, "A'll show ye where theres a castle," he says, "an young ladies," he says, "tae your wull," he says, "an jewels an diamonds, if ye let go ma baird."

"No," says Willie, "A'm no lettin go your baird. But A'm takin your baird aff," An he rippit the baird aff'im, ye see. An the wee man's rinnin roond wi plooks o water hingin where the baird was. The wee man says, "For God's sake," he says, "give me ma baird back."

"Oh no," says Willie, "ye're no gettin the baird back. This is the baird," he says, "an A'm haudin on tae this baird," he says, "till ye tell me whaur a' this gold is," he says, "an aa this."

"Well," says the wee man, "I'll show ye where it is," he says. "You go an get it youself."

Says Willie, he says, "Whit's aboot this baird?" he says, "that's so precious ye want this baird back?"

"Well," says the wee man, "that's a magic baird," he says, "an wherever ye want tae go an whatever ye want tae dae, say three words tae that baird an ye can land there."

"Oh, is that right?" says Willie. "An," he says, "if A want tae get back hame," he says, "can A say tae this baird that A want tae get back hame?"

The wee man says, "Yes."

"Oh well. Well, first," says Willie, "ye better show me where this ladies is, an this castle an things ye're tellin aboot. Or," he says, "I'm burnin this baird up. What's it gonnae be?"

"Oh for God's sake," the wee man says, "dinnae burn ma baird. Don't burn it!" he says. "An I'll show ye where these ladies is."

"Right," Willie says, "show me where these ladies is."

Away the wee man walks along this pad, wee nerra pad through this wud. An the ither two brothers wa ahin 'im. Willie's this baird wafflet in his han, ye see. [indistinct phrase] He wis haudin it ...' The wee man's traivellin afore them an he's aye lookin back tae see 'f they're comin till he come tae this great big huge trunk o a beech tree - great big huge thing like that, only it was broken on the top only half rose. There was a big hole on it at the centre.

"Noo," he says, "doon in there," he says, "an" he says, "that's where ye'll get everything ye want, doon in that tree."

"Ah," says Willie, he says, "you go doon in there first," he says, "an I'll follae ye doon."

"Right," says the wee man. The wee man went intae this hole, and right doon this - right away in underneth the ground. The three - three - the four o them were a' like that, hangin back but the wee man was first. They travelt on doon this passage way in through the bottom o this tree for aboot three quarters o an oor an broke oot an back oot intae a valley, and there was the loveliest castle in this valley that ever ye saw in your life. All these lovely plum trees an apple trees growin, ye see?

Wee man says, "There it is," he says, "there's the castle," he says, "and on ye go," he says, "there's plenty o money," he says, "plenty o wealth, plenty o everything in there," he says, "and there are ladies in there also," he says, "if ye want to go in."

"Well," Willie says, "go ahead," he says, "keep goin."

Wee man says, "I'm feart tae go in," he says.

"Oh you're feart tae go in," Willie says, "How're ye feart tae go in?"

"Well," he says, "the reason why I'm feart tae go in there," he says, "it was me that put them in there," he says. "I stole them an put them in there," he says. An he says "All their jewels and everything that's in there," he says, "but they have no power," he says, "or no'hin," he says, "on me, wi that baird ye've got," he says. "That's the whole secret o the thing," he says, "that baird."

"Oh is that right?" Willie says. An he says, "Whatever - what - what - what have I 'ae do wi this baird?"

"Well," the wee man says, "there's three magic words tae that baird an ye can do anything ye want with it."

"Oh," Willie says, "if ye tell me the three magic words, ye'll maybe have a chance o gettin your baird back."

"Well," the wee man says, "A' ye need tae say tae that baird is: Three professors in ma baird, I wisht I was something - I wisht I was this or I wisht I was that. Ye see?"

"Oh is that whit," Willie says. Willie says, "Well, up ye go to the castle to we see what's up here."

An the wee man up, tae the castle an he's fair shakin wi fricht, an whenever he opened the door in the castle, here was this three young ladies into the castle, an they hadnae the power tae come oot through the door, wi this magic o this baird.

An Willie sent his brothers roon aa the rooms tae see what wis in aa these rooms. There was gold and diamonds an everything in aa these rooms they went in. Packit wi jewels an aa thing.

Willie says, "Ye better fill a bag wi these jewels," he says, "these pieces," he says, "boys, an diamonds an things, an" he says, "we'll see what this baird will dae on wi them."

THE BEARD

So they filled a bag wi pieces o these jewels an each o them got yin o these lassies by the hand. Willie liftit this baird. "Three professors in ma baird," he says, "I weesh the six o hus wis back home."

Wheech!

A flash like that an they were standin back home the six o them back at the door o their own castle, their own wee hoose, ye see. So when they came back tae the hoose they had these bags wi them an they left the wee man in the valley.

When they came back the auld man luckit. He says, "Wait a minute, boys," he says. "What's - what's this? What's these weemin? What ye doin wi these weemin?"

Willie up an telt him whit happened a' how he met the wee man, how the wee man near endit their days an how he fed them an shown them whaur the jewels wur.

"Oh," the old man says, "an how did yese manage tae get back here?"

"Well," Willie says, "there wis the cause o it, that baird," he says. "Faither," he says. "An whatever," he says, "ye want," he says, "or whatever ye do," he says, "jist say three magic words," he says, "to this baird and," he says, "it happens."

"Oh is that right?" says the old man. "Let me see the baird," he says. Willie handed the baird tae his faither the old man, the old man livin. He says, "What dae ye - what dae ye say tae this baird," he says, "Willie?"

Willie says, "Well," he says, "ye jist say three words," he says, "there", what the man said tae him, he says, "Three professors in ma baird," he says, "I wisht A was some place." Ye see?

"Oh is that right?" said he. The ould man catched the baird like that. "Three professors in ma baird," he says, "I wish me an ma wife was in that valley where the boys came fae." [Claps] The ould man disappeared him an the aul wife and they went tae the valley an the're still in the valley yet!

II.3 THE HEID

John Stewart

The story's aboot a minuster in this wee toon, wee village place, ye see. He lived in the manse of course, and was quite a young man; just had a housekeeper, and on a Sunday afternoon he would go through the graveyard readin his sermons and the Bible, upon a Sunday, after his dinner. But one day he was up, after service in the church: he went away up round the end of the graveyard, jist comin round, and he came tae an old bit o a tome [tomb] place and he went and looked down like that and he saw this skull lying. And he stood and touched it wi his fut, like that, and he said, "My goodness!" very intae himself, you know. He says, "My goodness, what a lovely set o teeth!" In the skull. So skull says, "Aye, it was a guid set o teeth!" Ye see. The minister says - eh weel he got a shock when the skull spoke tae him. Anybody would! He says, "My goodness, can ye speak?" he says.

"Oh yes," he says, "I can speak," he says. He says, "I've been lyin here for a long, long, long time," he says. He says, "I was the minister here, years and years and years ago," he says, "but that house wasnae built at that time," he says. He says, "I cycled tae the church," he says, "well - a distance off, you know, or walked, or maybe it would be a horse, for that matter." It would be a horse: There wouldnae be bycycles in that days. So the minister cracked away to it and cracked away to it, about this thing and that thing and the next thing. A lot of Scripture came into their conversation an that, ye see. So the minister says, "I'll have to go now, it's gettin time for the sermon, and," he says, "could you no come down some day," he says, "and we'll have a talk," he says, "sometime maybe in the afternoon, but later on, ye ken, when the things is aa finished in the church?"

He says, "Oh," he says, "I could do that." He says, "What about next Sunday roon aboot seven o'clock?"

The minister says, "That'll do fine, then." So the minister closes his Bible and he comes away, pondering to himself you know. He had plenty o food for thought. I'll tell ye that! The skull speakin tae him! So he comes on down and does the sermon, and potters about and mucks about that week. Sunday came and after the service in the church, he comes doon home, and he comes in. He says tae the housekeeper, "I'm expectin a guest," he says, "Annie," he says. "Set the table for two," he says.

So the woman, when she set the table for dinner, she put two chairs out, ye see. So a wee while after that, he came in and sat down or was standin wi his back at the fire, and he says, "Look out the window," he says, "and tell me if ye see anybody comin."

She says, "Naw, I see nothin."

A while after that he says, "Dae ye see - look again," he says. "Dae ye see anything comin?" he says. "Doesnae matter what it is."

She says, "The only thing I can see," she says, "is a thing like a turnip comin rollin up the drive." Ye see?

"Well," he says, "open the front door," he says, "and just let it in."

So the woman, the housekeeper, she went to the front door and the thing came rollin just like a big neep, in the door and right intae the room wher the minister was sittin at the table. So the minister lifted it and put it on the end of the table, ye see. So he says, "Just you go on wi your dinner, minister. You know," he says, "the like o this is no use tae me," he says. "But," he says, "You go on," he says, "and enjoy your dinner," he says, "and I'll crack away tae ye." Ye see?

So they cracked away and cracked away and cracked away, and the minister had his dinner, and the heid says, "Well," he says, "it'll be just aboot time for me leavin," he says, "and I hope," he says, "next Sunday," he says, "that ye'll return the visit."

The minister says, "Oh I'll do that," he says, "heid," he says, "but where am I gonnae get you?"

He says, "You just come up," he says, "to where ye found me the first day," he says, "and," he says, "there's a wee plantin there," he says. "Walk roon that way," he says, "and ye'll know where to go."

So anyway, the minister's thinkin and thinkin a' that week, and he never confided in nobody, this chap, but he's wonderin what's wrong. But anyway, Sunday came, the next Sunday, and efter his service and he gets things aa set oot, he goes oot and he saddles his horse, ye see, puts the saddle on the horse, takes it round and jumps on its back, and goes up round the side o the wall o the graveyard, and up round the back o the graveyard and down. And when he came round the top o the graveyard, in by whaur the wee wud is, he saw an avenue he'd never seen before, ye see. And he scratched his heid, an that, an he looked and he says, "I never saw that avenue before in my life," he says, and he takes his rein and his horse right on up this avenue, ye see.

He comes on up and on up and on up, riding maybe for about quarter o an hour, walkin and joggin, and here he comes tae a quarry a place at the side o the road. There's two workmen shovellin sand. He says, "That's queer," he says, "on the Sabbath day," he says, "two men workin an shovellin sand like that on the Lord's Day." He says, "It's very queer." So he never says anything tae them, he just goes on past. And then he comes on then and he comes tae a wee thatched house on that beside, and here there's an auld wumman in her eighties, bendy-backit like that, and there's a young lassie layin in tae this auld wumman wi a brush, wi one o thon brooms, ye know, the brooms made wi birch. That was the kin o brooms at that time, and she's layin intae this auld woman, layin intae this auld woman. He says, "Oh my goodness!" he says. He says, "That's very cruel! Very very cruel!" he says, "especially," he says, "on a day like Sunday," he says. "That will have to be seen intae." He keeps goin an he comes tae anither hoose on that side o the road, wee hoose. And here there's a big, stout, farmer-like woman, standin at the door, leanin against the jamb o the door, and her mouth's gapin open, like that and there's rats and mice jumpin oot and intae her mooth ye see. "My goodness," he says, "that's a miracle -, that woman standin there wi her hand against the jamb o the door leanin on the door an her mouth open, and the rats jumpin intae and out o her mouth, and she's no even - she's no even noticin them!" Ye see? But he says, "it's no affair on mine," he says. "I'll just keep goin."

So he comes on up and he just comes round this wee bend and there he sees a wee cottage and a gateway open, and the door open, and the heid was waitin on the step on the door. So the minister came in and took his reins off his horse, tied them tae - there would be posts in them days where ye tied a horse with reins, ye ken, a rein-post. And the heid says, "Come on in, minister," he says. "Did ye enjoy your ride up the avenue?"

He says, "Oh yes," he says, "it was very nice. It was a nice canter wi the horse. Lovely place."

He says, "Come in." The dinner was set on the table. He says, "You go on," he says, "and eat your dinner," he says, "minister," he says, "because you know," he says, "I- I canny - meat's no use tae me," he says, "but just you carry on."

And the minister put him on the end o the table, and the two o them talked there, and talked away. "Now," says the minister, "there's something I want tae ask ye," he says. "When I came up the avenue," he says, "I came tae a quarry or some place where road men works and," he says, "there was two men there," he says, "shovellin as hard as they could," he says, "at sand," he says. "In fact," he says, "the more they must have shovellin in, there was as much came skitin back out again."

"Well," he says, "they were put there," he says, "as a parable." He says, "That's a parable," he says. "They men," he says, "were that greedy, that they work like Sunday and Saturday," he says, "the Lord's Day." And he says, "When their day come, they were put in there as a parable."

Says the minister, "Then there were a wee house," he says, "where I seen a young lump of a hussy wi a birch besom," he says, "layin intae a poor auld woman," he says, "a lassie about fifteen," he says, "and I didnae think that was right at aa."

"Well," he says, "she's there as anither parable." He says, "That auld woman," he says, "had that - that was an orphan lassie, and," he says, "she laid intae that lassie and licked her and laid intae her, that oul woman did," he says, "and that lassie was in torture, and eventually she died," and he says, "fir every hit that she gave the lassie, she has tae get a hundred back," he says, "and she's there as a parable."

He says, "Very good," he says. "Now," he says, "what about the other house," he says, "where I seen the big woman," he says, "stand-in," he says "at the door," he says, "with her mouth gapin open," he says, "and," he says, "rodents, mice and rats jumpin in and out intae her mouth."

"Oh," he says, "that was another woman," he says, "a bad besom, too, she was," he says. "There was a poor tinker woman," he says, "wi a wee child," he says, "four or five months old," he says. "And the woman was comin along," he says, "the road," and he says, "she wanted some milk for the wean's bottle and she went in and asked the woman tae gie her a ha'penny or a pennyworth o milk," he says, "for the wean's bottle," he says. "And she had a wee dish o milk" he says, "that a mouse fell intae," he says, "and before she'd gie the woman clean milk, she gave the woman," he said, "the milk the deid mouse was in and," he says, "it poisoned the wean and killed it. And," he says, "she's there as a parable."

So they cracked away, the minister and the heid, and the minister says, "Well, it's gettin late," he says. "I'll need tae get away back noo," he says. He says, "I've enjoyed your crack heid," he says. "I suppose maybe ye'll come and see me some other time, an that." Ye see?

And then the heid, he says, "When you go back, you'll no know your place." He says, "Dae ye see that bag doon there?"

The minister looked roon. You know a guana bag? He says, "Take that bag and put it on your horse's back. And," he says, "when you go back," he says, "ye'll no have any manse - no house. And," he says, "there a great city there." He says, "Ye'll see flyin machines in the air," he says, "iron horses," he says, "goin on wheels. Noises," he says, "that you've never thought in your life," he says, "nor ever heard or."

"My goodness," says the minister, "why can that be?" he says. "It's only about quarter to nine now," he says, "and I came here about half past seven."

"Ha haa," he says, "that's what you think! You've been here," he says, "hundreds o years!"

"My God," says the minister, "that's no sae good!"

"Well," he says, "now," he says, "take that bag and put it on your horse's back," he says, "and when you go back," he says, "you'll come tae that big city." And he says, "Comin tae the outskirts o the city," he says, "ye'll see an ould, ould ould woman," he says, "over her nineties, and she'll be flingin oot," he says, "a basin o water." And he says, "Ask her," he says, "did ever she hear tell o a minister that went a-missin?" he says. "And she'll tell ye. But," he says, "never - don't come off your horse's back till ye put this bag under your feet, before ye step off your horse."

So the minister said - bidden farewell, come on back past the woman wi rats and mice jumpin oot and intae her mooth, past the ither hoose where the young lassie was layin intae the ould woman, and right doon past where the men was shovellin the sand, and down tae where he thought his graveyard was, and he hears this noise! And just all of a sudden he's just on the outskirts of, a city. He stood, he scratches his heid! He didnae know what tae do! The place is completely different. It was another world! The horse was rearin up in the air wi the noise o traffic, it was nearly boltin. He was hingin on tae its mane tae keep hissel in the saddle. An aa the people's lookin at him with this auld fashioned clothes on and the weans is aa runnin alongside his horse. "Look at the funny mannie! Look at the funny mannie!" Ye see? He was comin in and he sees an auld carle o a cratur, comin oot tae throw oot her basin o dirty water, and he pulls up. He says, "Excuse me," he says, "auld woman," he says.

She looked at him. He says, "Can you ever mind," he says, "anythin aboot a minister," he says, "that went a-missin, years and years and years and years ago?"

She says, "Well," she says, "that's an ould, ould story, that," she says, "that's been handed doon fae generation tae generation," she says. "I heard ma granny speakin aboot it," she says, "and it was her granny that telt her aboot the minister," she says, "and he never was seen again."

Right! The folks aa oot standin and they're collection aroon him, because he looked curious in the auld fashioned clothes on, you know and this big auld black horse. So he says, "Come here all you people, come here," he says, "come round here," he says. He says, "I'm gonnae gie my last sermon," he says, "before I go." So the folks aa comes roon, crowds o them, weans an men an women, aa standin roon aboot him, and it was mair fur tae look at him, than tae listen tae a sermon. So he takes his fit oot o the stirrup and he steps doon an he forgot aboot the bag, and he went away in dust! People never knew what was gonnae happen and that's thon story aboot the minister and the heid!

I just continue on, on a story, but I'd be makin it up as I went along. But you'd be interested listenin to it. You know what I mean? I suppose that would be the way o the - the -

Sheila: You knew the outline of the story, but you just -

John: Ah you could think up other bits - you could make up other bits tae put in.

Sheila: As you went along. Yes. That's the way it was done.

II.4 THE WATER OF LIFE

A John Stewart

A/ Well, this was a king, and he had three sons, Tom, James and Jack. Jack was the - he was the silly water-carrier, you know what I mean? So the king ruled for a long, long, long time there, in that part o the country, and one time he got up and he could hardly move, know what I mean? He could hardly move at aa, complainin an complainin tae the laddies an people about the castle, that he was - couldnae move at aa hardly, ye know. So, they sent for this doctor, that doctor, this wise man, thon wise man. Every one was tryin their hand tae cure the king. But no! Nobody could cure him.

Till one day, an old woman came to the castle, just like a beggar, an old beggar woman, you know. And she was at the back door, askin for this an that an the next thing, at the back door, whatever she could get, when she sees Jack comin roon the end o the hoose. Silly Jack, an he's got two big buckets o water wi him, ye see. So, she says, "Hallo," she says, "son," she says. "Do you belong the castle?"

"Oh aye," he says, "that's ma faither's castle, but," he says, "he's no weel the noo," he says, he says, "there's been a lot o doctors an one thing an another at him," he says, "and wyce men," he says, "witches an warlocks an everything's comin," he says, "tae try an ... an ... eh - cure him. There's none o them," he says, "none o them can cure him at aa," he says, an he says, "when he's lyin like that," he says, "the ither two," he says, "Tom and Jimmy," he says, "they can dae what they like," he says. "They have the ridin horses," he says, "and hawks, an good hawkin an falconin, an oot wi the good staghounds, chasin the deer, but," he says, "ma faither'll no let me go nae place," he says, "because," he says, "he thinks a canny look after masel," he says. "I dodge about the kitchens," he says, "and cairry the water an stuff."

She says, "What is it that's wrong wi your father?"

"Well," he says, "naebody kens," he says.

"Well," she says, "I'll tell ye," she says, "what would cure him," she says. She says "The Water o Life."

B John Stewart

B/ It was a king and he had - he was very, very old, ye see, an he had three sons - and - his physicians and these old fashioned doctors would come and see him, ye see.

And one of these old doctors says, "The only thing that'll cure you," he says, "is the Water of Life," he says. "Ye've tae get that."

"Oh," he says, "I don't know where I could get that." But anyway he calls his three sons in and he says, "the only thing that'll cure me," he says, "is the Water of Life."

A1 (Contd.)

"Ah but," he says, "what's good o the Water o Life? Where am I gonny get that"? he says. "I've two buckets o water here," he says, "but that wad be little good tae it."

"Oh no," she says, "for the Water o Life," she says, "ye've tae go a long, long, long, way," she says. "But," she says, "if ever," she says, "ye have tae go an look for it," she says, "there's a wee whistle tae ye," she says. "Keep that in your pocket," and she says, "just blow this whistle," she says, "and I'll be there," she says, "tae advise ye. But," she says, "dinnae be goin aboot the castle," she says, "blowin it, cause it'll no take any effect," she says, "it's only when you're needing me, that it'll take effect."

So it's the old woman, she went tae the back door and it's the cook an some o them had gien her a piece an one thing an another like that, you know, rolled up in a paper and away she went.

B1 (Contd.)

"Now," he says, "if yese could go an search for that," he says. But he says, "I'm very, very doubtful," he says. He says, "it's gott-en," he says, "away hundreds of miles," he says, "from here." An he says, "I mightna last until ye came back."

So the three o them said they would try anyway. But we'll take up Jack's story, because most of the story concerns Jack, the youngest one. He was always the foolish one, Silly Jack the Water-Cairrier.

A2 So Jack, he's carryin water an muckin aboot the kitchens an one thing an other, but his father gets worse, ye see. So Jack he goes up tae the room this day, an there's Tom an Jim an the rest of them's in the room, crackin away tae the faither and wonderin what's wrang wi him. When Jack wants tae come in, "Gae oot o this fool! You've nae business in here. Go on doon tae the kitchen, the cook's wantin ye tae go for sticks; pit logs on the fire!" Ye see? But Jack wouldnae go. He says, "No, I want tae speak tae ma father," he says. "I want tae speak tae the old man" he says. So the faither looks. He says, "Well," he says, "let Jack in. Whit hairm is he daein? Come on in, Jack," he says. "What are ye wantin?"

He says, "I ken," he says, "how tae cure you, but," he says, "I wadnae say," he says, "in front o them. Pit them oot," he says. So the king says tae Tom an Jack an the rest o the folk that was in there, he says, "Wad yese go oot a minute," he says, "till I see what ma son here," he says, "has got tae say tae me." He says, "sit doon there, laddie." So Jack sits doon. The rest o them went oot an closed the big door o the king's bedroom.

He says, "I was speakin" he says, "father," he says, "tae a wumman," he says. "She was here," he says, "at the back door. But," he says, "I was at the cook about her," he says, "this mornin and nane o them can mind o a wumman bein at the back door." He says, "but the wumman was there," he says, "when I was cairryin water in, but," he says, "nane o them," he says, "knows anything about her."

He says, "what kind o a wumman was she?" Oh, the laddie's described her but he says "I've never kent aa aroon the kingdom," he says, "onything like that," he says, "an old woman like that."

"Well," he says, "I was tellin her," he says, "ye wasnae weel," an he says, "she told me," he says, "the only thing that will cure ye," she says to me "was the Water o Life. An," he says, "I was thinkin," he says, "if you could gie me an auld sword," he says, "an wan o the horses, wan o the old horses, oot your stable," he says, "I would go away an look for that Water o Life," he says.

"Ach, laddie," he says, "whaur could you get the Water o Life," he says. He says, "wasn't Tom an Jim an aa the folk in the place," he says, "all roun aa the airts and pairts," he says, "lookin for doctors an one thing and another like that," he says, "and do you think," he says, "if them wise men an aa thing that comes fae ither places," he says, "doesnae ken," he says, "what tae dae wi me," he says, "how are you tae ken?"

"Oh," he says, "there's nae hairm in gie'in me a horse," he says, "an auld hourse and a sword," he says. "I'll get as much meat oot the kitchens," he says, "as'll keep me gaun for a day or two an," he says, "I'll search the country," he says, "tae see if I can get this Water o Life."

A3 Well, eventually he says tae Jack, "Go doon," he says, "tae the groom," he says, "and tell the groom," he says, "tae gie ye an auld horse. Tak the auld mare," he says, "she's the best yin," he says, "I've had her a long, long time and she's quaite." An he says, "watch yersel when ye're away," and he says, "go tae the armoury room an tell them tae gie ye a sword," he says, "an there's nae use if ye're gaun," he says, "there's nae use in takin an auld yin," he says. Tak a decent yin."

So Jack thanks his faither and telt him "I'll be away," he says, "and when I come back," he says, "I'll hae that water!"

So, he shakes hands wi his father and goes down the stair, out tae the stable yard, tells the groom he wants a horse. The groom was gonnae chase him, ye see but eventually runs up tae the father and the father says, "Yes," he says, "gie him a horse," he says, "gie him the auld mare."

So, tae make a long story short, Jack gets the oul mare, saddles up, gets a big parcel o meat oot o the kitchen, pits it in his saddle bag. And it wasnae much o a saddle they gien him, I'll tell ye, the warst one in the stable. And this sword an a scabbard, a sword wi a big belt on it, ties it roon his waist, and he's off!

B3 So Jack goes to the kitchen an he gets the auld cook tae make him up a piece, ye see. An he slings it over his shoulder and away he goes on the road, whistlin an singin. An there was no roads in them times; it was more or less bridle paths and hill tracks and take your near-cut through woods or valleys or any place that you thought you were going the right way.

A4 Noo, he didnae know what way tae go. He looked that way an he looked this way, an he looked that way. He says, "Och," he says, "I'll just folly ma nose," he says, "I'll jist go intae the wind." So he's comin on an comin on an comin on. Comes tae this wee burn. Stops, an the sun was shinin, middle o this day in a big forest an there was a wee river runnin doon. So he stops an jumps off his horse, takes the reins owre the top o its heid, takes the bits oot o its mouth. He says, "I'll gie ye a drink here Meg," he says, "and a bit or twa o gress an a'll hae a rest masel," he says, "till ye kinna freshen up." So he takes the bridle off the horse, lets it drink wa'er and the horse was croppin away at the gress, an he's sitting doon, aneth this trees, an he's sittin an sittin and sittin, looking at this and that an the next thing, when doon comes this wee burd. An it was a wee burd 'at he had never seen before. Well, a type that wasnae common roon aboot where he was, you know what I mean? An he throws it wee crumbs, wee crumbs an it picks away an picks away, ye see.

He says, "where ye goin, Jack?" Jack looks roon aboot. He says, "I thought there were somebody speakin." Turns roon aboot, then he gets tae his feet. The wee burd says, "it's me 'at's speakin."

"Oh can ye speak wee burd?"

"Oh aye," says the wee burd, "I can speak," he says. He says, "I was enchanted," he says, "long years an years an years ago," he says, "an I've been in the shape o a burd since."

An he says, "I know where ye're goin," he says. "I've got an idea," he says, "ye're in search o the Water of Life, but," he says, "ye've a long, long road tae go," he says. "I canna help ye tae get it. But I can advise ye here, the road tae take, an ken o what to do on the road. But," he says, "ye've a long journey."

"Well," says Jack, he says, "that's awfa nice o you," he says. He says, "it wad be good o ony - onybody or ony cratur or anything at aa gien me advice because," he says "I'd do onything," he says, "for tae get this water," he says, "for the sake of my faither."

"Oh well," he says, "that's about the only thing that will cure him," he says, "is the Water o Life. But," he says, "when ye saddle your horse," he says, "here Jack," he says, "keep goin the way ye're goin," he says. "And at night," he says, "follow the brightest star in the heavens," he says. "Keep that star in front o you," he says, "keep goin, because," he says, "the country you're gaun intae," he says, "there's no paths or no bridle walks or nothin," he says, "it's just through the rough terrain of country, ye see."

"Well," says Jack, "thanks very much."

B4 But he was just follaein his nose anyway, and walked and walked and walked and away out and walked and walked. So he came tae this -this wee burn, a wee river, ye see. An he sat down an he was washin his face, took his piece out, ye see, an he happened tae look up an here he sees an aul wumman. She was gatherin sticks. So he got chattin tae the aul wumman an she says, "where are ye makin for, anyway, ma boy?"

A5 So Jack saddles up, throwin his leg owre his horse, you know, when he goes on. On an on an on an on aa that night. Next day, pulls up at a wee bit burn place where he'll rest, nice wee bit grass for his horse, an he's sittin there. Didn't know where he was, an he's sittin listenin tae the birds whistlin and he's thinkin about this wee burd too, you know, when he minded o the whistle the wumman gien him. "Oh," he says, "damn me," he says, "I mebbe lost it wi the hurry-up and everything." Searches his pockets an its away doon the bottom o his oul jacket pocket, he get this wee whistle, and it wis made oot o ivory. Wee oul yellow ivory whistle. An he looks at it an he pits it in, an he says, "I don't know what good a wee whistle's gonnue do, but I'll need tae gie it a blow."

 So he pit it tae his lips an he gies a wee sharp whistle come oot it, ye know. An jist like that, there was the auld wumman. She says, "Well," she says, "Jack," she says "I see ye've startit your journey."

 "Oh," he says, "it's you, Granny," he says.

B5 "Oh," he says, "I'm goin," he says, " - ma father's lyin very ill. He's the King o So-and-So a place." An he says, "I'm goin," he says, "in search o the Water o Life." He says, "where to go for it or what to do about it," he says, "I don't know."

 "Oh well," she says, "I've heard of it," she says, "but it'll take a lot o gettin." But she says, "Where ye goin the night? It's gettin kinna late now."

 He says, "I was jist gonnae sit out," he says, "aa night," he says, "as I did dae," he says, "since last week an," he says, "jist keep goin."

 "Well," she says, "if ye cairry that puckle sticks hame tae me," she says, "ye can stey in the hut wi me till the morning," she says. "It's no muckle," she says, "but," she says, "ye'll be quite welcome."

 So Jack thanked the oul wumman very much and away he goes tae her hoose, ye see. An when he seen her right in the lamplight in the hoose, this oul canle light in the house, ye know, oh : she was a real old hag : her nose and her chin were crackin nuts! An she'd wan tooth jist stickin right out o her mooth.

 She makes him something on the fire, gruel or something, 'cause there was no tea in them times. It was aa barley bannocks and maybe soup or somethin like that. But they got somethin tae eat anyway. She's sittin tellin Jack he had a long road tae go and that he would have to climb the Glassy Mountains, she says.

A6 She says, "Aye," she says, "I was waitin on the soond o the whistle. I thought that ye wad hae got feared comin through aa them wids wi the wild boars an things an the wolfs," she says, "that's in these wids," she says. "I thought maybe ye'd hae blaaed the whistle lang ago."

"Naw," he says, "I forgot aboot the whistle, tae tell ye the truth," he says, and he says, "a maybe wadnae hae come this way at aa," he says, "only I met a wee burd."

"Oh," she says, "I ken aboot the wee burd," she says. "You didnae ken," she says, "that I was the wee burd," she says. "I was the wee burd." And she says, "ye still have a long road tae go now," she says, "when ye leave here," she says, "travel for three days." She says, "Once you pass that hill there", she says, "your whistle'll be nae use for ye tae call me because," she says, "ye're in another terrain." She says, "but keep goin," she says, "for aboot three days, until ye come tae a wee auld thatched hoose, or widden hoose in the middle o the wid," she says, "a hut." She says, "that's my auldest sister."

Noo the auld wumman that was speakin tae him, Jack wad reckon she was comin up on her hundredth year, you know. So anyway, Jack crackit tae her for a while and she says, "She'll tell ye a lot mair than I can, Jack because she's nearer the place that you're makin for an she has mair knowledge than me, wi her bein older."

B6 But she says, "Ye've a long way tae go there," she says, an she says, "I can only advise ye," she says, "for a certain bit o the road, bit o the way, an then," she says, "ye'll need tae manage again after that." She says, "When you go," she says, "from here," she says, "ye'll come through a thick forest an," she says, "there'll be a big clearin in the centre." An she says, "Dont go out in the clearin at aa," she says, "because," she says, "that's the Red Bull o the Forest's territory." She says, "The Red Bull," she says, "is a nice bull," she says, "but it defies another bull that comes," she says, "now and again, a black one." An she says, "They generally have terrible fights." Ye see?

So here Jacks stays all night with the auld wumman. He gets up in the mornin an washes his face outside at the wee pool o water an he gets a couple o barley bannocks aff her. An the old wumman comes tae the door an she says, "Now ye're gaun on," she says. And she says, "After ye pass where that bull is," she says, "ye'll come," she says, "tae an aulder sister o mines," she says. An she says, "You'll maybe not find her," she says, "but she'll find you, because ye have tae go that way."

A7 So Jack thanks the auld wumman an he jumps on aul Meg's back an he's away travellin on over sheeps parks, bullocks parks, up mountains, down braes, through wuds, owre burns. Sometimes he has take a round aboot tae get past marshes an that, you know. But eventually he hit this black wud. The wuds gettin worse - thick! Through the day its like dark. But he comes on an on an on an on, through it and he has tae stand an think tae see if he's on the third day. He's been travellin that long an he's that weary. But all of a sudden, he just comes on his hut in the middle o the wud, and a wee bit o a clearin. So up Jack goes tae the door an he chaps at the door.

"Come in," an oul woman says. Jack opens the door. "Ha, ha," she says, "I've been expectin ye," and she's rockin on her two front teeth, she's that old! And her nose and chin are crackin nuts!

"Well," says Jack intae hisself, "I've seen mony's an oul wumman, but that's the ouldest wumman ever I saw in my life."

She says, "Come over tae the fire, an I'll give ye somethin tae eat."

So she gives him barley bannocks, goat's milk and stuff, ye know. Sittin crackin away, she says, "I ken whaur ye're gaun," she says, "for the Water o Life." "But," she says, "ye've tae climb the Glassy Mountain, ma lad," and she says, "the only way you'll get up there," she says, "is wi the Shoes o Swiftness," she says, "they can go any place," she says, "I'll len them tae ye," an she says, "for the peril o your life, dont lose them!" she says. "And when you get tae the top o that Glassy Mountain," she says "take them off, and point them back this wey." She says, "They'll come back theirsels. Now," she says, "lie doon," she says, "the night," she says, "and rest," she says, "because ye've got a long road tae go."

B7 So Jack bids the oul wumman good mornin an away he goes. He's marchin on an marchin on an marchin on ye see. Stays oot aa that night. It's a good thing it was the summertime; he could lie oot, wi his coat over hisself. He got up in the mornin an he was takin a bite tae eat an a drink at the wee river, a wee strike o a stream that was passin. An down comes a wee burd an it's sittin pickin away at bits that Jack was throwin it. Jack was takin the soft pieces an throwin it tae him, ye see, watchin it pickin away.

It says, "Ye're a kind-hearted man," it says, "Jack."

Jack says, "My goodness! Bird," he says, "was that you that was speakin?"

She says, "Aye," it says, "it was me!" An she says, "There's no many," she says, "that'll half wi ye," she says. "Times is hard." But she says, "You seem tae be a nice happy-go-lucky lad," she says. An she says, "Ye've gien me nice bits I can eat." Now she says, "I know where ye're goin," she says. "Ye're goin tae look for the Water o Life." This wee bird.

He says, "Yes," he says, "that's where I'm goin," he says.

She says, "Well," she says, this wee bird says, an it says, "When you get there, tae the Glassy Mountains, it'll take a lot o climbing. I don't know how ye're gonnae get up. But eventually if ever ye need anything, just call on the wee bird and if I can do anything fur ye, I'll do it." Ye see.

So Jack flings it another wee bit o piece an bids it cheerio an away he goes. An he comes on an on an on an on an on through this thick, thick black wood, an he says, "I must be comin near that clearin," he says, "where that bull is," he says. "I wouldnae like tae get attacked wi a bull," he says, "dinnae matter how nice it is."

B8 But he's just comin out tae the end tae the wood, could see kinna light clearin in front o him an he heard this roars o these bulls. [Roars like a bull.] They're bawlin a brun(?) an they're away back off ane anither an they're gallopin at one another, an they're tossin an tearing at one another, these two bulls, ye see.

So Jack stays back a bit an he's watchin an this Black Bull and this Red Bull, they're pittin up a terrific fight. Sparks is flyin ev'ry time they clash their heads, the sparks is flyin fae their horns. But eventually the Black Bull turns an goes away an this Red Bull's stanin an there was one or two cuts on it.

So Jack's passin an he looks at it, but it didnae seem tae pey much attention tae him. But he took his hankie out an he went owre tae it an he cleaned its wounds, ye know, an it spoke an aa.

It says, "Very nice o ye Jack," it says, "tae come owre an do that," he says. He says, "Where are ye bound for?"

Jack says, "I'm goin tae - fur the Water o Life."

"Well," he says, "there's never been a lot o people passed here," he says, "in search for that," he says. "But any that did," he says, "never came back," he says, "I can tell ye that." He says, "They never came back." But he says, "Are ye hungry?"

Jack says, "I had a wee bite back the road there," he says, "afore I came intae the wud."

"Well," it says, "you look in my ear an ye'll see a wee white thing, an take it out." So Jack pit - looked in its ear, an there were a wee white bit o thing an he took it out an it was like a wee white handkerchief. He says, "Now lay it on the ground, Jack." So Jack left it on the grund like that and here there was a lovely spread on it, white tablecloth. Aw, there was roast meat, roast pheasants, roasted fish o all kinds, steamed fish, there was aa kinds o puddins. I was goin tae say trifle but they didnae have trifle in them days! So anyway Jack sat doon an there was a lovely big can o milk an aa. So Jack sat doon and I'm tellin ye, he did pit a weight o grub away. Because wi eatin this barley bannock an this coul water he was starvin. He was nothin but sinew an muscle, wi this barley bannocks an clear water. But he eat away aa eat away an this bull's crackin away tae him.

He says, "Now Jack, see when ye go across," he says, "that there?" An Jack's munchin away an sayin, "Aye?"

B8 (Contd.)

"Well," he says, "go oot that ither side," he says, "an keep in a straight line as straight as ye can," he says, "an ye'll come," he says, "tae that ither aul wumman." He says, "She's got a shack there," he says, an he says, "If anybody can tell ye aboot the Water o Life, an one thing an another like that," he says, "she can," he says, "because she's nearer to it than we are."

So Jack he finishes. The Bull says tae him, "Just take it up Jack like that," he says, "the four corners an gie it a shake." So Jack took the four corners o this big white table cover an he gien it a shake an everything disappeared, bar the wee bit hankie, like a wee bit o a handkerchief.

"Now," he says, "put it back in my ear." So Jack put it back in the Bull's ear, ye see.

So Jack says fareweel to the bull an he's ploddin on, throwin stones at rabbits an aa thing tae pass the time, an kickin sticks an comin tae wee rivers an jumpin owre them an lookin an trying tae catch trouts an aa thing tae pass the time.

But he comes owre an he's walkin an walkin an walkin, an lies oot that night again. Early in the mornin he's goin owre through this long heathery place in bushes an it down a bit like that an intae anither thick forest. An he's jist comin through this forest - an it was that dark in the forest he's tae put his hand up like that tae kind o see, ye know, although the sun was shinin up above.

A9 So Jack lies doon in front o the fire, and in fact, he couldnae sleep for thinkin ye see. So he gets up in the mornin and the ould woman gies him a bite tae eat.

"Now," she says, "when you go," she says, "tae the tap o the mountain, and put the shoes back," she says, "ye'll see a lovely valley," she says, "right doon in front o ye," and she says, "in front o this valley," she says, "ye'll see a large man," she says, "a two-headed giant," and she says, "for the peril o your life," she says, "don't go down that valley." She says, "Cut away the ither road aa the gither," she says, "where it's dark an miserable-lookin," she says, "go that way." And she says, "Ma sister gien ye a whistle, didn't she?" He says "Aye." "Well," she says, "A'll tak the whistle," she says, "because that whistle," she says, "has tae go back. Now," she says, "there's a hazel-nut, and," she says, "ye havenae tae crack that hazel-nut open until ye're ready tae get the water ye see."

"Aw," he says, "that's very nice o you," he says, and he taks the hazel-nut and rolled it in a bit o parchment paper o some kind, and stuck it away doon in his waistcoat pocket and she gied him this shoes and they were like - did ye ever see thon auld golashes for yer boots, for snow, owre the outside o your shoes? They were something like that. So he took them an he rolled them up an he put them in his pocket. She says, "Ye'll have a good day and a half's ridin," she says, "fore ye come tae the Glassy Mountain."

B9 So here he comes across this ould wumman an she was strugglin away wi a burden o sticks too for her wee hut. So he cairries her sticks tae her an she says, "I've been expectin ye," she says, "Jack," she says, "Ye were at ma sister's?"

He says, "Aye," he says.

"Well," she says, "ye better come owre tae the house," she says, "an get somethin tae eat," she says, "ye'll likely be hungry noo."

So she takes him owre tae this wee hut in the wud, takes him inside an there's two big miaowin-chates, wan sittin on each side o the fire, two big cats. (Miaow!)

"Aw shut up," she says, "Mysie!" An she gies the cat a wallop wi her hand, ye see. She says, "Get owre an sit doon fae the road there." The cat jumps up on the top o the dresser an its watchin Jack wi its two eyes blazin, ye know. An Jack says, "If that Mysie comes near me," he says, "I'll gie it a funny kickin at the side o the heid!"

But he sits doon at the fire an the ould wumman gets a wee tin an she pits some things intae it an mixes it like a gruel an she pits in two or three other things intae it. But when Jack tasted it, well, it was all right, there was nothing wrong wi it; it was very good. An he could feel his strength comin back just like a shot.

"Now," she says, "Jack," she says, "ye'll have tae climb the Glassy Mountain. I suppose," she says, "ye've heard aboot it? Did ma sister tell ye aboot it?"

"Aye," he says, "your sister mentioned it."

"Well," she says, "there's two things ye'll have tae get," she says, "an I can give ye them. But," she says, "ye'll have tae watch them," she says, "for the peril o your life," she says, "watch them!"

"An what's that?" says Jack.

B9 (Contd.)

"Well," she says, "I'll gie ye the Shoes of Swiftness and the Cloak of Darkness. Now," she says, "the Shoes o Swiftness," she says, "'ll help ye up that Glassy Mountain. They kind o stick an," she says, "they're very, very fast," she says. "They'll take ye to a place very, very quick." An she says, "When ye go to the top o the Glassy Mountain," she says, "there's a great giant," she says, "an he can transform hisself intae any kind o shape." She says, "Ye'll have tae be very, very wary," she says, an she says, "The Cloak o Darkness," she says, "is the only way ye'll get past him, if ever he tries tae stop ye in your quest."

So Jack says, "Oh," he says, "that's very good," he says, "very good. I'll never forget ye for this," he says. "For my father is at death's door," he says, an he says, "he'll be waitin," he says, "on this water comin back."

So in the mornin he gets some'hin tae eat fae her an she gies him this oul galoshes, they were like oul galoshes, ye know them oul busted galoshes? They were like that. An she gies him this wee cloak that went roon aboot him an when he pit it on, he didnae know, but ye couldnae see him.

A10 So he jumps on his horse's back an bids farewell tae the ousl woman, an he's on his travels again, on an on an on an on an on! Owre burns an up banks, braes an wan thing an anither like that.

An all of a sudden he started tae see a glitter in front of him, know what I mean. A glitter like some like a - like a reflection o a mirror in the sun. An when he comes out o this wood, he can hardly look and it's just a straight glass mountain in front o him.

And he pits on this Shoes o Swiftness. "Now," he says to his horse, "Meg" he says, "I'll take the bridle aff an," he says, "there's plenty o grass an water here an," he says, "A'll leave you here, and if A dae happen tae come back A'll get ye, an if A dinnae get back A'll be deid." Ye see?

So the old horse just shook itsel an was glad tae get the saddle off, and it went away grazin. So Jack put this shoes on and when he pit this shoes on, he could feel hissel goin as straight an rigid as a rod, know what A mean? An he looked at the top o the hill like that, and he pit his fit forrit tae walk tae the mountain, an his two feet went that way - whzzzzz! Right up this glassy mountain wi the Shoes o Swiftness. An he landed up an he fell on his side on the top o the Glassy Mountain. He was out o breath y'know, not wi his own exertions but wi excitement. So he takes - he lies for a while looks doon at the shoes and he takes them off and he just turns them like that an lays them doon and the shoes were off like that! Ye see?

B10 So he went tae the door. "Now," she says, "when ye go back," she says, "when ye go out," she says, "an get to the top o the mountain, in case ye lose the shoes," she says, "turn - face the shoes this way, an they'll come back themselves." Ye see. An she says, "If ye need them, call on them when ye're comin back."

So Jack he pits this galoshes on his feet, an he disnae need the cloak; he pit the wee cloak on his pocket. An you talk about go, boy! Aw they flew wi him. He was passin swallows wi this shoes, as fast as he could go, ye see.

Now he comes - he couldnae see - when he come oot o this bit o the wud an that, he looked an he saw this glitterin thing in front o him. It was like burnished silver. An this was a mountain. Now this is what he's got, ye see. When he came to it, he stopped suddenly an he braked up wi these shoes, ye see. An he looked at this mountain an he touched it. It was kin o shakin he thought too to the touch. An oh! a fly couldnae hae kept its feet on it, a fly couldnae hae went up.

But he went away back from it a good bit an he come at a good speed to it, an he just went up it like that. An he lands right on the top an when he came tae the top it wasnae glass. There was a bit o a valley and rocks and one thing an another like that, round about, ye see.

All So he gets tae his feet an he walks past, owre the top of the Glassy Mountain. It was glass for a certain distance, know what A mean? An he looks away, away in front o him an he saw this valley, lovely sunny valley, it wis, lovely green trees and birds flyin aboot, an standin right on the path doon was a giant wi two heads, wi a great cudgel. Jack - he roared at Jack, an the very ground trembled, know what A mean? He says, "What stranger are you," he says, "comin tae this land?"

Jack says, "I'm up here," he says, "on an errand for my father."

"Well," says the giant, "before ye get past me," he says, "your guns - if your guns were made of iron and your horse was made of steel," he says, "you'll never reach the land that I live in because," he says, "ye'll never pass here."

Jack says, "But I'm no passin you anyway," he says, "I'm goin that way," he says, "I'm goin this way."

B11 So he stands there for a wee while till he gets his breath back, takes the galoshes off his feet. An he mindit what the aul wumman telt him. She says, "I want them back home." He pit them doon an whish! the galoshes was away. So he walks across a bit, this flat rocks he walks along and he hears this roar, an he looks an sees this two headed giant. An it didnae actually get its eye on him. When he seen it comin he on wi the cloak, ye see, but this giant knew because it could smell, it could smell him, ye know. So it comes roon the corner an its great feet was makin the rocks tremble an Jack was standin hidin behind this bush wi his cloak on him. An boy! it stands an ye'd actually think it knew he was there! But Jack runs wi the cloak on him and up owre some other rocks an across a burn an away down a path an in behint some more rocks.

A12 So Jack turns on his heel an walked away doon the ither road, away in by this dark - a forbidding lookin bit ye'know, forebodin -like a place that would make yese look at it before ye would venture. So away he goes in this way on an on an on, walkin - and all of a sudden, he hears somethin like somebody singing, ye see. Hears this singin, hears this singin! And this was, when he comes roon this bend, and at the back of this kin of lovely hazel-bushes, roon this bend, this was a golden-haired maid an she was sittin on a rock combin her hair. And Jack pulled up suddenly an looked at her an he says, "My goodness," he says, "this is a funny place," he says, "tae see a lassie, a girl," he says, "o your description."

"Oh," she says, "I've been waitin on ye." She says, "I got word ye were comin!"

Jack says, "Well, I don't know how ye could get word o that."

"Ah but," she says, "we're here and we cannae tell ye hoo we get word but," she says, "I'm here tae lead ye," she says, "tae where -tae within reachin distance o the Water o Life." Ye see?

Jack says, "Oh, that's very very fine," he says. "Can A not go now an get it an get away hame," he says, "because my father," he says, "'ll mebbe be deid agin this time."

"No," she says, "ye cannae go," she says "till tomorrow at twelve o'clock," she says, "that's when ye can go for the Water o Life."

So Jack sits doon eatin berries. He'd no meat o no kind there, ye see. He's eatin berries an pullin this bit thing an eatin it, an thon bit thing. Cracks away tae the lassie an one thing an anither like that.

B12 But when he comes roon behint these other rocks, what was stan-in there but a beautiful young girl, like a princess. And she says, "Oh," she says, "ye startled me," she says. She says, "What are ye doin here?" she says. "If the giant comes," she says, "he'll kill ye."

Jack says, "Oh," he says, "I didnae know ye saw me," he says.

"Oh," she says, "I know what you've got on," she says. "You've got on the Cloak o Darkness," she says, "and it fell wi the speed ye came roon the bush." So he looked and picked it up an put it in his pocket.

She says, "Yes," she says, "you're here," she says, "for the Water o Life."

He says, "Yes, I'm here for the Water o Life."

"Well," she says, "come roond here," she says, "I'll tell ye a little story." Tall boy, he went an follaed this young wumman and down the wee bird comes, the wee bird flies doon an it sits on Jack's shoulder an he says, "Don't go Jack. That's the giant!"

A13 "Right," she says, the next day "it's comin near time now," she says, "come wi me," she says, "but," she says "is your sword sharp?" Jack says, "Aye."

So she takes him down this path till they come tae a circle o rock - it was like marble, this rock. Ye see? Jack says, "where is the well?"

"Oh," she says, "there's no well, there's a wee bottle," she says, "and ye'll not get much of it," she says, "ye'll only get aboot maybe aboot half a dozen drops."

"But," says Jack "I cannae see nae place," he says, "a spigot, or a well, or a burn or onything, where the Water is."

"Well," she says, "I'll show ye where the Water is." So she lay down on the rock, ye see. She says, "Now, pull your sword out an cut my heid off." Ye see?

"Oh," Jack says, I couldnae dae that. No tae a nice-lookin girl like you," he says. "Some princess or something like that," he says, "I couldnae do that no, no."

She says, "I'm tellin ye, cut my heid off!" An she says, "When the heid's off," she says, "lift my heid by the hair," she says "and hold it up," she says "and instead of blood 'at drops," she says, "it'll be like dreeps o water. An," she says, "try and catch it," she says, "because the neck o that bottle's very narra," and she says, "try an catch as much in that," she says, "as'll do ye." She says, "now, hurry up, cause we dinnae hiv long," she says, "because that giant," she says, "he has a brother that comes roon this way an," she says, "he had me enchanted." Ye see?

So the lassie lies doon. "Well," says Jack, "I'm going to do this," he says, "but I'd raither not." He says "I've never done anything like this before," he says.

She lay doon and she says "Take your sword oot an cut my heid off!"

B13 The giant had turned hissels intae this young wumman, ye see, for tae entice Jack away so that he could get a grab at him.

So Jack says, "What'll I do?"

He says, "Here's a nut. Crack that hazel nut and see what ye see." So Jack took this hazel nut, cracked it and this was a wee sword about that size. He says, "Pick it up, Jack." Well, Jack picked it up like that. Aw, it was such a lovely sword aboot this length, y'know, an it was a gold colour and it actually fetched itself. So Jack put the point o the sword right at this lassie's neck.

He says, "You're the giant."

She says, "Oh no, I'm not the giant."

Jack says, "Ye are the giant," he says.

She says, "Well," she says, "I took the form of another."

Jack says, "What other?"

She says, "A princess," she says, "that I've got an you'll not get." But the wee bird says tae Jack, "Kill him! Kill him!"

So Jack says, "I couldnae dae that."

He says, "Kill him! Cut the heid off him."

A14 So she lay down an bared her neck an Jack drew the sword an the sword seemed tae go itself an the heid skited off! An he got the heid like that an he held it an he got about a dozen drop o this clear fluid intae this wee bottle, an he pit the cork on the bottle, an he looked roon for the lassie, an what was stanin there? The wee bird! The wee bird was there!

B14 So Jack cuts the heid off her, ye see, and the wee bird flies doon an it says tae Jack, "Take that heid by the hair, across onto that flat, that big flat rock." That flat rock was like marble. An Jack got the heid by the hair, big long, blonde hair and he took it across.

"Now," says the wee bird," he says, "have ye took a wee bottle wi ye tae get some o the Water o Life?"

"Aye," says Jack, "but I dinny heed whaur I put it." An he pit the heid doon. "Just pick the heid up! Don't leave it down or ye'll lose the Water!"

An he put his hand in his pocket, doon in his pack, an he got this wee bottle.

"Now," says the wee bird, "haud that up," he says. An when Jack done that there was no blood! There was just three or four dreeps o clear water tipped down into the bottle. Ye see?

A15 So it says, "Now Jack the quicker you're back the better," he says, "because I hear the giant comin," he says, "an he comes this way an he meets his brother at the other end. An if they get ye between that, ye'll never get back."

So he says tae Jack "Oh you're too late," he says, "hide." He says, "He'll see ye if ye move now." So the wee bird telt Jack tae roll back aneth the bushes, when he minds boy! He minded o his hazel nut! So he rummages an rummages an rummages till he got the hazel nut an he cracked the hazel nut and inside the hazel nut was a wee bit o cloth, dark cloth. An the wee bird looks an says "Oh ye're safe."

Jack says "How?"

She says, "That's the Cloak o Darkness."

An whenever Jack done that tae it, it seemed tae get bigger, y'know, an he pit it on him an ye couldnae see him. So he gets this cloak on an the wee bird flies away in front o Jack an says, "Follow me an I'll take ye a near cut."

So Jack runs efter this wee bird, past the giants - the giants never even saw him. They were roarin at the pitch o their voices; they could smell human flesh ye see?

But he gets tae the top o the Glassy Mountain. "Now," says the wee bird "wait here." He says, "The giants cannae come here, this is out o bounds for them, the top o the Glassy Mountain."

So the wee bird flew doon an it flew tae the auld womans place an Jack got the shoes and Jack pointed them back and they went back and he jumps on his horse's back an he's through the forest. Of course, it took him a day and a half gaun back tae the hoose, the same as it did comin. An when he landed back at the auld wumman's hoose she telt him tae come in and she says "Were ye successful Jack?."

B15 "Now," says the wee bird, she says, "throw the head," she says, "back to the body." An she says, "See what happens!"

So Jack threw the heid back tae the body an the two seemed tae intermingle like that, an there was the giant!

"Now," says the wee bird, "make for your life!"

Jack says, "I cannae," he says, "I've pit the Shoes o Swift-ness away!"

She says, "Well, on wi your Cloak o Darkness quick!" So he got the Cloak o Darkness roon aboot him an he backed it back in the - seein that the bottle was a'right. An the wee bird was flyin wi him right back tae the top o the hill where he had come up. An Jack remembered the witch sayin, "Shout when ye want them." So Jack gien a bellow an ye would ha heard him in Stranraer, the roar he give tae get those shoes tae get away fae the giant. An just in a flash the Shoes was there. Do Jack put them on his feet and boy! whizzzzz! right down this Glassy Mountain.

An the Shoes continued wi him, right back till he came tae the auld wumman at the house 'at gave him the Shoes an the Cloak. An she was waitin at the door. She says, "Well, Jack," she says, "did ye succeed?."

A16 He says, "Oh aye," he says, "wi your help," he says "I was successful." An he says, "long may ye love," he says. "If I get hame quick," he says, "wi this water tae ma faither," he says.

B16 He says, "Oh yes," he says. He says, "I succeedit," he says, "to a certain extent," he says, "but I thought," he says, "I wad hae got a fill o a bottle o water," he says. But he says, "It's a wee castor oil bottle I took wi me," he says, "an you would hardly see what's in the bottom o it."

"Oh but," she says, "that is the real Water o Life," she says. "Don't you worry about that," she says. "It doesnae take a lot o that stuff," she says, "tae make anybody better." An she says, "Ye'll need tae guard it carefully."

So Jack gave her back the Cloak and the Shoes and he bid her farewell an he's on back the way he came, ye see. An the wee bird's flyin in front o him an pickin away an flyin an follaein him aa the time, this wee bird, see. It was somethin like a Willy Wagtail.

A17 -

B17 So he comes back through the clearin where the Bull was an here the Bull stands, see. An it says tae Jack, "Oh you're comin back, Jack?"

Jack says, "Aye."

He says "Did ye succeed?"

Jack says, "Yes," he says, "I did," he says, "thanks tae a lot o good people," he says, "I made it. An thanks tae you Bull," he says. He says, "I must thank you very much too for your help."

"Well," says the Bull, "ye can help me a bit more, Jack," he says, "I done you a good turn," he says, "an you'll dae me wan."

"What's that?" says Jack.

He says, "Take your sword," he says, "an cut my heid off."

"Oh," says Jack, "Oh naw, naw, naw! Oh," says Jack, he says, "half o the country an kill ye, Bull," he says, "wi the good turn ye done me."

"Oh but" the Bull says, "ye'll have tae, Jack," he says. An he says, "You'll see why, when ye do it." He says, "I know ye've got the magic sword," he says, an he says, "ye'll cut my heid off."

Says Jack, "Oh I forgot about that sword," he says. "Here it is, here." An he still had this sword ye see. Jack says, "What dae ye want me tae dae?"

He says, "Just stand," he says, "an gie me a crack," he says, "wi that sword," he says, "right across the back o the horns. Right across. An," he says, "my heid'll come off."

So Jack didnae want tae dae it. He was very nearly cryin. But he pulled this sword oot anyway an he shut his eyes an he hut the Bull's neck, ye know. An when he opened his eyes, here there was a prince standin, a young prince. He says, "Thank you very much, Jack," he says, "thank you very much." He says, "I was a prince," he says, "at one time," he says. "Before your time," he says, "from a land," he says, "away," he says, "away on the other side o yours." An he says, "I came lookin for the Water o Life, but," he says, "the enchantment got me before I got there." An he says, "I was enchanted intae the Black Bull o the Forest." An he says, "That ither bull that comes here," he says, "it's enchanted too. But ye see," he says, "he's a bad, bad man that," he says. "I wouldn't have anything to do wi him if he comes tae ye in any shape or form. Don't have anythin tae do wi him."

Jack says, "No, I won't."

A18 "Well," she says, "before ye go," she says, "come ootside."
 So Jack went oot wi her ootside. "Now," she says, "there it is there."
 "What," says Jack.
 She says "look". And the wee burd was sittin on the winda - sole o the winda.

B18 "Well," says Jack, "what are ye goin tae do now?"
 "Well," he says, "I go this way," he says. "Don't worry about me," he says, "because, since I was enchanted intae the bull," he says, "I've got a lot o powers that I didn't have before that." An he says, "Good luck tae ye, an God speed," he says, "till ye get hame tae yer father," he says, "an it's time ye were away."
 So Jack says, fareweel, shakes hands wi this prince man an he, this boy goes away. So Jack he walks on an walks on an he couldnae get it out o his heid, an he's thinkin aboot this an that an the next thing. An he sees the wee bird still flyin in front o him, ye see. So they come back an they passes the first oul wumman an the first oul wumman asked him, she says, "Was ye at ma sister's? How's she gettin on? Is she keepin fine?" an aa this cairry on. So Jack gave her aa the news an she says, "Did ye get the Water o Life, Jack?"
 He says, "Yes," he says, "I got it."
 "Well," she says, "I don't think your worries are finished yet," she says.
 Jack says, "How?"
 She says, "Is the little bird wi ye?"
 Jack says, "Aye."
 "Well," she says, "that's your future wife." D'ye see.
 So Jack says, "Whae can I mairry a burd?" he says. "I cannae mairry a burd." He says, "I go wi the kitchen dame when I'm back at the castle," he says. "I'm no lookin for a wumman!"
 She says, "But that is your future wife," she says. She says, "She's a princess, that wee bird."
 He says, "Whae can a burd be a princess?"
 She says, "I'm tellin ye." She says, "Come out here." An the wee bird was stannin.

A19 "Now," she says, "take your sword oot an kill it."

"Oh," he says, "I couldnae dae that, naw! Wee bird," he says, "efter it daein sae much for me, one thing an anither like that."

She says, "Take your sword oot Jack an kill it," she says, "or the Water of Life's nae use tae you. Now take my word for it."

"Well," says Jack, "tae please ye, auld woman an for the sake o ma father an that," he says, "but I wad raither loss ma legs as dae that," he says.

She says, "You do it."

So Jack takes his sword an it didnae take much o a dunk tae kill the wee bird, you know. But as soon as the sword hit the wee bird, what was stannin there? The golden-haired maiden!

B19 The wee bird says, "Aye, Jack, she's right enough. Take your sword out an nip the head off me too."

Jack says, "I couldnae nip the head off a wee burd," he says. "Dae ye think," he says, "I'm a fool or somethin?"

She says, "Ye'll have tae, Jack," she says. "Take your sword out an cut the heid off me."

So Jack took his sword oot an he could hardly get tae it, but he nipplit the heid off the wee bird, and there was a lovely young princess girl wi lovely raven curls hanging doon her back, aa the parphernalia on her. Oh, lovely girl she was!

A20 "Now," the auld woman says tae Jack, "you take that girl home," she says, "that's a princess frae the next kingdom tae your father's. She went missin hundred o years ago an she's of royal blood. When ye go back A wish yese happiness."

So Jack thanked the auld wumman, put the lassie up on the horse an they set off for home. Now the auld man was bad when Jack left an he's gaspin at his last gasp there an some o them were saying "Where did Jack go? Is he no here? An the auld man's deein," an one thing an another like that, ye see. "Oh ye might heed that fool. Ye might nae care aboot him. He's awa. God knows where he is!"

But anyway later on in the efternoon, they lookit doon the avenue, an here's auld Meg comin wi this princess an Jack sittin on its back. Comes up, jumps off the horse takes his girl friend aff, this princess comes intae the house, says, "Where's ma father?"

"Aw, he's too auld for you tae see. Time you were doon at the kitchen gettin water. You were too long away." But Jack pushes past them an up tae his father's room. The father says, "Aw," he says, "son, are ye back?"

He says, "Yes," he says, "an I got what I went for father."

He says, "What was that again son?"

He says, "The Water o Life."

"Oh," he says, "my God," he says, "I doubt that'll no go, the Water o Life."

"Well," he says, "tak a wee sup o it an see." So the faither - it took him aa his time tae pit this wee bottle tae his mooth an he got a wee taste in his mooth. An his faither was as good as gold! Introduces the princess to the father. The father says, "I know that kingdom", he says, "I remember," he says, "hearing them tellin aboot that lassie bein enchanted an taken away." But eventually anyway there was a big weddin an bells were ringin there was also ten days o feasting, an Jack and his father built another castle for Jack maybe four or five mile from his own, and him an the princess lived happy ever after.

B20 So Jack thanks the oul wumman an said he'd be back tae see her sometime. An she says, "Jack, ye better go home now," she says. "Your father'll be waitin on ye."

So Jack an this girl away they goes. It took him aboot a week tae walk back. An when they came back he took her up to his father's, introduced her as his wife. His father - as his girl friend - but his father was far through. He was lyin just aboot gaspin his last. So he gets the bottle quick an he just puts it tae his father's lips like that an the old man come back tae - he didnae get younger - he didnae get younger, but he turned as virile an sittin up an gettin his claes on tae get oot o bed. An Jack married that girl an ruled in that country for a long time.

A21

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B21 An then his two brothers came carryin on an worryin aboot the estate an one thing an another like that, ye see. So Jack says, "I'll tell ye what I'll do wi them," he says. "Dae ye see that island oot there, that great big island off the shore, when ye go across?"

He says, "Aye."

"Well," he says, "you can have that." Ye see. An one o them, one o the - the - one o their grandchildren or great grand children is still there yet, an that's Rainier o Monaco. He married that Grace Whit-ye-ca-it, Grace Kelly. An that's him, thats some o them there, yet. On the Island of Monaco or Manaco, or whatever they call it, on that island, his forebears.

II.5 THE NINE STALL STABLE

Willie MacPhee

Once upon a time there was a crofter an his wife. They werena doin too well. Their crops an everything else was kin o goin bad wi them. Cattle was a bad price, an everything else. But they strugglet on the best way they could for years, done the best they could. Wan day the wumman got up. She says, "John," she says, "I'm no feelin very well," she says, "I think," she says, "there must be somehin wrong wi me."

"Ach," he says, "there's no much wrong wi you," he says.

"I think," she says, "I think," she says, "I'm pregnant."

"Oh well," he says, "that's no much tae be sorry for," he says. "Ye should be glad at that," he says, "'cause it's a long time since we - went together," he says, "an we've been long - we've been expeckin this for a good long while," he says. "I'm glad," he says, "that ye're that wey."

So time rollt on, but at the end o nine months, she had this wee boy. An he was a good boy an went tae school an everything else. When he growed up his father let him go wherever he wantit tae go, aa roon the farm steadin, aa roon here an there when he was a laddie, dae what the laddies always dae, work wi - kill birds, dae aa the mischief he could. But as he grew up aulder he never got no interest, he never had no interest for tae work or dae no'hin aboot the croft. He just cairried on his own wey an done what he wanted tae dae, an that was hit, an his father just let him an his mother just let him go, seein he was the only boy.

But he growed up tae he was aboot seven or eight year auld. An here by the way his mither fell again an she had anither wee boy. Now times growin on an this ither wee boy's rising an getting up an doin everything his father telt him tae dae, an aa quite different laddie entirely. Quite different. As much difference as day be night in the two o them. These two boys grow't up onyway an all the work that had tae be done an everythin got done, the youngest yin, he did, an he never complaint none in the world aboot it. Nut a thing did he complain aboot, he done everything he was wantit tae dae. But the ither yin, the aulder yin, he done nothin but just went an played, shot an whatever he was wantin tae dae, he did it, an he never chaved, an never done nothin.

So years rollt by tae they were very near manhood. An the auldest yin, he wad be aboot twenty, an he got brownd off as all boys do at that age. He said tae his faither an mither, "Ach, I think," he says, "faither," he says, "an mither, I think," he says, "I'll go away," he says, "an look for a job some place else," he says, "for I canna be bothert bidin here nae longer," an he says, "I'll go away," he says, "an see what I can dae."

"Aw well," his faither says, "please yersel," he says. "Ye're a big man noo," he says, "an ye can please yersel," he says. "Ye're no daein much roond here tae help here," he says, "If ye can do anythin better away," he says, "good luck tae ye."

So the next day his mither parcelt up some lunches an some extra stuff he was needin an away he went tae push his fortune. But he daunted on an he walked on an he walked on for miles an miles an miles in-tae a strange land where he never was afore. An he was comin along this bit o a road, close tae the side o a loch an he sees a lot o swans an things. An laddies wis throwin stanes at them. "Ah," he said, "that's a good pastime, I think I'll hae a shot at this masel," he says, "an throw some stanes at these swans tae." So he started in wi these laddies an stanet these swans, but the swans flew oot on the

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water, an that was it. So efter he got tired o flingin stanes he lift-it what he had an he went on the road again.

He came on anither bit farther an he sat doon at the side o the road tae hae his lunch, or whatever he had tae eat, an he's sittin at the side o the road. An all of a sudden he notices all these wee ants runnin back an forrit across the road. "Aw," he says, "what kin o terments o beast is that?" he says. "That's terrible," he says. He says, "I think I'll tramp on them," he says, "an bray em." So he trampit on them an bray't them up an follit them tae whaur they were gaun. An it was one o these big ant moulds, an he stood luckin at it for a while, an aa these other laddies come alang an they were luckin an they asked him whut it wis. An he says it was "an ant heap," he says. "That's a big ant heap," he says, "an the ants," he says, "gaithers aa their stuff," he says, "all winter - all summer," he says, "an they tak it doon there in the wintertime," he says. "It keeps them goin," he says. "Seein it's early Spring, they're early startit.

"Oh aye," this laddie says. The laddie says, "I wonder what's in the bottom o that?"

"Aw," he says, "we can soon see that," he says. So they scattert this thing oot, this big heap o mould belongin tae the - the ants - scattert it aa oot tae see what was in the bottom o't. "Course there were naethin in the bottom but wee crumbs o this an that, bits o sticks an dead flies an everything like that. An they jist stood for a while luckin at it.

"Aw, there nothing there much interestin," this yin said.

"Naw," these ither laddies said, "there naethin interestin there." So they went away. An efter a while he thocht tae hisselt, "I think," he says, "I'll sit doon here," he says, "an eat some o ma meat," he says, an he says, "tak a rest," he says, "because I dinnae see me gaun much faurther the day." So he sat doon at the side o the road a wee bit faurder alang an he's sittin at a wee well at the side o the road, tae get a drink o water. An he's sittin eatin his lunch when the first thing that comes up oot o the well is a wee frog. He luckit at the wee frog.

"Aw," he says, "a wee frog." He says, "I think," he says, "ye should be daein better things doon in there."

"Aw," says the frog, "A cannae dae nae'hin better," he says.

"Aw, ye can speak?" he says tae the frog.

"Oh," says the frog, "I can speak." He says, "Even A ken whaur ye come fae," he says. "Ken the place ye come fae," he says. "Whit ye've been daein aa alang the road," he says. 'But," he says, "if ye give me a wee bit o yer meat that you're eatin," he says, "I'll tell ye some mair."

"Naw," he says, "naw," says this laddie. "I'm no tellin ye nothin," he says, "I'm no giein ye nothin."

"Well," he says, "I could dae ye a good turn," he says, "if ye'd only give me a wee bit o yer meat."

"Naw," he says, "Ye're gettin nane."

"Aw, it's aa right," says the frog, he says. "Never mind. It's aa right," he says, "Eat your meat," he says, "an enjoy it." Frog says tae him, "Well what ye daein here, onyway?"

"Aw," he says, "I'm luckin for work," he says, "tryin tae get a good job wherever I can get it."

"Oh," he says, "ye're on the right track," he says. "Dae ye see that big hoose away up there?"

"Aye," this boy says, young man says, "Aye, I see that big hoose up there."

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"Well," he says, "they're lookin for a man up there," he says, "a spare man up there," he says. "I don't know what ye've got tae dae," he says, "but," he says, "ye'll get a job," he says. "I've seen a few o them gaun up there," he says, "but they must be workin up there still," he says, "because A never seen them comin doon."

"Aw I see," he says tae the wee frog. "I see." Says he tae the frog, he says, "Dae ye - have ye nae idea what kin o work is up there?"

"Naw," says the frog. "I've nae idea," he says. "No idea what work's up there," he says, "but go up there an see for yersel," he says, "that's the best thing tae dae."

Away he goes up tae this hoose, away up this dark avenue, right away up tae this hoose. Knocks at the door, chaps at the door. A butler comes oot tae him. "Well," the butler says, "what do you want, ma young man?"

"I'm lookin for a job," he says. "I heard," he says, "ye were lookin for people to work for yese up here."

"Well," he says, butler says, "I'll go in an see ma boss an see what he says."

Away the butler went back intae the hoose again and out comes the gen'le man o the house.

"Well," the gentleman says, "what do you want?"

"Well," this young man says, "well, A could dae wi a job," he says.

"Oh," he says, "I can give you a job," he says. "I'll give ye a job," he says. "Do you want it?"

"Yes."

"Can you work?"

"Oh I can work a wee bit," he says.

"Well," he says, "come on an A'll gie ye a job. But remember," he says, "if ye don't do this job," he says, "ye'll never go back doon that road again."

"Aw," he says, "if that's the way o't," he says, "I'll try ma best an dae it."

So away this gentleman an this young man goes, away oot tae the steadin, an he takes him tae this stable, there were nine stalls in this stable. But there were nae horses in it, because the horses wis oot, all grazin, it bein early summer, early Spring an summer.

"Now," says the man" he says, "there's the stable," he says, "an if you clean oot that stable," he says, "there's nine stalls there," he says. "You clean oot that stable," he says, "an we'll see efter that," he says, "whit ye can dae."

"Right-o," he says. So away the gentleman o the hoose went an left him tae clean this stables. Gien him a barra, gien him a big brush and a shovel and a fork, a graip raither. An he starts tae clean this stable. Aach! Within half an oor, he got fed up an he got tired an sat doon. "Ah" he says, "I cannae be bothert cleanin this," he says. He says, "I'll wait for a wee while," he says, "an see. Get a rest. I'll need tae tak a rest, because I'm tired," he says.

Well, he sat doon on top o a pile o strae an he fell sound asleep, on tap o this heap o strae. This gentleman come back aboot half past four or a quarter tae five with - he thocht he'd have the maist o it cleaned oot. But when he come back he was lyin heapin on this - sleepin on this pile o strae, an he wakened him up. "Ye better get up," he says. "Ye never done very much."

"Naw," he says, "I couldnae dae very much," he says. "I was too tired," he says. "I couldnae dae very much. I traivelt a good bit," he says, "an I'm too tired tae dae't." He says, "If ye give me a chance," he says, "I'll dae't the morn."

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"Aw naw," he says, "ye've had your chance," he says, an he says, "that's hit!"

So they took him oot an this gentleman belanging tae this big hoose, he was a warlock. An these warlocks can dae anything. They can turn ye intae anything or mak ye dae anything they want ye tae dae. So what he done wi him, he turned him intae a big grey stane at the door o the stable an left him there. He says, the gentleman says, "There ye are," he says, "you sit there," he says, "an that'll dae you," he says, "that's anither yin I'm redd o."

So that was the end o hum for the time bein!

Now back at this wee croft, where this oul woman an this oul man - well, they werena that ould, but they were gettin up, anyway, an the ither younger son, he was workin aboot the fairm, an this is maybe a year efter that still workin away. An he was aye wonderin how his bri-ther wisnae comin back, how he didnae come back or write or dae nothin. He says tae his faither, "Well, faither," he says, "ma brother," he says, "I miss him very sore," he says. "I don't know what happened tae him" he says, "an I would like tae ken what happened tae him. He was-nae handy roond here," he says, "he never done very much. Still," he says, "ye miss him when he was away."

"Aye," the man says, "that's right enough," he says. "He's aye your brother," he says. "An A wisht A kent what happened tae him."

"Aye," the woman says, "A wisht A did," she says. "He's maybe mur - killed or murdered, something maybe happened tae him."

"Well," says the other brother, he says, "A'll tell ye whit A'll dae," he says, "faither. If you can manage tae struggle away," he says, "through the summer," he says, "Struggle through the summer," he says, "there's no much tae dae," he says. "I'll go away," he says, "an see'f A see him."

"Oh," says the oul man, "that'll be a very good thing tae dae," he says. "I wisht ye would, son," he says. "Ye're a good boy," he says, "A ken masel," he says, "ye'll look efter yersel." An he says, "Nothing'll happen tae you," he says. "I know you'll come back," he says, "doesnae maitter what happens."

"Oh," he says, "I'll come back faither," he says. An he says, "I'll see what happened tae him onyway. I'll try an fin oot what happened tae him."

"Very good," the faither says. "Away ye go, son."

So the next day, he rose very, very early, an he got s'ing fae his mother, same as his ither brother got, some lunches an stuff, ony-thing that he had for tae keep him warm at night if he's lyin ootside, an away he set.

Well, by good luck would have it, he traivelt on the same direction as his brother went, jist the same as if something had guided him the same road. So he'd been traivellin on an traivellin on for days an days, but finally come along this samen lochside an here was these swans, these two swans. Noo agin this time, it was well on in the year and these swans had a lot o wee young ones, cygnets. So he stood an he luck at them a while, an he seen these laddies comin an they were gonnae throw stanes at them. He kent they were gonnae throw stanes at them because there were some o them liftin stanes.

So he says, "What are yese gonnae dae wi they stanes?"

"Aw," these laddies says, "we're gonnae frighten these swans away."

"Aw naw," he says, "ye're no." He says, "Ye better get on your way," he says, "or," he says, "I'll maybe dae some'hin aboorit, an no let yese touch them," he says. "They're no daein yese nae hairm," he

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says. An he says, "Look at them," he says, "they're beautiful animals. They're daein yese nae hairm, an leave them alone."

"Aw," this laddie says. "That's a'right, if ye feel that way aboorit," he says. "It's O.K." So away they went, this boys. An he fed a half o this wee bits o breid he had in this wee thingummy - this wee bag, tae the swans, an he fed the swans an he fed the wee young swans.

Efter a while he went away on his road and the swans went away back swimmin through the loch again. So he came along the road again, jist about the samen spot as whaur his brother was, an he sat doon at the side o the road tae eat a bit more o his lunch, or whatever he had. An he seen these wee ants goin back an forrit across the road. So he was curious an he says, "Great workin wee beasts," he says, "how they work like that an strive like that for tae keep their ainsel," he says. So he crummelt up wee bits o his - what he was eatin doon on the road an these wee ants liftit it an they went away across the road wi't yin noo an yin again liftin these wee crumbs an gonnae sit an watchin impasionable.

After a while he says, "That's a great wee beasts," he says. "I'll g'owre an see," he says, "whaur they've takken aa the stuff tae." He come owre tae the bing, aa these ants' bing. He's stannin luckin at this bing an he crummelt mair wee bits o breid doon intae the tap o this ant heap. He says tae hissels, "That's wonderful beasts," he says, "how they live like that an cairry on like that." An like that, the tap o the ant bing, this big ant came oot, great big ant it was. Maybe it was the queen o the ants, or maybe the keeng, I don't know. But it was the heid one o the ants onyway, an it came right up tae the tap o the bing an it luckit up at this man, this young boy.

An he said, "Well," he says, "that was a very good trick," he says, "that ye done," he says. "That was very nice o ye," he says, "feedin us," he says. "If we can do onything for you," he says, "we'll certainly dae't."

"Ach," he says tae the wee ant, he says, "that's nothin," he says. "That's nothing at aa," he says. "I don't like tae see onybody," he says, "bad tae beasts or onything like that," he says. "I don't like that," he says.

But the ant said, "Ye're no like your brother. He was here an," he says, "he tossed oot wir place, tossed it all oot," he says. "We had a terrible job", the ant says, "bringin everything aa back together again an gettin it -"

"Aw," says the ither yin, he says, "that's aa right," he says. He says, "Did ye - whaur did ma brother go?"

He says, "I don't know," he says, "where your brother - If ye go across tae the well there," he says, "there's a frog in there," he says, an he says, "hit'll tell ye somethin mair aboot him."

So he went across tae the well an he's sittin at the well an eatin his lunch when the frog came up tae the tap o the water.

"Hallo," this frog says.

"Hallo," says this fellow, he says. "You're funny - a speakin frog!"

"Oh," says the frog, "I can speak," he says. The frog says, "Will ye give me a wee bit o yer - what ye're eatin?"

"Oh," he says, "I'll gie ye a wee bit o what I'm eatin," he says. So he crummelt twa-three wee bits tae't. An the frog says, "Yer brother was here, ye know," he says, "an he went up tae the big hoose tae get a job an he's no back doon yet."

"Oh aye," says the brither, the ither yin, he says, "I see," he says. "Is that where he went?"

"Aye, he went up there. But he's no back doon yet," he says.

"Well," says the brither, he says, "If he's up there, 'I'll need tae go up an see if I can see him."

But he's sittin eatin a wee bit mair o his lunch, when the first thing that come across the road was this wee, wee man, wee, wee fairy, come dannerin oot fae amang these bushes at the far side o the road. An it says tae him, "Well," he says, "how are ye gettin on ma son?"

"Aw," says the laddie, "I'm gettin on aa right," he says. "Where did you come fae?"

"Well," he says, "owre there," he says, "in that humplock there," he says, "I stey ower there," he says, "me," he says, "an aa the rest o ma clan," he says, "owre there," he says. But he says, "I wis gonnae come oot," he says, "when your brother passed this way," he says, "the last time," he says. "But," he says, "he was that bad," he says, "wi these swans back there, that he helpit tae stane, an I was watchin him," he says, "wi they ants' bings," he says, "an I was listenin tae him speakin tae the frog," he says. An he says, "That's the way I didnae come oot," he says, "because he micht hae done some evil thing on me." An he says, "I was better tae bide whaur I was," he says, "an watch the rest."

"Oh aye," he says. "Well," he says.

"But," he says, "you're goin up," he says, "tae get a job in that big hoose up there?" he says.

"Aye," he says, "I'm goin up tae see'll get a job," he says.

"Well," he says, "I'm, gonnae warn ye," he says, "afore ye go up," he says, "he's a very very queer man up there. You know," he says, "there was lots o people went up there," he says, "an never came back doon," he says. "An whatever he's daein on them, I don't know," he says, "but I never seen them comin back doon." But he says, "I'll tell ye what," he says, "if ye gie me a wee bit o your - whit ye're eatin," he says, "an a wee bit tae take back across the road tae ma freens," he says, "we could maybe help ye," he says, "if ye get any kind o job ye cannae dae yersel. We wad gie ye a wee hand."

"Oh," says this fellow, "that would be very good o ye," he says. "Oh your welcome," he says, "tae the half o what I'm eatin."

So he gien him a good wee puckle on this whit he was eatin an the wee man bid him goodbye an telt him, if ever he was needin him, for tae jist come doon an tell the frog. If ever he was needin him an he wad come an gien him a hand. "Oh," he says, "that's very good o ye, richt enough," this boy says.

So away the wee man went and he sat doon and ate a wee bit mair o this an took a drink o this water. "Now," says the frog, he says, "ye heard what the wee man said," he says, "the fairy said," he says. "If ye're needin a hand, jist come doon an tell me," the frog says, an he says, "I'll give word tae them an tell them."

"Oh," says this fella, "that's very good o you," he says.

"Aye," the frog says, "a queer place this," he says. "Ye know," this frog says, "I'm no a frog at aa," he says. "That man up there," he says, "pit me in here," he says. An he says, "I'm a prince in ma own way," he says, "an that man put me in here as a frog," he says, "because A didnae obey him." But he says, "If ever I could dae you a good turn," he says, "A wull," he says. An he says, "Don't forget," he says, "tae come doon if ye need ony help."

"All right," says the man, this young fella. He goes up tae this big hoose onyway. He chaps at the door; oot comes the butler.

"Well," says the butler, "what do you want?"

"Well," says the young fella, "I could do wi some'hin to do, sir," he says. "I'm lookin for some work," he says. An he says, "I could do wi a job."

"Oh well," he says, "jist you stan there," he says, "an I'll tell ma boss," an he says, "see what he can say aboorit."

So he goes in an out this gentleman comes. "Well," he says, "what do you want?"

"Well," he says, "I'm after something to do," he says, "sir," he says. "I'm lookin for some work," he says. "I'm wantin a job if I can get it."

"Oh well," he says, "I'll gie ye a job. Are ye a good worker?" he says.

"Oh," he says, "I'm a good enough worker. At least," he says, "I think I am," he says. "I could very near dae anything," he says.

"Oh well," he says, "I'll show ye what tae dae," he says. "If ye cannae dae it," he says, "it's just too bad upon you."

"Oh," this fella says, "I'll try ma best."

He takes him owre tae where this stable was or steadin and he showed him this stable. "Now," he says, "Ye've tae clean that oot," he says, "clean all the manure, dung, oot o that stalls," he says. An he says, "I know," he says, "there a good puckle in there tae dae," he says. "How long will it tak ye tae dae that?"

"Oh," this fella says, "I don't know, sir," he says. "It'll tak me a good wee while."

"Well," he says, "I'll gie ye," he says, "tae this time the morrow," he says. "How'll that dae ye?"

"Oh," this young boy says, "that'll dae me fine sir."

So away the gentleman goes an this fella started wi this barra an this graip an this spade - no a spade but a shovel, tae clean oot the stables. So he's workin away an workin away an workin away and oh! he's daein no bad, he's got wan very near cleaned oot, But oh! there were an affy dung an it was very near level tae the roof o this stable.

But he sat doon tae tak a rest an he kinna dovert away sleep as he thought. But, aw naw, he waukent up on a sudden, he couldnae rest, he waukent up on a sudden. "No," he says, "I don't think," he says, "that every I'll do this." He says, "A ken masel that this man did something tae ma brother," he says. "As sure as the world," he says, "if I dinnae get this stall cleaned oot," he says, "I'm gonny be done." He says, "I'll take a wee walk doon," he says, "doon an tak a drink o water at this wee well tae freshen me up."

So daunert away back doon tae the well an he stopped doon tae tak a drink o water an this wee frog come fae the bottom o the well. "How're ye gettin on up there, noo, son?" he says.

"Aw," he says, "A've a place tae clean oot," he says, "an A ken masel A'll never clean't oot. There an awfa awfa work tae be done up there," he says, an he says, "if I dinnae dae't," he says, "I think by the luck o this gentleman up here," he says, "as you says - he's a bad yin," an he says, "I don't know what he might dae onto me."

"Ah," says the frog, "dinna you worry," he says, "don't you -you go back up," he says, "an A'll see'f A can get ye a wee help," frog says.

"Will ye,?" says the young fella.

"Aw," he says, "A'll see," he says. "A'll see. A'll see'f A can get ye a wee help some place."

Away he went back up tae the stable an he's workin away again, but aw! he got that tired, but he sat doon tae hae a rest. First thing that came in through the back o the stable was this wee man.

"Eh," he says, "ma laddie, ye're gettin kinna tired."

He says, "aye," he says, "I'm tired," he says, "wee f'lla."

"Well," he says, "jist you sit the tap o that puckle strae there," he says, "and," he says, "me an ma mates'll gie ye a wee hand."

So he sat doon on the tap o this wee heap o strae that was lyin an he fell sound asleep. An all these wee men, these wee fairies, started tae this nine stalls o the stable. But when he waukent up 'boot five or six oor after that aw! the stable was that clean, ye could ha took yer breakfast aff it. There wasnae such a thing as a taste o dung aboot it. It was clean, beautiful an everything was aa put in the same place an it was sittin shinin. Everthing was shinin, spotless. But there werena a wee fairy tae be seen, they were aa awa gin this time. An he's sittin the tap o the strae when the door opens and in this gentleman comes along wi his butler.

"Aw" he says, "ye're there!"

"Aye," he says, "I'm here," he says.

So, "Oh, ye've made a good job o that," he says. "Ye've made a good job o the stable," he says.

"Oh aye," he says, "I made a good job o the stable," he says.

"Well," he says, "seein you're," he says, "such a good worker," he says, "I'm gonnae make a promise wi ye," he says. An he says, "If ye can dae't," he says, he says, "therefore," he says, "ye're entitlet," he says, "tae mair'n a day's work. I'll tell ye what I'll do," he says. "If ye do this next wee job," he says, "for me," he says, "ma daughter," he says, "is the princess," an he says, "ye can have her as your wife, on one condition."

"Well, what's that?" this fella says.

"Well," he says, "when she was out walkin," he says, "in the forest owre there," he says, "she had a very very valuable string of pearl beads aroon her neck," he says, "an she went away an lost every one," he says, "through this forest." He says, "I don know where she lost them." An he says, "For that," he says, "I have her locked in the dungeons," he says, "tae these beads is found. An if you can find them, or get them," he says, "you can have her an ye can have this castle," he says. But he says, "Efter ye do that, if ye do that," he says, "we'll see then efter that."

"Oh," says he, "this is it. Whaur am I gonnae get beads an things that's lost in a forest among aa that green gress an breckans an hether an shrubbery of all descriptions?"

"Well," says this man, he says, "I may as well tell ye now," he says, "your brother was here," he says, "an there he's at the door o the stable." This great big stane was lyin, big grey stane. "There he's," he says. "That's your brother lyin there," he says. "An if you cannae dae that," he says, "what I'm tellin ye tae dae now," he says, "you'll be turned in the same as that," he says, "as that stone."

"Aw," says the brother, "that's terrible. Ah well, sir," he says. "I think," he says, "I'll be lyin there," he says, "alang wi ma brother," he says. "I don't think," he says, "I'll be able tae dae this," he says. It was very near impossible fur tae gang an get these lost pearl beads intae the wud. But away the gentleman went.

"Afore ye go sir," he says, "how long am I gonnae get tae get these beads?"

"Oh," he says, "I'll gie ye a day," he says, "tae find them," he says. "If ye don't find them - well," he says, "that's it."

"All right," he says.

Away this fella goes intae this wud, searchin up here an searchin there, searchin every place where he thocht she should maybe stick on a brench or some'hin, break the beads fae aboot her neck. But naa! he couldnae get nothin. Couldn't get a haet. Couldn't even get the string that was on the beads.

"Ah," he says, "ye're gettin - gettin dark, gloamin dark. Ah," he says, "that's me, that's it finished," he says. But he says, "I think I'll go down tae the well," he says, "tae get a drink o water, anyway, afore I go up," he says, "tae get turned intae a grey stane."

Down he goes tae the well: he's sittin at the well, an he got a drink o water an this we frog come up. "Ha ha," he says, "ye're in trouble this time," he says.

"Aye," he says, "I'm in trouble this time," he says. "A've tae get beads," he says, "the queen lost," he says, "princess lost," he says, "in the forest," he says, "an A'll never get that in the world."

"Aah," says the wee frog, "cheer up man!" he says. "Ye've plenty o freens," he says, "plenty o good freens. A'll see what I can dae fur ye," he says, "wi yer freens. Away ye g'up," he says. "Sit owre there," he says, "an tae the end o the hoose," he says. "Sit intae a bit where he'll no see you," an he says, "we'll see what we gaun dae."

Away he went an sat where the wee frog telt him tae gang an sit doon, an he was sittin aboot maybe an oor, maybe an oor an a half. The sun was jist aboot tae set doon at the back o the mountain when he seen aa these wee ants comin, wi aa these pearls. Every yin had a pearl, aboot a hundert o them, an maybe mair. Every all these wee ants. They went an searched through the wud till they got the pearls, efter the wee frog telt them. An this big ant was wi them, the keeng or queen or whatever it wis.

"Noo," he says, "there your pearls," he says. "You done a good turn tae h-us," he says, "we - it's as much as we can dae tae show a good turn, dae you a good turn."

"Oh," says this man, he says, "that was very very good o youse. Thanks very much."

"Ah never mind," says the wee fairy, see. "You've done very good for us."

So he got his pearls, he got them aa intae a wee dish and up he goes to the front door o the big hoose. Chaps at the door. He says - the man come oot, ye see - "Is that - is that onything like the pearls," he says, "that was lost?"

"Oh," he says, "that's them," he says, "that - is - them," he says. "That's them, richt enough," he says. "That's the pearls. Now," he says, "come on an A'll let ye see the princess." They con - they went away doon tae the bottom o the cellar, way doon - aw! the beautifulest young woman ye ever seen in your life, beautiful thing, a princess, beautiful young thing, an she's sittin greetin in the cell.

"Aw," he says, "it's a'right, ma dear," he says, an he says, "I made a - a turn wi your faither," he says, an he says, "aye," he says, "I've tae get ye fur ma wife an the castle if A got these beads."

"Oh that's right," says this laird, he says, "that's right," he says. "I made ma promise," he says, "you would get her," he says, "when ye got thir beads. But," he says, "the funny thing is aboot it," he says. "ye canny get her the noo."

"How is that?" says the young man, he says.

"Well," he says, "the keys o the cellar," he says, "the keys o the dungeon," he says, "was lost," he says. "Me," he says, "an ma gellie was oot fishin," he says, "in that loch away doon there," he

says and he says, "I hooked a big fish, an ma gellie had the keys in his pocket," he says, "an wi the net he leaned owre tae catch this fish," he says, "an the keys fell oot o his pocket," he says, "an went intae the water. An ye'll need tae get they keys," he says, "afore ye can get her."

"Aww!" this young man said, he says, "this is terrible," he says. "A cannae sweem nane," he says. "A don know how A'm gonny get these keys."

"Ah well, it's up tae you," this laird, he says. "Ye'll need tae get them afore ye can get her. An efter ye dae get the keys, ye'll need tae another wee turn for me, but hit'll be an easy turn," he says.

"Ah well," says this man, this fella, he says. "That'll be aa right."

Away he goes doon tae the lochside an he's luckin alang the loch, here an there an every - ah! he couldnae fin nae keys. An he come back tae the wee well again, an he bood doon tae get a drink o water again, an this wee frog come up again. We frog says, "Ha ha," he says, "ye've tae get the keys noo," he says, "have ye?"

"Aye," says this fella, "I've tae get the keys." He says, "How did you ken?"

"Ach," this wee frog says, "I ken everything. Ken everything," he says. "Noo," he says, "ye're gonnae get the keys," he says, "because," he says, "I've got something," he says, "tae get your keys wi," he says. So he says, "Jist you come back up tae the castle and wait up there," he says, "for a wee while," he says, "then come back doon here tae the waal," he says, "an your keys'll be lyin here, at the waal."

Away the fella went back up tae the castle and waitit fur aboot an oor. The wee frog went an got the swans, got in touch wi the swans. The swans is - ye ken the way swans dugged up an doon, the neck away doon tae the bottom searchin here an searchin there. The male swan, hit came up wi the keys in its mooth, an come back owre an gien them tae the wee frog at the waal. So the swans went away back tae the loch again. Man came doon aboot an oor after that, doon tae the well again.

"Aye," says the wee frog, "your keys are here," he says. "There they're lyin there."

"Oh," he says, "thanks very much," he says, "thanks very very very much," tae the wee frog.

"Ah," says the wee frog, "that's aa right," he says. "Ye're no finished yet, mind ye," says the wee frog, he says. "I'll tell ye what's gonnae happen noo," says the wee frog.

"Whit's gonnae happen noo?" says this fella, he says.

"Well," he says, "the morra," he says, "he's gonae hae ye ontae a race," he says, "tae beat him," he says, "through the wuds o he's estate and along his valleys an back tae the castle," he says, "an if ye dinnae get back tae the castle," he says, "afore him in time," he says, "he's gonnae turn ye intae a stane," he says, "the same as your brother."

"Oh is he?" says this man.

"Aye," he says, "noo," he says, "it's up tae you," he says, "tae pick the richt horse."

"Ah well," says the man, he says, this young fella, "hoo'm A gonnae pick the richt - ken the richt horse?"

"Well," he says, "I'll tell ye hoo ye'll ken the richt horse. D'ye see that very end stall?" he says. "That oul, oul horse," he says, "that you're sae good tae? That oul white horse that's awfy awfy thin?" he says. "You tak that horse," he says, "an you'll hae a good chance," he says, "winnin on that horse."

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"Oh well," the lad said, "I'll tak yer biddin. Ye've been right up tae noo," he says, "so I'll take your biddin for this tae."

"Well," the wee frog says, "I'm tellin ye, that's what tae dae. Tak the white horse."

"Right," he goes up, gies him the keys.

"Oh," he says, "there's your keys," he says. An he says, "Can I get her noo?"

"No," he says, "tell ye what we're gonny dae," the man says, this laird. He says, "The morra," he says, "we're gonnae have a race," he says. An he says, "You can pick ony horse you want in the stable," he says, "an I have got my ain private horse," he says. "We'll have a race," he says, "through the wuds," he says, "through the valleys," he says, "across the burn an back here tae the castle. An them 'at's back at the castle, first," he says, he says, "that's them 'at's gonnae win the castle," he says, "an forbye that," he says, "all the things," he says, "and all the things that's all about the castle," he says. "They're maistly lairds and earls and folk wi plenty o money, castles an things they've got," he says. "I'll gie ye a rod," he says, "a magic rod," he says, "ye can turn them all back the way they wur," he says, "if ye win the race."

But he says tae hissel, "A doubt very much if A'll win this race."

"Now," this man says, "if I catch ye," he says, "atween the hoose here," he says "an they rin right back roon," he says, "I'm gonnae slay ye an cut yer heid off," he says, "an turn ye intae a grey stane."

"Aw, God bliss me," he says, "that's terrible. Well," he says, "I'll hae a try."

Down this fella goes, down to the old stable for to pick his horse an he went alang all the horses, an he luckit at this oul horse. "Aw," he says, "A doot, A doot, A doot," he says, "that frog's wrong. A doot that could win nae race."

"Is that what you think?" the oul horse said. "Is that what you think? You tak me and you'll win the race," this oul white horse said tae him.

Next day they got up very early and the sun was shinin bright. Got up very very very early, got his horse oot an everything was all prepared, ridin saddle on its back an everythin.

"Now," says the king, he says, "this is where we start fae up here," he says. "An the two o us'll start together," he says. "Now," he says, "if I catch you before you're back roon tae this castle," he says, "an ye ken the route tae go - richt through tha wud, right through there," he says, "an along through yon valley and across yon burn," he says, "an then back through that ither valley," he says, "and across this burn," he says, "and back tae the castle. Noo," he says, "if I catch ye afore I - afore ye come back here," he says, "ye're a done man."

"Ah but," the lad said, "I'll try ma best."

This oul horse is stannin an ye wadn't have given a ha'penny for it. Nothing but skin an bone. Ye'd think it hadn't a leg tae stan on.

But onyway, away the two of them sets, the two horses. Aw but this oul white horse, it was - fur, fur two steps this other horse was daein wi the laird on its back, this oul horse was daein three an it was goin like the wind, goin like the wind. But they come tae - they went through the first wud richt enough an they come tae this level. Now, this aul horse was gettin kinna tired then. An this fella, "Go on go on, ma ould horse," he says, "ye're daein well."

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"Ah," says the oul horse. "I'm jist aboot finished," he says. "Look roon, owre yer shouder," he says, "an see'f ye see the laird comin."

He lookit roon owre his shouder. "Aye," he says, "he's no far ahind me," he says. "He's jist aboot catchin up wi me."

"Well," says the oul horse, "luck intae my lug, my left lug, an ye'll get a wee dreep o water. Fling't ahin ye. See what happens."

He luckit intae the oul horse's lug an he seen a wee do-dreep o water hinging tae the hairs at the point o his lug an he caughted it wi his finger an thoomb an flung't ahin 'im, into this level, efter he went through the first wud and the second sud, this loch o water at his back wi the wee dreep o water oot o the horse's lug. It was a flowin sea, jist, a ragin sea o water.

"Oh," he says, "there he's, he's comin through, he's swimmin through the water, he's makin through the water," he says. "He's comin still yet. An he's gainin on us again," he says. "Follaein up again on us."

"Ah well," says this oul horse, "luck you," he says, "intae my right lug," he says, "an ye'll get a wee bit thorn," he says, "a bit black thorn," he says, "an fling't owre yer shouder, he says, "an see what happens."

He luckit intae the horses lug an he seen this black thorn. He flung't owre his shouder. When he luckit back there were a thing like a forest o thick black thorn, that a flyin midge widnae hae got through't. An this bad laird in the middle o't ye ken. An this bad laird started roarin efter him, but na! he couldnae - couldnae do nae'hin wi 'im. Couldnae get oot o this bush an he was tied in a knot.

But the young fella made hame tae the castle. When he made hame tae the castle, he was a free man. He was back in afore this king, ye see.

Noo this keeng, he's intae this jungle o black thorns an he couldnae get oot ne way in the worl, couldn't get oot no way. So this - this young lad came back. He said, "I'll need tae try an get him oot," he says, "because," he says, "he'll be in there for life," he says, "an A'll no get ma princess, or naethin," he says, "'cause he's got the keys."

Back he comes an he roarin tae him in through this place. "Are ye aa right in there?"

"Naw," he says, this bad man says, "A'm no aa right," he says, "A'm torn an A'm jaggit an A'm aa twistit tae death," he says. "My horse is aa torn tae bits with jags," he says. "Try an get me oot o this."

"Aw," says this lad he says, "I canny get ye oot," he says. "Hoo'm I gonnae get ye oot?"

The oul horse says tae him, "Ax him - ax him," he says, "if ye let him oot an get him oot," he says, "will he let ye go free along wi your - your castle an everything, an aa your money. Ax him."

He says, "If I get ye oot o that," he says, "will ye let me go free? An get ma brother back," he says, "an aa the rest o the folk ye pit intae stanes an things, here an there? An gie me ma castle an gie me ma money?"

"Oh," this man says, "the minute ye let me oot o this," he says, "that's me finished," he says. "I'm done then."

"All right," says this man. "What am A gonnae dae noo?" he says tae the horse.

"Go back doon," he says, "tae the wee frog in the well, an ax hit whit ye've got tae dae."

"A' that," he says. Back doon tae the well again. Wee frog in the well.

"Well," said the frog, "whit's wrang this time?"

He telt him - the laird was in among the bushes an he couldnae get him.

"Ha ha! In among the bushes is he? Well," he says, "jist you tell him for tae throw oot the rod that he's got," he says, "the enchantment rod," he says, "an ye'll get him oot o the bushes." An he says, "Wance ye dae hae the rod," he says, "ye've got aa the power," he says, "an he's got no power at aa."

"All right," this lad says. Back up tae the bushes again. He's still cursin an swearin on amangst this bushes. Now his horse is torn in bits, he couldnae get movin. But this young fella had still his oul white horse yet.

He says, "The only way," he says, "I can get ye oot o the bushes," he says, "is if ye throw me oot that rod," he says, "ye've in there," he says.

"What rod?" says this man.

"That holy rod of enchantment," he says. "The thing that pit everybody in grey stanes an things," he says, "that thing that ye turn everything the way ye want it," he says, "wi the first shake o't. Throw me that oot," he says, "an I'll get ye oot fae amang the jags.

"Aw," says this man, "I cannae get oot - cannae get it. Ye cannae get that," he says, "that's mine. That's where aa ma power is."

"Ah well," says this fella he says, "if ye're gonnae be like that," he says, "ye'll jist have tae bide in amang the jags," he says, "because I'm no gonnae take ye oot."

"Aw no," he says, "no, no, no" he says, "here the - here the rod," he says, "Get me oot," he says, an he says, "everything ye workit fur an everything ye got," he says, "ye'll get it away wi ye."

So he flung him oot this droll black ebony staff thing. "Now," he says tae hissel, "what am I gonnae dae wi -?"

The oul black horse says, "Jist gie it a couple o shakes back an forrit across tht bushes there, where's he's tied in an see what happens."

He's gien this thing one or two shakes back an forrit across the bushes an the bushes all withert, jist the same as the frost or some'hin get them, an he got oot. When he got him oot he wasn't worth a ha'penny. He was torn an raggit in bits an he was an oul oul man, when he come oot an he was only a young man when he went in. But this rod - this young fella had all the power o this rod. An when he took this oul man back tae the castle, laird back tae the castle again.

"Now," he says, "how dae I get a' ma folk an everything?"

"Well," he says, "whatever ye want tae dae jist wave that rod," he says, an he says, "everything'll come back."

"Well," he says, "I'll gae doon an try ma brother first," he says. He went doon tae the door o the stable and he shakit the thing abeen't. Aw the fella - his brither jumpit up like life, same as life. Roon all the castle here and there, all these droll shapit stanes he was touchin. Every yin he was touchin was comin oot princesses, lords and ladies, and all high folks o the things in the place this man turned intae stanes. An he got his sweetheart oot o the dungeon. Now that was aa right. But when he got away back, away back hame says he, "Aw, wait a minute. I'll need tae gang an seen ma wee frog."

Doon tae the frog. "Are ye there ma wee frog?" he says.

"Aye," says this wee frog, "I'm here," he says. Says the wee frog, "Have you still got that - rod?"

"Aye," says this fella, "I've still got this wee rod."

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"Well," he says, "jist gie't a shake owre the well," he says, "an see what happens."

He gien the rod a shake owre the tap o this well an a flash come off this well. An this was a great ordunous castle - this well. An this is the laird o the well, this prince's castle that was intae the well. This bad man transferred his castle intae a well, an transferred the man wi this castle intae this wee frog. See?

"Now," says this man, he says, "all owre there all these wee ants ye see owre there, all they wee ants is all my workers," he says. "Go an touch that bing an see what happens," he says.

'Towre wi the rod an touched this wee bing an ants' bing an there wis hundreds and hundreds o folk, workers, fairmers, servants of every kind, comin oot o this wee thing an went back tae the castle where this ither man was. Well, that was aa right.

They startit back hame an were goin back by this swans. This swans flew - come canny intae them. The swans says, "Ye gaun awa hame like that?"

"Ah well," he says.

The swans says, "ye must dae some'hin for [us]."

"Ah," says the young fell. "I'll dae whatever ye want."

"Well," says the swans, "just touch us," he says, "an see what happens."

So he jist touched them wi the - this stick, this rod, an that was the king and queen o that country, that reigned that country at that time, an aa their family. An he turned it aa back same as they were in life again.

So him an his brother went back to their ain hoose where their faither and mither wis, an the young fella telt his faither whit really happened and telt what he got an everything.

An he says, "Now," he says, "I've come back," he says, "an I'll send yese money," he says, "every week," and he says, "I'll go back tae ma ain castle and ma queen an I'll come an see yese."

An that's the end o ma story.

II.6 THE THREE FITTIT POT

A. John Stewart

A1 Well, this is years ago, years and years ago, this man and wumman had a big family o weans, y'know. An aa they had was this cuddy and cairt, and they'd go here an there campin. They knew aa the wee bits tae pit up the bow tent and things was very very bad. They could hardly get the bits o meat for their weans tae keep them aa going. They were just like a nest o young birds; their mooths was aye open fur meat.

But so, they camped here an there an they come up this glen. The man put the tent up an he let the cut and cairt an he says tae his wife, he says, "A'll away up here," he says, "an hawk these hooses," he says, "up the glen here," he says, "an see what A can get," he says. He says "If A dinnae get no'hin," he says, "gie me that bag wi me," he says, "A'll maybe beg a puckle tatties or some'him."

So he threw the bag intae the cairt, away he takes the wee cuddy by the heid. The wee cuddy's walkin alongside him up the road. So he's hawkin the hooses here an there, an a hoose here an a hoose there. Here he comes tae this wee oul thackit hoose. Wee auld fashioned look-in place, made o big aul stones an divots an thatch, an reek comin oot this wee chimney.

So he went in an chapped at the door. An oul oul man cam oot. He says, "Well, ma man," he says, "what are ye here for the day?"

B Willie MacPhee

B1 Well, this is a traveller's story an listen tae this. This'll make the hair o yer heid turn purple.

Oncet upon a time there were a traiveller man and a traiveller wumman. An as traivellers go - they're never well aff - but this man and wumman was worse than that. They had naethin in the world, nothin in the world. But he was a peaceful living man, he never done nae hairm, he was never in jail, or never done no'hin. He jist lived tae traivel wi his wife roon the country. An he had two wee weans. So he was a tradesman tae, he could make baskets and make tin, everything that a traiveller man could dae: play the pipes, sing songs; he was a great man for throwin the stane and playin quoits an everythin like that, a great sportsman aa roon aboot. An so wis his wife a nice wumman an aa. This was a hard time wi them.

They're travellin away up this back glen, I don't know where it wis but gaun away up this back glen an they were very very ill aff - they hadn't a thing aboot them, not - not as much as one, could make one tea to theirself. The weans is gaspin wi the hunger. But he made two baskets an he made them wi green wands, he never peelt them nor nothin, he jist made them wi green wands. An they're comin up this road. He says, "If ye can sell they twa wee baskets," he says, "we could maybe get somethin in the shop," he says, "way up here. If there are a shop. God knows whether there a shop or not," he says. "There might be a shop."

"Well," she says, "I'll try ma best."

So they come up this road and there were a fairm, a good bit aff the road. He says, "Is that a fairm up there?" he says. "Go an see if ye can sell thae twa baskets."

The wumman goes tae the fairm. He says, "If ye see onybody aboot," he says, "wad ye try," he says, "if it's a man at aa," he says, "an ask him," he says, "if he's got a bit tabacca," he says, "that he

B1 (Contd.)

ae could gie ye, because," he says, "I'm dyin for a smoke, I cannae get a smoke."

"Aw," says the wumman, says she, "I'll dae that."

The wumman goes up tae the hoose, up tae the fairm. She rappit at the door. Oot comes this big tall wumman. "Well," says she, "mistress, what dae ye want?"

A2 "Well," says the man, he says, "I'm just gaitherin oul bits o stuff," he says, "I've a wife an family," he says, "I have tae dae somethin," he says, "tae try an keep them. Times is bad."

"Oh laddie," he says, "times is bad right enough," he said. "They're that bad," he says, "that I havenae got a thing aboot the place I could gie ye," he says, "unless that oul three fittit pot lyin there," he says. "If that's ony use tae ye," he says, "ye can tak it, 'cause," he says, "it's lain here sin ever I come."

"Well," says the oul man, "it's aye some'hin," he says. An he was gonnae put his han in his pocket an maybe gie the man a penny or tuppence for it, or some'hin like that. The aul man says, "Naw, naw," he says, "it's lain there long enough," he says, "an if it's ony use tae ye," he says, "jist tak it."

"Well," says the aul man, "it'll mak scrap onyway."

B2 "Oh," says the wumman says she, "I dinnae ken what A richt want," says she. "I've twa wee weans doon there," she says, "and ma man," she says. "This is the first time we've been up this road," she says, "an we're dyin wi stervation."

"Oh dear," says this wumman, she says, "that's no sae good. We'll need tae see aboot that," she says. "What's that ye've got there?"

Says this traiveller wumman, "That's two baskets missis," she says.

"Oh," she says, "that's the very thing I was needin," she says, "fur tae gaither ma eggs, 'cause there's been nobody up here sellin baskets for years an years." An she says, "come away in," she says, "an A'll gie ye somethin that'll dae fur the weans an yersel."

She took the wumman in. Aw! when she took her intae this hoose, the kitchen o the fairm, it was a beautiful kitchen and as clean, spotless clean. "Now," says she, "what do you need?"

"Oh," says the traveller woman, she says, "I need everything," she says. "Ma - A have nothin at aa."

"Well," she says, "A'll gie ye some'hin."

She gien her tea an sugar, bottles o milk an scones an meal. An she gien her a puckle floor an a guid big lump o ham, pork ham.

"Now," she says, "if ye wait," she says, "I'll - I'll - till the man comes in," she says, "I'll gie ye a puckle tatties, Golden Wonders."

"Oh," says the wumman, "that's fine. Noo," says the wumman, "I'll tell ye wan thing. Ma man never had a smoke for three or four days and," she says, "he's dyin for a smoke."

"Ah but," says the wumman, says she, "I'll gie ye a smoke."

She went tae the mantelpiece an tae a thing like a caddy, an she took oot a great big lump o tabacca an she gien it tae the woman. She says, "How's 'at? Will that dae ye?"

"Aw," the traiveller woman says, "that's lovely. That's - thanks very much, ma'am, that's first class."

"Now," she says, "what dae ye want for your baskets?"

"Oh," says she, "mistress," says she, "ye can hae the baskets for nothin," says she. "You keep the baskets for what ye gien me," she says, "that'll pey ma baskets."

"Oh well," says the wumman, "Where ye goin tonight?" This fairmer wumman said tae the traiveller wumman.

"Oh," she says, "mem, we'll maybe go up the glen and get a place to stop up there."

B2 (Contd)

"Well," she says, "if ye go up there," says she, "half a mile, there's an oul wastins," says she, "that wis wan o the plooman's hooses," says she, "an it's tumblet doon, and there's a good bit there, ye can camp there," she says, an she says, "there's a big soo stree - a strae soo," an she says, "an," she says, "ye'll get stuff for yer bed there," she says, "strae for your bed." She says, "ye can bide there as long as ye like."

"Aw," says the wumman, "thanks very much."

A3 So he lifts this big oul three fittit pot an pits it in the donkey cart. So the man hawks away and hawks away one or two wee things here an there, comes back doon tae the camp. Lifts the pot aff an lays it doon an his wife says, "Did ye get ony tatties?"

He says, "Aye, I got wan or two fae the last fairm, there," he says. "They're in the bag."

So she goes an she gets her pot an she puts on the tatties. She says, "I dinnae ken what we're gonnae do the morn," she says. "There's not a taste o meal, there's no'hin at aa for the weans."

So away he goes, shifts the next day, lifts the big oul rousty pot an pits it on the cairt. He says - she says, "What are ye daein wi the pot?"

He says, "I was gonnae cairry it along," he says. "It'll mak scrap if A come tae ony scrap places," he says, "buyin scrap."

"You know, I wadnae sell that pot," she says. "When A take a second look at it," she says, "it's a fine big pot," she says. "If I cleaned it up," she says, "'d mak a richt pot," she says, "fur if we got anything," she says, "tae boil in it."

"Well," he says, "please yersel," he says, "'t'll take a lot of cleanin."

B3 Away she went doon tae the road an telt her man this. "Aw," says the man, says he, "that's great," he says, "that's the very thing we were needin," he says. "It'll maybe save wir life for a few days."

They went up the road away up an here they come tae this wast-ings. "Oh," the man says, "there a beautiful place fur the tent," he says. "Look at that. Beautiful clean water an everythin runnin by there."

So he pit up his tent aw! an got a bing o this strae, pur it in thir bed. An the wumman boilt some tea an gien the weans tae an gien her man tea.

"Now," says she, "we've nae dishes," she says. "If A had ony kind o a pot," she says, "or ony kin o dish," she says, "tae boil they tatties," she says, "I could fry that ham in ma wee pan, if we had a pot," she says, "tae boil that tatties intae."

"Aye," he says, "that's richt, aye. We'll never get nae pots or no'hin here," he says.

But he's away turnin roon the back o this aul hoose, ken, gettin bit o boords an things. He went onside the aul hoose, an the cupboards were still there, belonging tae the folk but there were nae'hin in the cupboards. But this wee three fittit pot was init, aw! just like a shillin inside, beautiful an clean.

"Aw," he says, "there the very thing," he says, "that wee pot." About a four pint pot. "Aw, there the very thing tae boil oor tatties." A three fittit pot it was.

He came back roon with the sticks ablow his oxter an this wee pot hingin. "There a pot tae ye, noo," he says. "Would that boil yer tatties?"

"Aw," says she, "that's the very thing," she says, "that's the very thing'll boil the tatties. An thank God," says she, "I got a meal o meat made for these weans."

The wumman took it to the burn an she scoort this pot clean wi a sod. Aw! It was just like a shillin, ootside an inside."

A3 (Contd)

So they danners on wi the donkey an cairt an the things in it, here they comes up an they comes tae a wee aul empty kin o hoose. An the man says, "A wonder, who owns this aul hoose?" He says, "A'll go up here," he says, "tae this oul fairm, see'f there anybody there." He says, "If we could get intae that aul hoose," he says, "it wad keep us oot o the - the - coulder weather," he says, "because it's startin tae rain."

So she haulds the donkey fur him an he walks up tae this hoose an he asks the man about this wee empty hoose. "Well," says the man he says, "there's nothing in it," he says. "There's an odd - calf an things goes intae't noo and again," he says, "but go in," he says, "an if it's any use tae ye," he says, "tae keep ye oot o the cauld," he says, "dae it up for yerself," he says, "because it's lyin empty anyway."

So the man comes doon an he says, "Aye it's aa right." So they goes in an the wife cleans it up an they sweeps it oot. The man gies them straw tae make beds and she carries her two or three things in an gets a fire kennlet an he - bits o sticks he gets lyin about. An aa things is kin o comfortable in there, when the fire's goin an that, ye see?

So she boils the rest o the tatties, one thing an anither like that, an efter they get tatties an - a taste o milk, whatever the man gied them, she goes oot an she gets this big pot an she scoors it an scoors it, cleans it an scoors it well, till it wis like a new shillin. An she blackleads aa the oot side o it, ye ken? Makes it nice - aw! a lovely big three fittit pot. So she carries the pot an she lays it in at the door, the lobby.

B3 (Contd.)

She took it back for tae fill't these Golden Wonder an pur it on the fire an let it boil. Boilt the tatties. Efter they'd had their supper, she took her pot again. She says, "Aw, a beautiful pot," she says, "thank God for that," she says, "A thing a wis needin aa the days o ma life, a good pot like that," she says. She washed the pot clean oot again an pit it sittin upside doon on the tap of their barra, and they went tae their bed.

A4 So there they sits crackin an talkin, an she pits aa the weans tae bed. Him an her an the man sits carackin, wunnerin what they're gonnae dae the next day, an one thing an anither like that. Bits o Business, ye see?

So here they goes tae their beds, lies there till the man faas asleep, lays his pipe doon an faas asleep, an his wife faas asleep. An she wakens in the morning. So she gets up an the man gets up an she says, "get me some water," an he says, "Whaur's the can for the water?" She says, "Take the big pot - it's clean," she says. "It's as clean as a new shillin."

So he goes tae get the big pot. But when he goes tae the big pot, it's full o meal an tatties an aa the kin o things that wad make a meal! The pot's full tae the brim. He comes an tells her an she scratches her heid. The two o them looks at one another an they starts laughin in one another's faces! He says, "It must ha been the man on the fairm come doon," he says, "wi that stuff an pit it," he says, "when there were nane o us up."

"Ah," she says, "that's been it," she says, "probably that's been it."

B4 They were layin aboot - they were lyin in their bed maybe aboot a couple o oors, when they heard a rumble ootside at the barra. She says, "Hey, man, hey!"

"Whit is it?" he says.

"There's somethin," she says, "oot there," she says, "rummlin aboot the dishes. Maybe some'dy's tryin tae steal ma pot," she says.

"Awa!" he says. "Ye're mad!" he says. "Who would come traivellin up a waste glen like this?" he says, "tae steal your pot? A mean - maybe rabbits or some'hin ootside," he says.

She says, "I'm tellin ye. Luck oot tae ye see."

The man luckit oot. Ma! the pot was still on top o the barra. "Na," he says, "pot's still there. Nae body near your pot."

Went back tae their bed again. They fell soun asleep. The pot down off the barra, away up the road. Three fittit pot. Way up tae this big hoose. The next day there were gonnae be a big shoot. An this hoose - all roon the - phaisans or whatever they were gonnae shoot. An the chef he was making a dinner for all these gailies an things. Pairtidges an phaisans an hens an this great inorjurous roast. Ye see?

Ah he - the pot in through the door into the kitchen where aa this wis, an the chef's workin away. "I wonder," he says, "where I can pit this roasted leg o mutton," he says. "I can't get no place tae pit it." An he lucks an sees this wee - this three fittit pot. He says, "The very thing," he says, "a lovely wee pot like that," he says. "I wunner where that come fae?"

He put this leg o mutton intae't, roastit mutton. Away the cook went oot o the place tae his bed. The minute he got aboot - down the pot came back to the road, back doon tae where the barra wis. Up tae the tap o the barra. An he's sittin on the barra. Next day when the man an wumman got up first thing she luckit for was for her pot.

"Aw," she says, "hey man. C'mere tae ye see this! C'mere tae ye see whit's in the pot!"

"Whit's in the pot?" he says.

"C'mere tae ye see this! It's been someb'dy," she says, "maybe the wumman o the fairm took peety on us and come doon an left this flesh," says she, "for the weans."

This was the leg o roastit mutton intae the pot.

"Oh," he says, "that's - that's what it must ha been," he says, "that's what it was right enough," he says.

A5 So the woman goes an she pits a pan on, she gets bits o fat an stuff an she pits meal in an makes skirly, one thing like that. Oh she makes a - a half decent breakfast oot o the things that wis in the pot. So the man goes oot hawkin that day, comes back in, an they use the rest o the stuff that's in the pot, meal an maize an stuff. There, they goes tae their bed that night again. So the samen thing the next mornin, the two o them gets up an he goes tae get the pot tae go for water, an the pot's full again! Lovely meal! Tatties at the one side o the pot, an aa the meal at the ither side, couple o ingins, know what A mean?

The man says, "Jeannie," he says.

"What is it?" she says, "Jeck?"

He says, "That pot," he says, "the pot's full again," he says.

She says, "It cannae be," she says. "That's impossible," she says. "The man wouldnae come up an doon," she says, "giein us that stuff," she says.

"Well," he says, "afore I use it, afore we use it," he says, "I'm gaun up tae ask 'im."

So the man went up tae the fairm. He says, "Good mornin."

"Good mornin," he says. "How - did ye get the hoose? Is the hoose aa right?"

"Aye," he says, "it's dry enough. It's better than being oot in the camp," he says. "Did ye lea've any tatties an stuff doon at the door?"

The man says, "Naw," he says, "tae tell ye the truth," he says, "A havenae hardly a tattie on my place. Canny get them fur masel."

"Well," he says, "that's queer."

The man says, "How's that?"

"Oh," he says, "nothin," he says, "A thought maybe I could buy - take some tatties off ye, but," he says, "if ye dinnae hae any -"

"But," the man says, "Wait a minute," he says, "A could gie ye milk," he says, "if ye send some o the weans up wi a can. A'll gie ye some mulk. An A'll gie't."

"Fair enough," says the man.

So away he comes doon tae his wife an he says, "No," he says, "he didnae dae't."

"Well," she says, "who's daein it? That's the point?" She says, an I'm no inquirin!" she says, "that's just the point."

B5 They took the leg o mutton oot, ony - an the wumman boilt mair tatties tae this leg o mutton, an they ate it. Stoppit there that day. Washed this pot again an put it up on tap o the barra. Went tae their bed again.

A 5 (Contd)

So they use the stuff in the pot. They stays there fur about a week. An he says, "Aw A'm fed up," he says, "here," he says, "an A've got aa the wee places, fairms," he says, "hawkit, roon aboot," he says, "I'm shiftin the morn."

So they goes an they packs their donkey cairt. She makes a lovely place for her pot, efter she cleaned it an everythin, ye see, at the back o the cairt, an sen that the tailboard was well-tightened up in case the pot would faa oot the back o the cairt an maybe break on the oul road.

An away they goes again an comes on an on an on an on an on, wi this wee donkey pullin this wee cairt. But they comes on again an they pits their tent up. An he makes a good big tent, a gayley, an stones it well roon, in a kin o sheltert bit, ye know. An away on this road he could see a g - aw! the spires o a great big house.

He says, "I wonder what or who's livin there," he says. He says, "That'll be some gentleman belonging the hills an that," he says, "shootin lodge or some'hin."

So they goes tae their bed that night and the wumman has her pot in the tent in case anyone wad lift it.

THE THREE FITTIT POT

A6 They're lyin. Says she, "Hey man! There's somethin oot at that barra no canny." She says, "Listen! Listen! They're rummlin at that pot."

He says, "Awa! That's naebody!" he says. "It's imagination."

"Luck oot tae ye see," she says.

The man luckit oot. Ah, the pot was still there on top o the table, the thingmy. "The pot's there," he says. "There's naebody touch your pot," he says. "Naeb'dy'll go near it."

Fell asleep again.

Down the pot gets off the top o the barra again. Away up tae the big hoose again. Now, that was efter the shoot an everythin. An the man, the aul laird o this thing, was tae pey aa the folk for beatin. They were tae get so much every day for beatin, the thing's fur money. Startit countin his money the oul misard a an oul man. He says, "I don't know, where to put this money," he says, "for - ma sovereigns," he says. "The bag's burst," he says. An he luckit an he sees the wee pot lyin. "Oh," he says, "there the very thing, a pot," he says. "A'll pit it in there."

Fillt the pot level wi gold sovereigns, an what he had left owre an abeen, he peyed his gailies wi't, folk 'at was beatin fur'm. The pot was level tae the mooth wi these gold sovereigns. The pot was lyin. The aul man - the aul keeng of whatever he was or laird, ow whatever he was, he went tae his bed onyway. The pot's oot through the door ahain, way back doon where the traiveller man and wumman was biding, up on the tap on the tap o the barra.

B7⁶ So they're jist sleepin when the pot comes oot the door, going on its three f - legs, an it makes for this castle. The pot! Makes for this castle, boy. An it comes the - when it comes tae, eventually comes tae the castle, it's in the back door and up a lobby, an sittin at a table, the oul gen'leman o the castle. He's countin his money! Sovereigns an half sovereigns and gold trinkets, ye see. An he's lookin for some place tae pit the money in when he coontit it. So the pot goes across when it d - when he wasnae lookin an sits jist at his side. An he looks roon like that an he sees the pot. An he says, "Aw, just the fine thing," he says, "for ma money." An he's in wi the sovereigns intae the pot, in wi the sovereigns intae the pot. Then the oul man rises tae go away for somethin else and the pot just trudges an struggles oot o the door an back tae the tent. Ye see?

So when the man an wumman got up in the mornin, the man an wum - the man went tae the pot tae luck at it. The man nearly faintit! He gien a roar an he held his hairt. He saysm "Jeannie, come here tae ye see this," he says, "we're quoddit! W're quoddit!" he says, "as true as God's in Heaven, we're quoddit!" he says.

What is it," she says, "w - Jack?"

He says, "The pot's half full o loor."

She says, "Naw! she says, "Whaur was the pot gonnae get money?"

Says he, "I'm tellin ye," says he, "half sovereigns an gold sovereigns."

She says, "We're gonnae be quoddit. What - how did the - what pit it there?"

"I don't know."

They argued - they'd finish up, they were arguin, they were gonnae fight owre this, tae see whaur the money come fae. The man says, "Well," he says, "leave it there the noo," he says, "tae we see."

A6 (Contd)

Next day they ruz an luckit at it. Wumman, the first thing luckin at her pot. Here the pot was lyin an it was flowin tae the mooth wi gold sovereigns!

"Hey man," says she, "get up quick tae ye see this. Luck," says she, "dae ye see this!"

"Rise quick tae ye see this," she says.

Man got up, luckit - "Oh Lord have mercy! That's been - aw! I wunner," he says, "maybe that was robbers," he says, "that hud their money there. That couldnae be, either," he says, "'cause they would hae took it wi them." He says, "We better lea'e it alane," he says, "in case they went back."

THE THREE FITTIT POT

A7 They left it there. Waitit an waitit, wey efter dinnertime - nothin happened. The wumman says, "Gie me a sovereign. A'm awa doon tae the shop away back the road."

Aw, it was a long road tae the shop, miles it was. He says, "Take the cuddy an cairt wi ye."

"Naw," she says, "A'm quicker walkin masel," she says. "That thing wi the curled up feet," she says, "cannae walk."

Away she goes tae the shop an she buys messages. She - at that time she would get a lot for a sovereign. Ye get a week's messages an money back.

But anyway she comes back loaded wi 'er [indistinct word] o meat an the man says, "Well," he says, "there's naebody comin aboot the place," he says, "aboot that," he says. "A'm cowpin it intae this cloot," he says, "I'll row-t - roll't up. We can put it aneth the bed strae." Ye see?

So they cowps the money oot, rolls it up in a cloot an shoves it aneth the bed straw, ye see.

B7 They waitit. Naw! Naebody came back. He took the pot an took his wee barra, back on its wheels again, spread a big cloot, an emptied the sovereigns oot in this big cloot, tied them in a cloot, tied it firm an left them in the bottom o the barra. Put a puckle strae on the top o't.

"We'll wait here for a day," he says, "tae see," he says, "wull anybody come back," he says, "an if they speak aboot it," he says, "I'll show them where the stuff is," he says, "tell them I pit it in there for safety."

But they waitit all day, all that nicht they waited.

A8 Now the auld man's oot the next day wi his cuddy an cairt an he's gaun roo the hooses an the folk's says, "Aw," she says, "the folk's aa complainin. We're taxed tae death," she says.

"How's that?" says the man.

"Well," she says, "the gentleman in the big hoose," she says, "has got us ruint wi taxes," she says. "We can't hiv a thing, if we don't have the money tae pey wur taxes," she says. "He taxes wur calves, he takes wur hens, he takes wur horse," she says. "We can't keep goin tae him," she says, "a greedy miserable man." Ye see.

So the man an when he comes back he says tae his wife he says, "That big hoose we see away miles in the distance," he says. He says, "That's some kin o a royal gen'leman," he says, "that owns all the land," he says, "an he's got the folk," he says, "taxed tae death." An he says, "The morn," he says, "I'm gonnae think I'll be oot o here," he says, "because if ever he fins oot we're here," he says, "he'll maybe kill us," he says. "He can dae it if ye - like that."

THE THREE FITTIT POT

A9 So they goes tae their bed that night, ye see. An they gets up in the mornin. Goes tae his - she pits on the kettle for a taste o water that was in the kettle, on the fire. An he's gaun oot for somethin an then he turns tae her an he says, "Did you shift the pot?"

 She says, "No, A never shiftit the pot."

 "Well," he says, "the pot's away." He says, "Somebody's chored it," he says.

 "Ah," she says, "awa man," she says. "Wha wad steal a three fittit pot?"

 "Well," he says, "it's awa."

 She says, "They'll never cairry't onyway," she says. "It taks the dunkey an cairt tae cairy it."

 "Well," he says, "it's away."

 Looked an searchit high an low - not a thing. Ye see?

B9 Again they were lyin. "Hey man," she says, "rise an luck at the pot."

 Luck at the pot! "The pot's there," he says, "I michtna rise an luck at it."

 "Rise," she says, "for God's sake," she says, "an hae wan luck at it."

 "Awa!" says he, "I'm mad aboot you an yer pot! God's hear my prayer," he says, "may ye never seen that pot! I hope," he says, "someone taks that pot awa fae ye tae get me tae get peace."

 All right. Next day when they got up, they luckit. No pot tae be seen! Pot was away!

A10 But sits an takes their breakfast an aw! away near dennertime, he's gaun oot tae water the wee cuddy. There were a precipice like that an a burn rinnin doon, ye ken, owre craigs, but on this side o the precipice there was a wee bit o water come oot an scooted doon, an that's where they wur for water. He's standin oot there an he sees this thing comin doon the road. An he roars tae his wife. He says, "Jeannie, come here tae ye see this!" He says, "there's a thing comin doon the road," he says, "I dinnae ken what shape it is!"

An she come oot an the two o them's lookin like this, ye ken [hands shading eyes] an when they come nearer an nearer she says, "That's the pot!"

He says, "Awa, wumman!" he says. "Ye're blin!"

"I'm tellin ye," she says, "that's the pot. But what's that ither twa thing," she says, "hinging oot o't, wavin aboot?"

An they waitit an when the pot come up, it was the oul earl o this hoose that was intae the pot an couldn't get oot, ye see. An it went like that, right - it went right past them, an this earl, this oul baldie-heidit man, was roarin his heid aff. An it went tae the edge o the precipice an it tipped on its side like that, an pit him owre the cliffs intae the burn. An then come right back an intae the lobby - intae the - the - the - bit o the tent gaun in like the mooth bit o the tent. Went in there an jist stopped.

The man says, "Shannas, shannas!" he says, "we'll be benished," he says, "we'll be benished." See? An he says, "If on - if onybody comes," he says, "an if that pot was seen," he says, "they'll - they'll hae traced it or watched it," he says, "comin here."

So the next mornin he gets up an the wumman gets the pot, cleans it, washes it, pits it in the cairt. The man says, "Wha - what are ye daein?"

She says, "I was shiftin it here in case some'hin happens."

So they gets their things rowed up, puts them in the cairt an shifts it away back the way they come, into a different district aa thegither. But fae that day, tae the day the pot broke or burned itsel oot, there never was anither thing got wi that pot!

An that's the last o ma story.

B10 "There noo," she says, "A telt ye," she says, "there was somebody knockin aboot this camp. A telt ye!" she says. "Ma wee pot's away an a wudnae hae lost that wee pot," she says, "fur no money."

"Ah well," he says, "there ye are," he says, "what did I ken? I thought maybe," he says, "an oul pot," he says, "that somebody just flung away."

"Aye," she says, "an oul pot som'in away. God hear my prayer," says she, "I could get a bing o they pots. But," says she, "I'll never see that pot again."

And neither they did. They never seen it. They didnae ken whaur it went.

An they went doon, the next day, right back doon the glen wi their wee barra, an - full o this cloot o gold sovereigns. An whatever happent tae them after that, I don't know. But I never met them since. I could dae wi I could meet them, tae get a shillin or two aff them.

II.7 JOHNNY PAY ME FOR MY STORY

A Willie MacPhee

A1 Oncet upon a time there were a widow woman and her son, lived away on a dark, black island, away miles away fae anybody. This wuman and her son never very much corresponded wi nobody, they always kept theirselves to theirselves. This laddie o hers he used tae get odd jobs here and there aa owre the country, when he could get a job. He would come back hame much different, he was that tired he just went tae his bed and laid hissel doon.

But this nicht, he was just goin tae go awa tae his bed, when he heard a chap at his door. He says, "I wonder wha that can be" he says "at the door at this time o night," he says, tae his mother.

"Oh," she says, "I don't know. Ye'd better go an see. Ye never ken wha it might be."

So Johnny went to the door, and he opened the door canny, and he peered oot. An he could recognise it was an old man standin at the door.

B Willie MacPhee

B1 Oncet upon a time, away up in the far north, there lived a widow woman and her son. And they lived away by themselves. They never bothered nobody, and they never interfered wi nobody, and they kept theirsels to theirsels. And this son o hers, he'd just need tae get a job wherever he could get it, an odd job here an there, tae keep everything goin, him and his mother. An they're sittin this night at the fire, the two o them, their two selves, an they heard a chap at the door.

Johnny says, "That's a chap at the door," he says, "I wunner", he says, "who that can be at this time o the night."

"Oh," the old woman says, "I don't know," she says, "Johnny, ye better go an see."

Away Johnny goes tae the door, an he opens the door, canny, he peers oot, and here he sees a wee ould man standin at the door.

A2 He says, "Hallo," to the old man. He says, "What are ye doin at this time o night, landin on the road?"

"Ah," the old man says, "I'm lost," he says, "laddie," he says, "I've nae place tae go," and he says, "I just seen your licht," he says, "an I just came in tae see if ye've ony place ye could put me up for the night."

"Oh aye," he says. "Come in," he says. "There's naebody bides here but me an ma mother."

So he took this old man in, and the woman's sittin at the table watchin this old man.

She says, "Ye're awfy tired-lookin, old man."

"Aye," he says, "missis," he says, "I'm tired. I've walked a long way, the day," he says, "and I'm very, very tired."

She says, "Will ye take somethin tae eat? Will ye take a cup o tea?"

"Oh," he says, "thank you very much, I'd be glad o a cup o tea," he says, "it's a long time since I had anything tae eat."

B2 "Oh, hallo," Johnny says, "what are ye daein standin there, ould man?"

"Oh well," he says, "I seen your light," he says, "I'm kin o lost," he says, "and I seen your light," he says, "and I thought," he says, "maybe I could get somewhere tae be doon for the night," he says. "Ye see, I'm lost," he says, "an I don't know where -".

"Oh that's aa right," says Johnny. "In ye come, old man." So he took the ole man in, an the ole man sat doon at the side o the fire. An he's crackin away tae Johnny. Johnny says, "Ye're affa tired-lookin, oul man," he says. "Ye must hae come a far journey the day," he says. "Ye must have travelled far the day."

"Oh," he says, "I've travelled far," he says, "Johnny," he says. "Traivelled a good bit."

"Aye," says Johnny, "ye look tired."

Says the woman, says she, "Would ye mind," she says, "takin a cup o tea? Dae ye want a cup o tea, old man?"

"Oh I wadnae mind a cup o tea," he says, "missis, 'cause I'm fair starvin," he says.

"Well," says she, "I'll gie ye a cup o tea."

A3 The old woman, she made him a cup o tea, gied him whatever she had in the hoose, half o't, also gien the laddie a cup o tea, and took a cup o tea, hersel.

So, they sat crackin there for a while. The laddie says, "Ye must travel far. Are you sellin somethin or what?"

"Na," says the old man, "I'm no sellin nothin."

"An what dae ye dae for a livin?" the laddie says.

"Well," he says, "I'm a storyteller."

"A storyteller!" he says.

"Aye," says the old man, "just, I'm a storyteller. I go here an there," he says, "tellin stories to folk who let me in," he says, "just for a bite or two," he says, "and a lie doon."

B3 So the woman gien the oul man a cup o tea, and Johnny a cup o tea, took a cup o tea hersel. Efter the tea was finished, Johnny says he, "what - are ye hawkin, or what are ye daein oul man? What dae ye dae for a livin?"

"Oh," says the old man, says he, "I don't hawk," he says, "son," he says. "I just go around telling stories."

"Oh," says Johnny, "tellin stories! That's a funny thing," he says, "tellin stories. I've never met a story-teller."

"Well," the oul man says, "that's what I am. I tell stories."

A4 "Oh," says the laddie, "that's just the very thing," he says, "I would wish" he says, "for at nights, someone come an tell me a story."

"Oh," says the old man, "would ye like a story son?"

"Oh," the laddie says, "aye," he says, "I would like a story."

"Oh," he says, "I'll tell ye a story," he says. "What's your name?"

"Johnny's my name," says the laddie.

"Oh," but he says, "Johnny," he says, "I'll tell ye a story."

"Well," says Johnny, "I'd be very glad o a story jut tae pass the time."

"Oh," but he says, "I'll tell ye a story, Johnny."

So the old man started on this story, and this is the story that this old man told to Johnny.

B4. "Oh well," says Johnny, "this thing, I like tae hear stories," he says, "onnything tae pass the time, because it's wearisome in this hoose."

"Oh but," says the old man, he says, "I'll tell ye a story, son. What's your name."

"Oh," the laddie says, "Johnny's ma name."

"Oh well," he says, "Johnny, I'll tell ye a story," he says. "But," he says, "when I tell ye the story," he says, "maybe ye'll no be pleased aboot it."

"Oh," says Johnny, "I'll be well enough pleased about it."

So the old man started tae tell this story, and this is the story the oul man telt Johnny :-

A5 He says, "Oncet upon a time," he says, "there was a King," he says, "and a Queen," he says, "lived away far, miles and miles fae here," he says. And he says, "He wasnae an evil king, he was very good," he says, "to all his tenants and very good to anybody that come about," he says, "this king."

 An he says, "This king," he says, "had four lovely daughters, but" he says, "also this king," he says, "always had a miller," he says, "and this miller that he had this time," he says, "was bidin doon at the bottom, at the millery," he says, "and this miller had fower sons."

 An he says, "One day," he says, "when things were very quiet," he says, "and bad," he says, "they had nae much work," he says, "as they were growin up," he says, "and they just had enough work tae keep the auld man goin," he says. "These boys," he says, "went away tae look for work for theirselves." An he says, "Oh, they were four fine, beautiful young men," he says, "strong young men," he says, "and they could have got work anywhere."

B5 Oncet upon a time, there was a laird, or a king, or whatever ye like tae ca' him, wi his property, and he lived in this castle. An he had fower dochters. An this castle and this laird had a miller, and this miller had fower sons. Well doon ablow this castle where this laird was. An this miller used tae grind aa the meal an aa the flour, for aa the countryside roon aboot. But ach, times was gettin kin o hard for this oul miller, and he was getting auld, and these boys was growin up, and the auldest boy said tae his faither, "I think," he says, "faither," he says, "I think we'll go away," he says. "There's no much work here," he says, "to be done now," he says, "I think we'll go away," he says, "and look for a job wursel."

 "Oh well," the aul miller says, "On ye go," he says, "son, if ye can be any better off. Away ye go, push your ain fortune."

A6 "So away these four boys goes," he says. "Johnny, and they travelt on for days and days, the four o them thegither, till they come to a cross-roads. The oldest one says, "Well," he says, "boys," he says, "there's nae use the hale lot four of us," he says, "goin thegither lookin for work," he says. "We'll never get it that way," he says. "We'd be better tae split up," he says, "an we'll meet back here in a year an a day," he says, "an by that time," he says, "maybe some o us will hae a job," he says. "Some o us'll have somethin anyway," he says. Well, so they all agreed to this. So the two youngest yins went tae one road and the two oldest yins went the other road, ye see. Now, the two youngest yins come doon this road a good bit, till here they come to another crossroads. The oldest yin said, he says, "there's crossroads. You go yin, an I'll go the ither," he says, "and we'll meet back here in a year and a day." And he says, "We can look for the other two," he says, "afterward."

"Well," the ither yin says, "that's all right."

So they split up. An the same thing happened to the two older brothers. They went so far up their roads, till they come tae a cross-roads, and then split up tae. One went yin and one went the ither. That was aa right.

B6 So away the fower brothers went. An oh they traivelt on for many days, an they came tae a cross roads. The oldest brother says, "Well, look," he says, "boys," he says, "there's nae yiss," he says, "the four o us gaun the same road lookin for work," he says. "We'd be better tae split up," he says, "and meet here in a year an a day." An he says, "We'll make wur way back hame then," he says, "an we'll see how the old folk's gettin on," he says.

So they all agreed tae this. So the one brother went the one road, an the other brother went the other, and the other went another. There were five roads, one the road they come. There were five cross roads, an each went every road.

A7 So, he says, "The eldest brother, Johnny, he was a big strong man," he says, "an intelligent fellow," he says, "he went on this road," he says, "to a good long bit, asking work here and asking work there, na. He couldn't get nothin. But he suddenly come tae this big hoose, and he up tae't. This gentleman come oot tae him. He says, "Well, my boy, what d'ye want?"

"Well sir," he says, "I'm, lookin for work," he says and he says, "I've no money or nothin," he says, "I cannae get a job at aa."

"Oh," he says, "you're an intelligent-lookin man," he says. "Ye better come away in," he says, "and get some supper, anyway." So the oldest brother gangs, and this man started asking him questions about this an that an the next thing. He says, "You're sure ye're willing tae try anything, any kin o job?"

B7 So the auldest brother went away up this road for a good long bit. Oh he traivelt for many's many's a day, out this road an out this road, tae finally, he come tae this hoose. An he chapped at the door tae ask for something tae eat; he was fair starvin. The wumman said tae him, "where are ye goin or what are ye doin?"

"Oh," he says, "I'm lookin for a job," he says, "and I'm fair stranded."

"Well," she says, "I'll gie ye your tea," she says, "and you go up tae that big house up there," she says, "an ye might get a job up there," she says, "because he's a very, very nice gentleman that lives up there. An ye might get a job up there."

"Oh," he says, "I'll just do that ma'am."

So, efter he got his tea, away he went up tae this big hoose, chapped at the door and, of course, the butler came out first, and asked him what he wanted.

He says, "I was wantin tae see the gentleman, to see if I could get any work," he says, "I'm stranded, and I could do wi a job."

The butler says, "Just you stand there a minute," he says, "and I'll go in and see the gentleman."

So in the butler goes. Aboot three or four minutes after, the gentleman comes, "well," he says, "my boy," he says, "I could give ye a job," he says, "but," he says, "may be ye wouldnae like it," he says. An he says, "On the other hand," he says, "may be ye would like it."

A8 He says, "Well," the oldest brother says, "I'm willing tae try anything."

He says, "I'm what you call," he says, "a stargazer," he says, "a man that reads the stars," he says, "and I've been lookin" he says, "for a mate this long, long time," he says, "tae learn him," he says, "to learn the things that I know," and he says, "if ye take up that job wi me, my boy," he says, "it might bring ye something," he says, "it might bring ye a lot o money."

"Oh," says the oldest brother, "that's just the very thing for me," he says. "I'll study doon," he says, "and dae that."

So the eldest brother fell in wi this gentleman, and he's studying this stargazin business.

B8 "Oh," says this young man, he says, "I'll take any kind o job at all, sir," he says, "'ll do me any good tae make money."

"Oh," he says, "this job'll do ye tae make money," he says. "A very well-paid job, this," he says, "an if ye do it right," he says, "ye'll make a lot of money by it."

"Well," this young man says, young boy or man says, "Well, I'll just start."

"Well," he says, "your job is," he says, "ma job is," he says, "but I'm getting too old now," he says, "but my job is," he says, "is a star-gazer," he says. "Readin the stars and tellin by the stars," he says, "everything that happens, and everything that's gaun tae happen."

"Oh," says the laddie, "that seems a very intelligent job, sir," he says, "and A'll be glad tae take it."

So he started wi that gentleman, and that was he's job, he got that job.

A9 Now the second eldest brother, he's away this other road, searching here and searching there, same as his other brother, for a job. Na. Couldnae get one, tae. But, he come tae this hoose, oh an affa rugged-lookin hoose it was. He says, "A doot," he says, "there'll not be much work here." So down he went, rapped at the door, oh an this rough-lookin man came oot tae him. He says, "What the hell do you want here, at this time o night."

So the fellow told him he was lookin for work, he would dae anything.

"Oh," he says, "would ye dae anything for money?"

"Aye," he says, "I wad dae anything for money."

"Well," he says, "I think you're the very man," he says, "I'm lookin for," he says, "tae gie me a hand wi the money I..."

B9 Now, the other brothers (there were another three left) another one - we'll start wi the second youngest brother, the second oldest brother, rather. He's was away roon this road, tae, lookin here an there for a job, but finally come tae this hoose. An he chapped at the door, an this man come oot tae him. "Well," he says, "what dae ye want?"

"Well, sir," he says, "in fact, I'm lookin for a night's lodgin," he says, "an a job."

"Oh," the man he says, "I'll gie ye a night's lodgin", he says. "An perhaps," he says, "I'll gie ye a job, or I'll learn ye a trade," he says. "I'll learn ye a trade," he says, "if ye're willin tae stick by it."

"Oh," this laddie says, "I'll stick by it," he says. "If there money intae't," he says, "I'll do anything for money."

"Well," he says, "this is a very, very payable job," he says. An he says, "If ye do it right, it'll pay you well," he says.

"But if ye do it wrong," he says, "well - too bad," he says. "Ye'll land yersel in a lot o trouble."

A10 So he took him in and gied him his tea also. This young lad he says, "What dae ye dae?" he says, "What are ye?"

He says, "I'm a professional burglar," he says. "There's nothing in this world," he says, "that I can't burgle." An he says, "I would like an accomplice," he says. "One that I can show him the tricks o the trade," he says. "So if ye like ye can bide wi me," he says, "take a chance," he says. "You could earn yourself a lot o money," he says, "if you could learn tae dae't."

"My," this other boy says, "I'll just take a chance wi you," he says, "an learn tae be a thief."

B10 "Ah well," this other laddie says, "I'll have a shot at it, anyway. What is it?"

"Well," this man says, "its tae be a professional thief, a professional robber," he says, "a thief."

"Oh," this boy, he says, "I'm no sae sure about that," he says. "I was brought up honest," he says, "no tae steal."

"Oh," but he says, "this is a good profession," he says. "I'll learn ye tae dae't."

"Oh well," he says, "I'll try it anyway."

So he stuck there wi the professional thief.

All So that was him, now we'll go back to the other two brothers. The oldest yin, o the youngest two brothers, he's comin along the road a good bit, and along the road, and he sees this funny lookin castle sort o thing, an all these people shooting their bows and arrows.

He says, "I wonder," he says, "what they're aa doin there, wi their bows an arrows." He says, "I'll go doon anyway, an ask for a job." But gaun doon the road, he thought better. "I'd better wait," he says, "till all the rest o the people goes away," he says, "and I'll go doon."

So he sat in a bush till all the rest got away, went up tae the front door an chapped on the front door. This gentleman come oot, "Well what do you want?" he says. Telt him he was wantin a job, and he could dae anything, if there was anything tae dae, he wad dae anything.

"Oh," he says, "just come in, boy, and see what we can do for ye."

So he took him in and gien him his supper. He says, "What can ye do?"

"Oh, Sir," he says, "I'm a miller's son," he says.

He says, "That's all the trade I've learned, tae be a miller." But he says, "The mill's away," he says, "and I'm lookin for some kin o other job."

B11 Now the third youngest yin, he's away along this other road, oh many miles away along, and there's a great big castle, away ablow the road, an he went doon tae't, tae get a job, tae, or ask for a job, rather. An he rang the bell, out comes the butler, he says, "What dae ye want?"

"Well," he says, "I'm after a job," he says, "of any description," he says, "I'm stranded on the road."

"Well," says the butler, he says, "the man o this big house," he says, "the gentleman of this house," he says, "is a very intelligent man," he says, "he's a very clever man," he says. "He might gie ye a job," he says. I'll see him."

So away he went in, and the gentleman came out about three or four minutes efter.

A12 "Oh well," he says, "I can learn ye a good job," he says, "If ye want tae try it up," he says, "I can learn ye this job," he says, "and it'll do ye a lot o good," he says.

"Oh," this laddie, he says, "What is it?"

"I'll learn ye," he says, "tae be an archer, I'll learn ye," he says, "tae be the finest archer in the world, and win a lot o prizes in your archery."

"Oh well," says this laddie, he says, "that's aa right," he says. "That's aaright," he says, "I'll just stop here."

So he stoppit there.

B12 "Well," he says, "my boy," he says, "I'll give ye a job," he says, "I'll learn ye a trade," he says. "There's not very many o them goin now," he says, "the trade's dying out," he says, "and I'll learn ye it."

"Well," says the lad, he says, "what is that?"

"I'll learn ye tae be a professional archer," he says, "with the bow and an arrow. Ye can shoot anything," he says, "with this bow an arra."

"Well," says the laddie tae hissle, "and don't think that'll be very payable, but," he says, "it's better than nothin. Well," he says, "I'll just hae a shot at it anyway." So he stuck, the other yin stuck wi this yin, this man, to learn to be a professional bow an arra.

A13 Now the youngest yin, he's comin alang.

Ah, but he's gettin a hard time, he cannae get nae work. He wasnae as big as the rest o them, naebody wad take him on. But he come tae this hoose, a wee auld hoose, it was. He says, "... gaein in there," he says. "I cannae see much doin in that place," he says. He says, "I'll rap at the door anyway."

He rappit at the door and here he heard this scuffling coming tae the door, and a wee auld man opened the door. "Well, young man, what do you want," he says, "at this time o night, son?"

B13 Now the younger yin, he was the last yin in the line, the youngest yin. He's away along this road but oh! he couldnae get nae big hooses, he couldnae get naethin. But he come tae this wee village o a toon, an aa every wan o the lights was aa oot, but he seen wan wee light burnin in this hoose, and he went across tae't. Chapped at the door. An this old man came oot tae him. "Well," he says, "what do you want?"

A14 "Well," he says, "sir," he says, "I'm on the road," he says, "and I'm lookin for a job."

"Oh," he says, "laddie, there's not much work here," he says. But he says, "Come away in," he says, "and I'll see ye'll get a drop tea," he says, "and what's - a share o the hoose," he says.

So the laddie goes in, sits doon, got his tea. He says tae the old man, he says, "You'll no be workin any more, old man? You're too old."

"Oh," he says, "I'm too old for work now, son," he says, "I was a good worker at wan time," he says, "but I'm too old now," he says, "my hands is too stiff," he says, "for to do what they used tae dae."

An he says, "An what was your trade," he says, "old man?"

The old man says, he says, "I was a tailor," he says, "I was the best tailor," he says, "in the whole o the district," he says, "for miles an miles," he says. "I never got nothing," he says, "I couldnae sew, or I couldnae do."

"Oh," he says, "if I could get work it would be fine and it was a fine trade. I wished," he says, "I could dae that."

"Oh," says the old man, he says, "I'll learn ye tae dae that," he says, "son, if you want tae be a tailor."

So he agreed tae be a tailor there an then, and he stoppit wi this old man, and he started wi his tailorin, sewin and doin everything he could.

B14 "Well," he says, "I'm stranded, sir," he says, an he says, "I've no place to go. I was lookin for a place tae lie down," he says, "or a cup o tea or something."

"Oh," this old man says, "I'll gie ye a cup o tea, son. In ye come." So he took him in, and this was the old tailor o the toon, professional tailor. He says, "what are ye doin," he says, "son?"

"Oh well," he says, "I'm lookin for a job," he says, "I want a job o some kind," he says, "and I'm lookin for a job."

"Oh," says the old man, "I'll learn ye a job," he says. "I'll learn you a trade."

"Oh," says this laddie, "that'll be very good," he says. "I'll take any kind o trade at aa."

"Well," he says, "how would you like to be a tailor?" he says. "I'll learn ye tae be a professional tailor."

"Oh," this laddie says, "that's lovely! That's lovely! I'll take any kind o job."

"Well," this old man says, "I'm gettin very old, and if you learn this trade well, it'll do you a lot o good."

"Oh," this laddie says, "it'll do me fine, sir."

A15 But the time went on, and every yin done their job, that they could dae, the job they were at, this yin wi the stargazer, and the ither yin wi the thief, and this ither yin wi the archer, an the youngest yin wi the tailor. So time went on, time went on, till it came tae the day when they had tae go home, the year an a day. So they came back the same way as they went. They come back to the first crossroads, and the two brothers met, and the other two brothers met at the other crossroads, and then the four o them met together, exactly in a year an a day. So they aa the joy tae see them, an shakit hands and aa the rest o't, and the yin axed the ither what he done, an they telt one another what their trades was. Oh they aa agreed wi one another, it was quite a good trade, quite a good trade, so they made their way back hame.

B15 So that was the fower o them got a job. Now the fower o them was workin in aa their jobs for exactly one year, and maybe less than a year, and they remembered they had tae meet back at that crossroads in a year and a day. So they got all their money they earnt for what they were daein, an their knowledge, and away they went back, for tae set oot back home. But anyway, tae make a long story short, they all met at this crossroads where they left. An yin asked each other what they got tae dae, and how they got on w't, an they telt one another the story o what they were. An the auldest yin says, "Well, we might be right enough," he says, "boys, and we might be wrong," he says, "we'll just have tae stick wi the jobs we've got. But we'll need tae go back," he says, "and see how the ould folks gettin on."

A16 So back they come, right back to where they started, right back to where their faither and mother was, and the old mill. But when they come back tae the mill, where their father and mother was, their father and mother was deid, and they were away, and gone. "Haw me," the eldest brother says, "What are we gonnae dae noo?" he says. "How are we gonna do now?" he says. "They're deid," he says, "and for aa the things we've done," he says, "we're not one thing the richer. An we've no one at the back o us? Whit are we gonnae dae noo?"

"Oh well I dunno," he says. "We'll go up an see the old king and queen," he says. "It's a year an a day, a whole year since we were here," he says. "Ye never know what might hae happened tae them tae. So we'll go up an see them."

B16 So away they went back, they went back tae this castle, and this oul mill, meal mill where their father an mither wis, that they left there. But when they come back tae the meal mill, the meal mill was no longer there, the meal mill was down an away, wi nothing left but the ruins o the wee hoose, where they used tae stay. An the old man and woman was dead.

"Aw," the oldest brother said, "there!" He says, "I wonder what happened tae them. There's naebody here," he says. He says, "They must be dead, or away or something." An he says, (it was dark), he says, "There's naethin we can do," he says, "we'll just have tae lie down in this old hoose till the morn."

So they lay doon in the ruins o the oul hoose, in a corner, in the shelter, but when the mornin come, they got up, an the four o them went up tae the castle, tae ask what happened tae their faither an mither.

A17 The four brothers goes up, and the old king's sitting in a chair.

 "O'h hello," says the king, "here these four boys comin, who went away a year ago. I wonder," he says, "what they've been at," he says, "what kin o jobs they've got."

 So the four o them come up, an he remembered every one by his name, how they got on or what they're doin an they told him what they done, an everything like this. He spoke to them aboot their father an mother. "O'h," he says, "they died," he says, "aboot nine months ago," he says, "just aboot three months," he says, "after yese left, boys," he says. He says, "I gied them a good, respectable pittin away," he says. So he says, "I could do no more for them."

B17 "O'h," the oul laird says, the king, or laird, or whatever he was, he says, "O'h," he says, "your father and mother," he says, "died" he says, "about six month ago," he says. "They got so old an feeble," he says, "that he couldnae move aboot, so he died," he says. "The old woman died also. But," he says, "I seen well to them," he says, "and I put them away well."

A18 "Well," they says, "that's a pity, for I don't know what we're gonnae dae noo."

"Oh, but wait a minute," says the king. "You've tae prove," he says, "what ye've done. You," he says, "you say you were a stargazer, an astronomer, an you can tell me onything."

"Oh yes," he says. "I can tell what's gonna come," he says.

"And you," he says, "you say you're a first class thief. Ye can steal anything."

"Aye," he says, "that's right," he says, "I'm a first class thief."

"And you," he says to the other, "You're a first class archer."

"I am that, sir," he says, "naething in the world I can't hit."

"And you," he says tae the youngest yin. "You're a tailor."

"Aye," says the youngest yin, "I'm a tailor."

B18 "Oh well," says the ouldest brother, "that is very good."

"But," says the oul king, he says, "what are yese gonnae do noo, boys? Did yese learn a trade."

"Oh yes," the auldest brother says, "we learned a trade," he says. "We learned a good trade. We all learned good trades."

"Oh," he says, "I see. Well," he says, "I tell ye what," he says, "afore yese went away," he says, "if yese remember," he says, "if you would do well," he says, "I would do well wi youse," he says. "Gie yese a daughter apiece," he says, "if yese came back," he says, "when yese made your fortune."

"Ay well," says the old brother, "that was right enough."

"Well," he says, "afore yese do anything," he says, "yese must do a wee test for me," he says, "to prove," he says, "what yese really done."

"Oh," says the ouldest brother, he says, "we'll try wur best," he says.

"Well," the old laird, he says, "what were you?"

"Well," he says, "I was a professional stargazer," he says, "readin stars," he says, "an aa thing."

"Oh," he says, "and ye can do anything by that?"

"Oh," he says, "I can do a lot," he says, an he says, "I can tell a lot by that."

"Oh I see," he says. "Ye can tell a lot by it?"

"Aye."

"What are you?" he said to the ither yin.

The other yin, he says, "I'm a professional thief," he says, "I can steal anything," he says, "from anybody," he says. "Steal anything out o anywhere."

"Oh," he says, "that's another good trade. What are you?" he said tae the ither yin.

The other yin said, "Well," he says, "I'm an archer," he says, "I can shoot an arra at anything," he says, "and kill it dead," he says.

"Oh," he says. "Can ye? An what are you?" he said tae the youngest yin.

The youngest yin said, "Well, I'm a tailor," he says.

"Oh," he says, "that's very good," he says. "A tailor is very good."

A19 "Well," he says, "boys, I tell yese what," he says. "Onything I can do fur ye," he says, "if you can do what you say, and prove what you say," he says. "I have four dochters. Each of you," he says, "have got one apiece," he says, "for a wife, but," he says, "ye've got tae prove yerselves," an he says, "that's tomorrow morning. Is that agreeable?"

"Oh," they says, "fair enough. You couldn't get a better offer than that. That's first class."

B19 "Well," he says, "to prove you," he says, "to prove what yese can do," he says, "ye see that tree there?" he says, tae the oldest yin.

"Aye," the oldest yin says, "I see that tree," he says.

"Well," he says, "there a bird's nest in that tree."

"Aye," the oldest yin says, "I can see the nest," he says.

"Well," he says, "If you can tell me how many eggs is in that nest," he says, "up there," he says, "that'll be your task finished."

"Oh well," says the oldest brother, "I cannae tell ye exactly now," he says, "but I could tell ye in the mornin," he says, "how many eggs is in the nest."

"Fair enough," the old king says. "Ye'll tell me in the mornin."

A20 Then the four o them went tae the old mill, and had a wee shake-doan under the bit where he used tae lie, and they couldnae hardly sleep aa night for thinking o what they had tae dae the next day, what task the king was gonnae gie them the next day. So up they got very early in the mornin, got a wash, cleaned up a bit, as much as they could, and they set off for the castle.

 The king was up waiting for them. "Oh," he says, "yese is up, boys."

 "Aye," he says, "we're up, sir," he says.

 "Well," he says, "that's very nice." He says, "Have ye had any breakfast?"

 "No," he says, "we'd no breakfast," he says, "there's nothing tae eat in the mill," he says, "there no breakfast."

 "Oh," he says, "that'll no dae," he says. "Yese canna do your task," he says, "withoot gettin your breakfast."

 So he took them in, and they got their breakfast, first class breakfast. After breakfast time he took them out to the yard, at the back o the castle.

B20 So they away back doon again tae the wee bit shack an they lay that night. Whatever the auldest brother done, he read the stars an everything, an they came back up the next day, the four o them.

A21 "Now," he said tae the auldest yin, "you're an astronomer?"

"Yes," he says.

"Well," he says, "ye see that nest," he says, "up there," he says, "in the gourach o that tree?"

"Aye," he says, "I see it."

"Well," he says, "if you can read the stars," he says, "and tell me how many eggs is in that nest," he says, "I'll gie ye ma daughter," he says, "tae marry."

"Oh," says the boy. "I'll just do that." So he says, "I'll need tae look at the stars," he says, "at nicht," he says.

"Oh," he says, "that's aaright," he says. "Ye can look the stars when they come oot."

So he waited till the stars came oot at nicht and he read the stars, this stargazer, this astronomer. Back up the next mornin, saw him again.

"Well," he says, "ma boy," he says, "did ye read the stars," he says, "an tell me how many eggs is in that next?"

"Yes sir," he says. "I did," he says. "Yesterday," he says, "sir," he says, "there was three eggs in that nest," he says, "but" he says, "there's four in't today."

"Well," he says, "we'll see about that." An he called one o his butlers. "Get a ladder," he says, "and see how many eggs is in that nest up there."

The butler went away an got a ladder, climbed up the tree, looked in the nest. "There's four eggs in the nest, sir," he says.

"Very good," says the king, he says, "that's very good."

B21 "Well," says the old man, he says. The ould laird, this ould king, "Could ye tell me how many eggs is in that nest?"

"Oh yes," he says, "I can tell you how many eggs is in that nest," he says. "There four eggs in that nest," he says. "There were three yesterday," he says, "but there four eggs in't the day."

"Oh, I see," he says.

A22 "How," he says to the thief, he says, "come inside," he says, "and keep very, very quiet. And I want tae see that bird licht in that nest," he says, "and I want tae see you," he says, "go in up," he says, "an stealin that eggs," he says, "below that bird," he says, "without that bird risin."

"Oho," says the thief, "I think, sir," he says, "that I could dae that."

"Well," he says, "if you can dae't" he says, "you'll win the hand o one ma daughters."

So in they goes, the four o them sittin at the back o this wee windae, lookin oot at this wee windae, an this blackbird comes in on top o its nest.

"Oh," says the king, "there your chance," he says. "There's your chance," he says, "the bird's lichtit on the nest," he says. "You gang," he says, "and steal one o the eggs oot o't," he says, "and show it to me," he says, "between your finger an thumb," he says, "an the bird sittin on the nest."

The thief goes oot, whatever way he went roon the tree here and there he got up the tree without the bird comin aff, right up tae the nest, and they're watching through this wee winda. Got the egg oot from below the bird withoot the bird moving. Held the egg oot, showed it tae the auld king. "That's it," says the king, he says, "jist hold the egg there, he says, "hold it there."

The other brother sittin up this tree, with the egg between his finger and thumb.

B22 "Well," he says tae the ither yin, "do you think you could go an steal one o the eggs, from ablow that bird athoot the bird risin?"

"Oh aye," the other yin said, "I could dae that."

"Well," he says, "you go up," he says, "an steal one o the eggs," he says, "an let me see the egg." He says, "I know there are four eggs in that nest," he says, "an you go up an steal one o that eggs," he says tae the - , "withoot disturbin the bird."

This yin goes up an he gets this egg oot. An there were four eggs in the nest, an he gets wan o them oot, hel's it atween his finger an thumb, like that.

A23 "Now," he said tae the archer, "if you can break that egg," he says, "wi yer bow and yer arrow, crack that shell wi yer bow an arrow, without bustin the yolk," he says, "you have won your maiden."

"Oh," but the archer says, "that's an easy thing for me tae dae." He took oot his bow an his arrow, took even dead aim, jist tipp-ed the side o the shell, an the shell cracked in two shares in his brother's hand, wi the egg in it, an never broke the yolk.

"Aye," he says, the king he says, "ye done that," he says. "Ye done that right enough."

B23 "Now," he said, tae the archer, "can you split that egg wi your arra, crack that shell, withoot breakin the yolk, or anything."

"Oh aye," said the archer, "I could dae that." So he liftit the arra, an he's shot the arra, an he cracked the shell roon aboot like that."

"Aye," he says, "ye did it. Ye did that," he says.

A24 "Well," he says tae the wee yin, "it's your turn now," he says. "Now," he says, "you see," he says, "if you can sew that shell on that egg," he says, "the same way as it was," he says, "without damagin it in ony way in the world, without the bird kennin."

"Oh," he says, "I'll dae that." He got the brother doon, wi the egg and the shell and the yolk an everything, got it aa thegither and sewed it wi a fine needle an fine thread. You could hardly see the crack at aa. An the ither brother pit it back in ablow the bird in the nest.

B24 "Now," he said, tae the tailor, "dae you think," he says, "you could shew that egg, that shell," he says, "an put it back in the nest? The other yin'll put it back in the nest."

"Ay aye," the tailor says, "if he takes it doon, I'll shew it."

So he took it doon, he sticked richt roon aboot the shell, so it was very near impossible tae see the stitches, and they put it back in the nest again.

A25 "Well," says the king, "listen," he says, "yese are clever, clever men," he says. "There's no gettin away wi it," he says. "Yese won yer girls," he says, "boys. Yese won yer women. An A'm a man o ma word," he says, "A'll gie yese a dochter apiece," he says, "an A'll give yese," he says, "a farm apiece," he says, "tae farm your crops an do what ye like," he says, "wi what ye get." He says, "When I die," he says, "an ma wife dies," he says, "all ma estates," he says, "will be all split," he says, "in four divisions, tae each o ma daughters an each o youse." So he says, "but we cannae do nothin tonight, boys," he says. "It took us a long time tae dae that. But you come back up in the mornin," he says, "an we can make the arrangements," he says, "for the four o your weddings."

B25 "Well," he says, "boys," he says, "very clever boys," he says. "I must say," he says. "But," he says, "I'll be as good as ma word," he says. He says, "I'll gie yese a daughter apiece." But he says, "I have a wee while tae consider, tae get everything done," he says. "An away down," he says, "to your shack," he says, "and come back up in the mornin again."

A26 So, they went back down tae the oul mill, an were as happy as anything. An they slept that night - they never hardly slept at aa they just laughed an talked an jokit the lea-lang nicht. But ah boy, they were up like a shot in the morn. Now they went up tae the castle, hard as every they could, an they seen the oul king an the oul queen oot, an they were wringin their hands, an tearin - the oul woman was tearin the hair oot 'er heid, an three o is laddies daein the same, tearin the hair oot 'er heid.

"Aw," says the auldest brother, "what's wrang noo?" he says, "what happened up here?" He's lookin at them aa tearin their hair aa tae bits.

"Aw, this is terrible. Aw, what am a gonna tell these boys, when they come up?"

"What's wrong, sir?" he says, "what's the matter?"

"Oh boys," he says, "an affa thing happened here last night," he says, "tae the youngest dochter," he says, "o the family. An affa thing happened."

Says the youngest yin, he says, "is she dead? Is she away?"

"Aw, she may be dead. I don't know," the king said. "When we got up this mornin," he says, "she wasn't in her room, the room was empty. The window was torn oot o the frame. The window frame was oot, an she was gone. An there were signs o a struggle intae her room."

B26 So away they went as happy as Punch, away doon tae this shack, an they come back up in the mornin again. When they come back up near the castle, they seen the old man, the lady o the hoose, they were oot, an they were wringin their hands, and three sisters wringing their hands and tearin the hair out o their heid.

"I wunnder," said the auldest brother, "what's wrong here," he says. "I wunner what happened here?"

So when they came up, the oul man says, "Aw boys, boys, an awful thing happened last night!"

"What happened?" the auldest brother says.

"Well," he says, "I don't know really what happened," he says, "but the room," he says, "that ma youngest dochter was in," he says, "the door was taken off the hinges," he says, "an she's away, and she was never seen or heard tell o. I don't know what happened tae her."

A27 "Oh my God," the young yin says, "that's terrible. "Well," he says, "what are we gonnae dae noo?"
"Ah wait," says the oldest brother, he says. "Wait a minute. I'll figure this oot in just a wee while." He says, "let me think," he says, "an see what happened tae her." He says, "I canna dae naethin the noo," he says, "in daylight. I'll need tae wait," he says, "till the morn," he says, "an I'll study the stars," he says, "an study the things, tae see whaur she went to, tae see if she's alive."

B27 "Oh that's terrible," the oldest brother says. "Can I see the room?"
"Oh, they could show you the room."
Showed them the room. The bed was there where she was lyin, hit aa rufflet, an the door was off, an everything like this.
"Oh," says the oldest brother, "isn't that terrible?" He says, "I don't know what we're gonnae dae aboot that!"
"Oh," says the oul king, "for God's sake," he says, "boys, see if yese cannae dae somehin, or try an fin oot what happened tae her."
"Oh well," says the oldest brother, "we'll have tae gae doon again, and think again."

A28 They're doon again tae the aul mill. They didna sleep the first nicht, nor the second night, never slept aa nicht lang. They're up very sharp in the mornin.

The other three brothers says, "Did ye mak oot what happened tae her? What's happened tae her?"

"It's aa richt," he says. "I ken whaur she is. I ken what happened tae her. I know what happened tae her, an I know where she is."

"Oh thank God for that," the others says, "that's very nice. Thank God for that."

With that the aul king's out the door again. He says, "Whit's wrang brothers?"

The other yin says. "It's aa richt," he says, "I ken whaur she is," he says, "I know whaur she is."

"Oh, dae ye?" says the king.

"Aye."

"Well," the king says, "is she aa richt?" he says.

"Oh she's aa richt," he says, "alive," he says, "but she's in bad hands."

"Oh my God," the aul king says, "what's happened tae her?"

"Well," he says, "away far oot," he says, "in the freshwater loch," he says, "there's a castle away oot there," he says, "a lang, lang way oot," he says. "It's oot o sight," he says. "An there's a demon o a man," he says, "bides oot there. In fact," he says, "he's a warlock, this man. An it was him 'at come last night," he says, "an stole the lassie oot o her room. An she's lyin intae a room, and she's in that castle. She's locked up."

B28 So they're back doon tae their shack again, an they slept till the mornin again, and when they come back up in the mornin, the ole king said, "Well, boys, what dae ye think?"

"Well," the oldest brother says, "I ken where she is. I know where she is. She's a long way away, across that sea there, intae an island. A demon stole her last night," he says, "and he took here away tae this island," he says, "and she's in that island. I know where she is."

A29 "Oh my God," the aul king says, "what are we gonna do now?" he says.

"Well," the aulder brother says, "there's only wan thing we can do," he says. "I ken whaur she is," he says, "an if we can get a boat," he says, "we've a good chance o goin an gettin her."

"Ah," but says the king, "I'll get yese a boat boys." Away the king went an made enquiries here and there an got this big sailin boat, an away the four o them went in this big boat, ye see?

B29 "Oh well," says the old king, "dae ye think, could ye get her back?"

"Oh," he says, "we could get her back," he says, "but we have nae way o gettin tae this island," he says. "It's a long way."

"Oh but," says the old king, "I'll get ye a boat." The king went and he got a boat, a big sailing ship, and away the four o them set.

A30 Now they sailed for oors and oors and oors, but anyway, in through a bank o fog, they seen this big aul-fashioned island, an this big aul castle sittin away in the centre o the wood.

"Now," says the big yin, he says, "that's whaur she is, in that castle boys." An he says, "There's only one man that can dae anything fur her," he says, "in that castle," he says, "an it's you," he says, "brother," he says, "you're the thief," he says. He says, "but remember," he says, "if that man gets you," he says, "that warlock," he says, "its death for you!" But he says, "If you can get in an get her oot o that castle," he says, "without him waking, an get her back tae the boat," he says, "I think we've got it made!"

"Ah," says this yin," he says, "I think I could do that."

B30 Now, it was the ouldest brother that was takin the wheel, and he was leadin them, steering tae whaur this island was. But when they come within sight o this island, he says, "Thonder's the island," he says, "boys," he says, "and thonder's the castle where she's in. An she's at thon top windae," he says, "away at the top o the castle. That's where she is," he says, "in there, cause I've read it in the stars," he says, "and that's where she's imprisoned, in there. An," says he, "it's up tae you," he says tae his brother the thief, he says, "it's up tae you," he says, "tae get her," he says. "But remember," he says, "Ye'll have tae watch yersel in there," he says, "cause there are a lot o guards an everythin, watchin owre her," and he says, "ye'll have tae be very careful."

"Oh, but," the thief says, "I'll watch masel," he says, "if A can get ashore withoot anybody seein me."

A31 Out he goes, slipped out o the boat, quite canny, away up tae the castle. An he made his way in through aa the rooms, till he finally come tae the room where she was, an he managed tae get her oot o the room, an away doon the stairs, an oot, an jist gaun intae the boat, when this man, this warlock, he waukened up! An he discovert she was away.

Now the boat's away back to the other castle see? They're makin good speed comin back hame, wi the win in their back, an the sails aa blowin wi the wind. They're makin good speed, but ah! when they were about a mile tae the shore, they lookit back, an seen this black cloud comin through the air, an this black wumman's jacket. An they lucked. The auldest brother says. "Look," he says, "Ken what that is?" he says. "Naw," the rest o them said.

"Well, that's the warlock," he says, "comin efter us." An he says, "He's gonnae attack us."

"Na," they says, "it's impossible."

"I'm tellin ye, that's the warlock." He says "You better get your bow an arrow, very quick."

"Oh," but he says, "I've got ma bow an arrow here," he says. "I've ma bow an arrow here."

B31 So he got ashore, anyway, one way or another, and he sneakit up tae the castle and he got right roon, an in through a door and away up tae the peenacle o the castle, tae this room where this woman - this lassie, was an of course, he stole her an took her oot, back doon tae the ship. An they set sail, away back for home, withoot anybody seein them.

Ah, but when they were just aboot within half a mile o the shore o back hame, they lookit back an they seen a thing like a black cloud comin sailin owre the sky. The second youngest brother said, "Look at that thing comin!" he says, "what's that?"

"Oh," says the oldest brother, "that's a thing comin," he says, "and it's no goin tae do us much good," he says. He says, "We'll need tae watch what we're daein here," he says, "'cause that's that demon," he says. "He's turned hissels intae something," he says, "and it's gonnae attack this boat," he says, "and droon the lot o us," he says, "an droon the young lassie tae."

"Ah, I don't think so," the boy, the archer says. "I don't think it," he says. "I think I'll sort him," he says, "wi this bow an arra."

A32 So, this thing come, like a giant bat, like a giant black bat, in the air, an made three or four swoops at the boat wi its talions. But this yin wi the bow an arrow managed tae keep him aff every time he come, wi a spear at him here an a spear at him there, an an arra here an an arra there. But this time, this man he came down too close, an he made a dive at the side o the boat, this warlock, an he caught the side o the boat wi his talions, an tore half o the side o the boat aff, an the boat was sinkin.

"Oh," says the tailor "I'll need tae get this sewed up quick," he says, "before this boat sinks," he says. So the tailor's sewin away at this boat, the rest o them workin in oars, doin everything they could tae mak quick intae the shore. This yin wi the bow an arra, jist waited till he come as close as he could an he put an arra right through his throat, this warlock's throat, an this warlock fell intae this loch. But they managed tae get ashore, still shakin an sore everywhere, wi aa the water rinnin oot them, an the aul king walkit oot tae the door, an "Oh," he says, "boys, yese is back," he says. "That was very good. That was very, very clever."

B32 But when this thing come close tae them, it was a thing like a great big giant bat. And it was comin doon, makin dives on the boat, wi its claws. Tore the sails off it. Tore everything off, and it was goin tae tear the boat in two shares. It's makin dives at the boat an this young fella's at it wi the arras, just frichtin it away an odd time. But this time it come down too close, an it caught a dunt at the side o the boat, and it tore the boat a - sundry. An whenever it tore the boat a - sundry, it went back up intae the sky again an this yin wi the arra, he took a good even aim at it, and sunk the arra richt in through its hairt, an it fell intae the water.

Now, this tailor says, "Oh," he says, "the boat," he says, "is in half. What are we gonnae dae?" The eldest brother, "You're the tailor," he says. "You get it sewed up!" he says, "as quick as ye can, or tie up wi ropes or something."

"Ah well," says the youngest brother, "I'll dae that." So he done his best wi this boat, an he managed tae hand it together, some way, till they got ashore. An when they come back up, up tae the - up tae the castle again, and the ould king says, "Well," he says, "boys," he says, "ye done well," he says.

A33 He took them inside, an they got dry clothes an everythink, an they went aa ready for tae get mairrit. So every yin got what he supposed tae get, every yin got mairrit, an every yin got his fairm, and every yin got a share o the money, an I think they're still livin happy tae this very day."

B33 "An A must say," he says, "an A must thank ye," he says. "I've kept ma word," he says, "and A'll give yese all a good castle," he says, "apiece," he says. "An A'll give yese money," he says, "for life," he says, "for doing that." An he says, "A canna do no more for yese."

 "No," says the oldest brother, he says, "that's right," he says. "Ye done very well," he says, "An I must thank ye very much."
 So that was the end o them.

A34 The old man says, "What dae ye think o that," he says, "Johnny?"

"Oh," says Johnny, he says, "that was very good," he says. "That was the best story," he says, "I've heard for years."

"Well," the old man says, "I'm glad ye likit it," he says, "son, because that's my trade," he says, "tellin stories, an," he says, "every story that I tell," he says, "I always get payed for it."

"Oh well," says Johnny, he says, "that's a different kettle o fish aa thegither," he says. "We've havenae any money," he says, "tae pay onybody."

"Oh well," he says, "Johnny," he says, "if ye've nae money tae pay me," he says, "for your story, I'm afraid ye'll need tae pay it," he says, "wi a forfeit."

B34 Now the old man says, "Johnny, that's the story, that's - what dae ye think o that story?" the ould man said tae Johnny.

Johnny said, "That was a very good story, old man," he says. "That's as good a story as ever I heard in ma life."

"Well," he says, "what dae ye think o't?"

"Oh," says Johnny, "it's a good story."

"Well," he says, "what are ye gonnae pay me for ma story, Johnny? Ye'll need tae gie me something for ma story. What are ye gonnae gie me?"

"Aw," Johnny says, "I have nae money, ould man," he says. "Me an ma mother's poor," he says, "we have nae money. It just takes bare an busy," he says, "fur tae keep us gaun," he says.

"Well," he says, "ye ken," he says, "Johnny, that's my trade. I'm a story teller and I must get payed fur ma story."

"Ah well," says Johnny, he says, "I havenae got nae money," he says, "Old man."

"Well," he says, "if ye've nae money," he says, "Johnny, ye'll just have tae pey a forfit."

A35 "Oh well," Johnny says, "if I have tae pay a forfeit I suppose I'll need tae dae it."

"Well," the old man says, "seein your sae game," he says, "I'll tell what ye'll need tae pay a forfeit wi."

"Well," he says, "what have I got tae dae?"

"Well," he says, "I'm gonna turn ye," he says, "intae a lion," he says, "Johnny." He says, "I'm gonnae sent ye oot thro the [?] for wan year an a day. When ye come back in wan year an a day, we'll see about ye what ye said if you've gonnae pay for your story or no."

"Oh well," says Johnny, "that's hit. If I've got tae dae't, I've got tae dae't."

So next mornin when Johnny went oot, the old man was standin there at the door,. "Well," he says, "Johnny, I'll need tae turn ye intae a lion," he says, "son," he says. An he says, "Ye can roam through the woods for a year an a day.

"Fair enough," says Johnny, he says. "I'll jist dae that."

B35 "Aw, a forefit," says Johnny. "What's a forfit?"

"Well," he says, "a forfit's a thing," he says, "I turn ye intae a beast or a bird or something," he says. "An ye'll go away," he says, "roamin for a year," he says, "and when ye come back," he says, "I'll be here when ye come back."

"Ah well," says Johnny, "if that's the way o't", he says, "A cannae help it."

"Well," he says, "if ye cannae pay for ma story," he says, "I'm gonnae pit ye," he says, "through the forest," he says, "for a year an a day, as a lion through the forest for a year an a day."

"Ah well," says Johnny, "I canna make a better o it, ole man."

A36 So the old man turned him intae a lion, and away Johnny set through the wood. Now the wumman was left in this wee cottage herself, and the old man went away aboot his business, and Johnny went through the wood for exactly wan year an a day.

The year an a day was up, Johnny come back tae his mother's hoose, made his way back tae the hoose. When he come back tae the hoose it was gettin gloamin dark when he came back tae the hoose, and the old woman was sittin at the door waitin for him, greetin. When he came back tae the hoose, he turned back intae hissels again.

"Oh," says she "Johnny, Johnny," says she, I'm glad you're back. It was an affa lang, a lang, lang year that," says she, an she says, "I'm very, very glad ye're back," she says, "son."

B36 So the old man turned Johnny intae a lion, and away Johnny went through the forest, for wan year an a day. He wandert all over the forest, here, there an aa owre the place.

But he come back at the end o a year an day, back tae his hoose, an his oul mother. Oh, an the old woman was very bedraggled, very tired - lookin. "Oh," she says, "Johnny, I'm glad you're back," she says. "That was a long year," she says, "you were away," she says. "It jist took me bare 'n busy just tae get a bit stick fur the fire an get things goin," she says, "while ye were away."

A37 "Oh," he says, "mother," he says, "I'm glad I'm back masel," he says. "Cause," he says, "that was a lang straik," he says, "through that, the lee-lang winter, among frost and snow," he says, "then aa summer baked anew."

"Oh," but she says, "son, ye're back. Thank God!"

In Johnny came intae his mother's hoose. His mother was makin him a wee bite o something, but he was that tired, and he was that fatigued, wi wanderin an rinnin here an there, when she came ben wi an everything, he could hardly tak a wee bit tea. But he took a wee drop o't anyway, an he went an lay doon. Ah but he nae ten minutes lyin, when it turned dark, an the chap came tae the door again.

He says, "I wonder," Johnny says, "Who that could be at that door tonight."

"Oh well," the old woman says, "I don't know what it is," she says. "There's naebody here at that door," she says, "since ye left. That's the first buddy that came tae that door since ye left."

"Ach well," he says, "I'll go tae the door anyway."

Went tae door, he opened the door, he opened the door, here was the auld man, again. Samen old man again.

B37 Johnny says, "I ken," he says, "mither," he says, "but what could A dae?"

"Oh," says she, "laddie, ye couldnae dae nothin. But I'm glad you're back."

So Johnny's just sittin takin a wee cup o tea, when the chap comes tae the door. Johnny goes tae the door, an opens the door, an here's this brave old man again at the door.

A38 "Oh" says Johnny, "it's you!"

"Aye," he says, "Johnny, it's me," he says. "Can I come in?"

"Oh," says Johnny, "ye can come in," he says. "Ye can come in," he says. "But remember," he says, "we havenae got much in the hoose the night," he says, "because," he says, "ye ken whaur I was," he says, "for a year."

"Aye," he says, "Johnny. Well," he says, "I turned ye intae a lion," he says, "for a year and a day."

"Aye," says Johnny.

"Well," he says, "ye can turn yersel intae that lion, any time ye want," he says, "whenever ye feel like it."

"Oh," says Johnny, "thanks very much."

"But," he says, "Johnny, ye must tell me something."

"What's that," Johnny says.

"Are ye gonnae pay me for my story?"

"Ah," says Johnny, "where's I gonnae get money wanderin in the" he says, "in frost and snow the lee-lang winter?"

"Ah well, that's right enough," he says, "Johnny," he says, "but" he says, "I'll need tae turn ye intae somethin else for another year an a day."

"Aw," says Johnny, "in the name of God," he says, "can ye na hae some mercy tae me?"

"Well," he says, "its for your ain guid," he says, "Johnny," he says.

"I'll turn ye," he says, "Johnny," he says, "intae a salmon," he says, "gie ye a change in the sea for a while."

"Ah well," says Johnny, he says, "if ye turn me intae a salmon," he says, "I suppose I'll jist need tae be turned intae a salmon!"

B38 "Oh," says Johnny, he says, "it's you!"

"Aye," he says. "It's me, Johnny," he says. "I'm back for ma payment," he says. He says, "I dinnae want tae bother ye much, but I cannae help it."

"Aw," says Johnny, "whaur am I gonne get anything," he says; "A year roamin that forest?" he says. "Masel, in the wuds? Where am I gonnae get any money?"

"Ah well," says the old man, he says, "Ye'll just have tae pey anither forfit, Johnny."

"Ah well," says Johnny, he says, "if A hiv tae pey it, A hiv tae pey it."

"Well," he says, "Johnny, I'll pit ye for a year an a day, intae the sea as a salmon, an see how ye like it doon there."

"Aw," says Johnny, he says, "this is it," he says tae his mith-er. "A'm away in the sea for another year, an a day."

A39 So away poor Johnny was doon tae the burnside, a wee burn that was runnin by. There was a good - aside it, there was a wee bit o a spate on it, there was as much water in this burn as would carry Johnny down to the sea. So over Johnny walks tae the burn's edge, he walks tae the burn's edge and managed tae put his feet intae the water and he turned intae a salmon. Oh away Johnny is doon this burn, away doon, till it was right put to the sea, and he sailed and swam and everything he could dae tae get hissel past his year intae the sea, tae finally the last day come, o his year, and he made his way back tae get back tae the burn. So instinct brung him straight back tae the burn, where his was intae, and he come up the burn and he's lyin at the back o the burn, intae a wee shallow bit, just waitin the second when he would turn back intae a man again. So just like a flash, Johnny was a man again, back stannin on the back o the burn, and aa that was wrang with him was his feet kin o damp jist, because it was a shallow bit he come in. So he wannert oot o the burn, an he wannert owre by his hoose, where his mither was, and his mother was there waitin on him comin back.

"Aw," says she, "Johnny, ye've got back, son!"

"Aye," he says, "mother," he says, "I got back," he says. "That was a cald, cald cairry-on for me," he says, "aa winter," he says, "in that sea," he says, "I got chased wi otters," he says, "chased," he says, "wi seals, sea-lions, an everything possible I've been chased wi," he says, "I was near gaffed twice," he says, "wi fishers."

"Oh my God," his mother, she said, "that's terrible, Johnny."

"But," he says, "I'm back noo," he says, "thank God," he says. He says, "Maybe that wee man'll come back nae mair."

"Ah well, ye better come in," she says, "son, and get some dry claes ontae ye, an get a wee bite o something tae yer stomach."

B39 Away he went for another year an a day, a salmon. He was turned intae a salmon, for another year an a day. But at the end o the year an a day, he come back and up the burnside, alongside his mither's wee hoose. The minute he come up tae the side o the hoose in the burn, he turned intae a man. He was back again.

"Oh," he says, "thank God," he says, "I'm back, mother."

"Aw," says she, "I'm glad you're back tae," she says, "Johnny."

Aw, an if she was tired the first time when he came back, she was worse the second year, because she could hardly walk at aa. An the hoose was aa hackit, was knockit doon wi the wind, and rain and storm.

A40 So in Johnny come. He wasnae needin much dry claes, jist his socks were wet, bits o his troosers, wi standin in the burn. So he changed them an he sat doon, an got his wee bite o supper.

 An he wis jist sittin, crakin tae his mother about what was gaun on, and how she was gettin on, an aa this things, an how she's survivin for the last two year, and she was tellin him, a knock came tae the door again.

 Says Johnny, he says, "A bet ye a shillin," he says, "mother, that that's that man back again," he says, "and if he asks this time for money for ma story," he says, "I dinnae ken whit to do," ye see, "I've nothin," he says, "I've not a fig."

 "Oh well," she says, "son, ye heard him last time. Maybe," she says, "it's for your ain guid, so ye jist better gang tae the door an open the door."

B40 But anyway, in comes Johnny again, and he's sittin, an he's tak- in a wee cuppae tea fae his mother again, and he's crackin aboot this an that, when this chap comes tae the door again. Johnny he goes tae the door again and here's the ould man at the door again.

A41 "Oh well," Johnny says, "mother, I'll just go tae the door an open it." So away he went tae the door. Whenever he opened the door, he seen this wee man standin at the door.

"Oho," says Johnny, "you're back again!"

"Aye," he says, "back again," he says, "Johnny," he says. "Am I gettin in this time?"

"Oh yes," says Johnny, he says. "Ye can come in. Be jist as well comin the nicht," he says, "as what ye were twa year ago."

"Oh," the old man, he says, "that's fair enough," he says.

So the old man come in an sat doon, and asked Johnny how he got on in the sea, how many times he escaped death, wi seals an otters an aa the rest o it. Johnny telt him aa!

"Aw," he says, "ye're a very clever boy," he says, "Johnny. But," he says, "Johnny," he says, "I'm na gonnae be here very long the nicht," he says, "I've anither appointment the nicht," he says, "I've anither appointment some place else, an I've just come back tae see ye," he says, "tae see if ye're gonnae pay me for ma story."

"Aha," says Johnny, says he, "there's nae use o sayin things like that," he says. "Ye ken fine I could get no money in the sea," he says. "For this last year. There's no money in the sea, and I've nae-thin else."

"Oh," the wee man, he says, "Johnny," he says, "I'm sorry for ye," he says, "but I'm gonnae gie ye another forfeit," he says, "till ye come tae your senses," he says, "and dae your best, an pay me for my story."

B41 "Oh," says Johnny, says he, "you're back again!"

"Aye," says the old man. He says, "A'm back again, Johnny," he said, "an ye ken what A'm back for!"

"Aye," says Johnny, "I ken what ye're back for," he says, "but I'm just as bad noo as the first time ye met me!"

"Ah well," says the auld man, "ye'll have tae pay anither forfeit, Johnny."

A42 "Ah well," says Johnny, he says, "I suppose I cannae help it. What am I gonnae go in this time?"

"Well," he says, "Johnny," he says, "ye were in the wud for a while," he says, "and got on very well in the wud. Ye've been a lion, an ye got on aa richt in the sea, tae," he says, "as far as I see. I dinnae see ye nane the waur o it," he says. He says, "I'll gie ye a chance this time," he says, "in the sky," he says, "tae see how ye can dae for yersel there," he says. "I'll turn ye in tae a hawk," he says, "Johnny." An he says, "It'll may be come in useful tae ye efterward."

"Ah," says Johnny, he says, "if ye turn me intae a hawk," he says, "I suppose I cannae make the better o't."

B42 "Ah well," says Johnny, "I cannae help it. What am I gonnae dae this time?"

"Well," he says, "ye were in the forest," he says, "for a year an a day," he says, "an ye were in the sea for a year an a day," he says. "Noo," he says, "I'm gonnae put ye abeen the forest this time," he says. "I'm gonnae turn ye intae a hawk. An ye can fly o'er the forest, here an there," he says, "wherever ye wish, for a year an a day."

"Ah well," says Johnny, "if that's gonnae be the wey o't" he says, "I'll have tae jist dae't."

A43 So away in the wud the next morning, the next mornin, they come oot tae the door the old man and him an he says, "Well," he says, "Johnny," he says, "I'll see ye in a year an a day fae the day," he says, an he says, "Good luck be wi ye."

"Oh good luck," says Johnny, and like that Johnny turned intae a hawk, an soared up intae the sky, awa abeen the wuds away abeen aa the places mile, ye could see for miles aa here an there, see right away across the sea, here and there an everyplace.

"Aw," says Johnny, "this is better," he says, "than the wud, anyway," he says. "It's better than gaun through the wud as a lion," he says. "Naebody'll chase me up here."

So Johnny's flyin here an there - aw, he went further away this time than ever he went aforehand, because at a pull of his wings he could sheer away up in tae the sky, jist in seconds, and he could come back doon again. Tell me, the year wisnae sae bad at rinnin by this time as Johnny thought, but he finally come back, but having been sae far away, he didnae mak back that nicht, for a year an a day. He went back in the year a good bit. "Ah," he says, "I'll rest here," he says, and he says, "I'll manage hame the morrow's night. I'll rest on the nearest bit I can see," he says, "a sheltery bit," he says, "and I'll rest down," he says, "and be hame the morrow," he says, "if God be willin," he says. "I'll be hame aside ma mither."

So he's gan alang and he looks an he sees this wee hoose in the middle o a wee wud, an hit aa surrounded wi ivy bushes, an ivy growin up the waas. Says Johnny, "This is the very thing," he says, "this is a good sheltery bit, an I'll just fly in among this ivy," he says, "that's on the hooses here, an naebody'll see me in there," he says.

B43 So away Johnny goes again, turned intae a hawk for a year and a day. He's flyin here an he's flyin there, flyin every place. An he always made his way back at the end o the year an a day, but this day, anyway, oh! he must have been an affa long bit awa, for he was affa tired, an he seen this wee licht in the middle o this wid, an he thocht it was his wee hoose.

A44 So Johnny fled in thro this bushes an well intae the hoose, an he's sittin on the windae sole, ablow this ivy, oh it was a beautiful shelter, an he could see in through the window, and hear everything that was gaun on through the window. So Johnny's sittin and he's lookin in through the window, an there's a man an wumman in the place and a lum o a laddie tae. The laddie's lauchin an cheery, an awfy jolly laddie, lauchin an haein fun wi his father and mother. Johnny lookit the ither way, an here he sees this auld man comin, the samen auld man as he would (?) him.

He says, "Here this auld man comin," he says, "an this pair laddie," he says, "is gonnae be turned the same as me," he says. "Ach I'll wait anyway," he says, "if ye jist says the wrong answer."

B44 So when he fled doon, when he lookit at it right, when he come close, na! he seen it wisnae his hoose. An he sittin in the windae sole, in ablow big spreadin ivy leafs, an he's luckin in through the window, Johnny, this hawk onyway, but it wis Johnny. An he seen an oul man and an oul woman, an a lump o a laddie sittin in the hoose. See?

"Oh," he says, "there folk sittin in there," he says, "an they're dry and they're warm," he says, "an I'm oot here," he says. "An A thought it wis ma mither's hoose."

But he's sittin, an the first thing he sees comin danderin up the drive was this samen oul man, danderin up the drive.

A45 The auld man chapped at the door. The old folk opened the door an took him in, an that was his first trip there. So he done the same as what he done wi Johnny. He got his tea an he got his supper, an then the laddie axed him tae tell him a story.

 "Och," he says, "son," he says, "I'll tell ye a story," he says, "an it's a guid yin."

B45 An he chappit on the door o this hoose, an the laddie went oot an opened the door, an Johnny's sittin watchin them aa the time. An the ould man come in, and he got hi tea, the same thing that's happened at Johnny, and the last laddie was sittin, and he telt the laddie he was a storyteller an everything like that. An the laddie says, "Well, tell me a story."

 "Och," the old man says, "I'll tell ye a story, son," he says, "but may be ye'll no like it efter it's finished."

 "Och," he says, "I'll like it," the laddie says.

A46 So the old man up an he telt him the same story as what he telt Johnny, and this laddie's sittin very contentit, listenin tae the story, and efter all - [tape runs out]

Efter the auld man's finished the stories and Johnny's sittin wi his lugs cockit at the window, tae hear what the laddie would say, ye see.

"Well," the oul man says, "son," he says, "that's the end o ma story," he says. An he says, "when I tell a story I expect tae get paid for it. So, what ye gonnae give me for my story?"

"Well," the laddie says, "I have nae money," he says, "I cannae pay ye, but maybe God'll pay ye."

"That's fair enough," the old man says, "that will just suit me fine!" The oul man says, "ye can go scot free! cause, if ye hadnae telt me that God'll pay me, I wad hae made ye pay a forfeit. But ye managed tae be sensible in your words, that ye said the right word. So I bid ye goodnight." An away the oul man went!

B46 Well, he telt him the story, onyway, and he telt him the same story that I telt you about the oul miller an the king an the four sons. An efter he was finished, he said tae the laddie, "Well?" he said tae the laddie, "what dae ye think o it."

"Oh," says the laddie, "that was a good story," he says, "old man. It was a first class story."

"Well," he says, "ma son," he says, "ye'll have tae pey for the story," he says. "I'm a storyteller, an ye'll have tae pey for't."

"Aw," this laddie says, "I have nae money. We have nae money. Ma mother an faither's too ould, an they have nae money either." An he says, "We cannae pey ye," he says, "Oul man," he says. "But may be God will pey ye."

"Aha!" the oul man says, "That was very clever ma boy," he says. "That was very clever. Well," he says, "ma boy, I'll let you go free for that," he says. "If ye had said anything else," he says, "ye wad hae needit tae pey a forfit," he says.

"Aw," but the laddie says, "may be God'll pey ye. I cannae pey ye."

A47 "Now," says Johnny, "if I had a kent aboot that," he says, "for tae say that," he says, "I'd hae been a free man," he says. "I ken what tae dae the morra," he says, "when I come back tae the hoose."

Fair enough, Johnny sat there aa nicht, amongst the ivy, and he's waitin patiently till the light come, daylight wud come in and as soon as the light come in, Johnny made direct for his ain hoose. He's up very, very sharp, an away on his wings, right for the hoose. An he has a long way tae travel an a good bit tae fly, and it was jist comin on for nicht when Johnny reached his ain wee hoose. An he was comin tae the hoose, he never seen any reek or anything aboot the hoose, never seen nae movement aboot the wee hoose. An he jist licht on the wee hoose, an he's sittin on the windae sole, he couldnae turn back intae hissels until the year was up, the exact minute. He's sittin wunnerin tae hissels, "I wunner what's happened," he says. "I donny see ma mother aboot here." He says, "it looks like a long time since anybody was movin aboot this place, God knows what happened tae it."

B47 An Johnny heard this sittin at the windae. "Now," he said, "if I had a thought o that at first," he says, he says, "luck noo," he says, "what I would ha been!"

But the next day anyway, Johnny made his way home, an he come an he sat doon and luckit at his hoose. The hoose was knockit doon an there were nobody there. His mother was deid. Everybody was all away. Everything was aa different fae when he left.

A48 So with that the time come an Johnny turned back intae his nainsel again, an whenever he turned back intae his nainsel, he jumpit doon aff the windae sole where he was sittin, made directly intae the hoose. So he tried the door o the hoose and the door opened, but when he come intae the hoose, there was nobody in it, no sign of his mother an no fire in the fireplace and nothing aboot, but just the bare empty hoose. He says, "Oh," he says, "what happened tae me mither? Where did she go to? Maybe she's badly," he says. But he kennled up the fire an by this time it's beginning to get kin o dark. He kennled up the fire, but there was nae meat tho he searched aa the places. He lookit but there was nothing there, not a thing left in the hoose but the fower bare walls o the hoose and a bed in the corner, two-three bits o blankets an that. He says, "I'll just have tae kennel a wee fire," he says, "an heat masel up," he says. "I'll ask somebody in the morning what happened tae the auld wife," he says. "God knows what happened tae her."

 An he jist had the fire goin lovely, when a chap comes tae the door. Johnny says, "Maybe this is her back, noo," he says, "frae the shop or something." So he went tae the door, an he opened the door. It was this oul man that was at the door again.

B48 So he's sittin at the edge o the hoose, an he's waitin. The first thing he sees comin up the drive was this aul man.

 "Aw, here he's comin again!" he says.

 Up he comes, an o coorse there was nae hoose there. Johnny was just sittin shelterin up against the waa.

A49 "Aw," says Johnny, he says, "you're back!"

"Aye," says the aul man, "I'm back Johnny." But he says, "I've a sad tale tae tell ye," he says.

"Well," says Johnny, "I believe that," he says. "What sad tale's that?" he says.

"Your old mother," he says, "ye can see she's not here."

"That's right," says Johnny. "She's not here. I'm just wunner-in where she is."

The old man says, "She died six months ago, Johnny. That lang cold winter, she couldnae look after herself, she was gettin kin o on, ye ken, Johnny. An she died, puir old soul. I cam here tae visit here, an got her lyin doon here on the bed."

"Oh," says Johnny, "that's terrible. Oh well," he says, "there's nothing, I suppose, I can dae aboot it."

"No," the old man says, "no, that's right, Johnny. Never mind," he says, "Johnny. I buried her," he says, "an I gien here a good down-puttin," he says, "a very expensive funeral. I seen everything was right," he says.

"Oh well," says Johnny, "that was very good o you," he says. "That was very good o you indeed."

B49 "Oh," he says, "ye're here again oul man."

"Aye," he says, "I'm here again," he says.

"Ah," says Johnny he says, "look at the hoose," he says, "an ma mither's away," he says. "She must be deid."

"Aye," he says. "She died last winter," he says. "Johnny," he says. "But I seen to it, that she was aa right," he says. "I got her putten away well." An he says, "I seen tae everything aa right."

"Ah well," says Johnny, "that was very good o ye," he says. "What's gonnae happen noo?"

A50 "Well," he says, "Johnny, I'm back again," he says, "an ye ken what I'm back for."

"Oh aye," says Johnny, "I ken what you're back for," he says. "You're back for payment o your story."

"That's right," the auld man says, "I'm back for the payment o ma story. Are ye gonnae pay me for ma story?"

"Well," Johnny says, "it's jist like this," he says, "old man, I cannae pay ye. I'll never pay ye, but maybe God will pay ye."

"Ah!" says the oul man, "Johnny," he says, "that was well choosed," he says. "Man," he says, "if ye'd choosed that word," he says, "three year ago," he says, "ye'd hae been a free man," he says, "an ye wadnae hae been away fae your mother for two year. But," he says, "never mind Johnny," he says, "ye did well," he says, "thae three things that ye done," he says, "the lion," he says, "the salmon an the hawk," he says, "ye can turn intae them any time ye want," he says, "an otherwise, ye can come oot o them any time ye want. So I think," he says, "ye'll find that's not a bad prize."

"Oh well," says Johnny, he says, "that's fair enough," he says, "an thanks very much old man."

B50 "Oh well," says the aul man, he says, "if ye cannae pay me for my story," he says, "ye ken what it is," he says. "Ye'll need to go back in the sea again, or back on the land, or up in the sky, or some place."

"Ah," Johnny says, "I cannae pay ye, old man," he says, "but may be God'll pay ye!"

"Aha!" the auld man says, "That's a good answer Johnny." He says, "if ye had a said that," he says, "three year ago," he says, "your mother might ha been livin yet."

"Aye that's right," says Johnny, "but things is things the way they go, and that's different."

"Well," the oul man says, "seein," he says, "that ye done what ye done, Johnny," he says, "all they things that I put ye intae, ye can do that, ye can either turn yersel in fish, turn yersel in a lion, or turn yersel in a hawk, anytime ye want."

"Oh well," says Johnny, "thanks very much," he says, "ole man," he says, "for that." An away the oul man went.

A51 "But," he says, "there's nothing for me here," Johnny says. "I'll need to go away an work some other place for a job or living."

"Well," says the aul man, "I'll tell ye what," he says, "on my far traivels" he says, - "ah, it's a good bit fae here right enough," he says, "away along the coast," he says, "a hundred miles maybe two hundred mile away along the coast," he says, "there's a big hoose along there," he says, "an the man that's in the big hoose," he says, "he's lookin for a man tae pick the richt horses," he says, "an ye might get a job there."

"Fair enough," says Johnny. Away Johnny goes along this road, in the direction the oul man telt him. Aye, twas two-three days traivel, but he fell in aboot half a mile tae the big hoose, when he heard a voice, cried, "Hi! Hi! Come ere! Hi!"

Johnny stops. "What's wrong?" He lookit aroon aboot him and couldnae see naebody. The voice again said, "Hi! c'mere! Johnny, c'mere!" He lookit up intae this tree, great, big, tall, tall tree. Lookit up, and away at the very tap o't, he seen this man sittin, legs tae a brench, big, this, brench.

B51 Johnny's sittin. "I wonder," he says, "what I'm gonnae dae noo." Johnny says, "Ach, there nae use me sittin here. I must - as well, gae away along the road an luck for a job some place."

So away he went along the road. Aye, he travelt a good few miles along the road. An he heard a voice, "Hi! Johnny!" An he lookit aa roon aboot. Na, he couldnae see nobody. Wandert on, walked on again. He heard the voice again. "Hi! Johnny!" Ha! He looked again. Na! He couldnae see naebody. The voice says, "Hi! Johnny! Owre here!" Johnny lookit owre intae the wud, way up in the tap o a tree, an he seen this wee man sittin in the tap o a tree.

A52 "Aw," Johnny says, "that man's stuck up there, an he'll be wantin a help. He'll be wantin me to go for a ladder or some-thin," he says. Johnny wannert oure across to the tree, lookit up at this man, sittin in the tree. He says, "what's wrang wi ye? What's come oure ye, maister, up there?"

He says, "Come closer," he says, "to the tree, come closer." So he stepped closer. He says, "Ye see whaur I'm sittin here?"

"Aye," Johnny says. "I see whaur ye're sittin right enough. There's nae bother there."

"Well," he says, "I can see most of all over the world," he says, "when I'm sittin up here."

"Ach," said Johnny, "ye must be kiddin," he says.

"No," says this man. "I'm no. Would ye like to come up here," he says, "and hae a luck up here," he says, "ye can see for yourself."

"Ah," says Johnny, "that was a thing that I was never nae use at," he says, "that's climbin. I couldnae come up there."

"Ach," says this man, "it's dead easy man," he says, "comin up" here! Dead easy comin up here!"

"Ah," says Johnny, "I don't think I should try it," he says. "In any case," he says, "I'm too tired. I traivelled a far distance the day and I'm too tired tae trek up there."

So this lad says, "Come closer a bit tae the tree." Johnny took twa steps closer tae the tree. Ah! Before ye could say Jock Robinson, Johnny was up tae the tap o the tree, alongside this man.

B52 Johnny walkit oure. "Come oure closer!" he says. "Come oure closer tae the tree." When Johnny walked oure tae the root o the tree, oh! just like a shot oot o a gun, Johnny was up at the tap o the tree sittin where the wee man was, and the wee man was doon at the bottom o the tree.

A53 "Well," said Johnny, "how did I get up here?"

"Aha," this man, he says, "ye got up here aa right," he says, "and ye come up here for a purpose," he says.

"Aw," says Johnny, he says, "I seem tae hae heard that voice somewhere afore," he says. "I think I ken that voice," he says.

"Well," Johnny says. "What am I gonnae dae up here?"

He says, "Look away owre there," he says, "and tell me what ye see away owre there."

"Oh," says Johnny, he says, "I see a big hoose owre there."

"That's right," says this man, "ye see a big hoose owre there."

B53 "Oh," Johnny says, "I'm daein weel noo!"

"Aha!" says the wee man, he says, "Sit up there," he says, "and see what ye can see."

"Aw," says Johnny, says he, "A canna see naehin, but I can see the water away doon there, the sea doon there, and that's as much as I can see."

A54 "Well," he says, "I'm glad ye're here."

And with that this man disappeared up the tree and Johnny was stuck up this tree at the tap o the tree.

Ah so Johnny's sittin on the gourach o this brench up here, he's sittin tae hissel, "I wonder what that man was and how can I - I'll hae tae try tae get doon," he says, "because I wad fae maybe," he says, "he's away for a lether," he says.

Ah but this man wad be an oor away, when back he come, wi this giant lether, an he put it up again the tree. It was wan o they ladders ye can pull it up and make it different sizes wi a rope, ye can - rightaway up! So this man pullt this rope an pullt this rope, till the lether was right beside where Johnny was.

"Right," he says, "Johnny, come on doon!"

Johnny come doon the lether, doon tae the fit o the lether.

B54 "Aye well," says the wee man, he says, "just you sit up there for a while," he says. "I've been sittin up there for a long, long time. An you can sit up there."

"Ah," says Johnny, says he, "wait a minute!" he says. "Tell me - I'm sittin up here," he says, "I cannae get doon."

"Oh," says the wee man, "ye'll sit up there for a long time."

"Aw," says Johnny, he says, "for God's sake," he says, "tak me doon!"

"Well," the wee man says, "just climb doon an ye'll be aa right."

So Johnny slid doon the tree, fa'in fae brench tae brench, but he finally got doon.

A55 "Now," says Johnny, "what was aa that in aid o?"
 "Well," he says, "Johnny," he says, "I've been waitin on ye," he says. "I've been waitin in a lang queue," he says, "for a while."
 "Oh," says Johnny, he says, "I couldn't believe that," he says. "How d'ye ken ma name?"
 "Oh fine A ken your name," he says. "Ye better come wi me tae the castle," he says, "an I'll tell ye what I want ye for."
 Away the two of them goes to the castle.
 Gave Johnny his tea, right enough and a good supper.

B55 "Now," the wee man says, this man, he says, "Seein A let ye doon," he says, "ye'll need tae dae some'hin for me."
 "Aw," says Johnny, "A'll dae anything," he says, "and as regards work."
 "Ah but," he says, "this is no work," he says, "Johnny. This is a thing that only you can dae," he says. "I ken what you can dae," he says, "you can gang in the sea," he says, "you can gang on the land," he says, "an ye can fly," he says, "up abeen the sky - the trees an everything," he says.
 Says Johnny, "How do you know that?"
 "Ah, I know that!" he says, "I know that," he says, "an I know mair aboot you," he says, "than you think."
 But he says, this wee man, he says, "Come tae ma castle," and he says, "I'll gie ye a job tae dae. If ye do it," he says, "it'll be tae your benefit."
 "Ah well," says Johnny, he says, "I'll try anything," he says. He took him up tae his castle.

A56 "Now," says Johnny, he says, "What's this I hear," he says, "aboot there's a good job here?"
"Well," he says, "I know a lot aboot ye," he says, "I know a lot aboot ye can dae," he says, "and how ye can dae things, near everything ye can dae," he says. "I have a brother," he says, "well, he's only a half-brother," he says, "and he's a bad evil man," he says, "and he lives away across the loch there," he says. "Oh its five or six hundred miles across that loch there." An he says, "he come at nicht," he says, "an he stole the only dochter I had," he says, "the only one in the faimily that's left, he stole her," he says. "An what was his intentions for stealin here," he says, "I don't know, cause he's a bad evil man. An I would wisht," he says, "you tae go an luck for her, an bring her back."

B56 "Now," says Johnny, "what is this anyway?"
"Well," he says, "I had only one sister," he says.
"Aye," says Johnny.
An he says, "A demon come," he says, "away fae a farrint land," he says. "I dont know where he come fae," he says, "but away fae some farrint land or some farrint island," and he says, "he stole my sister!"
"Oh," says Johnny, he says, "that's bad."
An he says, "You're the only man," he says, "can get her back."

A57 "Oh," Johnny says, "that's a gift, I could never dae that. How would I manage tae get across seas an everything else?" he says.

"Ho," says this man, he says, "bit I'll gie aid," he says, "for tae go tae where he is. An I'll give ye directions where he is."

"Well," says Johnny, "how can ye no go yersel?"

"I cannae go masel," he says, "I haven't got the powers that you've got. An I cannae go masel. But I'll get ye a boat," he says, "an I'll get ye men tae sail the boat," he says. "You go an try an get ma daughter back. An if ye do get her back," he says, "well," he says, "this castle," he says, "an all my grounds an everything," he says, "will belong to you." He says, "and also the hand of my daughter."

"Fair enough," says Johnny, he says. "I'll try anything," he says, "wance."

B57 "Och," says Johnny, "how am I gonnae get her back?" he says. "I havenae got a boat," he says, "I've got no way o kennin whaur she is, or no'hin like that."

"Ah but," he says, "we'll fin oot whaur she is. I'm a demon," he says, "a wizart," he says, "an I ken whaur she is. An I'll tell ye whaur she is, if you can go an get here."

"Oh right enough," says Johnny, "I'll dae that, if you can get me a boat."

"Oh," says this man, "I'll get ye a boat."

A58 So there and then it was arranged that Johnny got this great big sailin ship an men tae sail the ship, an a captain for tae guide the ship.

"Now," he says, "Johnny," he says, "afore ye go there," he says, "my daughter," he says, "will never be freed, an she cannae get freed, no way, anyway, till my brother," he says, "dies."

"Oh," Johnny, he says, "that's a funny thing. Till the man dies," Johnny says. "How's he gonnae die?"

"Well," this man he says, "that we don't know," he says. He says, "There's three things," he says, "I can tell ye three things," he says, "that'll end his life," he says.

"Three things will end his life. One o the three things, an it'll be the last yin, Johnny," he says, "the last thing," he says, "that'll end his life."

"Oh well," Johnny said, "if it's the last thing, that'll be aa-right then."

B58 So the boat was provided for him, big lump o a boat, wi an engine in it, and a captain, an two o the other deckhands, to guide them on the road, and tae help Johnny. So the wee man says, "Now," he says, "ye'll sail away across that sea," he says, "ye'll sail for many, many days," he says, "across that sea. An ye'll come in sight of an island," he says, "and in that island," he says, "my sister is. But," he says, "remember," he says, "there a demon in that island," he says, "and sometimes he's at home, and sometimes he's away fae home. Ye'll need tae watch what you're daein."

"Oh," says Johnny, he says, "I'll watch what I'm daein," he says. "I'll watch what I'm daein aa right."

A59 But away Johnny sets sail in that boat, oh he sailed on for a long, long time, weeks an weeks an weeks. The captain was a first-class captain an he's navigatin the ship the way the man telt Johnny tae navigate it, an the direction tae go. Wan early mornin, one of the captain's mates came doon tae Johnny. He was lyin sleepin doon in a bunk, down in the bottom o the boat. An this man said, "Ye'd better wake up, Johnny," he says, "an go up the deck," he says, "because the captain wants tae see you."

Up Johnny goes to see the captain, says, "What is it, captain?"

He says, "Thonder," he says, "dae ye see thon island," he says, "away owre there, away on the left?" he says.

"Oh aye," says Johnny, "I think I dae," he says.

"Well," he says, "that's where the boss's daughter is, that's the island where his half-brother is guardin her. An his half-brother is a warlock," he says. "He can put many a funny curse on you."

"Oh, can he?" says Johnny. "We'll see about aa that," Johnny says.

B59 So away Johnny sails on this boat wi this captain. An oh! they sailed for many many days, and Johnny's tired wi these three year he didnae get a proper sleep, an no proper meat, and Johnny's lyin at the bottom this boat, intae a cabin, an he's lyin sleepin. An the captain's steerin this boat, richt oot across this great big sea. An this captain looked away tae the north, an he seen this island. He says, "May be that is the island," he says, "that this woman's on," he says. "Ye better go doon an tell Johnny aboot this."

So one o the deckhands come doon an waukened Johnny up. "Johnny," he says, "ye'd best tae get up," he says, "because here's the island here, whaur this demon lives," he says, "and whaur the boss's sister is."

So Johnny come up on the deck. He says, "I wunner if that's it."

"Oh," this captain says, "that's it, cause I've got all the directions here," he says, "afore me," he says. "That's the island." An he says, "Thonder's the castle in the middle o the island," he says, "whaur she is."

A60 But anyway, they come within five or six mile of this island, an Johnny says, "I'll tell ye what I'll dae," he says. "We'll not go any closer," he says to the captain. "Just stop here," he says, "and wait here," he says, "till I come back. Don't do anything," he says tae the captain.

"Very good," says the captain tae Johnny, "I'll dae what ye tell me."

The captain lowered the anchor doon, and Johnny jumped overboard and the minute he jumped overboard, he turned intae a salmon, and he's swimmin down right for the shore.

B60 "Ah well," says Johnny, see, "draw as near as ye can," he says, "an I'll get oot an see what we can dae."

So the captain drew in as close as he could to the side o the thingmy, an throwed doon his anchor, an Johnny got oot wi another wee boat tae the shore.

A61 Now he come ashore just aboot maybe half a mile fae the castle. When he come oot in the shallow, shallow water, where it gave him just enough tae swim in, four or five inches o water, he turned himself back intae a man again. An he stood up an luckit all roon about him, walkit along this beach, the wan way, and walkit away along the other way. An as far as ye could see in every direction, he seen this great big wall.

"Oh," Johnny says, "this is terrible," he says, "I wunner," he says, "how I'm gonnae get owre that!" Johnny went along this wall a good long bit, an he come tae a kin o high bit up o the grun, where the wall wasnae sae high, an Johnny says, "I think I'll manage this bit."

Johnny run back a wee bit, an he turned hissel intae a lion, an jist three or four gallops, an oot owre this waa he sailed, right intae the estate, ye see!

B61 But when he came oot tae the shore, he went roon the shore, try- in tae get up, tae the grounds, an there were a great big giant wall, up roon this castle, roun an roun an roun. No way in but owre this wall. Johnny says, "In the name o the God," he says, "how'm I goin tae get owre that waa," he says, "an intae this castle? Oh," he says, "wait a minute," he says, "if I turn masel," he says, "intae a lion," he says, "may be I could get owre there. It's an affa jump owre there tae," he says, "tae get owre that waa."

But there were a burn runnin through, comin oot o the island, an running intae the sea.

"Oh," Johnny says, "I'll tell ye whit A'll dae," he says. He says, "I'll turn masel in a salmon," he says, "an I'll go up in there," he says, "an through that way."

So he turned hissel intae a salmon, an he went intae this burn an through this airch, an up intae the grounds o this castle.

A62 Well, when he cam intae this estate, he lookit aa roon aboot him, here an there but naw, he could see nabody. He says, "I think I'll better turn massel intae a man again, in case," he says, "if I dae see anybody, I frichten them tae death when I'm a lion."

So he turned hissels back intae a man again, an he walkit up close tae the hoose, closer an closer tae the hoose, but when he come closer tae the hoose, he seen a lot o great big dogs.

"Oh," he says, "I see a lot o dogs," he says. "I think," he says, "that they dogs would attack ye." So he says, "I'll turn massel intae a hawk again." He says, "I cannae get mair." So he turned hissels intae a hawk again, an he flew fae tree tae tree, tae tree tae tree, until such time as he come tae the castle. When he come tae the castle, he flees roon aa the castle. Naw! he couldnae see a sowl. There wasn't a sowl aboot the castle, that he could see.

He says, "I wonder where everybody is, I cannae see nobody here."

B62 But when he turned hissels back intae a man again, when he luckit, he seen aboot - aa these great big watch dogs, watchin wanderin aa through the grounds o the castle.

"Oh," Johnny says, "if I go oot there," he says, "as a man," he says, "I'm gonnae be etten alive." He says, "I'll turn masel," he says, "intae a lion," he says, "I'll frighten these dogs away."

So he turned hissels intae a lion, and whenever aa these dogs seen this great big giant lion, they flew for their living life! An Johnny waunert up close, closer tae the hoose.

Johnny thought tae hissels, "Well, if A go up closer to the hoose, as a man, somebody'll may be see me, an they'll ken that A'm here for no good." So he turned hissels intae this hawk again. An he's jumpin fae brench tae brench, fae tree tae tree as a hawk, an he flew roon aa this castle, luckin intae this windae, an intae that windae, tae see if he could see anybody. He could see nobody.

A63 He started gaun fae window tae window, fae window tae window, an he come tae this window, an he peered inside, an here was this young lassie, sittin in this room, an she was sittin greetin an tearin hair oot her heid. He sat at the window for a while an she's sittin, an she happened tae look at the window and she seen the bird at the window, this wee hawk at the window. She went forward, an she liftit the window up a wee bit. She says, "Aw, ma poor wee bird," says she, "ye must be cald sittin in aa that rain. It was pourin wi rain that day. An she let the wee hawk intae the room. So the minute that Johnny got inside the room, he turned hissels back intae a man again. Aw, the lassie fell on tap o this bed an faintit, tae see a man turnin hissels fae a hawk tae a man! So she says, "Oh my God," she says, "what are you," she says, "who are you?"

B63 But he come roon tae this windae at the very top o this castle, an he lucked in through this window, an here he sees this young wumman sittin sittin greetin.

Johnny says tae hissels, "That must be her, there," he says. "That must be her, there." An she's sittin greetin on the tap o a chair, an she's no lookin at no'hin, but she's sittin greetin. An Johnny tapped at the winda wi his beak, tapped at the winda. An she luckit oot the winda an she seen this wee bird at the winda, and she went oot forrit, an she lifted the winda.

"Oh,!" she says, "what a lovely wee bird!" An she took this wee hawk inside an she put on the tap o the table whaur she was sittin greetin. But all of a sudden, Johnny turned hissels back intae a man, again. Oh of course then and there this wumman got an awfa fright, this young lady got an awfa fricht.

"Oh my goodness!" she says, "what's that?"

A64 So he up an he telt her all this cairry-on that he come through an everything.

 "Oh," she says, "that's very interesting. You've met my father?"

 "Aye," he says, "I've met your father," an he says, "he telt me different instructions. An he telt me that you'd never be free, until your uncle would die."

 "Well," she says, "that's right, so I would." She says, "I don't know any way in the world how he's gonnae die, because he's that fly," she says, "everything he does, he's that fly, an he can't tricked o nothing."

B64 Johnny says, "It's all right," he says, "I've been sent here," he says, "by your brither, tae try an rescue you," he says. An he says, "I can turn masel intae several things," he says, "an that's the way I came in here."

 "Oh," she says, "I'm very glad o that," she says. "But," says she, "Ye'll never get away."

 "How," he says, "will I never get away?"

 "Well," she says, "I can't get away," she says, "there's no way o gettin away," she says, "tae such time," she says, "this demon is dead."

 "Oh," says Johnny, he says, "how's that?" he says. "How ye gonnae kill him, or how ye gonnae - ?"

 Says she, "I don't know," she says, "how he's gonnae get kilt, or how he's gonnae die. But tae he dies," she says, "I'll never get redd o this castle."

A65 "Well," says Johnny, "I tell ye what," he says, "there's one way he can be killed and one way he can be done away with." An he says, "that's the way I'll hae tae fin oot." So he says, "Ask him the night," he says, "what his life is," an he says, "he'll maybe tell ye," he says, "an he'll maybe no, how his life will end, or what his life is [indistinct phrase]."

But anyway, Johnny turned hissel back intae a hawk again, goed tae the window, an he's sittin on the window. He looks across the sea. Ye could see out on the sea, sittin on the big high castle. He seen this sailin ship comin an he seen it drawin intae this jetty thing, this great big man on it, comin direct up tae the castle. He says, "I bet that's him," he says. "I bet ye that's him," he says, an he says "I hope she gets the right answer."

B65 "Well," Johnny says, "I'll tell ye what," he says. "Where is he away to?"

She says, "I don't know where he's away to. He's away every day and he just comes back at sunset, at night."

"Well," he says, "is he good tae you?"

"Oh," she says, "he's very good tae me."

"Well," he says, "when he comes back," he says, "you ask him what is his life, or how he's to die, an," he says, "tell me, an I'll may be find oot some way o killin him."

"Well," she says, "I'll do ma best."

A66 Up this man comes, an it's him right enough. He comes in, opens the front door and he opened the - came up tae the room where the lassie was tae see if she was still there. Ah, she was there aa right.

"I'm still here," she says, "I'm still here. An its bein a long wearisome day," she says, "I havenae had much pleasure," an she says, "I wishit I was home."

"Oh you'll get hame," he says, "when I die."

"Aye," she says, "when you die! When will that be?"

"Well," he says, "dae ye see that hump o ground out there?" he says. Oot, an there were a green oot there, an this was a great hump o ground oot on the green, aboot the size o a knowe o grun, an wi trees an things round it.

She says, "Aye."

"Well," he says, "when the wee birds," he says, "carry it away," he says, "tae build their nests ither places," he says, "an that comes level," he says, "that's the end o ma life."

B66 But when this giant come back, oh! he was good tae this lassie! He said, "Were ye wearied today?"

"Oh," she says, "I was tired today," she says, "and wearied. I slep all day. Oh yes." But she says, "One thing," she says, "I mun ask ye."

"What's that?" he says, this giant, this demon said.

She says, "When are you gonnae die?" she says, "Or how am I gonnae - I'll never get free," she says, "till you die."

"That's right," he says, "ye'll never get away fae here," he says, "till I die."

"Well," she says, "how are ye gonnae die? What's your life span?"

"Well," he says, "dae ye see that great big mould o grun oot there? Wi all that bushes an things growin intae't? That great giant mould?"

"Aye," she says, "I see't."

"Well," he says, "till the birds takes all that away tae that's level ground," he says, "that'll be my life story."

A67 "Well," says she, "I dinnae want ye tae die," she says. "No, no," says she, "I would rather keep livin, an dinnae die."
"Oh," he says, "wid ye? Well," he says, "that's when I'm gonnae die."

B67 "Oh," she says, "that'll be never," she says. She says, "Tae get that away," she says, "it'll take thousands an millions o years," she says, "for that tae go away."
"Oh it'll take that!" he says, "tae the birds lifts aa that away wi their feet," he says, "takes all these bushes away," he says, "that's my life."
"Oh," she says, "that's terrible."

A68 But next day this man went away again, and Johnny came in. He says, "What did he tell ye?"

She says, "He telt me when that knowe wad go away wi the wee birds oot there," she says, "tae build their nests, that wud be the end o his life."

"Well," he says, "ye ken what tae dae?"

She says, "Naw."

"Well," he says, "I can see him," he says, "that he's no as bad as he lucks." He says, "You go oot," he says, "wi a stick," he says, "an chase all the birds away," he says. "Every bird ye see comin roon the place, chase them away," he says, "an see what happens."

She's oot wi a stick an she's chasin aa the birds, makin a noise an aa the birds is just lichtin an goin away. But here this man didnae go tae sea that day. He was watchin her, he was sittin watchin her away fae a distance, but he never seen Johnny, 'cause Johnny had turned hissel back intae a hawk again. But shes whooshin these bushes an stottin aa the birds away.

B68 The next day awa this man went again, this demon went again, and Johnny got back intae the castle again. "Well," he says tae this young lady, "did ye find oot the way he's gonnæ die?"

"Aye," she said, "I found oot the way he's gonnæ die."

Says she, "Dae ye see that big mould oot there wi aa they bushes an everything on it?"

He said, "Aye."

"Well," she says, "tae the birds takes that away in their feet, an aa that things away tae build nests wi, tae that's level," says she, "that's his life span finished."

"Oh," says Johnny, "that'll never be. Na," he says, "that no hit at all," he says. "That's nothing," he says. He says, "Are there many birds comes in that thing?"

"Oh," she says, "there's thousands an thousands o birds comes an roosts there," she says. An she says, "but that'll never be in my day," she says. "I'll never live tae see that."

"No," says Johnny that's no right," he says. "I'll tell ye whit," he says, "whenever you see ony birds lichtin on that," he says, "you go oot an chase them awa," he says, "keep chasin all the birds away," he says, "and see what happens, then, when he comes back."

"Oh well," she says, "I'll do what you tell me."

But she's oot, when she thocht about the time he was comin back, an she's chasin aa these birds wi a stick, away off the tap o this mould o grund, big mould, chasin them away, hooshing them away an hoo-shing them away, an this man's comin up the drive.

A69 But he come back this man. He says, "What are ye daein," he says, "my dear? What are ye doin?"

"Well," she says, "I'm chasin all these birds away, for they're aa taken the mould away," she says. "Ye never how so many birds could tak them away in a very short time."

"Aw," he says, "I see ye care for ma life."

"Aw," says she, "I care for your life more than anything in this world," she says. "I care for your life."

"Oh well," he says, "ye better come away inside and get your tea."

Away in, an they had their tea. "Well," he says, "I'm sorry," he says, "my dear," he says, "I was tellin ye a lie."

"What lie?" she says.

"About my life," he says. "When my life ends you'll be free." He says "That's no my life at aa," he says. "I'm sorry for tellin a lie."

B69 An he stood an lucked at her.

He says, "What are ye daein ma dear?"

"Oh," she says, "I don't want ye tae die," she says, "I don't want ye tae die at all," she says, "I'm keepin all these birds back," she says, "from takin your mould away." [What like are ye, Sheila?]

"Oh," he says, "I see," he says. "You don't want me tae die?"

"No," she says, "I wouldn't like you to die," she says. "That's the way I'm chasin all these birds away," she says, "from takin the dirt away."

"Oh," he says, "ye're very clever," he says, "my dear," he says, "but," he says, "I'll not fool you," he says, "this time," he says. He says, "that's not my life span at all."

"Oh is it no?" she says.

"No," he says, "that's no my life span."

"Well," she says, "what is your life span?"

A70 "Ye see that great big stane oot there?"

A great big stane that was shapit somethin like a horse, wi fower big legs oot o't, an a big long body.

"Aye," she says, "I see hit oot there."

"Well," he says, "when that thing melts away," he says, "an when the fog grows out o't six inches long - ye see, there fog comin oot o't every day" (that's the stuff that's on a dyke - fog).

"Well," he says, "when that fog," he says, "haps all that stone," he says, "right owre," he says, "that's when the end o ma life'll come.

"Oh," but she says, "but that'll be never, that'll never happen," says she.

"How?" he says.

"Well," she says, "I'm gonnae scrub that stone the morn," she says, "till it's clean."

"Oh well," he says, this man, "we'll see. I'm goin away the morn anyway," he says, "I'll see what it's like when I come back."

B.70 "Well," he says, "dae ye see that great giant rock oot there?"

"Oh," she says, "I see it."

An this was a great giant rock about seventy or eighty thousand million ton, o a clear rock.

"Aye," she says, "I see that."

"When that rock gets covered over wi fungus," he says, "all over, when it grows all over that rock," he says, "that's my life span finished."

"Oh," says she, "I'll watch," says she, "there'll be nae - nae'-hin like that."

A71 This man went away. She thought he went away, but he didnae go away, he just went oot and hid again. She's doon wi pails o water an a scrubbin brush, an (?) an everything, an she made this thing like a stane horse, she made it - polished it, wi a hard, glass polish, there was never a thing see oot o't, o fog or anything.

B71 But away he goes the next day, and Johnny comes back. He says, "Whit did he tell ye this time?"

"He says, "She said, "that rock," she says, "when its covered wi fungus all over, that'll be his life span finished."

"Na," Johnny says. Johnny says, "That's no hit either. That's no his life span either," he says, "there something else," he says. "Axe him the day at night," he says, "when he comes back," he says, "what is his right life span." An he says, "Go oot an polish that rock, an wash that rock," he says, "clean. An get everything," he says, "clean an polished, cleaned as much as ye can," he says, "and any wee bit o dirt or anything that's stickin aboot, clean't off."

"Oh," but she says, "I'll dae that Johnny."

Out she goes, when she thocht aboot the time he was comin back, an she's cleanin this rock, an polishin this great big giant rock. An she's gaun roon takin every wee spot o dirt off't here an there.

A72 This man see that, an he says, "That lassie must be fond of me, right enough," he says.

So he comes back again, "Come away in," he says, "an get wur tea." An they went an got their tea again. "Well," he says, "I seen," he says, "that ye made a good job o that stane," he says, "dawtie," he says. He says, "that was very good, but," he says, "I'm sorry to disappoint ye," he says, "but that's not my life at aa," he says.

"Ah well," she says, "what is your life?"

"Well," he says, "I'll tell ye ma life," he says, "seein you're so good," he says.

B.72 An he's comin danderin up the avenue again, this man, efter comin back fae his day's cairry-on.

"Oh," he says, "what are ye doin, ma dear?"

"Oh," she says, "I'm cleanin this rock," she says, "in case any fungus grows on this rock," she says.

So this man says, "Oh well," he says, "I see," he says, "ye're very tentful ma dear," he says, "polishin that rock an shinin that rock."

"Oh," she says, "I wouldnae like nothin," she says, "happens tae this rock," she says. "I'll guard it wi ma life, as long as you're livin," she says.

"Well," he says, "I see," he says, "that you're very true and faithful."

"Oh," she says, "as long as A'm livin," she says, "I'll never see no'hin happ'nin tae that rock, or no fungus'll grow on that rock."

"Well, well," he says, "ma dear," he says, "I see," he says, "that ye're true. Well," he says, "I'm goinnae tell ye this time," he says. "That other two things I told ye," he says, "was wrong. But I'm gonnae tell ye this time," he says, "the truth, my lifespan," he says, "and how I'm goin to die. There only one way I can die," he says, "and this is the way I've got to die."

"Well," she says, "what is that?"

A73 "There's a long log o wood," he says, "down on the beach." Johnny's sittin at the window listenin to him. An he says, "There'll need to be a man," he says, "it's sixteen feet long," he says, "an its five feet thick." An he says, "There'll need tae be a man," he says, "an I don't think there a man in the world that can dae this. There'll need tae be a man," he says, "wi one solid blow wi an axe," he says, "tae split that log in two shares." An he says, "Oot o that log," he says, "there'll jump a wild duck - the wild duck'll come oot o that log," he says, "an it'll fly right across the sea," he says. "An that wild duck," he says, "it'll lay an egg," he says, "drop an egg," he says, "when it's up in the high - up in the air," he says, "in the heavens," he says. "It'll drop an egg," he says, "an that egg," he says, "'ll need tae be broken," he says, "on the front o my broo there," he says, "where that mark is. An that's the end o my life. That's when I'll die."

"Oh my goodness," she says, "that's terrible," she says. "That's a terrible tale, that," she says. "Is that true?" she says.

B73 He says, "Away down," he says, "at the other side o the island, at the back o the island there," he says, "on the shore, on up on the beach, there's a great big plank, a fair block o wood. And it's thirty feet long, and it's ten feet thick, each way. An," he says, "one skelp with an axe," he says, "just one single skelp wi this aix, or any aix," he says, "and that plank has got to be split in two shares, that plank, with one solid walt, and oot o that plank," he says, "there'll fly a wild duck, and it'll fly up intae the sky. An," he says, "when it's up in the sky, that wild duck," he says, "that wild duck," he says, "'ll lay an egg. An that egg has to be broken," he says, "on my broo, the front o my broo there," he says, "an that will be my life span. When that's done," he says, "or tae that's done," he says, "I will never die."

"Oh," she says, "that's terrible," she says, "that's funny that an aa," she says. "Ye'll never die right enough, because there's no human man," she says, "can split that block o wud as far as you(?)" she says, "o that length an that width. An there's nobody," she says, "could catch a duck egg," she says, "an break it on your broo."

"Naw," he says, "there never will be."

A74 "That is true, my dawtie," he says.

"Oh I doubt," says she, "that that'll never happen."

But Johnny's sittin listenin tae aa this. He says, "That's the third yin," he says, "that the man telt me," he says, "an that is the right answer," he says. "That's hit!"

B74 The next day, Johnny came back up again, when he was away.

"Well," he says, "what did he tell ye, this time?"

"Well," she says, "he telt me," she says, "that a block o wud roun the back o the island there," and she says, "it's a huge thing," she says, "and its split wi one single blow o an aix, an oot o that block o wud, there'll be a wild duck fly, an when that duck's up in the sky, that wild duck'll lay an egg, and that egg has tae be broken on the front o he's broo, and that's his life span."

"Well," he says, "that could be hit right enough," he says, "because I see a big giant lump o wud roun the back o the island, ye see, an that could be hit right enough," he says. "I think," he says, "it'll be hit right enough."

A75 He says, "I'll need tae go back tae the boat."

Johnny flew back tae the boat, as quick as quick, his ain boat. An when he landit on the boat, he turned hissel back intae a man again. He said tae the captain, "have ye got an aix on the boat?"

"An aix?" the captain says. "Yes, we've got an aix."

"Well," he says, "let me see't."

An the captain took oot this great big axe. Johnny shairpened it an he shairpened it an he shairpened it, till it was jist like a lance, it was that sharp.

"Noo," he says, "I'll try ma best." Johnny was soon back again - he said to one o the men, "Take that aix in a boat," he says, "'cause I cannae cairry it. Take it in a boat," he says, "the morrow's morn," he says, "as quick as ye can."

"I'll dae't," the man says.

B75 He says, "we'll give it a try that anyway," he says, "an see whit happens."

A76 An Johnny went back tae the castle, an next mornin, very very bright an early this man was away. Wherever he went, God only knows, but he went away in this great big yacht. Johnny come tae the castle. "Noo," he said, tae the lassie, he says, "listen," he says, "come on," he says, "get yersel ready."

The lassie says, "what, what's wrong?"

"Come with me," he says, "an ye'll see everything will be all right."

"All right," the lassie says. Once she'd got something gaithered together, she come away wi Johnny.

B76 He says, "Come on then," he says, and that was in the mornin early. "Come on," he says, "an I'll try an get ye oot tae the boat," he says, "an see what happens."

Noo this demon went away early in the mornin, just at sunrise, and he didnae come back tae sunset, and this was early in the mornin when she telt Johnny. But Johnny took her oot, an when he was startin oot, aa these dogs an things was roon aboot.

"Aw," says Johnny, he says, "I'll need tae frighten these dogs away." He says, "Don't be afraid, ma dear," he says. He says, "I'll watch ye." So Johnny turned hissel back intae a lion again, and the minute the lion was there, aa these dogs fled for their life, and the two o them come doon.

A77 Now, back tae this waa this great big high waa. Johnny could easy enough get oot i't but it wasnae sae easy two getting o'er it.

Johnny says, "I wonder what I'm gonnae dae?" he says. "Just you stand there a minute," he says. Johnny flew right owre the waa an doon tae the shore, where the men was wi the boat, the rowin boat. He says, "Ye'll need tae go back tae the big boat quick," he says, "an get a rope."

"Aa right," the captain says. They're away back tae the big boat an they come back wi a rope.

An Johnny says, "ye see that waa there?"

The men said, "Aye,"

"Well stand alongside that waa," Johnny says, an he says, "catch this rope when I gie ye it fae the far side."

"Right," this man says.

The man flung flung the rope owre the waa.

Johnny turned hissels intae the hawk again, an he flew owre the waa. When he's owre the waa, he turned hissels back intae a man again, seein he had this big coil o rope. An he catched one bit o the rope an he flung't owre the waa an he had the ither end o the rope roon the lassie's middle.

"Noo," he says, "I'll go up tae the tap o the waa an I'll tell the man tae pull," he says, "an you travel up the waa."

"Right," the lassie says.

Johnny jumped up on the tap o the waa an he callt tae the men, "Right! pull on your rope!" he says. They tightened the rope. "Right," he says, "Come on! Walk up! Just pull at the same time as ye walk up." It was nae bother, she just walkit up the waa, an got tae the far side. They got her across the far side.

B77 They come doon tae this big giant wall. "Now," says Johnny, "there the wall. Hoo ye gonny get across there?" He says, "It's easy enough for me gettin across, 'cause I can fly across. But," says he, "you'll no get across." But says he, "You stand there for a minute." So Johnny turned hissels intae the hawk, an he flew owre the other side, an he cried tae the men wi the wee boat. "Bring me in a big long rope," he says, "and hurry up."

The men came in wi this big long rope an he says, "One o yese come up here," he says, "the two o yese come up here, and gie this lady a hand," he says. So they come wi the rope an they put the rope owre the big waa and Johnny flew doon again, turned hissels intae a man, and tied the big rope roon her middle, an jumpit up on the waa again, and telt the other men on the far side o the hill, far side o the waa, like, tae pull her owre. So they pullt her owre wi this rope.

A78 "Now," said Johnny when they got her doon, "I wonder," he says, "whaur this plank," he says, "is, he talked aboot, this big lump o wud. I wonner where it is."

He wannert along the shore a bit, an here they come tae this plank o wood. So Johnny says, "there it is," he says, "there's the plank o wud," he says. "As true as he said it," he says, "there it is. Have ye got that aix?" he said to the captain.

"Oh," the captain said, "we've got the aix."

"Give it to me," he says. "Step back," he says.

Johnny liftit this aix, an he swung it roon his head, an he split this log the way ye'd split a cabbage wi a gully knife. When the wud split open, oot o this log this wee wild dyuck shut right up intae the air.

B78 "Now," says Johnny, he says, "whit aboot this log?" he says, "I'll need tae kill this man wi this egg," he says, "in the log [indistinct phrase]. Where is this log again?" he says. "Bring me a big aix," he says tae the some o his deckhands. So they brung this big aix, an they went roon tae the other side o the island. An of course the lassie went intae the big boat. Him an two o his men went roon the island, and they got this big log lyin. So Johnny took aff his jaicket, he went tae the end o the log an he took wan swipe at this log wi this big aix. An he split the log in two shares just the same ye wad split a ben wood. An the minute the log was split, oot flew this big wild duck, an it flew up intae the elements.

A79 "Oh," says Johnny, "there's the wild duck. I better get after it."

Johnny turned hissel intae the hawk again, an he's up efter the wild dyuck, an he's crowdin up on this wild dyuck, an Johnny's circlin this wild dyuck, so it wouldnae go too far oot the water an drop the egg. But wi the fricht an everything else this wee wild dyuck was gettin, an the boy Johnny was chasin it, he just chased it close intae the shore, an this wee wild dyuck dropped this egg in the air, dropped it doon intae the water, right doon intae the water.

Johnny come down low to the water, an whenever he come doon tae the water, doon low tae the water, he turned hissel intae the salmon again an doon efter this egg.

B79 Oh an it was goin far up. It was goin too far in fac. "Oh,"

Johnny says, "I'll need tae try an get that doon a bit," he says. So he says tae the men, "You go back to the boat as quick as ever youse can." An this duck's gaun farther up intae the elements. Johnny turned hissel back intae the hawk again an he's up efter this duck. But when he was up near, close tae the duck, when the duck seen the hawk, the duck took fright, an the duck let an egg faa intae the sea. Down Johnny went efter this egg, and it fell intae the sea, of course, Johnny had tae turn hissel back intae the salmon again, fur tae get this egg.

A80 But he got the egg afore it hit the bottom. Johnny got it in his mouth, when he come oot, an he was jist oot o the water an nae mair, an turned back intae the man again, when they luckit an they seen this sailin ship come, an it was comin at a speed past redemption!

"Oh," says the lassie, "there ma uncle comin," says she, "an he must," says she, "hae fun oot," says she, "that his life was gettin ended," says she.

"An there he's comin!"

Says Johnny, says he, "Get intae the boat, everyone o ye," he says.

Every wan o them got intae the boat, and they pullit hard away for their ain boat. Rowed out as quick as ever they could tae their boat. An they finally managed to get on their ain boat. But ah me! this boat drew alongside an this man, he was that angry, there were [?] off his mooth, he was that wild, an him roarin. An this man, he had a sword that was about seven feet long, an he come off his ain boat, an jumpit intae another wee boat, an he rowed across tae their boat. But Johnny's waitin on him on that isle, just as he come across. He liftit this egg, an he hit man square on the broo, spot on the broo. The minute that the egg broke on his broo, he fell on the brunt on his back, stiff, lay dead in the wee boat, an that was the end o him!

B80 So when he got the egg, he come up wi it in his mooth, and swum alongside tae the ship, tae come up, tae he was place (for) gettin intae the wee deck an up. An he had this egg intae his mooth, an he turned hisselt intae a man again, an he'd still the egg in his mooth, an he clumbed up an intae the boat.

But, here's the thing. Here they luckit, an they seen this thing like a boat comin, like a speed boat, an it was comin like nobody's business! About a thousand mile an oor! Comin across, just skimmin the water, an this man, this giant in front o't. The minute he come tae the boat, he jumpit oot o the boat, an he was jist goin tae tear everybody that was in this other boat, in larachs, when Johnny took this egg, he took an even aim, and he hut this giant right in the front o the heid, wi this duck egg. The minute the duck egg broke ontae this man's broo, he just fadit like blottin paper, away fae anything. There were nothin - not even a track o him left on the deck hand. So Johnny says, "That's hit noo," he says. "That's him finished," he says. "That's the giant finished," he says. An he says, "A'm glad." An he says, "We'll better get back hame till we see whit the ither man says."

A81 So Johnny an the lassie an aa the crew members an the captain, went back tae the ither castle, an telt the ither brither what had happened, what really happened, an they told him aboot everything. The ither brother was so good as when he said, an he gave his dochter, gien him the castle, an gave him aa everything roon aboot, an they're livin there tae this very day yet, and that's no lie, so help me God.

B81 So they sailed back, to where her brother was, this young lady's brother, an when they sailed back, they come up tae the castle. Oh! and this man was that well pleased wi him!

"Oh," he says, "thank God," he says, "you're back." He says, "I thought," he says, "I'd never see ye again!"

"Ah," Johnny says, "ye've seen us," he says, "and I've seen your giant," he says, "an there your sister" he says. "I come through some punishment!" he says, and he says, "we might ha aa been killed," he says, "because he was a terrible man."

"Ah," the brother says, "I know he was a terrible man, 'cause," he says, "I've had many dealins wi him," he says, "an I could do no'hin wi him," he says. "But," he says, "ye've proved your point, Johnny," he says, "and ye did well," he says, "and I'll handsomely reward ye for that," he says. "Ye can have my sister," he says, "as your wife," he says, "and also," he says, "you can have that castle an that island if ye want it," he says, "or any other castle."

So they lived there happy ever after.

II.8 THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A John Stewart

A1 Once upon a time there was a king, and this king had a lovely wife, the queen, and they were desperate for a child. So time rolls on and the queen gets in the family way. So when the child is born, the bad housekeeper and her sister goes and takes the newly born infant away from its mother and puts a cat in the bed. So the king goes away hunting and when he came home he says, "What like is the queen?" "Oh she's gave birth!" "Where is she? Let me see." So when the king goes into the room and looks, his wife's in tears and he looks in beside her and it's a cat that's in the bed!

"Oh what are we gonny do now, what are we gonny do?" Ye see. He puts her for a month in the dungeons with spite, because he thought there were something wrong with her. So the baby that was took away - the bad sister o the housekeeper, she took it away miles into the dark, jungly woods at that time, to a woodcutter's house, and left him and his wife with the child, ye see, and they were rearin this wee boy up.

B John Stewart

B1 (Some folk call it, "Speaking Bird of Paradise," but I call it, "Cats, Dogs and Blocks.") This is, oh, hundreds o years ago, I suppose. There was a king and his wife was a very beautiful young woman, ye see, an he was wantin an heir to the throne, as it were. So, her sister, the queen's sister, was a lady, more or less, a lady kin o in waiting. An she actually run the house, and she had the servants under her finger, specially her and the housekeeper.

So the king was told that the queen was pregnant, ye see, and oh, he was overjoyed! He was overjoyed tae hear that she was pregnant.

So, the time rolls past till the queen was having her confinement, you know. The king he was away, some shoot or something. He'd maybe be like me, he never liked tae be about if thir's happening!

But anyway, he was away, and the queen gave birth to a son. As soon as the son was born, the queens sister away with it! Gave it to the housekeeper and told her tae take it away as far as she could, ye see. So the queen's sister, the housekeeper, carried it for weeks through the forest till she came to this old man and wumman's house, and she gave them the bairn, ye see. So this old man and woman was overjoyed tae get a wean because they were living themselves! And in them times there was - ye couldnae get any place y'know what I mean? Company was company, even if it was a wean cryin.

So the housekeeper comes back. Before the housekeeper got back, and the king got back, the queen's sister put a cat in the bed, ye see. So the king came home. He says, "Oh is everything -?"

B1 (Contd)

"Oh yes."

"I have to go up to the queen and see." So he's up and he looks and a big cat lyin in the bed wi the queen. "Oh my God," he says, "what's this?" he says, "Oh I won't have this," he says. He says, "Are you sure she had a child?"

The queen's sister says, "Well, that's what she had," she says. "We can't help it."

He says, "I'll punish her," he says. "When she rises out that bed," he says, "I'll give her a term," he says, "in the dungeons."

So, when the poor queen got up, miserable walkin aboot, the king takes her, and he put her in the dungeons for aboot three months, and kept her there as a punishment, because he thought there were witchcraft attached to her, ye see.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A2 So the time rolls on again, and the queen falls in the family way again, and she gives birth to another boy, and as soon as it was born, the sisters they lifts the baby, the prince, and smuggles them out to the other sister and she takes it away to the house in the woods, the woodcutters house. So when the king comes back and inquires about his wife, "Oh yes, she gave birth," but when he looked in the bed, they'd put a dog and a pup, ye see. And oh! he was climbin the walls, ye see! "She can't be human!" and this and that and the next thing, and the woman doesnae know what to do, ye see. Drags her oot by the hair o the head and down into the dungeons again with her, ye see, and leaves her there, till she's like skin and bone. And of course the other baby, the baby boy, it's took away to the auld woodcutters place away miles into the woods.

B2 So, he takes her back oot again, and he says, "I'll give ye another chance," he says. So time rolls by again, and the queen falls in the family way again. An the king's absent, he's away some place shootin or fishin, or some blinkin thing like that. Another boy. The queen's sister rolls it up in a blanket, out with it, gives it to the housekeeper. The housekeepers away with it. An they pits a dog in the bed, a pup. Y'know, a big young pup.

So the king comes back that next night, and he says, "Oh, she's better again. I'll go up," he says, "and see what it is." Up he comes and looks at the thing.

A big young pup lyin in the bed! Ye see?

Oh! He nearly killed the queen! He battered her ears for her and told her tae get up an out of there. An he puts her down in the dungeon again, and he keeps her there for oh, about six months, till the wumman - she doesnae know where she is! Know what I mean? She's half mad.

The housekeeper takes the other baby right out tae where they put the first wan. She leaves the other bairn wi the man and woman in the forest. An back she comes tae the castle.

So the queens in the, the queens in the dungeons. An he's ravin mad, he's rantin up and down, and he's wonderin what's wrong, and it couldn't be, an one thing and another like that. An he says, "I'll have tae see more about this!"

A3 So time rolls past again and the queen gets out of the dungeons and he says, "I'll give ye one more chance!" he says, and he says, "we'll see what happens." And she falls in the family way again. So he's far away huntin, falconin wi thon falcons an that, up on his chargers back, and the queen gives birth tae a princess, a wee girl. So the samen thing transpires again - the wicked sister o the housekeeper gets the wee baby girl and away through the wood and through the wood and through the wood, till they came to the woodcutters cottage and hands them the wee girl. Now that was the two princes and the wee princess was hundreds o miles you may say from the palace altogether in the dense wood. So, anyway, the king comes back and "Did the queen give birth?" "Yes." But what was in the bed, when he looked? A block o wood! They couldnae get a cat or a pup tae put in beside the wumman, and the first thing they got was a block that they were gonny use for the fire, and placed it in the bed wi the wumman. So oh! he pulls her oot and gets her lashed and down to the dungeons wi her, ye see.

B3 So at the end o about six months, he takes the queen out again. "Now," he says, "look," he says, "I'm givin ye a last chance! I'm givin ye a last chance," he says. An he says, "if you do it this time," he says -

She says, "I never done nothin!" She says, "I never done nothin!" she says.

An he says, "Look," he says, "a cat and a dog you had!" He says, "There's something wrong some place!"

"Well," she says, "I canny help it," she says.

So she falls in the family way again. They sneaks the kid oot, the baby, rolls it in a blanket, the sister gies it tae the housekeeper, and the housekeepers away back tae the samen place wi the wean. The king comes in an he looks in the bed, an it's a block o wood that's in the bed. A block o - y'know a block o wood that ye would split tae put on the fire?

Aw! The king takes the queen. He says, "That's you finished!" he says. "Into the dungeons!" So the queen's in the dungeon, boy, boy, oh boy! An things is goin very, very bad.

A4 Now the time rolls on and this two boys, they're great with an axe now, they're able tae cut wood and the lassie she's in the house, takin over fae the old woman, cookin and sewin and one thing and another like that. And anyway, one day the boy was oot in the wuds and he sees an auld wumman comin wi her bundle o sticks, and she couldnae get them up on her back. He says, "Wait granny and I'll gie ye a hand wi that," ye see, and he helps her wi the sticks, puts them up on her back, like that, and says, "There ye are now," he says. He says, "Where do you come from?"

"Oh," she says, "I just come from across there, on the other side of the hill," ye see. She says, "You're a prince," she says to him. He says, "What?" She says, "You're a prince," and she says, "you've a brother," and she says, "you've a sister."

He says, "How do you know that?"

"Oh," she says, "I know, because I've the magic and the know-how to know," she says, and she says, "the only way," she says, "that you'll get away from here, you'll have to go," she says, "and look and find the sleeping Bird of Paradise - the Speaking Bird of Paradise," and she says, "it's a dangerous journey, a very dangerous journey." Ye see.

B4 Now we'll leave the king and queen, an we'll go to the old man and wumman, wi the children an that. The two boys, they grows up an grows up, till there's one about fifteen and the other one's about seventeen and the lassie, the last one was a wee girl. She's about twelve or that, ye see. An the boy, the oldest ones out one day, for sticks an that, ken, gatherin sticks. An at that time, they burned that much sticks, in their homes and for charcoal an that, they'd tae go a long distance fur tae get sticks. So he's sittin eatin his piece, when an old woman comes by.

She says, "Hallo, son," she says.

He says, "Hallo, old woman," he says. "Its a nice day."

She says, "Yes." She says, "I'm oot for a puckle o sticks," she says, "I've got this wee lot, ma puckle," she says, "but I'm feart tae lea them off my back," she says, "because I might no get them onto my back again."

He says, "Where do ye stay, an I'll carry your sticks tae your - wherever you're stayin?"

"No," she says, "I'll manage them masel," she says, "if ye can lift them on ma back efter I lay them doon."

"Oh," he says, "I'll dae that."

So he helps her wi her bundle o sticks off her back, an he halves his piece wi her, his dinner.

She says, "Y'know," she says, "You're royalty."

He says, "What's that?" 'Cause he didnae even know what royalty was. They were never at school, they were among the dense forest, one thing an another like that. So this oul wumman tells him the story. But she says, "It's an awful distance," she says, "where ye come from. Weeks an weeks," and she says, "I don't suppose," she says, "if you were going, that they'd believe ye." But she says, "I'll tell ye whit," she says, "if you can go," she says, "and get the Speakin Bird o Paradise," she says, "it wid - everything would come aa right."

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A5 So he thanks her, the boy thanks her and he comes back and he tells his brother and sister what the old woman had told him. Now at this time, this boy's about sixteen or seventeen, ye see. He says, "I'll tell ye what I'll do," he says. "I'll go first," he says, "and search," he says, "to look for this sleep - Speaking Bird o Paradise," and he says, "if I get it, I don't know whats gonnae happen," he says, "but I'll tell ye what I'll do," he says. "D'ye see that tree," he says, "that we played roon aboot when we were younger?" They says, "Yes."

 "Well," he says, "I'll put my knife in there," and he stuck it in the tree. He says, "If you see that blade," he says to his brother, "red like bluid red," he says, "ye'll know," he says, "that I'm no com-in back," he says. "It'll be your turn," he says, "to go an look for it," he says, "because we canny ask oor sister. She's too young," and he says, "she wouldnae suit doin the likes o this at aa."

B5 So the two boys are sittin at the fire an that, and the young lassie, an they're talkin aboot what the auld wumman had told them, ye see. So the oldest brother says, "I'll tell ye what I'll do," he says, "I'll go," he says, "back past where that auld wumman stays, an," he says, "I'll see if I can hear anything about this." He says, "There could be some truth in it."

 "Well," says the other brother, "fair enough," he says, "me and your sister can look efter the hoose till ye come back."

 He says, "Well, fair enough," he says, "I'll go in the mornin."

 So the boy gets up in the mornin, him an the other brother an the lassie, an she bakes him a couple of collops, an a scallop, you know, pancakes an that, rolled up, an he pits it in his pocket. He comes oot the door, an he says, tae his brither, "Tell me," he says, "I've got ma pocket knife here," he says, an he says, "I'll stick it in that tree there," he says, "at the door." An he says, "If there's anything wrong wi me," he says, "the blade o ma knife'll turn blood - red spots o blood on it. Turn red."

 "Aa right," says the other brother," he says, "but I hope there's nothing happens."

A6 So the next day, when they got the auld woman and the auld man o the house sleepin, they rows the oldest son a parcel o scones and whatever was in the line for eatin at that time, (Some o the older travellers would say, "They baked him a bonnock and fried him a coll-op.) and rolled it up and he put it in his pocket and he kisses his brother and sister goodbye and away he goes.

B6 So this boy he goes on, ye see. Away he goes. So he walks on and on and on and on and on, through sheeps parks, bullocks parks an aa the parks o Yarrow, till he come past where he had been, looking for the wood sticks. An here he meets the auld woman.

She says, "I see," she says, "you're goin!"

He says, "Oh aye." He says, "Now ye'd something tae tell me."

She says, "Aye." She says, "Ye'll have tae go up the Sleepy Glen." An she says, "Every step ye mak," she says, "ye'll feel like dropping." But she says, "for God's sake," she says, "dont faa asleep."

"Ach," he says, "I wadnae believe that," he says. "There's naebody can make me sleep."

"Aha," but she says, "I tell ye." She says, "if that's the way ye're takin it."

He says, "Where is the glen?" he says, "an I'll find oot fur ma-self."

So the woman telt him where the glen was. He didna have much truck for her, ye know what A mean? He was in a hurry. So away he goes, and he comes tae this glen; a hill on each side, an a rock here, an a rock there, an a stannin stone here an a stannin stone there. He wasnae three hundred yards up the glen when he leaned against this oul rock, and he's out! He forgets everything.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A7 So they waits and waits and waits for about six months. They used tae go oot every mornin tae look at the tree tae see the knife, but this mornin they went oot, and it was red! He says, "My brother is in difficulties," he says, "I'll have to go and search for him," he says. Ye see?

B7 So the other laddie an lassie's waitin at hame, an they looked at the knife every mornin. An he comes oot this mornin an the knives red. So he says tae his sister, "There's something wrong," he says, "wi Jack" he says, "I'll need tae follow him up," he says, "an see whit's wrong."

 She says, "Fair enough." She says, "I'll just try an manage here till yese come back."

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A8 So the next mornin he gets his bannock and his collop, and a bottle o water in his pocket, and away he goes through the wood. He goes on for about two days, on through this wood, on through this wood, on through this wood, and of course, he pit a knife in the tree before he left his sister.

"Now," he says, "if ye see that knife red, ye'll know I'm in bother."

So anyway, he goes away, and he's travelled about two days and he sits doon at this wee stream o water, tae get a drink o this nice water, when down a wee bird comes, and he flings it some crumbs o his thing. So the wee bird says to him, "Thank you very much, you're very kind!"

He says, "Can you speak?"

"Oh yes," she says, "I can speak. I can speak."

And he says, "Who are ye?"

"Oh," she says, "I have seen your brother," she says. "He helped me," she says, "wi ma sticks one day." And she changed right in front o him, and she changed intae the ould woman.

B8 So away he goes, an eventually, he passes where the auld woman is. She says, "Hallo."

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A9 "Now," she says, "you're a good boy," she says, "good laddie."
And she says, "Your brother got intae difficulties. But," she says, "before ye go," she says, "I'll tell ye everything ye have tae do," she says. She says, "When you go on travellin," she says, "for about three weeks or a month in a northerly direction," she says, "ye'll come tae a big glen gaun up," and she says, "they call that the Sleepy Glen." And she says, "Every step you take up that glen," she says, "you'll find yersel goin tae sleep. You can fair lie down wi tiredness and sleepiness, but," she says, "ye daren't sit doon tae rest or nod your heid or," she says, "you're a done man. But," she says, "tae help ye," she says, "here's a whustle," she says. And she says, "that wee fir cone, and" she says, "when ye're goin up the glen," she says, "keep blowin your whustle." And she says, "I know what you're away lookin for," she says. "Ye're lookin for the Speakin Bird o Paradise." She says, "I telt your brother aboot it." She says, "It's the only thing that'll set things right for youse," and she says, "When you go up that glen," she says, "blow on your whustle," she says. "Ye'll see the Speakin Bird o Paradise, but its guarded by two vicious lions on golden chains. But," she says, "take this half loaf o bread, see?" And she says, "Break it in two and throw each o them a half each. Now," she says, "in the space o time they eat that bread," she says, "you've tae be in," she says, "and get the bird and back past them again and," she says, "when you're comin down the glen," she says, "every stone that you see, touch it with that fir cone." Ye see?

B9 He says "Hallo," He says, "Ye didnae see a fella passin here, some time ago," he says.

"Oh," she says, "I saw him," she says, "but he wouldnae pay attention tae me." She says, "I knew what was happenin tae him."

"Well," he says, "what was it?"

She says, "I told him," she says, "he had tae go up the Sleepy Glen." She says, "He was lookin for the Speakin Bird o Paradise, that I told him aboot." An she says, "He wadnae heed whit I telt him," she says, "an he's fell asleep some place in the glen." But she says, "You seem to be a nice laddie," she says. "If he'd ha listened tae me, I'd ha telt him whit tae dae."

"Well," he says, "I'll only be too glad," he says, "auld wife," he says, "for tae tell me anything at aa" he says, "fur tae get ma brother back."

"Well," she says, "look," she says, "stay here all night," an she says, "an you'll be in plenty time in the mornin."

A9 (Contd)

So he thanks the old woman very much and asked her did she want half his piece that he left, and she says, "No, no, lad. You'll need that. Now," she says, "on ye go, and God be wi ye." Ye see?

B9 (Contd)

She makes him a bed doon in front o the fire, you know, wi the two or three bits o things she had. Gets up in the mornin, she gies him a barley bannock, maybe gruel or something like that, in them days. Then she says, "Ye'll go," she says, "fae here," she says, "but don't hurry. Take your time." An she says, "There's a whistle tae ye." (Whistle) An she says, "When you come intae this glen," she says, "whenever you feel yourself gettin tired, or drowsy," she says, "blow this whistle." (Whistle) "Aa the time, blow it. Blow it every time you feel yersel gettin tired," she says, "or sleepy." An she says, "Dont fail in that," she says.

"Well," he says, "that's good tae know," he says.

She says, "Now ye'll have to watch," she says, "that you don't forget because there'll be, there'll be ideas come intae your heid that you know nothing about." She says, "ye'll have to concentrate, an keep blawin this whistle." (Whistle)

So he takes the whistle frae her, an thanks her very much, an away he goes, ye see.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A10 Away he goes and hes on and on and on and on and on, pickin blackberries when he was hungry, anything he could get tae eat that wasnae poison he would eat it, tae keep hissel goin. But he comes eventually to this glen and there were stones here and rocks there and funny shapit stones and a wee auld ruined - where it had been - a wee auld ruined hoose at one time, wi big stones ootside the door and he could feel hissel gettin sleepy and brrrrrrr peep! he would blow this whustle and he could come tae hissel again, ye see. And he kept blowin the whustle and walkin and blowin the whustle and walkin and blowin the whustle an walkin till he come about three miles up this glen. And then he saw a glow, a coppery glow, and what was this but a tree, a bushy tree, jist like a wee small apple tree, or maybe a wee bit bigger, ye know, and the leafs were all gold and there was a lion on that side, maybe aboot twenty five yards before ye went to the tree. There was a lion on that side and a lion on this side, tied wi golden chains and a big buckle on their neck, gold collars. And they're standin paw-in an growlin.

B10 So he comes on and on and on and on an he comes tae this - she explains the shape o the - valley to him, this glen, an he's walkin up an he feels hissel gettin sleepy, an he felt like sittin doon, ye know. An he blows the whistle and he's fresh! Goes on again, he feels sleepy, blows the whistle an he's fresh! Blows the whistle an he's keepin goin, keepin goin, keepin goin. Now when he comes tae the top -

[I went wrong Sheila, I went wrong. Switch that aff a minute. - She gave him - she gave him a loaf of bread tae gie the two lions.

Sheila : And a fir cone.

Barbara: Carry on? Oh O.K. Go ahead.

John : So - I'll just continue on that bit. She gave him a loaf of bread, ye see.]

There was two lions when he came tae the top, on golden chains, that would meet in the centre like that. "Now," she says, "ye'll have tae throw these lions - break the loaf in two, an throw a part tae each lion." An she says, "When they're eatin the bread, ye've tae run through tae this tree, all like golden leaves." An she says, "spread the leaves back like that, an ye'll see the Speakin Bird o Paradise," she says, "in a golden cage." An she says, "Grab it quick an get back oot past the lions before they finish the bread." Ye see.

So he's blowin the whistle, an he comes right up, blows the whistle, and right up, till he comes up tae the top o the glen, and there at each side o this place gaun in, like a place where a monument would be, y'know what I mean? An theres a lion on that side, an a lion on this side, wi golden chains and buckles on their necks. An they're writhin tae get at him!

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

All So he stood pantin wi excitement and for his breath, and he looked and he could hardly see look at this golden cage, it was glitterin wi this lovely bird. And he stared at the tree and he could hardly look at it, because it was hard to look at it in the sunlight, you know, it was glitterin. And he looked and he spied this bird, the bonniest bird that ever ye saw in your life, wi lovely golden, blue and red plumage and a great big long forked tail hangin doon, and it was in a golden cage, sittin in the tree. So he got as near to the lions as he could and he measured his distance and watched where he was gonnae run in, so he wouldnae trip over a branch or maybe a stone, ye see. So he plotted his line o advance between him and the tree, and broke the loaf like that and threw one half to one lion and this half tae that lion. And then he run in jumped up and took this bird aff the tree, ye see, and it started shoutin and screamin and he run oot past the lions, just when they were boundin at him, ye know.

B11 But he takes the loaf out o this knapsack, an breaks it in two, an flings wan bit tae one lion, an wan bit tae the ither lion, an runs in past them quick. This tree was glitterin wi golden leaves, it very nearly took an blinded him, ye know. So he spreads the leaves back, and there was this bird Speakin Bird o Paradise. A beautifuller bird ye never saw in your life. Big long curled feathers in its tail, it was all the colours o the rainbow. An he put his han up and he took it off. An runs through the gap and right oot past the lions.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A12 So he comes down the glen, walkin, and then he mindit o the fir cone in his pocket. So he took the fir cone oot and he says. "That stone there," and he touched it. Here this was a knight in armour, when he touched it! Touched the next stone, - it would be a young farmer, in aa different clothes, frae years and years before that, right on up tae not the present day, but the present day he was in, you know what I mean? Touchin this one, touchin that one, touchin - they were aa - that was them that had fell asleep goin tae look for the Speakin Bird o Paradise. And comin down this glen, he touched that many rocks and stones that there were like a regiment behind him. They were aa rubbin their eyes an lookin, and "Where was I? I must hae fell asleep." But aa ready tae make their way home and I suppose there had been some o them there for thousands o years. So he come right doon the glen and right back through the wood and through the wood and through the wood, till he came back tae the house. No - I'm telling a lie. He came back tae the wee hoose, the tumble doon hoose in the glen, and this stone that was up against the door, he touched that, and this was his brother. He'd laid against the stone o the old wall and fell asleep. So oh! they were glad tae see one another and cuddled and, "Hurry up" and looked at the bird, and "Come on then till we get back." So eventually they got back to their house in the wood.

B12 So, he looks on the side o the cage, and there was a stick - [I went wrong there again] - There was a stick on the cage anyway, that he had to touch each o the rocks comin down the glen wi. So comin down the glen, he was touchin this rock wi this stick touchin that rock, and this was aa people! Knights and soldiers and earls, and everything like that, that had tried for the Sleepin Bird - the Speakin Bird o Paradise, before this, ye see. They had aa fell asleep. So he touched here an touched there. Oh! there were crowds o them, hundreds! Till he come down near the finish up an he touched this rock, an here it was his brother. So they shook hands and cuddled one another and spoke and carried on, ye know, and they come straight on back past the auld wumman, thanked her very much.

She says, "Did ye get the Bird o Paradise?"

He says, "Yes. There its there in the golden cage."

An they come straight on back till they come back tae their ain hut.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A13 Now, they hung the bird up in the wee kitchen, ye see, but while they were away, the auld man and the auld woman had died, and there was nobody there but the lassie, the princess. But she was glad, boy, to see her two brothers, was she not!

Oh they couldnae get over it, they couldnae sleep aa night for talkin and crackin an speakin o what they had seen an aa this cairry on, ye see. So they hung the bird up and, not that night, maybe at the weekend, the bird looks owre at them like that, and it says, "The king'll be out at shootin the morn, on a hunt."

B13 Now they comes in an hings the bird up on the inside wall o the hoose. So it hangs there for a few days, and they're always givin it food an that, keepin it livin an that, an it's chirpin an walk in aboot the cage. It's there for aboot a month, and the two brothers is talkin aboot it, and saying, "A bonnie bird. It's no even talkin, it's no even daein nothin." See?

But this day they're sittin doon tae their breakfast, an the bird says, "Your father's comin the day."

A14 They looked tae see who was speakin, ye see, the voice, and they looked up. It says, "I'm tellin ye the king'll be out on a hunt tomorrow, and I'm goin tae tell ye what tae do," it says.

"Is that you speakin, bird?"

"Aye, it's me 'ats speakin."

"Take it doon on the table, brother," she says, "an we'll hear it better."

So they took it doon and they put it doon on the table, and this bird says. "I know all about you," it says. "Now the king is your father, and he's your father, and he's your father. But it's gettin him convinced." He says, "He'll come here tomorrow, passin because," he says, "it'll be a bad, dirty, wet day, and he'll be askin for a hot - a cup o somethin hot tae drink, as he passes, him and his men. An," it says, "tell him you've only got something tae eat in the pot," and he says, "he'll wait. Now," he says, "don't gie him your meat, your food, at all. Don't give him food. Put a plate down in front o him and his men, and all ye put on that plate is chuckie stones and water, ye see?"

The lassie said, "Oh we couldnae do that! Gie the king stones and water!"

He says, "You do what I'm tellin ye, and," he says, "when he goes tae eat that," he says, "he'll look at you in a rage and say, 'We can't eat that! We can't eat chuckie stanes and water!' Ye see? Well, do you know what to say back to him?"

"No, bird. What will we say?"

"Just tell him, it's as well for him to eat chuckie stones and water as for his wife to have cats, dogs and blocks."

B14 "Oh?"

"Well, yes, the king. He's comin here the day. An I'll tell ye why he's comin. He's out on a boar hunt, him an his gamekeepers an hunters. An he'll pass hre with their horses, ridin on horseback. But there'll be a freak thunderstorm an rain, and he'll come tae your door, an ask could he have a hot drink, or somethin tae eat, ye see? Oh yes."

He says tae the lassie, he says, "Madeline," he says, "you," he says, "when they ask for something tae eat, tell them 'yes', and," he says, "take them in," he says, "and put the chairs round the table," he says, "and your father," he says, "at the top o the table." He says, "You'll no know who he is, bit," he says, "I know." And he says, "Give them a plate each," and he says, "on it put chuckie stones and water." He says, "Ye'll get them in the river at the back there."

So the lassie says, "Are ye sure?"

He says, "I'm sure," the bird says.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A15 Now, they couldn't wait for the next day comin ye see. And oh! round about eleven o'clock they hears the crashin o horses comin through the wud. They were out boar huntin or something, an it was rainin. The lassie went to the door.

"Oh hullo my girl," he says. He says, "Have you anything hot in the pot," he says, "you could give me today?" he says. "It's very cold."

She says, "Well, king," she says, "if you come in I'll see what I can do, if I have something for ye." So him and his two main men, the rest o the soldiers just stood out there, ye ken, them that was after the hunt. The two men and him came in and she says, "sit at the table there." The lassie and the two boys were just sittin at the fire. The bird was watchin. She put a plate doon in front o him, wi a plate doon tae the ither two men. She came back and she put three chuckie stanes on that plate, and three on that plate, and three on that plate, and a drop o water, same as ye were puttin juice on a tattie. And the lassie went back and stood at the fire, ye know, and they were lookin at one another, ye see.

The king says. "Here my girl," he says, "what are we gonnae do wi this?"

Ah but it wisnae the girl that spoke, it was the bird. It says, "Look, king, it's as well for you tae eat chuckie stones and water, as for your wife tae have cats, dogs and blocks!"

B15 So that day passes, and the two boys an the lassie's waitin on the next day comin, tae see the thing'd be aa right, when, boy, about half past nine or ten o'clock it started tae rain, and aa of a sudden they heard crashin comin through the bushes. This was the game-keepers an horses, an them wi these bow an arras an hatchets, they were in boar huntin. And a knock came tae the door an this was a flunkey, a man like a half-general wi a uniform on. He says, "The King would like to know," he says, "if he can come in and have something hot tae drink," he says. "He's been caught in a storm, an we can't get back. An with comin away, we've lost our packages, an one thing and another like that, wi the storm."

"Oh," the lassie says, "come in."

B15 (Contd)

So the king come up, he marched up, oh, a good aged man at that time, and he came in, looked at the lassie says, "You're a nice girl," he says. "Nice comfortable little hut ye've got here."

"Yes."

"Have you anything for us to eat?"

"Oh, yes," says the girl, "I can give you something tae eat." She says, "You can sit up there," she says, "and your men can sit round here," she says.

They sit down, and the lassie went and got plates apiece for them, and she went and she got like clover stanes - ye know, chuckie stanes oot o the burn, thon half white chuckie stanes. An she put four or five on each o their plates, and a wee taste o water.

The kings sittin lookin at this, and the men there, every wan o their plates was the same.

He says, "Here, ma girl," he says. "I can't eat chuckie stanes an water!" he says. "There nobody could eat that!"

Then the Bird speaks!

It says, "Its as well for you tae eat chuckie stanes an water [Bennie whistles like a bird] as your wife tae have cats, dogs an blocks!" Ye see.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A16 "What?" he says. "Bird!" he says. "Say that again!" he says.

It says, "Its as well for you to each chuckie stones and water as for your wife to have cats, dogs and blocks!" He says, "That's your bairns, there, look. Your two laddies and your lassie. And," he says, "get back," he says, "and take your wife oot o the dungeons!" The bird says, "If she's livin!" and he says, "get rid o your auld housekeeper."

B16 "What!" says the king, "Say that again, ma burd!" [Bennie whistles]

"Its as well for you tae eat chuckie stanes and water, as your wife tae have cats, dogs an blocks?" An the Bird up an tells him everything, boy.

THE SPEAKING BIRD OF PARADISE

A17 So the king - oh! he started greetin and cryin and couldnae dae enough and gets his weans up and puts them up on his horses' backs and makes the men guard them, and gets them right back to the palace. And down, first race he made, some o his men and him was down tae the dungeons and the wumman was lyin like that, ye know, like a skeleton, her hair away doon, ye know, and got her oot. And oh! they treated her like God when they got her oot, ye know. And the wumman when she come tae and seen her weans, and one thing and another like that! The man was past hissel wi vexation, so he sent for the hoose-keepers and they were beheadit. He got their heids cut off, and that king and queen and the family lived happy ever after. And the last time I was there I got my tea off a wee tin table at the back door and the table bended and my story's ended.

B17 So he's up, the king, gets his family oot. He says, "Ma wife'll be dead in the dungeon!"

 An he gallops back wi his men as hard as he could Oh she was aboot - she was aboot dead.

 Oh, the woman was lyin like that, ken. Oh she was gettin plenty tae eat, but she was half mad, ye know. But they gets her out, and they - the king, oh he couldnae do enough for his wife, then, nurses her back tae health, because the Bird had told him everything and the woman come back tae something o a sensibility. But she never was the same after that, ye know. And that's the story of Cats, Dogs and Blocks, or the Speakin Bird o Paradise.

 And what became of the sister?

 Oh the sister, yes. He beheaded the sister, the sister was beheaded. An the housekeeper she was done the same wi.

II.9 THE BLACKSMITH

Willie MacPhee

Well, I'll tell ye a wee story about a blacksmith. The blacksmith and his wife they lived in this wee cottage. The blacksmith was a very pleasant oul man, but his wife was a crabbit oul devil. See? They're always arguin the toss wi one another. Got up this mornin, "Come on, John," she says, "ye'll have to go out to the shop an see if you can earn some money. There's no money in the place," she says, "we've no meat or nothin," she says, "and you're a heavy smoker," she says. "Ye'd better get up," she says, "an go intae the smithy."

"Very well," he says, "Maggie, I'll go oot." Get up, gets some breakfas [indistinct word] and out he goes. Goes intae his smithy shop, puts on a big fire o coal and he had an ould chair that he used tae sit on an wait on ony customers comin. Sat doon - was sittin on this chair and his fire was gaun beautiful - when all of a sudden this young man came in through the door. "Are ye no workin the day?" he says, "smithy?"

"No," he says, "I'm no workin for anybdy," he says, "son. No the day."

"Well," he says, "would ye mind very much," he says, "if I would use your tools an your anvil," he says, "tae do a wee job?"

"Oh no," he says, "it's quite all right," he says.

An he says, "I'll pay ye for the len o your tools."

"All right, then."

So he went oot to the door, this young man, and he took in this young wumman, an she was aa oot o shape an all twisted. An ugly cratur. The smiths sittin in his chair an he's watchin, an he went owre tae where the coal was, put on a great big fire o coal, a large fire o coal, an blowed it up an blowed it up till the sparks were goin through the lum. He catches this young wumman an he pit her sittin on top o this, ye see, aa this red hot cinnners, roon aboot her. An o course it was nae time till she was burnt tae a cinder, ye see. So efter he saw that aa the flesh was burnt off her bones, took all the bones back oot again an he put them on the top o the anvil, broke up all these bones wi the hammer, broke them up till they were just like dust. Gethered all the dust together like that and sput on it twice or three times. Blowed air at it. All of a sudden there a walf started tae appear at the tap o this anvil, turned into the beautifulest young woman anybody ever seen, ye see. An of coorse the smith's looking at it. He says, "That's funny."

"Well," he says, "old man," he says, "don't you tell," he says, "or don't you try an do anything," he says, "ye see any other body doin," an he says, "I'll give you five sovereigns."

"Oh! Fair enough," the old smith says. "I'll no tell naebody," he says, "an I'll be gled o your five sovereigns." So the young man gave him the five sovereigns an away the young man went and this beautiful young lady wi him.

He's sittin in his chair again, sittin an he's thinkin tae hissel, when in through the door comes his oul wife. "Ye're sittin on that chair again!" she says, "doin nothin, but sittin heatin yerself at the fire! Ye better get up," she says, "an dae something!"

He says, "I have nothing tae dae! I've nae work tae dae," he says.

"Ye better get up," she says, "an dae something."

"Oh," he says, "I'm gonnae dae something just in a minute." He got up tae his feet an he grabbed her and put her sittin on top o the fire. Put more coal on top o't and blowed the thing up an oh! she was screamin an screamin and screamin. But he burn her up tae a shinner anyway. All the flesh was burnt off her bones. "Now," he says, "I'll

hae a pleasin wumman an a good lookin wumman in a minute." He gethers oot aa her banes an put them on top o the anvil, laid on them wi the hammer on top of the anvil, till they were intae dust again. He gethered aa the dust together, a nice wee heap an [makes spitting motion] sput on them, then blowed. Naw! Nothing happened! He done't again [spitting motion] a bing o times. Naw! Nothing happened. "Aw," he says, "there noo! What did I dae noo? I've burnt ma oul wife," he says, "I'll be took an transported an hanged!" He says, "The best thing I could dae," he says, "is clear oot," he says, and he says, "they'll think the twa o us hae cleared oot an left the smithy, and naebody'll ken."

So he took all this boreen o ashes and put them in among the coal, ye see. An he happed them up. An he says, "I better go to the hoose," he says, "an get something tae take wi me," he says, "two-three tools an things." So he went intae the hoose an he got a puckle tools, what he could cairry wi him. Clean shirts and clean claes like that an put them in a wee bunnle and he set away. So, he's aye lookin back tae see if there's anybody follaein him but naw! naebody was near him. So he come up tae the tap o this hill, two or three days efter that, and he luckit away doon in the valley. He seen this wee toon away doon in the valley. An he heard this beautiful music over the toon, ye see. So he says, "I wonder what's gaun on doon there," he says. "I'll go doon an see." He was halfway doon the brae when he met this oul man comin up the brae. Says he, smith says tae him, "Whit's gaun on in the toon doon there?"

"Aw," he says, "d'ye not ken what's gaun in on that toon?"

"No," he says, "I don't. I'm a stranger here. I don't know what's gaun on in the toon."

"Well," he says, "this is a kin o a holiday," he says. "An it happens every year," he says. "'s for the laird's daughter," he says. "It happens every year," he says. The old man says, "I don't know," he says, "whether it'll be a good year," he says, "for" he says, "the last two or three year back like this, the lassie took very ill," he says, "an she's all disfigured," he says. An he says, "I don't know if there'll be anything doin or no."

"I see."

"Aw," he says, this oul man says. This oul man says tae the blacksmith, "I tell ye what you can dae," he says, "if ye like."

"What?" he says.

He says, "You tell me you were a smithy."

"Aye," he says.

"Well," he says, "I have a wee dish," he says, "that I make ma tea in. Do you think," he says, "you could sort the handle o't?"

"Oh certainly," he says, "I can sort the hannle." So he went intae this old man's hoose an the wee skillet thing he had for boilin his tea in, the hannle was off't, so the oul smithy pit the hannle on't - back ontae't. He says, "How's that, old man?"

"Oh," he says, "that's fine," he says. "Wait," he says, "an I'll gie ye some money for doin that wee job."

"Aw," he says, "its aa right."

"No," he says, "ye better take this," he says, "so there," he says, "there's three shillins tae ye."

"Fair enough," he says, an takes the three shillins.

"Now," says this old man, "if ye go doon tae the toon," he says, "ye might have the chance o gettin a job doon there, because," he says, "there's a lot o machinery doon there, shows an that," he says, "an they might be broken doon," he says, "ye might get something tae weld."

"Oh that's right," he says, "I will go doon." But when he went doon tae this wee toon aw! the people's gaun mad, oot an in the shops an hotels an everything, [indistinct phrase] up at this hotel. He seen the men comin oot cheery, oot o this hotel, ye see. He says, "I'll need to go in here for a drink," he says, "wi this three shillins." In he goes, wi the three shillins. But he spends the three shillins. When he comes oot he was well canned! Half drunk, ye see. "Well noo," he says, "I've spent the three shillins. What am I gonnae dae?" He says, "I'll go back up tae this lairds hoose," he says, "tae see this daughter." He minded about what he'd seen back, ye see? He says, "I'll go up an see this laird," he says, "an see what I can dae wi his dochter, see if I can dae onything wi her." So he went back up the road again up tae the big hoose, but he's just comin intae the big hoose when there's two guards stanin.

"Where ye goin ma old man?" he says.

He says, "I'm goin tae see the laird."

"An what are ye gonnae do wi the laird?" he says.

"Well," he says, "I heard," he says, "the dochter" he says, "has not been too well," he says. "That she's ill and she's not the same as she used tae be."

"Oh that's right," says the guard. "Are you a doctor?" he says.

"No," he says, "I'm no a doctor - I'm a blacksmith."

"Aw, I doot ye'll not be able to do much wi't because specialists come fae all over couldnae do nothin wi her."

"Ach well," he says, "I'll go up an try anyway, I'll go up an see." They let him up tae the hoose anyway. He come to the front door an he rapped at the front door. A butler came oot.

"Well," the butler says, "what dae ye want oul man?"

He says, "I would like tae see the laird."

"What dae ye want tae see the laird for?"

"Well," he says, "I heard," he says, "the dochter o the house was very ill, and I come up tae see could I do onything for her."

"Oh are you a doctor?" the butler said.

"No, I'm not a doctor, I'm a blacksmith."

"Well, just stand there a minute an I'll see what the laird says." In the butler goes, two or three minutes the laird comes oot.

"Well," he says, "my old man, what do you want?"

So he explains what he wants: his daughter - he's gonnae try an cure her.

"Oh," he says, "if you can cure my daughter," he says, "I'll gie ye anything in this world," he says, "if you can cure her."

"Well," he says, "the only thing that I would like," he says, "I'm a blacksmith an I'm gettin kin o old," he says, "I'd like a wee blacksmith's shop."

"Oh," but he says, "I'll gie you a blacksmith's shop," he says. "I've five or six blacksmith's shops," he says, "an I'll gie ye one tae stay in as long as ye want." An he says, "I've also," he says, "I've got a blacksmith's shop an an estate."

"Well," he says, "[indistinct phrase]" he says. "Can I see it?"

"Oh aye," the laird says, "ye can see't."

So he took him an showed him the shop an there were two or three men workin in the shop, see. So the old man he says, "I don't want none o these men," he says, "I just want to work masel," he says.

"Well," he says, "ye can work. Dae your job. But how're ye gonna cure my daughter?"

"Oh just leave that tae me," he says. He says, "Take your daughter down," he says, "in about half an hour," he says. An he says, "Just leave her wi me," he says. An he says, "I'll make everything all right. I'll cure her," he says.

"Fair enough," the laird says.

The oul man went intae the shop, blacksmith's shop, kinnelt up this fire. Aw what a fire o coal on an the sparks flew up through the chimney. In about half an hour, the laird come doon wi his daughter and she was a cripple. An she was the ugliest wumman that ever onybody ever seen. He says, "That's the same thing as what I seen back in ma ain shop," he says. "That's the same kin o lassie." He says, "I'll do the same wi her," he says. "She'll turn oot right."

"Well, there ye are," he says, "old man," he says. "See what you can do with her."

"Oh," he says. "Its aaright. Away ye go," he says, "an come back in half an hour. Or," he says, "make it an hour," he says. "Come back in an hour," he says, and he says, "your daughter'll be all right."

Away the laird went and the blacksmith went intae the blacksmiths shop. The oul blacksmith he took the lassie an he done the same wi her as what he done wi his oul wife. Put her an burnt her till there were nothin but the bones, ye see. He gethered aa the bones up thegither an he put them on the anvil an broke them up, spit on them and blowed on them but naw! nothing happened either. Not a thing happened! He tried it a lot o times - nothing happened. "Aw, there noo," he says, "I've did it now," he says, "didnt I?" He says, "That's me," he says, "I'll be shot," he says, "or kilt," he says. "There's no use o tryin tae run away fae this," he says. "I'll be shot or I'll be kilt. I'll never be let go back the road for the dochter." God, he sittin onyway an aa this bone kin o stuff's lyin on top o the anvil, the remains o the banes, lyin on top o the anvil. An he's sittin luck-in at it, when the first thing comes tae the door an opens the door. He says, "There noo," he says, "that's him back for his dochter." It was this young man, the yin he seen aforehand wi the lassie. He come wannerin right in tae him. He says, "Ye done that," he says, "didnt ye? I thought I telt you," he says, "never," he says, "in your life," he says, "dae anything," he says, "ye see any other body daein. Never try it," he says.

"Well," says the old man, he says, "I'm sorry."

"Ye're sorry?" he says. "Yer sorry's too late." An he hut him a walt. But the old man's lyin in the corner an he's watchin him. An this fellow gethered up all these bones thegither an he just [spitting motion twice] twicet, just a [indistinct word] got up the beautifullest young woman that ever ye seen. "Now," says he, "old man, never you try tae do the same thing again," he says.

"Oh," he says, "I'll never try to do the same thing again. Never try to."

"But now," he says, "I'm goin tae gie ye another five sover-eigns. I've gien ye five already," he says. "Well," he says, "there's another five, for ye." He says, "never you let on or never you speak about nothin."

"Naw, naw," he says, "I'll no speak about nothin."

He got the five sovereigns and this young man and this young wumman drew out tae the door and they shut the door ahin him, ye see. An the oul man's sittin, rubbin his hands thinkin about what he did an thinkin about his oul wife back - sittin rubbin his hands when the door opened again. An here the oul wumman comes in, his oul wife. He luck-it at her. "Is that you Maggie?" he says.

THE BLACKSMITH

"Aye," she says, "it's me, ye silly ould fool. Wha did ye think it was?"

He says, "It canny be you," he says.

"How can it no be me?" she says. "It's me."

An he went forward. "Oh it's you right enough," he says, an he gien her a kiss, ye see.

"Aw, aw," says she, "ye better get your fire goin," she says, "better than that. There's a young man comin up wi a pair o horses, wantin a pair o sheen an that or something." An he says, "Aye." But the man came up wi this pair o horses. She says, "I'll go away back intae the hoose again. "Aye," he says. Away she went. This man came up wi the horse, ye see. The man says, "This is a pair o horses I want shoon on."

"Oh aye," he says, "I'll put shoon on them. Just tak them in," he says, "an tie them up." He says, "I'll need tae go intae the hoose for some nails," he says. "I've nae nails in here. I'll need tae gae intae the hoose for nails." An he goes intae the hoose an the ould woman's cleanin up the house. He says, "Are there nae tea in the hoose Maggie?"

She says, "There nae tea. There nae tea at aa," she says.

"Well," he says, "can ye no gang tae the shop?"

"Gang tae the shop," she says. "What'll I gang tae the shop wi? I'm sure ye ken there's not a penny in this hoose."

He put his hand in his troosers pocket and took oot the ten sovereigns. "Ye've money noo," he says, "haven't ye?"

Says she, "Whaur did that come fae?"

"I don't know," he says, "whaur it come fae. But I must aither ha been asleep," he says, "or something droll happened me," he says, "cos there ten sovereigns."

Whether he did faa asleep or no - that's anither story [laughter].

Sheila: Oh that's quite a tale. An that's one ye heard from -?

Willie: That yin's fae Duncan Williamson.

Sheila: Duncan Williamson? Oh yes -

Willie: That's one of his?

Sheila: One of his.

Willie: Aye Duncan's a good story teller tae.

a/

Alec Stewart

This is the story about a woman and her man that stayed in a wee house not far from the village. About half a mile from the village. They had one daughter and she wouldn't go out. She always stayed in the house. And she cleaned the house and did everything in the house but she wouldn't go out.

So about dinnertime one Saturday her father says, "Mary, why do you not go down to the village and see if you can see any boyfriends or anything like that?"

"Oh," she says, "I dinny want to go down there to the village."

"This is Saturday," her father says. "Why not go to the dance tonight? There's a dance every Saturday night in the village."

"Oh," Mary says, "I can't dance. I can't dance at all."

"Well, you can always learn," he says. But about five o'clock that day she suddenly says, "I think I will go to the dance, father."

"Yes," he says, "go down to the dance." So off she went to the dance and it was in full swing and she come in and sat down and all the rest of them was dancing but she couldnae dance. She just sat and looked at them.

So there was a young man, he came across and says, "Why are you not dancing?"

"Oh," Mary says, "I can't dance."

"Oh," he says, "anyone can dance if they try to. Just try it. You can dance all right." So she got up and he took hold of her and he says, "I thought you said you couldn't dance. You're dancing splendidly."

Well, they danced the whole night through. And when the dance was finished, he says, "Will I take you home?" and she says, "I dont mind." So the two of them was walking away up to the house where she stayed. He took her right to the gate and she says, "Goodnight."

He says, "What about next Saturday night? Will you be down at the dance?"

"Oh," she says, "I think I will take a walk down next Saturday night."

He says, "Be sure, because I'll be there."

So a week went past and next Saturday Mary got herself all dressed up and she went away down to the dance. So she's sitting and the same man comes across and he says, "What about a dance?"

So the two of them danced the whole night again. And he says, "Will I take you home?" and she says, "I don't mind."

Well, the two of them was walking slowly up the road and he says, "Have you had a boyfriend before?"

And she says, "No, I never had a boyfriend."

"Well," he says, "what about me?"

So she says, "I don't know."

"Och," he says "you know fine. I've never had a girlfriend before, so why not me and you join up together and we might get married?"

She says, "I don't know. I'll tell you next Saturday at the dance?"

So next Saturday came and she's away down to the dance now and she's sittin and the young fellow came in and went over and asked her, "Have you made up your mind?"

She says, "I'll tell you after the dance."

THE CLOVEN HOOF

So the two of them dancin away and dancin away till it finishes up again and he says, "I'll take you home now."

So the two of them walkin tight up to the gate of the house and he says, "Well are you going to marry me?"

She says, "Yes, I will marry you."

"Oh," he says, "that's fine. Wait for a year," he says, "and after a year I'll come and claim you. I'm goin away for a year. I'll be back in a year's time and I'll call upon you."

So when he was turning away and she was shutting the gate, she lookit down at his feet and she saw the cloven hoof. It was the Devil. She didn't know what to do. She went away into the house and next day she couldn't do nothing at all. She couldn't work, she couldn't do anything. She'd promised herself to the Devil.

So her father says, "What's wrong with you? Had a row with your boyfriend?"

She says, "No, I didn't." And she told him the whole story.

"My God," he says, "you'd better go down and see the priest."

So she went down to the priest and she told him. He says, "That's terrible. But never you worry. When have you to meet him again?"

She says, "In a year's time. He's comin for me."

"Well," he says, "in a year's time, you don't stay in the house. You come right down to me."

She says, "All right."

So the time rolled past now and she was always going to dances but she never seen the young fellow after that. She never seen the Devil. And she come back from the dances every Saturday night until the year was up. And then she went down to the priest's house.

"Oh," he says, "is the year up?"

She says "Yes."

"Well," he says, "we'd better away down to the chapel. When is he to call for you?"

"Oh," she says, "he's comin for me about six o'clock at night."

"Oh well, he'll be here at six o'clock. We'd better go down to the chapel."

So they went away down to the chapel and he stood right in the middle of the floor of the chapel and he put holy water right round the two of them and they're standing in the centre of this circle of holy water. And he's reading the Bible.

So about five minutes to six they're standing waiting and waiting. Six o'clock comes. And he heard a chap at the door. He says, "Who's there?"

A voice says, "Its me. I've come for my wife."

The priest paid no attention. He just kept reading the Bible and the chap come louder and he says, "I've come for my wife." And then he gave another roar an a chap. And the chapel shook and he roars, "I've come for my wife."

The priest says, "Well, if you've come for your wife, put your hand in my hand and I'll give you your wife out."

But he couldn't put his hand in the holy person's hand, so he says, "No, I will not. But I must get my wife at once." So he gave the next roar and oh! the chapel shook and shook and shook.

The priest says, "Come in. Come on in. If you're a man at all, come in. You can't be frightened of a house. Come on in."

"No," says the Devil. "Send my wife out. Send my wife out."

But he seen that he wasn't getting his wife and he gied the next roar and he said, "I'm coming in. I'm coming in for her."

THE CLOVEN HOOF

He made this dart into the hall of the chapel but he couldn't come in through the second door. He just took the whole half of the chapel away and he turned into a ball of fire and he just took the half of the chapel away. And the lassie never seen him after that.

John Stewart

But I was gonnae tell ye a wee story, an come back to the - Him an my mother was travellin away up north an they met this man, ye see. They camped beside him. A queer kin o a man this. He wasnae a traveller or nothing. He was just there an ma father didnae know where he come fae. He says, "What about comin oot wi me Jock?" he says, "an getherin some stuff?"

Ma father says, "If ye like, but there's no much stuff tae gether."

He says, "Oh I ken whaur it is."

So the next mornin ma father got up an made his breakfast, away they went oot. Oh as this man said, they went tae this place an they - just a load, an very little. Come back, selt it an come back tae the camp, an some o them were crackin away. My father says, "I've been up and doon that road a dozen times an I never knew about that stuff bein there at aa!"

"Ah but," he says, "you're no me." He says, "An I know, he says, "the morn," he says, "where tae go for another." They're doon in their bed, an the next mornin, they come roon tae get their breakfast, an my father yoked the horse away doon, right away doon tae this other place, an stuff was there. Noo that went on every mornin for about a week. Ma father says tae ma mother, "There's something queer about that," he says. "That man kens," he says, "where tae go for stuff," he says. "An that places has been hawked dozens o times." He says, "An I even ken the men," he says. "A'" - but he says, "I'll -I'll leave - see what's what." So ma father an him shifted tae anither bit where they were gonnae be away aa night, ye see? An they took a wee tent wi them. So ma father put up the tent an him an the man was goin tae lie in it aa night an get the stuff an come back, tae gie them time tae come back an catch the stole [?] in the mornin. Tae get an earlier start. So ma father was lyin an he was watchin him lyin bed, see? He's lyin kin o sleepin. Ma father said it was about, comin up for about eleven o'clock, on a summer evenin. You could see the kin o dark grey, lovely evenin it was. An ma father's watchin this man's face lyin. Ma father actually said ye'd thought he was deid. Ma father was sittin lyin smokin his pipe. Ma father says, "A great big moth, about that size, come right doon, crawlin right oot o his nose. Ye see?" An it gien itsel a shake like that. Ma father said ye could see yon pollen stuff comin aff its wings. An he says, "It fluttered away tae the door," he says, "an flew away." Ne he says, "I didnae want tae waken the man," he says, "for I thought it was maybe a beast off the grun. Or something like that. Flew about the camp. He says, "I never says nothin," but he says, "I said tae masel, "I'll watch you another time." So the man got up in the mornin. He says, "I ken whaur tae go an get some stuff Jock." An away roon. Stuff there too, boy. Good wee load. Away wi it. He says, "We'll go up the glen," he says, "the morn," he says. "We'll need tae stay up there," he says, "because I ken where there's mair stuff." So ma father got this wee tent again and away up this glen again. Ma mither wasnae bothered now. She'd maybe a wean or twa weans, an she had money now, wi them gettin the stuff, ye see? An they took this wee tent wi them, him an this man, intae this wee place, put the tent up, an had their tea, crackit away an [Indistinct phrase]. Ma father said, "We were lyin the samen way," an he says, "I was still lyin smokin, watchin him again." He says, "I wasnae actually thinkin about the moth," he says, "I was thinkin about how this wee bugger kent where tae go an get aa the stuff. Well," he says, "doon his nose again comes this moth again." An he says, "I seen it this time richt, be

cause he was lyin sideways on. An it gien itsel a flutter an flew oot the door and away." An he says, "I couldnae understand it at aa." An he says, "I didnae want tae ask him aboot it because," he says, "it was a fearsome kin o a thing." But he says, "I pluckit up courage in the mornin," he says, "an I telt him" he says. "How dae ye ken whaur to go an get the stuff?" he says, "Philip?"

He says, "Oh," he says, "I've got the intuition it's there, Jock," he says, "But," he says, "as lang as we're gettin it," he says, "ye're no needin tae bother."

But ma father says, "How dae ye ken it's there?"

"Well," he says, "I lie there," he says, "in ma bed at night," he says, "an," he says, "ma soul seems tae leave ma body," an he says, "I can actually see the stuff, an go tae where it is." Ye see.

So ma father says, "That's affa queer," he says, ken. But ma father was wi him a fortnight, an he has tae leave, this wee man has tae leave, ye see. An ma father's aye thinkin o this bloody moth comin oot o his nose, ye see.

So the wee man went away, an he telt ma father he says, "I'll come back an look for ye Jock in aboot a fortnight, 'cause I've some business tae dae, but I'll come up this way an see if I can see ye again."

Ma father said, "Aye."

So a month's passed, this - ma father said, "I doot that wee man's no botherin comin back." He says, "I could have done if he'd come back," he says. "He was a good wee grafter that," he says. "He could get the stuff." He says, "He actually kent where tae go an get it." Ye see. But anyway, doesn't this Philip meet another man, traivellin man, unknownst tae ma father. An he goes wi him an this other man through the samen experience as what ma father went through, but when the moth's come oot o the wee man's nose, it went oot, he says, "I'll need tae watch that," he says. An early in the mornin, this man lookit - this, no the man that the moth came oot o his nose, but the yin that was watchin it come oot. He got up for an early mornin pee, daylight, aboot five o'clock in the simmer's mornin. Ye see. An he seen the moth comin in the door, an he hit it like that wi his hand an rubbed his fit on it. Ken what I mean? So he went oot an made the tea, gien his horse strae. He says, "That wee man's never a long time risin," he says. "I doot we'll never get nae stuff the day, if he doesnae get up." An he went in tae shake the wee man an the wee man was lyin stone deid in the bed. He kilt - he kilt the man's soul.

A The Bailer Willie MacPhee

(This is) a true fact that really happened to somebody and that somebody was me by the way. Now when I was a young man I used to go here there and everywhere an do everything, 'most everything anyway. I used tae work on a lot o fairms, type (?) tracks and diggin roads an every damn thing like that. But finally I happened to land away up in the north o Scotland and went up tae this fairm, sittin away up on the hillside an I asked the man for a job, ye see. So "Well," he said, "ye're a big strong-lookin man," he says, "an I think you could do a good day's work," he says, "so I'll try ye out an see what ye're like."

I says, "Very good," I says. "I'll be willin tae do the best I can."

So I stuck in there an oh! I done a lot o good work for him. I could ploo, I could harra, could do all these things, done everything I could. But anyway it was in the beginning o the year when I come there, Spring time. I done a whole summer's work right through till it come tae the back end o the year, the hairvest time.

So we got in wur hairvest, I managed tae build stacks an everything like that, so when the hairvest finished - it used tae be, anyway, I don't know if there now - but it used tae be, when the hairvest was finished, ye used tae haud a kin o a ceillidh. An they used tae bring the fairmworkers fae aa the different fairms roon aboot, for this ceillidh, back-en o the year for the hairvest.

An some o them was tellin stories, some o them was singing songs, some o them was playin pipes, playin fiddles an everything. But I couldnae dae naethin like that at that time. I was a pure mug. I'd sit in the corner, enjoyin aa this.

But efter everybody sang an played an done everything, an played fiddles an so on, the fairmer said tae me, "Look," he says, "Willie," he says, "dae ye not think it's time you're daein a wee bit turn?"

I says, "I cannae tell nae stories," I says. "I cannae sing, ye know, I cannae sing. I cannae play the pipes, I cannae do no'hin like that." I says, "I can do nothin! I'm useless!"

"Oh well," he says, "I'll tell you one thing," he says, "Willie, ye've been a good man," he says. An he says, "Seein the sair hairvest is finished," he says, "everybody does a wee bit turn now an again," he says, "fur tae - the spirit o the thing," he says, "a wee bit cairry -" he says. "Ye'll need tae dae somehin."

I said, "I can dae nothing!"

"Well," he says, "wad ye mind," he says, "daein a wee bit forfit?"

"Oh no!" I says. "What is that? Whit's a forfit?"

"Well," he says, "ye have tae dae somethin," he says. "Ye have tae dae something that I ask ye tae dae."

"Aw," I says. "Aw! That's simple," I says. "I'll dae anything," I says. "What dae ye want me tae dae?"

"Well," he says, "ye know where the old boat is," he says, "away down on the shore?"

I said, "Yes, I know where the boat is."

"Well," he says, "seein aa the cattle's in," he says, "we've tae feed them on inside meat, an we're makin up some meat," he says. "An ye know the bailer for bailin oot the water," he says, "oot o the boat?"

I says, "Yes, I know that well."

"Well," he says, "we want that bailer," he says, "tae measure oot the quantities," he says, "o meat for each cow."

"Oh," I said, "that's aa right." An I said, "Dae ye want me tae go doon there an get it?"

He says, "That's right," he says, "just you go doon there an get it an bring it back up," he says, "an that'll be you aa right."

"Aw," I says, "that's dead easy."

I buttoned up ma jaicket, liftit ma - I smokit at that time, by the way - liftit ma pipe, out I goes through the door, an it was that dark I couldnae see anything. Farmer says, "Oh come here," he says, "ye'll need a lamp wi ye," he says, "for tae show ye the way doon."

I says, "My eyesight's quite good."

"Aye," he says, "but ye need a lamp wi ye," he says. "Ye'd better take this lamp wi ye."

So he lit me this lamp, just a paraffin thing, ye ken, glesses roon aboot. Ye couldnae see a lot wi it. An he lit this tae me, an away I went doon the road.

It would be about a hundred yairds fae the fairm, right away doon. I come tae the shore, down tae the spot whaur the boat was lyin. I saw the boat. I says, "Oh there the boat," I says. "This is dead easy."

So I laid the lamp doon, on the side o the shore an went intae the boat, an the bailer was away at the back-en o the boat, ye see. So I walkit wi these big heavy boots right tae the end o the boat. I bended doon tae get the bailer, an as I bended doon, ma feet slippit, ye ken, back the ways, an I fell on ma heid in the front - in the back o the boat, raither. An I dinny ken how long I was lyin there, but I seen stars, anyway!

An when I wakened up, I said, "O Christ, that's terrible!" But I gropit aboot an I got this - I got this bailer. Well, a bailer's jist a roon thing like a basin, an there's a wee hannle at the en o it, tae catch it like that, for bailin oot the water, oot o the boat, ye see. So I got the bailer. "Thank Christ I got that." An got back up again, walkit up tae the end o - the bow o the boat again, an pit ma leg owre the boat for tae get oot on the shore. Ma leg went intae the water! It was water I went intae! I lean'd weel oot, oh! but I couldnae get the bottom!

I says, "Christ!" I says, "What's happened here?" Put ma leg back in again an I gropit for the - anythin tae see if I could feel the deepness, an I got one o the oars. I pit the oar on, I feeled - naw! Couldnae get nae bottom!

"Oh," I says, "I ken what happened," I says. "When I went tae the back on the boat," I says, "my weight in the back o the boat," I says, "the boat," I says, "the boat slipped oot," I says. I says this tae maself. An I says, "Oot on the water."

Then I was up an I lookit roon an it was quite dark. I never seen the light or nothin. Couldnae see ma lamp or nothin. An the waves was beginnin tae shoot up. I says, "I wunner what's happened here? Och," I says, "I'll get the oars oot an I'll row intae the shore," I says. "I'll soon get back."

I was a good strong man at the time. Got the two oars oot an I was oarin up tae see if I could back intae where I come oot, ye see, oarin up. I says, "I must reach the beach sometime." I'm oarin away an I'm oaring away, but nae sign o the beach! Nae sign o the beach at aa!"

I oared an I oared, an I oared, oh! for aboot three quarters o an oor. Naw! couldnae get intae the side at aa, couldnae get nowhere, an the waves gettin bigger. An I'm oarin away an I'm oarin away, till ma airms feelled weak. My airms is that weak I could hardly pull the oars! Says I, "Goodness, that's terrible. I'll need tae tak a smoke o

ma pipe," I says. So I pulled the oars in an I put them underneath ma legs like that ye see. An I says, "I'll need tae have a smoke." I'm sittin luckin aroon; it's quite pitch, black dark.

I put ma han up tae get ma pipe, felt this big lump - here! "Hullo," I says, "what's wrong here?" Felt this side. I had two lumps up here! Two lumps! "Oh," I says, "wait a minute! There's somethin cock-eyed here!" An instead o ma big auld jaicket on me, it was a wumman's blouse that was on me! A wumman's thing that was on me. I says, "Wait a minute! There's somethin cock-eyed here." I gropit again. I couldnae believe masel. These beautiful lumps here! I put ma hand up tae ma heid tae scart like this, an when I put ma hand up tae ma heid, I feeled the hair right away back doon like this, beautiful hair. "Oh," I says, "never in the world -" But that didnae persuade me, ye ken. I gropit doon here, ye see, tae feel ma legs in ma troosers, an it was a skirt that was on me. "Oh," I says, "wait a minute! There's somethin cock-eyed here!" Lookit [indicates crotch] - gone! It was away! It was replaced wi somethin else!

I sat an I sat, an I was aa numbed, aa numbed. I didnae ken what tae think of it. I says, "This is terrible," I says.

But the waves is gettin worse, ye see. "I'll need tae try," I says, "an oar back tae the shore," I says. "I don't know what happened," I says, "but -" I tried tae oar the two oars, but I couldnae. Couldnae use the two oars. I could use one at a time, ye ken. I was usin one this time, an then this yin. But I git that exhausted that I fell intae the back o the boat, a somersault right back in, an where I fell, I lay there sobbin an greetin. Yese know what women is, when they're beat - they just lie an greet!

Well, I lay there, I don't know how long I lay yet, but when I awakened the sun was shinin, an the boat was at a standstill. There was nae mair rockin or rowin or anything. The boat was at a standstill. I got up an luckit aa roon an the boat struck the shore but it wisnae my shore, it wis a different shore entirely. I luckit roon aboot an this beautiful island - I was ontae. I says, "This is terrible! What's goin tae happen tae me yet?"

An I was just sittin in the airse o the boat like that, when the first thing I seen comin wanderin doon fae - was this young gentleman. An he comes wanderin oot tae the boat an he says, "Hello there," he says, "where did you come from my dear?"

Now, I says, "I don't know where I come from," I says, "I was shipwrecked," I says, "I was oot fishin" (made up a story). "I was oot fishin," I says, "an it got dark on me," I says, "I lost ma fishin rod," I says, "an I driftit in here an I don't know where I am."

"Oh," he says, "my goodness, ye're in a terrible state," he says, "ye're all wet."

I says, "I'm soakin wet."

He says, "Ye better come up tae the house," he says, "an get some dry clothing on ye."

So I came up wi him tae the house. Oh this beautiful big house on this island! Come up wi him. He says, "There's not many women here," he says. "There's just the servants an me," he says, "an some other - the crofters far out," he says, "but there's no lady or nothing adae. I'm the only body that's here," he says. He says, "What ye can do, ye can dry your clothes," he says, "an I'll see aboot dinner and some'hin."

I says, "Fair enough," I says.

THE MAN WHO HAD NO STORY TO TELL

So I took my clothes off an I got a big towel roon aboot me, an I got ma clothes dried on the fire an I put them back on again. So efter I got ma clothes dry, he comes back. He says, "Where did you come from?"

I says, "I don't know," I said. "I was out fishin," I says, "an I lost ma rod," I says, "an I lost ma way," I says, "an I don't know what happened to me."

"Oh," he says, an he says, "dae ye not know where ye come from?"

I says, "I don't know."

"Well," he says, "the best thing you can dae," he says, "is stay here for a while, till your people comes," he says. "Somebody'll look for ye," he says. "Just stay here."

So I says, "That's all right."

So I stayed there for a long, long time but tae make a long story boring, me an this young gentleman fell in love, ye see. Well, it's only natural, this young woman an a young man on this island! It's only a natural thing, isn't it?

So anyway, so far so good. Time passed on an me an him fell deeply in love an we got married. Now, as time rolled by, yese aa know what happened. What should happen anyway, wi a mairried couple. I had a family, two o a family to him.

Now, they were pretty well grown up, maybe one was seven an one was nine year old and we were out this day walkin, him an I, and we left the children in the castle. An we wandered right down by this whaur we come in, whaur I come in, anyway, right doon tae this point.

He says, "Darlin," he says, "there's the old boat down there," he says, "that you come in."

I says, "Yes, that's the boat I come in, right enough," I says. "An it's still hale yet," I says.

"Yes," he says, "it's still hale."

An I had a white - I remember - I had a white dress on me, lovely white dress an sleeves tae there. Just thin summer clothes on me. But it was midsummer, an usually in midsummer ye get thunderstorms, see? The heavens opened an there were a brattle o thunder come, an a couple o flashes o lightning an the rain started tae come doon.

"Oh," I says, "I'm gonna be wet," I says, "an it's too far back tae the house."

He says, "Darlin," he says, "you just stand under that tree there, that big spreadin tree. You stand under there," he says, "an I'll go back for your coat."

I says, "Fair enough." I stood under this tree ye see, an he went away. But I was standin under this tree, an I'm wonderin tae maself. "I wonder," I says, "if that ould bailer is still at the back o that boat yet." I says, "I think I'll go down an see," I says.

So I goes doon tae the boat an the boat's lyin here the same way as I come in. An I luckit away at the back o the boat an I could see the bailer. I says, "That's the bailer that got me intae all this trouble," I says. "I'll need tae have a good look at it."

So I jumped in the boat, creeped back tae the end o the boat an I leaned doon tae get the bailer, and when I did lean doon, ma feet slippit from me again, and I fell on ma brow on the back seat o the boat. Out like a light! Out like a light! Dead as a herrin!

So when I come tae masel, it was dark, stars was shinin, an everything was dark. I says, "There now, what's goin tae happen tae

me now?" I says. This is the same thing happened tae me a'ready. But when I got up, I luckit aa roon, I could see no lights. I could see no shore. I could see nothing. It was pitch, black dark.

I says, "I'd better try an get walkin back in again," I says. "Row this boat back in." So I got the oars oot, an I'm pullin awa and oarin awa at one side, pullin awa an oarin awa at the ither, tae see if I could get back intae the shore again. But na! I was struggling away for long enough, for maybe half an oor, strugglin away an strugglin away an strugglin away wi the one oar. But I feelled it gettin stronger an I could use the two oars. Oh I was goin lovely wi the two - "What's happened? What's happened noo?" I says. I could feel a funny smell off masel, ye ken. "Phew!" I says, "What's that funny smell?" Efter wearin aa this new clothes an everything ye feel smells, don't ye? I done that [sniffs] an there were a smell o dip aff me - sheep dip. "Oh," I says, "where did that come fae?" I [puts hands on chest] - nothing! Flat as a pancake! Big oul jacket - [Voice says, "Ye were worried."] I was worried, let me tell ye! Noo - big auld jaicket on me, big auld troosers, right down, where ma beautiful wee shoes was, big old coorse tackety boots on.

"Oh," I says, "this is terrible!"

I rowed away for a bit, I happened tae dae that [looks up] an seen this wee light. "Oh," I says, "there a wee light. This is the light o the castle right enough." I'm rowin like bleezes back. The boat up again the shore. Jumpit oot. This is ma wee lantern lyin, I left. I says, "That must hae been burnin a long time there!" I says. But I took the bailer wi me in ma hand and I liftit the lamp. I says, "I don't know where I am," I said, "but I'll go up this wee pad, anyway."

Walkit up this wee pad, an I had the bailer in one hand and the lamp in the other hand. I walked up this wee pad, an I come oot ontae the road again. Walked along the road a bit, an I come tae this other pad, an I seen the lights o this fairm, this hoose away up.

I says, "I'll go up tae this hoose," I says. But when I come tae this hoose, it was the samen hoose as I left, the fairm hoose. An I come in an oh! I was benumbed ye know wi fatigue an everything else. An I opened the door an come in, an this was the fairm that I left, when I come in.

"Well," said the fairmer, "ye're back," he says, "Willie!"

"Aye," I says, "I'm -" I was very sad. "I'm back," I says.

"Oh," he says, "did ye get the bailer?"

"Oh," I says, "there your bailer," I says. "There your bailer." Gien it over.

"Well," he says, "have ye got a story tae tell me now?"

"Oh," I says, "I have a story tae tell ye. But ye're never gon-nae believe it." An I telt him ma story, what happened, ye see. Fairmer sat, shook his heid.

"Well," he says, "Willie," he says, "that would hae took years tae do that."

"Oh," I says, "it took years. I know it took years! I have a wee boy thirteen years, of age," I says, "an I have anither yin nine," I says.

"Oh," he says, "that's terrible. Well," he says, "dae ye know how long ye were away?"

"Oh," I says, "I must be away," I says, "eighteen or nineteen years, anyway."

He says, "Look at the clock."

I looked at it. "Oh," I says, "I see the clock," I says.

"What time is it," he says, "on the clock?"

THE MAN WHO HAD NO STORY TO TELL

"Oh," I says, "it's twelve o'clock."

"Well," he says, "ye went away fae here," he says, "at ten minutes tae twelve!" He says, "ye were ten minutes away!"

So watch out if ye get a job on a fairm!

B Alec and the Donkey John Stewart

It's the time we were in Ireland. When we were young laddies, wir father kept a horse for the wagon, maybe a horse for the spring cairt and donkeys - you could get them ten a penny. Alec'll tell ye that. Ye could buy a donkey for a couple o bob ye know. You got a good one for five shillings.

But Alec had this donkey and cairt and at that time in the wee glens in Ireland it was slow hawkin the hooses, it was night afore ye got half a dozen hooses hawked. But we used to go away and maybe stop away two or three nights and then come back. The wagon was headquarters as it were, ye see. Well, Alec's away with his donkey and cairt, ye see, and he comes up this moor the second or third night he was away, and he went a road on this moor in Ireland, away in Donegal it was, and he'd never been this road afore and there were very little hooses on it. It started tae pour o rain, oh! wind and wet. When it does wind and rain and Ireland it does wind and rain! But he sees this wee light an he comes up and its a wee hoose, ye see. So he chaps at the door and the donkeys standin wi its heid doon, ye know, and a man comes to the door. He says, "What is is?"

Alec says, "Want to see if ye could let us in," he says, "aa night. I'm oot hawkin." See, in Ireland they're a rough and ready folk and ye never surprise them same as ye do here. Ye know what I mean? Ye'd actually think that they were waitin on ye, ye know. "And If I could get a place," he says, "tae put ma donkey till the mornin."

He says, "Well, ye can come in," he says, "and sit on the chair all night," he says, "young lad," but he says, "your donkey - I've only got that wee shed out there," he says, "and half the boards is off." He says, "I've got no hay or straw and," he says, "there's a goat in it."

Alec says, "That'll dae till the morrow. It'll no die for a night." So he goes across, takes the cairt off it. He never bothers takin the harness off it and he takes it an ties it in the wee shed beside the goat. And the wind's liftin bits off the road, ye see.

So Alec goes in an the man gies him a cup o tea, him an his wife. It was just a wee single thatched end wi wan bed, ye know, so they're sittin an sittin an sittin an he says tae Alec, he says, "Can ye no sing a song?" At that time there was nae wirelesses nor nothin, ye ken. And Alec says, "No," he says, "sorry," he says, "I'm a poor singer and I'm no in the mood for singing."

He says, "Well, can ye tell us a story?"

Alec says, "No I cannae tell a story either. I'd rather hae a lie doon."

"Can ye whistle then?"

"No."

So the man gets another cup o tea and another cup o tea and makes Alec a wee doss-doon on the floor at the fire. Him and his wife goes into this box bed. So Alec says, "I'll tell ye, boss," he says, "leave the ootside door on the latch 'cause I might need oot for a run-oot, ye ken. He says, "I wouldnae like tae be wakenin ye at night tae open the door tae me." So the man leaves the ootside door on the latch.

THE MAN WHO HAD NO STORY TO TELL

So away about one or two in the mornin he gets up to go outside for a pee, ye see. Oot the door and he's in his shirt tail and he runs oot tae the side of the goat shed and he's peein and comes runnin back tae the hoose again and the doors locked. The doors locked, ye see. Alec says, "I'm well aff no." An he's standin and he's chitterin and the rain an the wind woo! woo! woo! Rain comin roon the edge of the hoose and he doesnae know what to do. He chaps an he chaps. Naw, no answer. He has to go back into where his donkey is and stand alangside the donkey and the goat tryin tae shelter, till seven o'clock in the mornin and he looks oot an sees a trickle of reek comin oot the, oot the chimney. Runs owre, chaps at the door and the man opens the door and Alec says, "What the hell are ye doin?" He says, "I was locked out there," he says, "aa night."

The man says, "Well, I'm sorry about that. Come in." So he came in and Alec sits doon and gets his claes on quick, ye know, still chitterin. The man gies him a cup o tea. Alec says, "What did ye dae that for, anyway?"

He says, "Well, I'll tell ye whit I done that for." He says, "there was a purpose behind that, young fella. When you came in we was good enough tae keep you," he says, "and give you," he says, "your cup o tea and," he says, "we sit here," he says, "very lonely because we don't see many travellers on this road. We asked you," he says, "could you sing a song, could ye whistle, but ye couldn't. We asked ye," he says, "and I asked ye," he says, "could ye even tell a story and ye couldn't. Well," he says, "I've made damn sure, young fella, that the next place you go to, to stay all night, ye'll have a story to tell."

X

II.13 JACK AND THE SEVEN ENCHANTED ISLANDS

John Stewart

This is a story it happened in a country I couldnae tell where the land is. In this country there was a queen, that was very good tae her subjects, and one thing and another like that. An not far from her castle, a lot of her people lived, may be three or four mile from her. This man and wumman lived, and he was one o the queen's main kind o men for doing work about the palace and the castle and one thing and another like that. And his wife used tae work away too. Till one day, there was invaders came and invaded that part o the country, and this man was killed, ye see. Killed a lot o the queen's people, this invading pirates o some kind. And not long after the invasion the woman gave birth tae a son, ye see? So the boy was about two year old, or that, an the queen heard o it, that this wumman whose man that had been killed, had had a child. She says, "Well go," she says, "and tell her tae send the boy up tae the castle," and she says, "and I'll rear him along with my two sons, the princes, and he'll get a good education, and he can always go up and down and see his mother." So the wumman was too glad o the chance, tae let her son go up, ye see. It wasn't that far away. So he went up there and he lived at the castle wi the princes. When he come tae be aboot the size o these boys here, o he could do anything better than any man around the castle, and aa the people round about was admiring him, the size he was and the things he could do, ye see.

So when he come up tae be about eighteen or twenty, he started tae wonder aboot who his father was. He never was told his father was killed, or anything like that. An he asked one o the auld men o the army o the castle, who was his father, could he tell him who his father was. "Oh," he says, "I wouldn't like tae tell ye," he says. "Why not go back," he says, "and ask your mother about that?"

"Well," he says, "I think I will," he says.

Now, when the queen heard this she got onto him and didn't want him to go at all, down the mother and ask these questions, ye see? But he says, "I will go," he says, "nothing'll keep me back."

So he jumps on his horse's back an he gallops away down to the house where his mither wis and argues with her and torments who is father was, how he was killed, and aa like this.

"Well," she says, "he wasnae actually killed here," she says. "He was killed further north," she says, "when the invaders landed," and she says, "I don't know who the invaders were."

He wanted to know who they were. "Well," he says, "I'll get them," he says, "should A follae them tae the ends o the earth." So he says, "I'll get them."

So he went away on his horse's back, tae make a long story short, away in the direction he was told the invaders landed, and he travelled for about two nights and two days, and he came to this wee scattered kind o a village. In them days, it was just wee hovels, thatched wi grass and rushes an anything ye could get to cover the houses, ye see? An there was an old church place, kin o half in ruins. So he went up tae this church, an a man says, "Ye can't come in here," he says.

He says, "How?"

"Well," he says, "this is sacred ground," he says, "because," he says, "out there," he says, "your father was killed," he says to him.

And the boy says, "Who are you?"

JACK AND THE SEVEN ENCHANTED ISLANDS

He says, "I'm the man that looks after this place," he says, "and looks after everything about the church." And when he turned roon, he had a humph on his back, half the size o this hoose. An ugly man, he was a Kasimoto [Quasimodo]. Ye see? An great big feet. So the villagers told him, if he saw that man, no tae interfere with him at all, because he'll put bad luck on ye, ken? So, he says, "Yes," he says, "your father was killed there. Where you're standin," he says, "they took their swords out, and they hacked him to pieces," he says. "They hacked him to pieces."

"Well," he says, "how am I - could you tell me," he says, "who done it? Have ye any idea," he says, "where these invaders come from?"

He says, "No. I couldn't tell you that." But he says, "If ye go away down the coast," he says, "to the last wee house," he says, "he mightn't be in the wee house," he says, "he might be in the cave, stay-in." He says, "Ye'll get an old gentleman down there, he's a druid. Wan o the old druids." He says, "He's a far seer," he says. "He's like a fortune teller," an he says, "he can tell ye anything ye want to know." Ye see?

So away Jack goes down this - makes away long the coast till he came past this wee auld tumbledown houses. This auld man wasnae there. He went round the end of the rocks and here was a great big cave and an ol fire kennled, and this old man stannin, ye see. A great big long beard. So he says to the auld man he says, "Good evening," he says, "old man," he says.

"Good evening," says the man, he says, "Ye'll be lookin for me, or ye wouldnae be doon here."

He says, "Yes I'm lookin for you," he says. "I want to know," he says, "about the pirates that landed here," he says, "several years ago," he says. "May be eighteen, seventeen or eighteen years ago," he says, "and invaded this country, and killed a lot o people," he says, "because my father was killed with it."

He says, "Oh," he says, "I know," he says, "your father was killed with it. But," he says, "I would advise you," he says, "not to go and look for them," he says, "because," he says, "ye'll only get yoursel into trouble."

He says, "I'll not," he says, "I must go," he says, "an look for who killed ma father."

"Well," says the old druid, he says, "if that you're that desperate to go," he says, "ye'll have to take, five men with you - no, seven men, with you," he says. ----- like that, an odd number, an he says, "ye'll have to buid a boat," he says, "of bull hide, because," he says, "the places that you would have to go wi a boat," he says, "a big, heavy wooden boat wouldn't do ye."

Well, in them days, nearly all the boats were hide boats, light-framed boats and they pulled them wi oars, see? So he says, "That's all right, then," he says, "I'll do that." An he says, "when ye leave," he says, "keep goin into the settin sun." An he says, "That's all I can tell ye."

So Jack says, "Thanks very much," he says, "I'll go." So he went back to the place to the place where he was reared, tae his mother's place, an he got five men along wi himself, ye see, to go wi him. Great big strapping lads from the place, ye see? An they packed their bits o things, an away they went, and they went doon tae the tannery place, where they killed the cattle, you know, for food, and they got all these auld skins, and one thing and another like that, and they god wood, and they carted away tae where the auld hermit was, an they builds and starts building this boat, making the bows like that an

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puttin the bull hide on it, puttin things in for the rowlocks for the oars. So it took them about ah! very nearly two months, tae finish this, this boat. So him and the five men, then gets intae the boat and their stuff and their oars, and they're just gonnae oar away, when the auld man came oot. He says, "Have ye got your amount o men?" he says.

"Ye," he says, "I've got seven." Five, no six men, an hisself was the seventh. So they're away oot on the water aboot two or three hundred yards, up the coast, and they hears this roarin at them, shout- in an bawlin an roarin at them, ye see. An this was the two princes fae the castle, where he'd been reared. An they're roarin tae him that they're wantin tae come too, ye see.

Jack says, "A can't take yese. A've got ma certain quota o ma men an A can't take any more," he says. "It's unlucky. The old druid told me it's unlucky tae take any more than the seven." Ye see?

He says, "Well," he says, "if you don't come in for us," he says, "we're gonnae swim out." An the two o them jumps intae the sea. Noo Jack has tae stop, wait till they swim out an they pulls them intae the boat.

"Well," he says, "may be the old druid," he says, "'ll not know," he says, "that we've got a more number we've got than we were told tae take." Ye see?

So they're aa sits there, an they're rowin away and rowin an rowin an rowin, an each talkin a rest, an changin seats an one thing an another, you know. Well, they rows an rows an rows for about a week, goin always by the settin sun. So the wan kin o stormy kin o night, they were keepin close tae an island, that they came tae, kin o close tae it, for shelter. But they comes on up this shore an on up this shore, an at the break o daylight, they stoppit for a rest, and they were jist about a hundred yards off the beach. An Jack says, "There's a great big big castle there," he says. He says, "We could dae wi some more victuals an that," he says, "tae eat," he says, "an fresh water." He says, "Come on we'll go in," he says, "there an see if we can get something."

So they all gets off, seven, eight o them. There was wan odd one. So over they came tae this big vastle, an oh! they sees a lot o people outside the big gates, all yapping away through thon'er men, women an that. An they didnae want tae go up right away. "Because," he says, "ye never know what they might do." He says, "We'll sit here, on the place goin intae the castle," he says, "till we weigh them up first, till we see what like they are."

So, the lot o them's sittin there, an they sits there for aboot ten minutes, or so, then they sees this horse comin, and a lady on it, and she must have been a queen cause she had a crown on her head, lovely green silk an satin clothes an - ye ever seen yon red satin boots? - on her. An this horse, is all bells, an rings on its reins an that. So she came up past and she looked at them like that, an she never paid attention and never spoke tae the, and she want straight on up, and intae the castle, ye see? He says, "Did ye ever see a better lookin wumman than that? That's the queen, oh it must be a queen. Ay, oh yes."

So just like that, a woman came oot, a girl, and she came down to them, and she says, "The queen wants tae see youse." So Jack and them got up an they walkit in, and they went intae this great big room like a hall, they were ushered intae, and there were a great big sofa, and there were seven cups, wine cups, aa sittin fown this long table, and decanters o wine, an bread an fruit upon the table, ye see?

So Jack says, - he counted the seats - and on this couch, he says, "Seven seats! She must ha known we were comin, but she doesnae

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know there's an odd wan. But," he says, "we'll try an roll him any anyway, an they'll no notice." Ye see?

So Jack says tae one o them, "Sit beside me there," an so they all got down an they drank away there, as much wine as they wanted, and food, an the queen's talkin away tae them. Oh she was very nice tae them, ye see? Nex day comes. She says, "Oh just stay here," she says, "you're doin no harm."

So they stayed, and they're wanderin about the place, an carryin on wi the girls, huntin on this big island an that, ye see. "Now," she says - they were there a month! And she says this day, "Look," she says, "I'm goin away for a wee while," she says, "to the plains to see some of ma people." An she says, "Yese'll be all right here, an A come back," she says. "Don't leave the island," she says. "Everything's here that ye want," she says, an she says, "I won't be long."

So Jack says, "That's quite all right," he says, "queen, ye can go when ye like." So the queen she goes away. Now the queen has two daughters, an they're entertaining these men, an oh! everything at their hand they had in this castle. But the queen goes away, an one week rolls in, an another week rolls in, and another week rolls in, and another week rolls in, till there's two month passes. No the men's gettin fed up, an they're startin tae argue wi one another. Says, "May be Jack," he says, "is in love wi the queen," he says. "May be that's how he doesnae want tae go."

So they went tae Jack. He says, "What about goin?" he says tae Jack. "We had ither things to do," he says. An he says, "We dinny want tae stay here any more."

"Well," says Jack, he says, "She's a long time a coming back," he says, "it's near about three months since she left." He says, "Let's go then."

So away they went. They got stuff in at the castle an packed it up, an away down tae their boat, and they put it in the boat, jumps in the boat, an they starts rowin. An they're just twenty or thirty yards from the beach, when the queen comes home. And she's down at the waterside wi her two daughters, an the two daughters is rearin their hair. "Come back! Come Back!" Ye see, an the queen's shoutin on them tae come back. But Jack says, "Keep rowin," he says, "keep rowin."

But she pits her hand intae her pocket and she takes oot a ball o golden thread, ye see? An she catches the wan end o the golden thread like that, an she takes this ball an she throws it at the boat, and it flew right across, and it come tae Jack an Jack done that, an caught it wi his hand. An he went tae lay it down, but it stuck tae his hand like glue. He couldnae lay that golden ball o thread down. An the queen pulled like that on the thread, an she just took the boat straight back in again. She says, "Why were you leavin?" She got the ball from him. She says, "Why were you leavin?"

"Well," says Jack, "we got fed up."

"Well," she says, "look. Ye'll never get another place like this! Now," she says, "come on home," she says, "you and your men." An she says, "Ye've all ye want here. I told ye I'd be back."

So away they goes back, wanders aboot, an mucks aboot in roon the castle, doin this an doing that, but aw, they got fed up o bein in the one place, ye see.

So, "Are ye goin, Jack? If ye dinny come we'll go ourselves. We know ye're tryin tae - are ye in love wi that queen?"

"No," says Jack, "I'm not in love wi the queen."

"Well," they says, "Come on! I think ye only made a fool o us, thon time, about the golden ball, when she threw thon golden ball."

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Jack says, "Well you catch it this time, if we go doon, an we go away on the boat," he says tae one o his brothers, that were like his brothers, the ones he was reared wi, the princes.

So they says, "All right, I'll catch it this time." So away they goes down tae the boat, pushes it out fae the side, an jumps in an gets an oar each, an away they starts pullin out, ye see, out intae the water.

Haha! She's down, her an the two daughters, shoutin at them again, roarin an shoutin they'd tae come back, they'd no business leavin, an the girls is cryin an greetin an tearin their hair. So wi the queen pits her han in her pocket, an she's out wi the golden ball, and she flings this golden ball, an this boy catches it wi his hand, ye see? An it stuck tae his han, ye see. An the queen's pullin it back in, but Jack pulls his sword, an it was a real sharp one, an he slashed the thread! An it was that strong a thread, he cut it, but his sword bounced off it, and he nearly fell overboard intae the water, ye see? An the thread was left in the queen's hand, an she's roarin an screamin an the girls is dancin wi rage, ye see?

So Jack says, "Keep goin now! Keep goin!" So they oars and oars and oars and oars, and they rows an rows an rows. Next day, they floats about takin a rest, takes a drink a water an a bite o meat, and away again. An they rows an rows an rows, over this sea, far intae the settin sun.

So, through the night, they're rowin away just at their ease, lettin the boat swin along, ye see, an they sees a glow. An Jack says, "What's that?" he says. "It's like something on fire on the sea." So they rows an rows an rows an rows up tae it, an this is another island, an its surrounded by flames o fire, ye see. Flames o fire aa roond it. An the folks aa sittin at tables, an they're enjoyin theirsels an they're laughin, and they're drinkin, and dancin and drinkin, ye see.

An Jack says, "Don't none o youse go in there," he says, "tae that island," he says, "because," he says, "I don't like it at all," he says. "Keep goin men! Keep goin!" Ye see?

So they rows away and on an on they went, wi this boat, for about another two days and they spies another island, and the come in look at this island. It was the loveliest island ye could see. There was a lovely green valley like that, an a lovely brae like that, an grass on it. An there was an oul church, an this side there was a lovely wood o silver birch trees and there were sheep grazin on these wee slopes. An in the bottom there was a wee lake, like the shape o a harp, ye see?

Jack says, "That's a lovely quiet place," he says. "Pull in," he says, "tae get some fresh water an that."

So they pulls in, an they walks across this lovely green grass, tae the bank went down tae this lake, an they sits down. An they looks up toward this oul church place, an there's an oul man wi a long beard, ye see. And he comes wanderin down tae them, asked them were they there just for tae stay.

He says, "Ye can stay here, you know. It's a lovely island." He says, "Ye'll hardly every get old here." He says, "Ye can live off the sheep of the island," he says, "and there's plenty o fruit an stuff," he says, "an plenty o water." An he says, "Ye'll be quite welcome here."

So he turns an he goes away back up tae this oul church again, he goes away inside this oul church. Now, they're sittin there. The

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weather was that good, they just lay out at night. Oh, an they killed a sheep an had mutton, roast mutton every day, an had fruit, an lovely fresh water, ye see.

But they're sittin like that, this day, an Jack's lookin away oot, that way, an he sees this thing comin in the sky. An one o the men says, "What's that comin, Jack?"

An Jack says, "I don't know," he says, "it's an awful size." An when they did eventually see it right comin tae them, it was a bird! An it was the size o a moat. It had a wing span o about fifty or sixty yards, this bird. An it come right down like that. An something told it was the old man, in his ain mind. But he didnae say tae the men, ye see.

So this big bird landed, just up above the lake, no far from the, and it has in its claws a branch about the size o a young tree. An this branch is full o rid fruit, like between a plum and a grape. An they were pure blood red, this great young tree, ye see.

So it sits there, an its pickin away at the fruit. An it never seemed tae - looked at them, or went tae interfere wi and Jack an them went back close tae it an back from it - never looked at them, ye see. So the next day, they looked, an here's another two comin, but they werenae actually as big as the first wan, an they werenae carryin any branch or anythin like that. It was like, as Jack thought, two younger birds. An they landed beside the big wan. An they sat beside it, an Jack an his men were watchin them, an the two younger birds started picking the feathers from the big wan. An they picked an they picked an they picked an they picked, tae they'd picked every feather oot o this giant bird. It was like a giant bare turkey ready for the oven, ye see. Jack says, "That's the funniest," he says, "ever A seen in ma life," he says, "how them birds pickit aa that auld yin," he says, "till they pickit every feather oot o't."

Noo when the last feather was picked oot, it got up an it gied itsel a shake, like that, an it strode away doon tae this lake, an it jumped intae the lake, and it splashed aboot in the lake for about an hour. An it come back up again, an sat beside this big branch wi the berries on, it started eatin.

Well, the next mornin, when Jack an them looked at the bird, it had a new coat of feathers, like ye never seen the like in your life! An the other two birds placed aa the feathers, an peckin it an preenin it, an makin it bonnie, ye see. So it sat there till it was well done an near the afternoon, it picks the big branch up, an the two young ones flew away in front o it and then hit rose up in the air, and away they went, ye see. Jack says, "That's the funniest ever A seen in ma life," he says. The men couldnae get over it either. But still Jack knew within his own self, it was the old man fae the church, that was the bird. So Jack walks doon tae the big, tae this big, this lake kin o place, the shape o the harp, an he looked in, an the water was kin o aa pinky red, after the bird washin itself. So he took his claes off, boy, an he jumps in, an he's splashin an swimmin roon aboot, ye see. An he comes oot an he feels greatly refreshed. He was a new man. So he pits his claes on, an he comes up tae the men, an he says, "I think," he says, "tomorrow," he says, "we'll go on again," he says. He says, "We cannae sit on this island aa the time," he says, "although," he says, "it's a lovely island. But," he says, "I'll need tae go," he says, "and see if I can catch up wi the man that killed my father," he says.

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So they goes doon, gets in their boat, puts food in the boat and water, an away they goes again, rowin an rowin and rowin and rowin and rowin, ye see, till they come tae anither island. An, "We could do wi some fresh water again."

"Aye."

"Pull in here and some of us'll get off an go off and get water, an come in again." Ye see? So they pulled in close tae the shore like that, as close as they could. An they were gonnae jump in the water, some o the men, an wade ashore, but they looked an they sees this great big, big, big thing. It was like an elephant but it had the wings o a bird, an an elephant's trunk, and feet like a horse, and it was a giant o a thing. An hit starts prancing in front o them, like a fae the boat. It's lyin on its side, an it's waggin its tail, and its playin itsel this mountain o a thing! An the men says, "Oh it want us tae make fin wi it." Two or three o the men was gonnae get in the water an wade ashore an see an go oure an make fun with this thing, ye see. Jack says, "Don't do that!" he says. He says, "Come on," he says, "we'll get away," he says. "I don't like that at all," he says. "Come on." An they jumped in tae the boat, and Jack makes them row away quick, and here it got up, an it was in a fury, an it was gonnae plunge intae the water tae wide after them. An it didnae. It started flinging stanes wi its feet. But it couldnae aim very well, ye know. An it was a terrible rage. It started flingin these big stones after them. But luckily none o them hit the boat.

So they keeps rowin away an rowin away an rowin away an rowin away, till they runs oot o water, an they runs oot o grub. An Jack says, "If we dinny get food," he says, "shortly," he says, "or water," he says, "we're all gonnae die."

But oh! at the break o daylight they comes tae this other island. And there was a lovely little river gaun up, ye see. An the salmon was goin up this wee burn in dozens, silver fish.

Jack says, "Right," he says, "we'll get fish," he says, "plenty o fish," he says, "and we'll get water." He says, "Come on," he says. So they're all out and pulls the boat close tae the thingmy, jumps out in the river an oh! they're catchin fish. Pits a fire on an they've got boiled salmon first (?) ye see?

Now, they goes away up this water tae the top o the bank, and there's a valley, kin o valley gaun doon, and anither river comin intae that wan. So they comes up there an they looks, an here's the loveliest castle ye ever saw in your life, over this bank. An it's at the far side o this wee river, an there's a crystal bridge gaun across, glass bridge made o crystal. An the crystal bows on the bridge, y'know. Yon the far side, there was like ramps, irons comin down ye would think, but it was crystal, and it was all hung with silver bells. An whenever ye went near it and went tae touch the bridge, aa these bells rattled, ye see?

"How are we gaun tae get water?" An they were aa sittin there, sittin there, sittin there, but eventually at the far side o the bridge, the door opens in the castle, and out comes this lassie, this girl, a princess. An she's a beaten gold, silver band on her hair, lovely jewellery on her neck, an oh! she - just a real beauty she was you know. Blonde hair down her back, just like Granny there [points to Maggie].

"Now, now," Jack says, "Look at that," he says, "did ever ye see a bonnier lassie than that in your life?"

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She comes oot an she goes tae the bridge, and one o the boards lifts up like that, an she dips her bucket in and lifts water oot, and goes back in the castle wi't. But when they wad go tae dae that, aa the bells wad ring, an the board wad - the board at this end wadnae rise, ye see.

So, the men says, "The next time she comes out, Jack," he says, "roar tae her, tae see if she could gie ye water. She may be never saw us when she was oot."

"All right," says Jack, he says, "we'll have tae take a chance on it."

So when she comes oot again, Jack roars "Oo ee," an she looks up, and Jack says, "Wad there be any chance of you havin somethin we could carry water in for our ship." He says, "We're needing a big vessel for tae carry water in."

She came across an she was talkin away tae them. She says, "Oh yes, I'll give ye somethin." She gave them a big earthenware jug, and they filled it wi water, ye see, and left it at the side.

She says, "Stay here for two or three days," she says. "There's plenty o fish there."

Jack says, "I know," he says, "we were using water out o the little river," he says, "and we used a lot o your fish."

"Oh," she says, "that's all right," she says. "Take plenty," she says, "I'll bring ye some fruit too." An she fetched apples an fruit tae them an everything, ye see. An they were there for oh about a fortnight, having a good rest up ye see. An one o the men was kiddin Jack on this day. He says tae Jack he says, "Why dae ye no marry her Jack?" He says, "She's a lovely princess, that," he says. He says, "You an her wad make a lovely pair." Ye see?

Now, Jack says, "Naw," he says, "A wadnae do that."

The men says, "How? Are ye feart? Come on! Ask her the next time she comes."

"All right," Jack says, "the next time she comes out," he says, "I'll ask her," he says, "tae marry me."

So the next day, the girl came out again, came across an was speakin tae Jack an that, Jack follied her by herself, an he says, "Listen," he says, "what about marrying me?" he says. "An I'll stay here," he says, "and we could rule this place ourself."

So she looked at him and she started laughing. She says, "I couldn't marry you," she says.

"Why not?" says Jack.

She says, "You'll know tomorrow morning." Ye see?

"Oh," says Jack.

An she's laughin away like that an bid him goodnight and she went away across the bridge, intae her castle, ye see.

In the morning - no, that night when Jack went back down tae them, for they were aa lyin on the grass an that, makin theirsels comfortable for the night. They says, "Did ye ask her Jack?"

"Aye," Jack says.

"What did she say? What did she say?"

"She told me that I wad know in the mornin."

"Oh good. She'll be comin tae tell ye." Ye see?

Now, the mornin comes. They gets up an gies theirsels a stretch, an looks up like that, an there was no castle an no bridge! There was nothing! Blank! Ye see?

Jack says, "That's why she wadnae marry me. She's no the same as us at all. She must be some kin o an invisible bein fae anither place." See? Jack says, "I know now how she said, 'Ye'll see in the mornin, that I can't marry you,'" Jack says, "I know now."

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So they fills this cask o water that she gave them, an they got intae their boat an they're away again. Ye see?

An they're rowin an rowin an rowin.

Now, they come tae a - past an island. They past one island, and they rows an they rows an they rows, an in the middle o the night, the boat seemed tae stand still. It wouldnae move. Ye would actually think it was up against something. Ye see? Jack says, "We'll need tae wait tae daylight," he says, "tae see," he says. "We don't even know," he says, "whether we're aground," he says, "or not."

So when daylight came, they were right up against a rock, and the rock was just up out o the water like that, wi a flat top on it. And on this rock stannin, wi a big long gown on him, and a beard tae that, was an ould, ould man, ye see?

He says, "Oh," he says, "ye eventually arrived," he says,

Jack says, "Yes." He says, "What are you doin here?"

"Oh," says the old man, he says, "I've been here for years an years an years. I forget the time I've been here." He says, "And it was my own fault that I am here."

"How's that?" says Jack. They were sittin in the boat, speakin tae him, just up against the rock.

He says, "I was on an island back there."

Jack says, "I think we passed that island."

He says, "Oh ye likely would." He says, "I was on that island," he says. "There's a big - there's a good congregation on that island," he says, "and a good size of a village." An says, "I used tae work there." An he says, "I couldnae get enough o money," and he says, "I started thievin." He says, "I would go intae aa the big shots' houses, take away their gold, their antiques an everything they had," he says. "I even had tunnels made fae my own house out up under their houses tae get in," he says, "tae get their money and their jewels an that." He says, "I was sittin," he says, "the richest man," he says, "on that island." And he says, "I was still the worker," he says, "the grave digger."

"Oh," says Jack. He says, "That was funny that."

But he says, "I'll tell you how I'm here noo." He says, "There was a man tae be buried wan day. An he was a real bad man, this," he says. An he says, "They told me," he says, "tae go down and open a grave," he says, "for tae get this man buried." An he says, "I get ma pick an ma shovels an things, and I went away down to the graveyard," he says, "and picks a spot," he says, "for tae bury this man." So he says, "I started diggin an diggin an diggin an diggin," he says, "till I got down," he says, "a certain distance." An he says, "I must ha been on top o another - I know now I was on top o another grave. Because a voice came," he says, "up out o the earth sayin, 'Don't bury that man on the top o me because I'm a good spirit, and I'm light. Don't put him in here.'"

So Jack says, "I didnae know where -" This old man says, "I didnae know where the voice was comin from." An he says, "I told him I didnae believe in that at all," he says, "an one thing an another like that. 'Oh,' he says, 'I know you don't believe in it', he says, this voice said. 'But', he says, 'I know what you are, and if you don't change your ways, you're headin,' he says, 'the wrong way, ma man!' He says, 'I asked ye', he says, 'not to bury that man on top of me. Now,' he says, 'if you don't believe me,' he says, 'look down!' "So," he says, "I looked down," he says, "and where I was diggin clay," he says, "was pure, white, dry sand." And he says, "The dry sand was moving like that!" An he says, "When A saw that," he says, "I stoppit diggin." An he says, "I jumped out o the grave," he says, "an A filled it

in." An he says, "A took this other man's body further down the graveyard, and buried him in another place altogether." Now he says, "I took fright," he says, "and I stopped the thievin." An he says, "I didn't know what tae do," he says, "tae recompense whatever kin o thing had frightened me." But he says, "Wi drinkin," he says, "and one thing an another like that," he says, "oh," he says, "A soon started tae forget about it," he says, "an A went back tae ma old ways again." An he says, "I was doin that," he says, "when the voice came tae me an says, 'Well,' he says, 'I'm puttin you out,' he says, 'tae stand on that rock!'" [Telephone recap] He started his ain old ways, robbin this body, robbin that body an robbin the next body, ye see. So this voice came, an it says, "I'm puttin you away," it says, "an you would-nae take a chance, when ye were gettin it! But I'm puttin you to a place where you won't do any harm." And he says, "He put me out here," he says. - "Whatever it was, put me out here," he says. "I woke up," he says, "and I was standin here," he says. "And I had seven oatcakes wi me for ma food, and" he says, "a bowl of water, a cog o water." An he says, "I've been here - the first seven year I was here," he says, "there were two seals come an brought me salmon. An," he says, "I lived on them," he says, "for another seven year. Then," he says, "they came then," he says, "and gave me a brown loaf a week, along wi a wee bowl o ale." And he says, "That's what I'm livin on now," he says. An he says, "That shouts an roars ye hear," he says, "up in the sky," he says, "them's evil demons." An he says, "I'd advise ye," he says, "tae go," he says, "as fast as ye can," he says, "because," he says, "I'll be here forever." So he gave them a brown loaf tae help them on their way. They had no meat now. He gave them a brown loaf an some o this ale out o his wee bowl. So they oared away, and they rowed an they rowed an they rowed, for about a week, and they were in starvation nearly, ye see. An they were haggard and tired, and every one had beards on them right doon tae there. But they were passing close tae another island, and they saw this big old square house.

Jack says, "There's a house up there, men," he says. "If we could manage up there," he says, "wi the last o wur strength," he says, "we'll may be get as much meat," he says, "and water," he says, "as'll take us on wur journey."

So they all got oot and they went up tae this hoose, this castle place. An they heard a noise comin oot o it, men arguin. An they looked in and this men was all drinkin, all drinkin, ye see? An Jack an them stood at the door, an this great big man wi a black beard, he was tellin the rest o the men, aboot killin Jack's father, ye see. Now, when Jack heard this, he drew his sword, and he rushed in among them, bleachin an strikin at this man. But there were too many there for them. An Jack was knocked to the ground, and under (a hundred?) - cuts on him, bleedin like a sheep! An the rest o the men was all killed. An they threwed them out onto the grass, at the side o the brae. An these invaders and pirates then all buckled up and off they went! Now Jack's lyin unconscious, moanin, there, cuts fae heid tae fit. The rest o the men was all dead. He was the only one wi a spark o life in him. an out o the sky came this - the great big bird, carryin this young tree wi aa the fruit in its mooth, an it squeezed the juice intae Jack's mooth off o these big fruits, on this tree. And after about a couple o hours, Jack was as good as ever he was. So, tae make a long story short, it told Jack tae sit on the branch - in among the branches o this tree it was carryin, the fruit tree. And Jack got in among the branches, and it caught the tree in its two feet and away

JACK AND THE SEVEN ENCHANTED ISLANDS

it went up in the air. An it flew an it flew an it flew, and eventually it landed doon on an island. An it was the island where they landed where it had washed itsel in the pool, the pool wi the shape o a harp. So it left Jack down there, and it says tae him, "Wait here now, I'll be back in a wee while." So away it went, and Jack waited for about an hour or so, and he looked and looked and watched, and then he saw it comin, flyin again, still with this big branch on its talions, on its claws. An it landed down, and who was sittin on the branch, but the girl he asked for tae marry, where the crystal palace had vanished. It took her back for him! And Jack built hissel a nice bit o a wudden house there, and the two, the prince - Jack and the princess married and lived happily every after on that island.

John Stewart

A chap that worked on a big house here, gardener place, you know and he was a good gardener wi berries and one thing and another like that; strawberries, raspberries, currants and everything like that. He could even make jam for the big house an that an all-round gardener you know, a fruit man. But he wasnae too pleased wi his bit in life, he was lookin for something better, ye know what I mean? So one day, was lookin in the paper and he saw an ad., in it sayin, "Gardener and jam maker wanted. Only genuine man need apply". An it was a foreign address, in China. "Good wages and everything provided". Know what I mean? So he wrote away to this address and he gets a letter back and his ticket and so much money to come out. So he wasnae married or anything like that. He was a single man, so he gave his notice in to the place and set off. I suppose he would take the train or coach in them days. Maybe, a sailin ship or somethin like that. But he lands anyway in this foreign country, China. And it gave him directions in the paper, he was to go to a certain wee shop in the town and they would give him directions there and this, that and the next thing, ye see. So he goes an this auld Chinaman in this shop he gives him directions and it was about forty or fifty mile away inland, he was goin to this place. So this man volunteered to take him and they took him in a horse-drawn gig or something, and they left him off at the end of this avenue and says, "That's the house in there ye're lookin for."

So in he goes through this gate and up to this wee cottage. Oh it's a lovely little cottage, and he knocks at the door and there's no answer, knocks again looks all round about. Not a thing about it. He tries the door and the door opens and the fire's lit and the table's set and instructions on the table just to make hisself at home, and start his work right away.

Now, there was a bit o a garden and jam-making shed, wi boilers and things in it. So he took his clothes off and he didnae work the next day. He was wantin a rest from his journey. But he started the next day. Everything was at his - anything that a gardener needed was there. There was bags o sugar for his jam and there was the loveliest copper boilers for making it. You'd tae pick your own fruit, put it in and every tea-time he came in, the table was set. When he got up in the mornin, the table was set. And he started now tae wonder. He never saw a soul. Not a human being!

But anyway, he comes in this night, gets his supper, takes his supper and goes tae bed. All of a sudden, he could feel a queer thing comin owre him and the bed started to shake and he hung on and when he lookit, he was standin ootside. He was standin ootside and there was a blue light about the size o a bicycle lamp like a will-o-the-wisp in front o him. And this voice come to him. It says "Grasp the blue light." He was runnin and he's intae bushes and he's intae ditches and he's up banks and he's hittin trees and he's widin burns till he was exhausted. And he was always gettin near it and tryin tae dive on the top o it and he was always missin it. It was flickerin here and flickerin there and flickerin here and flickerin there.

Now, when he wakens he's in bed and he's tossin about wi the pillows in the bed. And he's that tired, it's leavin him, that he's makin hissel late in the mornin gettin up.

Next night, the samen thing happens. The bed starts goin and he's ootside! And this blue light's in front o him. And it's here and there and every place, up the sides of fields, through ditches, up oul quarries, right across burns, an he chases and he chases and he chases, till he comes tae this river, long flat river and the light goes across

an it's on the far side. You'd actually think the blue light was tantalisin him and he dives intae the water which he thought was water but it wasn't - it was boiling lava. And it was comin out a burnin mountain, that he'd noticed days before that. He'd always wondered what this was. Now it was a burnin mountain and the lava stream was comin right down and the place where he was crossin was a good breadth, and when he got in he was tryin to go across to get at the light and he says, he could feel his legs startin tae melt wi the heat o - the heat o the burnin lava, till he gets owre the far side and he makes a grab, but the light's away, away in front o him again and when he wakens up, he's strugglin and wrastlin in bed, really pure exhausted. And he wakens up and he takes a smoke and he says, "My God," he says, "I don't get oot of here," he says, "I'm goin tae be found dead". He says, "I don't know what's wrong wi this place." And every mornin when ye got up and after ye got up and had your breakfast, you looked at the place, it seemed tae enchant ye, you know. "Oh I'll give it another try," that sort o way.

Andrew: Made ye want to stay.

John: Made ye want tae stay.

So anyway, it was away the next night but the followin night, it starts again, and he's ootside an the blue light's in front o him, ye see. And the blue light goes away that way, and he's runnin an he says, "I'm no goin tae run sae fast, the night. I'll walk." So he walks after it an he walks after it and half-runs after it and walks after it and half-runs efter it, till it goes away a different road aathegither, an it takes him tae a big ould ruin, like an old Chinese monastery place wi big long stairs goin up, like that and it goes up this stairs, right up this stairs and in this old palace (there was no roof tae it, just the walls) and when he walks in there, everything's lit up, and the blue light's gaun up the stair and there's people in dozens goin up and down here, like them courtiers and ladies and nobles and aa this carry-on wi auld-fashioned dresses on them, Chinese. And he's up this big banister stairs and away round and he comes intae a big room upstairs and they're dancin tae music, and this light's gaun roon them all, and he's runnin after the light. So anyway, at the finish up, he stands in a corner an he weighin everything up, and he sees an awfa nice girl, and the music was sae good that he asks her tae dance. And as soon as he starts dancin wi her this girl, he hears Tramp! Tramp! Tramp! and the whole place is shudderin and all o the dancers stops and goes back to the walls and in through the door comes this great big black horse, like a great big Clydesdale black stallion and there was a man on it. And if ever there was a Devil, he was, by the way this fella described him. And the horse come right out in the middle o the floor and he let the girl go, and between the horse's legs the blue light appeared. An he made a runnin race, through the horse's legs at the blue light and when he wakened up he was wrastlin in bed wi the pillae, half-roads oot o bed and the bed-clothes an everything on the floor and he's lyin pantin, when he hears (knocks) at the door. [Dog barks]

He says, "Come in." In comes three men wi thon livery kin o uniforms on, flunkeys o some kind. "Yes your majesty," they says tae him, "we're waitin on you."

He says, "What are you majestyin about?" he says.

They says, "Come on your majesty." And another man walks in, wi a whole prince's regalia, ye know, aa the robes, the royal robes and wan thing an anither, like that.

THE JAM MAKER

"Well your majesty, we're here to dress ye up. You're gettin married this mornin."

He says, "Ye're makin a mistake, lads," he says. "I'm the gardener here." He says, "I'm the man that makes the jam," he says. "Ye know what a jam-maker is?"

"No your majesty."

But at the finish up wi argyin an bargyin they gets him to put this clothes on. And when he comes outside, the soldiers are standin like that, frae the wee house right tae this big ruin, that he'd run to the night before. And trumpets blowin and bands goin. So he comes out and they takes him and put him in this aa carved carriage and right up to this great castle. And when he come in, the girl was waitin on him, this princess and he says, "Look, there's some mistake made. I'm the man from the gardener's cottage down the road."

She says, "What gardener's cottage?" She says, "You're the man that came here," she says, "and you're the man," she says, "last night," she says, "that grasped the blue light," she says, "and broke the enchantment."

So she actually told him what he went through and the two of them got married and lived happy ever after.

Andrew: Grand tale!

John Stewart

This was a man working on a farm and he'd a wee family, ye see? An it was away back in the days o yore, when things was very very bad. Farmers could hardly pay them. If they paid them at all it was wi meal an tatties an stuff - mulk, ye see? So, it was comin up near Christmas, an the man was wonderin what he wad dae for bits o things for his kids, one thing an another like that. An the weans was rinnin roon aboot, on Christmas eve night, hingin up their stockings, ye see, an he says, "I wonder what I'll do now," he says. "I wonder what ae do."

He made peeries out o pirns, ye know, spools o threid, thon old-fashioned fags (?), he made peeries for the laddies, an we bits o rock-in horses oot o timber, but the wee lassie was wantin a doll, ye see. An he was oot that efternoon, walkin up the neep field and he looked an he saw this turnip and it was as like a doll, aboot eighteen inches high, and it was as like a doll as two peas, with the two roots like that for legs, and two other bits like this for, airms, and the body, ye see. An he looked an he said, "If I pulled that," he said, "I could make a doll oot o that tae her," ye see.

So he pulled the neep, the turnip, an he screwed the shaw aff the tap o it, carried it hame. So that night he sat an he scraped it an peelt it an lopped it an pit bits o claes on it, ye ken, and it really did look like a doll.

So the weans got up in the mornin an got their things, ye see, an the wee lassie's aa away wi her doll. So that night when they were going to their beds, the doll was lyin where the wee lassie had fell asleep. The man lifted it an pit it on the mantelpiece. But the doll spoke tae him!

It says, "Mr. McPherson," it says, "Jock McPherson, the quicker you take me back tae that field," it says, "where you pulled me," he says, "the better." An he says, "If you're walkin up an doon fields an see things," he says, "doesnae maitter where you're walkin, an see things, things like me, or any other things, never pit your hand tae them, just walk past," he says, "never injure them in any way. But take me back." Ye see? "An we'll say nae mair aboot it."

So, aw, it was late at night an the man says, "I canny go oot the night," he says, "it's win' an rain," he says, "I'll be droont."

"Well," he says, "ye'll have tae take me back the night!" he says. He says, "You just walk up the field," he says, "an ye'll soon ken," he says, "when ye get tae the place where ye pulled me."

So the man got the - he was dead scared, ye see. Frightened. The man was feart. He got this doll an he took the bits o claes aff it an he held the neep in his hand an he walked oot tae the road, and across one field, up the other field. The neeps was aa wet tae, an he's plungin through them, an whenever he come tae the place where he was walkin up an down where he had pulled the neep, the neep just seem-ed tae jerk an drop oot o his hand. Ye see? So he's stoppin like that tae see if the neep was doon an he seen a wee white roon stone, ken, he could see it kinna in the dark when he bent doon. So he liftit this stone, ye know, a roon stone it was, like a big pebble, an he liftit this stone an he just kep it in his hand an walked away, ye know, thinkin. An back tae the hoose an he pit the stone on the mantelpiece.

So the next mornin, the wife was up an there widna be much tea an sugar or ham an egg brakfasts at that time, I suppose it wad be a taste o porridge an milk or something, ye ken. An she says, "Where did ye get that stone?" she says, "I don't like that stone at all," she

says. "It's a queer feelin every time A look at that stone on that mantelpiece."

He says, "I found it last night," he says, "up at the neep field," he says. "There's nothin in a stone."

She says, "Take it an throw it away," she says, "I don't care about it." So he got the stone an he went ootside an he flung the stone away across the field, ye ken. So that was aa right, he went tae his work that day, come back, an the next mornin he was up kinnlin the fire, an he looked for matches or something on the mantel shelf, and there was the stone. Ye see? His wife was standin at his back. He looked tae her an she says, "I thought you flung that stone away."

He says, "So I did." He says, "I flung it away." He says, "Some o the weans must hae been oot an found it again."

An, "Naw," she says, "the weans werenae," she says. "They couldnae," she says, "in that lang grass, fin the stone."

"Well," he says, "I'll take it again," he says. "Look, come oot tae door, an there it's now," an he flung it away miles intae the air. Ye see? So, the next mornin, when they were up again, the stone was back on the mantelpiece. Ye see? He tried aa weys tae get rid o that stone an he couldna. He tried everything. He went away for an hour's walk, away through intae the river an aa thing. Naw, it was always back on the mantelpiece.

So now a time comes, he forgot about the stone then, an he just put it in his pocket an forgot aa about it. Aw, about three or four months efter that, the fermer an everybody was, complainin about the hard times like a famine comin, in the country. An he says, "We canny stick it here," he says, tae his wife, he says. He says, "We'll pack up," he says, an he says, "we'll move," he says.

Well, there were nae buses an the man didnae hae the price o a horse an cart or nothin like that. He just packit a bundle, put it on his back, an his three weans wi him, an his wife, an they off, ye see, marchin on, marchin on, marchin on. An they were makin a wee bit o meat here, an a wee bit o meat there an the man was - right enough there was plenty o rabbits an things in the country, a pheasant. If he couldnae get a pheasant, he always got a rabbit or two. The woman boil them wi some tatties an turnips an things tae keep them all going.

But they comes on an on an on an on an on an on an on intae country that they didnae know at aa. At that time it was just like tracks an wild country, ye see. He tried a few wee fairms for work. Na! The people was as bad as hisself. But they comes on an on an on an on an on till they comes tae this - it was like a big river. But when he looked at yon end o it, ye would think it was goin intae the sea, like sand dunes. An away on this ither side again, was a wud. Big wud. He says, "I wonder," he says, "what road we'll go," he says. "Will we go that way?" he says tae the wife, he says, "next the sea. We'll maybe no get roon, it wad be quicksand an that." He says, "An if we go that way," he says, "it's a thick, thick wud," he says. "We'll maybe get eat wi the wild animals." Ye see?

I suppose at that time there would be wolves, bears, one thing an another like that, in the wuds.

She says, "We'll stay here for the night," she says, "in this sheltery bit," she says, "an we'll give the weans a rest," she says, "an I'll try an use the rest o them tatties." Ye see?

He says, "Aa right."

So the man pit his things doon an it was a good thing it was nice an dry weather, ye see. So she gets the tatties, an she was lookin through her meat box, or wherever she had, her odds an ends tae

see if she could get something tae grease the tatties. So she come across a bundle o braxie cannles. Know what a braxie cannle is?

Sheila: Candle made out of sheep fat?

John: That's right, that's right.

She'd tied a bundle o them up like that afore she come away in case they were needin them. This braxie cannles. So she melted two or three o the braxie cannles when the tatties was boiled, an she mixed them up wi water an pit it through the tatties, chopped them up, the tatties, minced them up, an put the braxie, fatty bree in through them. So they eat that that night.

So the next mornin long before his wife was up, the man was doon the beach, an he looked, an he thought he saw a stone the same as the one in his pocket. But he put his hand in his pocket like that an he took his stone oot an it wisnae the same kin o stone at aa. So he put the stone back in his pocket again an something made the man walk up the side o the river, an the side o this - was a big broad - like the Mississippi, sort o style o a river, ye ken. He come roon this bend an in this marshy bit amang the reeds, he saw a wee auld-fashioned boat made o a kin o bark an wud an that, ye see. An there was water in it. It was kin o well sunken. He says, "If I could get that boat," he says, "it wad save me fae gaun roon," he says, "tryin tae get through that wud," he says, "or away roon that point," he says, "if we could go straight across." He says, "If I could get that boat fixed."

So he pulls the boat up an doon, half full o water, an he roared tae his wife, some o the weans an the wife come doon an got tins an jugs an aa thing, tae empy the boat o water, an the man turned it upside doon an it wis like bark or bull-hide or skin or somethin that was on it. An the seams was kinna loose, that's whaur the water was gettin in. But the frame o the boat was aa solid, solid oak frame's was in it, ye ken. So he says tae the wife, "If I'd had something," he says, "tae seal that seams," he says, "that boat wad be aa right."

She says, "I've nothin at aa."

He says, "What aboot some o yer braxie cannles? The fat?" Ye see? Handfu o braxie cannles an the dirt that come oot o the fryin pan, ye see? An he got a wee jug an he poured the fat intae the jug an he went up the seams o the boat, ken? An he put a wee sneck - he'd nae nails wi him but he pit wee sharp bits o wud, hard wud, bored a wee hole an chappit the wud in through, ye ken, like wudden nails. An pit the fat right aa roon every bit, an left it. It wisnae a big boat, maybe a thing aboot seven or eight feet long.

So he turned it up again an pushed it intae the water an oh! it floated like a cork. Ye know what I mean? An wi the water gettin on the seams it seemed tae freeze any fat that was there, tae keep it together better.

So he went an he cut hissel a big broad stick like an oar, an he got his weans in and his bundle an pushed off an paddled an paddled an paddled oot an paddled oot. "Oh," she says, "it's a good bit tae the other side."

"Ah but we'll get there sometime," he says. "It's a bonny day," he says. He says, "We'll get owre the other side," he says, "it's nice and green and bushy over there," he says. "Different fae this country here, fae this side."

But they paddled an paddled an paddled an paddled till they got owre tae the other side. She says, "What we gonnae do wi the boat?"

He says, "We'll hide it, in case we need it."

So they lookit for a nice wee bit in among some bushes at the side, ye know, an they tore some strips o rag an tied it to a stump o a tree, pulled it kinna oot o the water. So he gets the bundle on his back, again, an they're walkin up, just takin their time, walkin up this - on an on an on an on an on an on, when they sees this - aa this people in front o them, aa walkin - like that folk in that picture, walkin aa through the wood, ye know? An they're aa walkin an walkin an walkin, ye see. An he says, "What's that people daein?" he says. "Look at them aa." He says, "They must be goin some place," he says. "We'll follae on tae." An he tried tae speak tae a few o them but they were a very silent mob, ye know. But they went on an on an on an on an on an on. An they come ower the edge o this hill, an comin doon like that they sees a great big windmill, an this windmill's gaun roon, an roon, ye see. Noo all these people that was walkin, they looked prosperous kinna people, ye see? So after the yins stoppin an if it was a family, or a man an wife, they would stand an jabber tae yin another an they would get aa their belongings an go an hand it tae this man: money, jewels, meal or corn, everything they had, they gave tae this man. An he teemed it intae between these two big grindin stones, an everything was ground tae dust, ye see?

"Oh," the woman says, "that's queer." She says, "That's affa queer."

He goes up tae the man an he says tae the man - the people aa walked away - so he come up an he says, "What is these people doin?"

"Well," he says, "these people," he says, "are the rich o the country. But they're after nothing but prosperity an money." An he says, "I'm the Devil," an he says, "aa these people has tae hand aa their riches an their money tae me." An he says, "I just grind it up there."

An the man says, "Well, where dae ye put it?"

"Oh," he says, "that's none o your business where I put it," he says.

"Still," he says, "that's queer," he says. So him an his wife left, an away they went. So they come tae a bit o the country where the rabbits an the game was kinna scarce, ye see. An they campit. So he was walkin up above this bank an through this bushes - I suppose tae get some sticks for a fire or something - an he saw this broon hare lyin in a flap, wi its ears back, ye see. He couldnae get a stone tae hit it. He says, "If I could get that hare," he says. An he was frightened tae walk up on it in case it would get up an away. But he put his hand - he mindit o the stone in his pocket - put his hand intae his pocket an he took the stone oot.

An he just took aim an he flung the stone at the hare, ye see? An just hit the hare there, ye see? So the hare started kicking. So he lifted the hare an he was goin away tae kill it. Ye know the way ye haud them up by the hind legs tae dae this tae them. The hare says, "For God's sake," he says, "don't kill me!" he says. He says, "I'm an enchanted prince," he says. An he says, "I was enchanted," he says, "years an years an years ago, an I've been runnin about since." An he says, "if ye leave me down," he says, "and hit me with that stone," he says, "another twice - that's three times in all," he says, "I'll be cured." So he left the hare doon an it sat there an he hit it three times on the back on the neck (?) wi the stone, well once, then twice and this hare turned intae a prince. So he thankit this man, this Mr. McPherson, very much. He says, "I come from a long, long, long way away," he says. An he says, "The man that done that tae me," he says,

"is that Beelzebub man," he says, "at the mill." He says, "I went in an I had tae give all my riches." But he says, "I kept back," he says, "a stone, a very valuable stone," and he says. "Because I did this," he says, "he turned me intae this hare," and he'd been rinnin aboot here ever since.

So the fellow says, "Where is the stone now, the valuable stone? Could ye no sell it an get money tae go home."

He says, "I can't," he says, "because," he says, "you've got the stone." He says, "I was rinnin here and there," he says, "an I carried the stone aa the time I was the hare." But he says, "I couldnae get anybody that would hit me three times with it." Now he says, "I lost that stone," but he says, "where I lost it, I couldnae tell ye."

"Well," says this man, he says, "I found it in a field, o turnips," he says, "last year."

"Well," this prince says, "I thank you very much," he says. An he says, "if you gave me the stone back," he says, "I'll tell ye where to go," he says, "tae get something that'll benefit you far more than the stone."

"Oh," says the man, "the stone's nae use tae me. Does nae look of any value to me." But he says, "If it's o that great value to you," he says, "there's the stone tae ye." So he gave him the stone.

So the prince says now, "Dae ye see yon high mountain, thon rocky mountain?"

He says, "Yes."

"Well," he says, "if you go there," he says, "there's a mountain sheep there," he says, "with a twisted, deformed horn." Now he says, "It'll be easy enough caught," he says, "because it's gettin old and (?) an if you can get that horn off it," he says, "ye'll live happy ever after."

So, the man couldnae believe it, an he came back an he telt his wife an his wife says, "What kept ye Jock?"

He says, "I'm feart tae tell ye."

She says, "Did ye no get a rabbit or onything?" she says, "tae boil for the weans?"

He says, "No," he says, "I'll go oot an I'll soon see," he says, "if I can get a rabbit." He tells her.

She says, "My goodness," she says, "that's a queer - a queer - a queer carry-on that," she says. "An did this prince tak the stone?"

He says, "Aye."

She says, "What way did he go?"

"Well," he says, "tae tell ye the God's honest truth, I don't know where he went." He says, "I didnae even - what he told me excited me that much, that I forget." He says, "He just went an that was it!"

"Well," she says, "the only thing we can dae," she says, "is go as near that mountain as we can," she says, "an we'll just need tae wait an see if we can get haud o that sheep." But she says, "I dinny see where," she says, "a sheep's horn is gonnae dae ye much good." Ye see?

Well, he went oot an he got a couple o wee rabbits and stayed there that night, eat about the last o this meal an that, an away they went the next day, walkin through this brush an mud an up wee hills and doon wee hills, an they could see this big higher crag o a mountain in front o them. But they got as near to it as they possibly could, an he put doon his things. "Now just you wait there," he says, "an I'll climb away up here," he says, "an scout for this - for this sheep."

So he went up an up an up, an up, an he looked roon, the bend o the hill, over the rocks an that. My word, there was a lot o sheep, ye see? Mountain sheep. So he looks an he stares an he gets nearer them an nearer them an nearer them, an here he sees a great big wan, standin on a rock, an it had a great big twisted horn, like that, hanging down the ways. Ye see? So he crawled up an crawled up, right away round the back. This sheep just stood, the rest run away, galloped when they smelled him, and wind an that. So he got up round the back o this rock an it was standin on top o a rock, y'know. So he looked for a high rock an he stood up like that an he grabbed it by the hind leg, an he pulled it owre, ye see? An it fell owre the rocks that's doon beside him. An he got haud o the horn an he done that, an the horn seemed tae twist off, ken. An whenever he twisted the horn, the sheep just lay there, just lookin at him. Whenever he twisted the horn off the sheep, it sprung tae its feet like that, an it off, ye see?

So he looked at the horn like that, great big twisted horn, y'know. An he thought there was blood on it an he done that, here it was full o gold, nuggets o gold and diamonds and stuff come oot o it. He says, "Oh my God, look at this here." He couldnae believe hissel. So he back doon tae his wife, back doon tae his wife, an he showed her. "Now," she says, "if we could get back," she says, "to near where there's ony civilisation o some kind," she says, "we could start wursel a great business," she says. Because every time ye dumped the horn there was gold an diamonds an stuff comin oot o it, ye see?

"Well," he says, "come on." So they rolled the horn up carefully an packed everything an aa the --- they tired theirsel oot gaun back that quick to where their boat was, an they got in their wee boat, the next day, paddled back over tae where they come fae, an he's goin back past this place, this big place where the big wheel's gaun roon about. An who's standin there but the Devil, ye see?

He says, "Have you anything tae declare?" Ye see, the Devil says.

He says, "No, didn't I pass here already?" he says, "an I had nothin."

"Oh," he says, "I think ye have," he says. He says, "You've got the magic horn," he says, "an you'll have to give it up."

So he went away over tae the man like that, tae get his bundle, when his - this Devil stood stock still like that. The prince was at his back, this prince, an the prince had hit him there wi the stone, the valuable stone. An the Devil just stood like that. So the prince says, "Come on, hurry up, get away by him." An the prince lifted his stone an showed them a nearer way to get tae civilisation, ye see?

So they went on an on, bid farewell tae the prince an that, an they walked an walked an walked an walked till they came to this scatt-erment of wee houses, an a bit o a trading post shop or somethin an they got grub an oh! they were in a great way o daein. An the wife was that gled she started greetin an huggin her weans. Then they went tae the next toon an they bought theirsel a wee place an the man opened a wee business, a jeweller's kin o business it was. An ye know this? Tae this day now, lots o people say that's Samuel's, ye know, Samuel's the big jeweller's? They say that was him that started that. That wasnae too bad a wee story.

John Stewart

This was once a king. He was a landed man, y'know, he owned a lot of ground, at that time, so they were just actually made out as a king, ye know what I mean. An he had a lovely wife, the place was gaun on, but she would never give birth to any child, ye see. But one day he was out on horseback, and he was shootin - well, it would be bows an arras in that days - an he meets this old woman, ye see. An he says, "Out o the way, old woman," he says tae her, "till I get past in case the horse knocks ye down."

"Oh," she says, "if you knew who I am," she says, she says, "your highness," she says, "ye wouldn't speak like that."

"Well," he says, "who are ye?"

She says, "I'm the only woman," she says, "in all the land, who could give you," she says, "the wish that's most near to your heart."

"Well," he says, he says, "what's that?"

"Ye were wishing," she says, "that your wife would give birth to a son," she says, "or even a daughter. But," she says, "she's failed ye," she says, "for several years."

"Well," he says, "that's right enough."

He started tae get interested in her crack now, ye see.

"Well," he says, "have ye any place tae go?"

She says, "No," she says, "I just wander about," she says. And she says, "I'm quite happy."

"Well," he says, "if you come up tae the castle," he says, "ye can stay," he says, "as long as ye want, about the place an feed the hens an that, do what ye want." He says, "If you could try an help my wife any way." Ye see?

So this old woman, "Well," she says, "I'll go for the matter o a year, because," she says, "that's all the time that I can stay," she says, "because I come from a place," she says, "that nobody knows of."

He says, "Where is that?"

"Oh," she says, "that's away on the other side of where the Devil fooled the fiddler." She says, "And if your horse was made of iron," she says, "and your bows an arras an guns made of steel, or, your horses made o steel," she says, "you'd never reach the land that I come from."

So she just shut her trap then, and she went dawdlin on behind his horse an his men, an back to the castle. So he showed her a wee place where she could stay, like a wee hut place. So she's there feedin the hens. The lady herself used tae come oot an chat tae her, but the old lady would never say any more o where she come from, or what she was or what she wasn't, an she was like a big ould puss-wrinkle, a big old tall woman, ye know what I mean? An her nose an her chin were hooked, ye could crack walnuts between her nose an her chin. So she's there for - oh she's there for comin up nine months an out the king comes an he says, "Where's that ould wumman." Ye see?

The ould wumman says, "I'm here," she says. "What dae ye want?" she says, "your highness."

He says, "you've been here nine months now," he says, "an," he says, "I don't see any odds o ma wife. I thought ye were gonny help her along that lines."

"Oh," she says, "you've never noticed. But," she says, "your wife's three or four months pregnant, in the family wey."

He says, "ye don't tell me that!"

"Oh yes," she says, an she says, "she doesn't want to say."

So he went back up tae the queen an he asked her an she says, "Oh yes, I've been that way for about three months or four months," she says, "but you with your runnin here an runnin there, shootin an drivin here an drivin there, ye never noticed."

So anyway, he comes down to the old woman an he says, "Now," he says, "we've no doctors or anybody about, these lands," he says, "or midwives," he says. "Do you know anything about that?"

"Well," she says, "I know everything," she says. "I'll stay until your wife has her child."

So here the time rolls on, an he's oot wan day, an he gets the old wumman in at the henhouse, ye see. He says, "What are ye doin in there?"

She says, "I was takin these two eggs," she says, "for ma tea," she says.

"Well," he says, "ye've no right takin them without askin." He was very abrupt with her, ye know what I mean.

An she says, "Well," she says, "your Highness, I didn't mean to offend you in any way," she says, "I never thought ye'd miss two eggs, but" she says, "ye'll maybe rue it." Ye see?

So now him an his wife's nigglin, an when they're nigglin he's takin it out on the old wumman. But eventually the wumman lies down an to be confined, ye see. An she has the wean. But oh! Ye wanted tae see the wean. It was a hunchback an it had a club fut, an it had only wan eye. Oh! the king was gonnae do away wi it. The place was in an uproar! Ye see? He says, "Where's that old hag?" he says. He says, "I'll make her," he says, "that she'll -," he says, "it's her 'at done it."

So he's out an he's got the servants runnin here an there, lookin for this ould wumman, but the ould wumman wasnae tae be got! Ye see?

So the mother says, "Ye'll leave the child alone," she says. "It cannae help it," she says, "and we cannae help it," she says. "Just leave him the way he is." She says, "It's God's will an just leave him."

So the time rolls on, the laddie gets up, he's tryin tae learn this an learn that an he was well handicapped wi this club fut, because he couldnae run as hard as any o the rest o them, an he's like a crupach, ye know what a crupach is? But anyway, he comes to aboot when he was aboot nineteen or twenty, an he says tae his father, "That old woman -"

They telt him, the father told him like aboot the old wumman, an he says, "We blame her for when ye were born," he says, "for doin this."

An he said, "Tell me what she said aboot this horses made o iron," he says.

"Well," he says, "she wouldn't tell nobody where she come from, an she said if our horses were made o iron an our bodies made o steel, that we would never reach the land that she lived on." Ye see?

The lad, he says, "Och," he says, "I think," he says, "I'll go an search," he says. "She's maybe known in some other bit o the country."

So he went and he got a horse off his father, put a saddle on it, put a piece in his bag, an that, jumped on the horse's back an away he went, tae search for this ould wumman.

But he goes on an on an on and he's stayin here an stayin there, an talkin tae this one an talkin tae that one, askin aboot this ould wumman but nobody knew who she was. They didnae even know what he was talkin about when he asked them aboot the back o beyond, where the

Devil fooled the fiddler. Nobody knew what he was on, they thought he was mad! Ye see? But he's away for aboot a month, rakin here an there, one thing an another like that, an he's comin up this wilderness o a glen, an houses an things at that time were very very scarce. It was only a hut here an a hut there, ye would get through the country places. So he's comin up here an his horse got lame, went lame on him, an he tied his horse up wi a bit o - tae a brench, an he was that tired he threw hissel doon an after a while he looked at his horse an his horse's holdin its fut this way. He says, "Oh my goodness, my horse must be lame," an he loosed it an he led it for a wee bit an it was cripplin, ye see. So he takes his knife out an he's lookin at his horse's fut, an he's scrapin the hoof an pickin the dirt oot an aa thing, an he got this thing like a roond stone. He says, "That's a queer-lookin stone that!" Ken, it was aboot that size, an it was glitterin, ye see, so he put it in his pocket, an he lies doon, an oh! aboot one or two o'clock in the mornin, he hears this swishin noise, swishin noise. An he got up, tae see what it was, an he was enveloped in something like a cloak an he couldnae move one way or another, an he felt hisself bein carried, ye see, for a good long, long time, an when he was left doon this stuff that enveloped him, disappeared off him an he looked aboot an he was in a big cave, a big dark cave. An what was aa roon him but cockatrices. They're great big giant snakes wi wings, ye see. An it says tae him, "Where are you goin? You're in private territory. This territory belongs to us."

He says, "What did you do wi ma horse?" he said.

He says, "Your horse is all right," he says. "We couldn't take it up here," he says. "It's left where it was tied." Ye see?

So he's in there an he's lookin an there were a wild stink off this cave o these cockatrices, ye see. But anyway he's in there aa day the next day, aa day the next day, an noo he's starvin wi the hunger. An these things is never offerin him any food, but there was one, come tae him, a smaller one, a young one, an it says, "You'll just have tae try an steal bits o what they're eatin," he says, "if ye want tae live. Because," he says, "I don't think they'll let you out." Ye see?

So he's stealin bits o this frogs an mice - he would ha ate any-thing at all with pure hunger, tae keep hissel livin. He doesnae know hoo long he's there, it would be a fortnight or three weeks, maybe a month. He says, "My horse'll be dead now," he says, "tied tae that branch." Ye see? Thinkin aboot his horse. He says, "If I could only get oot," but every time he went tae get oot these cockatrices that were lyin wi their wings folded just watchin all the time, ye see? But he wanders back intae the end o the cave, an he meets the young cockatrice, an it says, "I'll tell ye," he says, "I could get ye out, get ye out of here," he says. "Even past ma mother and father, if ye'd do what I would tell ye."

So Jack says, "What's that?"

"Oh," he says, "they're all egg layers, they don't have young same as any other beast, they lay eggs. Now," he says, "if you could creep intae that shell o that egg," one that was lyin halfed in two, he says, "I could join it thegither," he says, "because," he says, "every day, when any o ma brothers an sisters is gonnae get born, the eggs has tae be rolled out for a certain length o time in the sun," he says. An he says, "If you can get in there," he says, "I could roll ye oot. An then," he says, "it's up tae yersel tae get out, an get away."

So Jack says, "All right, I'll take any chance at aa," he says. So he says, "Dae ye want me tae do it now?" He says, "Naw," he says, "first thing in the mornin, before the sun comes up."

So Jack waits, he lay wakened all night so just before daybreak he goes away ben and this young cockatrice is lyin coiled up, ye see. He says, "Get this shell here." It had been an old shell that had been hatched ages afore that, ye see. So he got intae the shell and he pit the two bits o the shell thegither and put a saliva o its mouth around the seam an it pushed it an pushed it out, rollin the egg, this big egg, ye see, out. An the mother an father looked. "Where are ye goin?"

"I'm just takin this egg oot for some sun." Ye see.

"Where did ye get it."

"Oh, it was at the back o the cave."

"There'll be nothin come oot o that cos it'll be like a dud one."

When he pushes the egg oot tae the front o the cave an leaves it there. So Jack gets his knife and he breaks the shell and looks out. Nobody there; an he gets oot an he's up on a precipice. He says, "Hoo am I goin tae get oot o here?" But he goes back roon the other way an he looks an he could see his footgrips here an there doon, ye know what I mean. An he hangs on wi his tooth an nail till he got, doon tae the bottom. Ye see? An when he comes tae the bottom he gets his horse wanderin aboot, ye see. So he puts his hand like that tae his pocket an here he has an egg in his pocket. He must ha liftit it sometime an pit it in his pocket when he was lookin at somethin or doin somethin, "Oh Good God!" he says. "I've got one o them beast's eggs in ma pocket." He says, "Ach," he says, "I'll keep it in ma pocket. It'll maybe bring luck tae me." So he sticks it in his pocket.

So he gets his horse an looks at his horse an his horse was right enough. An he jumps on its back an he comes on up this glen, right on intae another place, doon through a wood, comes tae a hut where he meets an auld man. He says, "Did ye ever see a wumman," he said, "an ould witch wumman." He says, "I met her one time," he says, "she comes from the Back o Beyond."

"Well," says the man, "I've never heard o the place," he says. "Never - couldnae tell ye nothin aboot that at all," he says. An he says, "The further ye go that way," he says, "the country gets wilder." He says, "I've never known anyone," he says, "that passes maybe aboot five or six mile beyond here," he says, "nobody ever goes." He says, "It's barren country," he says. "Nobody knows what's the other side of it at all."

But he comes on an on an on. He says, "I'll have to go," he says. "I'm no carin where I go." But he comes on an on an on an on an on, an he's sittin doon at the side o a wee burn takin a drink o watter, when he feels a movement in his pocket, an he does that. He thought there was somethin up. But he puts his hand in his pocket an here a young cockatrice comes oot, hatches in his pocket. An he takes it oot, an he gives it a wee bit o whatever he had been eatin, an he pits it back in his pocket again. But the next day its too big for his pocket, startit tae grow an grow, an grow, ye see. An he's goin on wi his horse, night an day, he's goin. An the cockatrice says tae him, "Where do you think ye're goin?"

Jack says, "I'm goin," he says, "tae look for an old wumman," he says, "for that old wumman," he says. "An old witch," he says. "I don't know her name," he says, "but she comes from the Back o Beyond."

He says, "Ye're at the start o the Back o Beyond." He says, "That's what they call all this country," this cockatrice says tae him.

An every minute o the day an every second this cockatrice is gettin bigger. It's gettin now that it he cannae take it up on his horse's back, it's comin behint him, an it's only startin tae learn tae fly, because they've got big leather wings, a cockatrice.

He says, "Ye'll no get any further than the top o this place anyway."

Jack says, "How?"

He says, "There's a mountain range that nobody can go through an the valley gaun through it," he says. "It's like walkin against a blank wall." He says, "Whatever kin o magnet's in it, ye canny get through it. If there's anything steel, your horse would stick tae the cliffs," he says. "It wouldnae get off."

So Jack says, "That's queer," he says. He says, "That's queer."

He says, "An what's doon this other way?"

"Oh," he says, "that's takin ye doon by the sea."

"Well," he says, "I'll go doon there," he says, "tae see what like it is. I'll maybe see somebody doon there."

He says, "We'll no get anybody doon there I don't think." He says, "Just fish an porpoises an shark. Animals," he says, "of the sea."

"Well," he says, "we'll go doon," he says, "an see anyway."

So down he goes, an he's sittin on the sand, lookin oot at the sea, an porpoises is jumpin aboot an seals, an things, ye see. So this porpoise comes in, flappin itsel aboot, an it says tae him, "Ye're lookin very weary, Jack," this porpoise says tae him.

Jack says, "My goodness," he says, "can you speak tae?"

He says, "Nearly everything up in this country," he says, "can speak." He says, "Ye're away from civilisation, here," he says. "There's never nobody here," he says.

An Jack says, "What's that white thing in the water, that white big patch o white?"

"Oh," he says, "that's an underwater spring well," he says, "that comes up there, an that's fresh water." He says, "That's fresh water," he says, "among the salt," he says, "ye don't often see that."

So Jack says, "I bet there'll be a nice place under the water, there. There'll be caves an things. There'll be some funny kin o fish."

He says, "Wait an I'll go an show ye," an he dives away aneth the water an right oot an comes back, ye see, an he says tae Jack, "That's what's down there under it." An Jack looks an it hands Jack an eye, an eye! Like a crystal eye, ye see. Jack says, "What's this?"

He says, "You might find," he says, "use for that yet." He says, "An that's aa I can say," he says.

So Jack pits the eye in his pocket, ye see. An he feels the other bit o stone that was in his pocket an he takes it oot. He says, "I've had this one too, for a while," he says, "I found that."

"Well," he says, "you're never in want when you've that other one," the porpoise says tae him.

He says, "Why's that?"

He says, "If you keep that in your mouth," he says, "ye'll never be hungry." He says, "I would like tae know where ye got that. I've heard about it," he says. "The rest o my people talk aboot it, my fish friends talk about it," he says, "but I've never saw anything like that."

So Jack cracks tae it an talks tae it an talks tae it, an away he goes. So the cockatrice says tae him, it says, "That's queer," he says, "what that fish said tae you, that animal says," the cockatrice

says tae him. He says, "Pit that bit o stone in your mouth Jack an see if ye are needin food," he says.

So Jack puts this white stone in his mooth, the first stone he got, an he didnae feel like eatin at all, an he didnae feel like drinkin. He felt fresh aa the time, ye see. Jack says, "By God," he says, "that's workin." Ye see?

So they come up tae this glen an he's walkin on, ye see. An all of a sudden, his horse seems tae waver an with the steel trappins tae his saddle an that, it gets traileed oot tae the rock side, an it stuck, ye see. An he's pullin an he's pullin, he's beginnin tae get traileed tae. His pocket knife was pullin him, inside his pocket. It's a good thing he didnae hae nails in his shoes, or he'd ha been stuck feet first! It was them leather moccasin kin o things he'd on in them days. But between him an the cockatrice they got the horse free.

"Now," says the cockatrice, he says, "what did I tell ye!" He says, "Aa this country here," he says, "right through," he says, "is that. Ye canny get intae it." Ye see? But Jack says, "There's bound tae be somethin," he says, "o that."

He says, "There's only one thing," he says. He says, "If ye folly me," he says, the cockatrice says tae him, he says, "I'll take ye," he says, "tae the double-headed eagle that has aa this place as its territory, an" he says, "if it doesnae know o any place through there," he says, "ye'll be as well tae turn back."

"An where can we see this double-headed eagle?"

He says, "Ye'll have tae wait," he says, "till sunrise every third day." Ye see?

"Aye," the cockatrice said, "it's every three days it comes, at sunrise," he says, "the two-headed eagle," he says, an he says, "it's the only that'll tell ye if there's a way across this mountain or not," he says.

So he waited the first day, he was up early but no, but the second day has ha been the day it was comin, so he sees this big eagle comin, two-headed eagle. Ye see. An it must ha knew, or saw him, an it landed on a rock, so Jack he got up an he says, "You're the two-headed eagle."

The eagle says, "Yes?"

"Well," he says, "I'm lookin," he says, "for the land," he says, "beyond these hills," he says, "beyond where the Devil fooled the fiddler," he says.

"Oh," says the eagle, he says, "ye'll no see anything if ye go there anyway."

An Jack says, "How?" An he turned roond tae speak tae the eagle, an the wee stone dropped oot his pocket, ye see. The eagle says, "Wait a minute," he says, "an it put its foot on the top o this eye. It says, "Where did ye get this?"

An Jack says, "I got it," he says, "from a porpoise that was swimmin about in the sea, at the shore side."

"Well," he says, "if ye leave your horse there," he says, "tae graze," he says, "take your cockatrice with you," he says, "over your shoulders," he says, "an climb on my back," an he says, "do as I say."

So Jack let his horse loose, he got the cockatrice up over his shoulder, climbed up on the two-headed eagle's back, an it soars up. He says, "We cannae go too close to the cliffs doon below because it's a place where ye could be caught an never get out." So it flies an flies an flies away up high, an goes straight across. An after about an hour's flyin, it comes down, an it lands, an it was just like the edge o the world on this cliff. An lookin out it was just aa darkness.

"Now," said the eagle, "ye see why they say it's the Back o Beyond where the Devil fooled the fiddler?" But he says, "I'll tell ye what tae do Jack." He says, "Get that wee stone," he says, "out o your pocket," an he says, "put that in your blind eye."

So Jack rummaged in his pocket an he got this wee glittery stone, like a diamond, an he pushed it into his eye. When he put that in his eye, he saw the loveliest country you could wish tae see, an aa the green fields an towerin castles an houses an people walkin about.

"Now," says the eagle, he says, "if ye go down there," he says, "it'll be at your own risk." He says, "if ye want out," he says, "ye'll have tae get me here," he says, "in three days again, on this rock up on the mountain."

"Well," says Jack, he says, "I have to go down anyway." Ye see? So this wee humfy man Jack, he gets doon, his cockatrice along wi him. Away they goes down an they're comin in past the people in the town. Everyone seems to be workin an carryin loads. Ye know what I mean? An they were nae in what you would call good condition, a poverty-stricken lookin, lot, an they were carryin this an carryin that, men along wi them seein that they done this an done that, ye see? So Jack he's walkin along, an he comes tae this great big iron gate in the centre o the town, tae get out o the busy part. So he goes up tae the iron gate, the cockatrice says, "Look, Jack!" An there was a big flash o light an the two gates swung open an out comes a man wi a robe on him an a long golden beard, an he says, "Welcome," he says, "to our domain," he says. He says, "You're the first person," he says, "that's ever been here," he says, an he says, "ye've broken the spell," he says, "on the people that is here." He says, "There's a witch," he says, "here, an she's always ruled it," he says, "through makin the people work, hard, hard on them, know what I mean?" An he says, "All the gains that these people get, she just takes for herself." But he says, "She's in that large castle up the side o the hill." An he says, "You're the only man that can go there," he says, "an break the spell."

Jack says, "How'm I gonnae break the spell?"

"Well," he says, "ye'll have to go up," he says, "along wi your cockatrice friend," an he says, "your cockatrice will know what to do."

So him an the cockatrice went up an when they went up tae within a hundred yards o the house, the cockatrice says, "You wait here now, Jack," he says. "I'll go up masel." Ye see? So the cockatrice flew up again, an when they got to the house, the cockatrice was three times as big again. It got up an it flew right up tae the house, it went right in through the big castle doors, an there were a terrible carry-on inside the castle. An it came out wi this old witch in its mooth. But she was aa dressed in finery now. So she looked at Jack an she says, "Ha!" she says, "I know who you are. Ye eventually got here," she says. "I don't know how you did it, but," she says, "you've done it." But she says, "ye've ruined me!" Ye see?

So she just droppit dead, ye see. The cockatrice turned intae the loveliest young princess that ever ye saw in your life, an when Jack got his nerves an his thoughts aa together, he looked at his same self, an he was away - he's standin tall, there was no humph, he could see wi his two eyes, an this gentleman wi a crowd o people behind him was comin up tae Jack, an he shook hands wi him, an Jack returned to the place where he had to meet the eagle in two days time, after festivities an aa thing in this town, an he took his princess with him an the eagle took the two o them out an took them further than it actually had to go wi them. An he collected his horse of course an the two of them went back tae his own domain, an they lived happily ever after.

So Jack waits, he lay wakened all night so just before daybreak he goes away ben and this young cockatrice is lyin coiled up, ye see. He says, "Get this shell here." It had been an old shell that had been hatched ages afore that, ye see. So he got intae the shell and he pit the two bits o the shell thegither and put a saliva o its mouth around the seam an it pushed it an pushed it out, rollin the egg, this big egg, ye see, out. An the mother an father looked. "Where are ye goin?"

"I'm just takin this egg oot for some sun." Ye see.

"Where did ye get it."

"Oh, it was at the back o the cave."

"There'll be nothin come oot o that cos it'll be like a dud one."

When he pushes the egg oot tae the front o the cave an leaves it there. So Jack gets his knife and he breaks the shell and looks out. Nobody there; an he gets oot an he's up on a precipice. He says, "Hoo am I goin tae get oot o here?" But he goes back roon the other way an he looks an he could see his footgrips here an there doon, ye know what I mean. An he hangs on wi his tooth an nail till he got, doon tae the bottom. Ye see? An when he comes tae the bottom he gets his horse wanderin aboot, ye see. So he puts his hand like that tae his pocket an here he has an egg in his pocket. He must ha liftit it sometime an pit it in his pocket when he was lookin at somethin or doin somethin, "Oh Good God!" he says. "I've got one o them beast's eggs in ma pocket." He says, "Ach," he says, "I'll keep it in ma pocket. It'll maybe bring luck tae me." So he sticks it in his pocket.

So he gets his horse an looks at his horse an his horse was right enough. An he jumps on its back an he comes on up this glen, right on intae another place, doon through a wood, comes tae a hut where he meets an auld man. He says, "Did ye ever see a wumman," he said, "an ould witch wumman." He says, "I met her one time," he says, "she comes from the Back o Beyond."

"Well," says the man, "I've never heard o the place," he says. "Never - couldnae tell ye nothin aboot that at all," he says. An he says, "The further ye go that way," he says, "the country gets wilder." He says, "I've never known anyone," he says, "that passes maybe aboot five or six mile beyond here," he says, "nobody ever goes." He says, "It's barren country," he says. "Nobody knows what's the other side of it at all."

But he comes on an on an on. He says, "I'll have to go," he says. "I'm no carin where I go." But he comes on an on an on an on an on, an he's sittin doon at the side o a wee burn takin a drink o watter, when he feels a movement in his pocket, an he does that. He thought there was somethin up. But he puts his hand in his pocket an here a young cockatrice comes oot, hatches in his pocket. An he takes it oot, an he gives it a wee bit o whatever he had been eatin, an he pits it back in his pocket again. But the next day its too big for his pocket, startit tae grow an grow, an grow, ye see. An he's goin on wi his horse, night an day, he's goin. An the cockatrice says tae him, "Where do you think ye're goin?"

Jack says, "I'm goin," he says, "tae look for an old wumman," he says, "for that old wumman," he says. "An old witch," he says. "I don't know her name," he says, "but she comes from the Back o Beyond."

He says, "Ye're at the start o the Back o Beyond." He says, "That's what they call all this country," this cockatrice says tae him.

An every minute o the day an every second this cockatrice is gettin bigger. It's gettin now that it he cannae take it up on his horse's back, it's comin behint him, an it's only startin tae learn tae fly, because they've got big leather wings, a cockatrice.

He says, "Ye'll no get any further than the top o this place anyway."

Jack says, "How?"

He says, "There's a mountain range that nobody can go through an the valley gaun through it," he says. "It's like walkin against a blank wall." He says, "Whatever kin o magnet's in it, ye canny get through it. If there's anything steel, your horse would stick tae the cliffs," he says. "It wouldnae get off."

So Jack says, "That's queer," he says. He says, "That's queer." He says, "An what's doon this other way?"

"Oh," he says, "that's takin ye doon by the sea."

"Well," he says, "I'll go doon there," he says, "tae see what like it is. I'll maybe see somebody doon there."

He says, "We'll no get anybody doon there I don't think." He says, "Just fish an porpoises an shark. Animals," he says, "of the sea."

"Well," he says, "we'll go doon," he says, "an see anyway."

So down he goes, an he's sittin on the sand, lookin oot at the sea, an porpoises is jumpin aboot an seals, an things, ye see. So this porpoise comes in, flappin itsel aboot, an it says tae him, "Ye're lookin very weary, Jack," this porpoise says tae him.

Jack says, "My goodness," he says, "can you speak tae?"

He says, "Nearly everything up in this country," he says, "can speak." He says, "Ye're away from civilisation, here," he says. "There's never nobody here," he says.

An Jack says, "What's that white thing in the water, that white big patch o white?"

"Oh," he says, "that's an underwater spring well," he says, "that comes up there, an that's fresh water." He says, "That's fresh water," he says, "among the salt," he says, "ye don't often see that."

So Jack says, "I bet there'll be a nice place under the water, there. There'll be caves an things. There'll be some funny kin o fish."

He says, "Wait an I'll go an show ye," an he dives away aneth the water an right oot an comes back, ye see, an he says tae Jack, "That's what's down there under it." An Jack looks an it hands Jack an eye, an eye! Like a crystal eye, ye see. Jack says, "What's this?"

He says, "You might find," he says, "use for that yet." He says, "An that's aa I can say," he says.

So Jack pits the eye in his pocket, ye see. An he feels the other bit o stone that was in his pocket an he takes it oot. He says, "I've had this one too, for a while," he says, "I found that."

"Well," he says, "you're never in want when you've that other one," the porpoise says tae him.

He says, "Why's that?"

He says, "If you keep that in your mouth," he says, "ye'll never be hungry." He says, "I would like tae know where ye got that. I've heard about it," he says. "The rest o my people talk aboot it, my fish friends talk about it," he says, "but I've never saw anything like that."

So Jack cracks tae it an talks tae it an talks tae it, an away he goes. So the cockatrice says tae him, it says, "That's queer," he says, "what that fish said tae you, that animal says," the cockatrice

John Stewart

..... story about the White Stag. Way back before my time, or Andy's, or yours, or any other body's here, hundreds o years ago, there was a kin who owned a lot o the country, ye see. An he ruled wi a rod of iron. He'd a daughter about fourteen, he never let out of his sight. The only man who ever saw her was the Hen-wife's son, or the auld wumman that used tae work in the garden and feed the hens, for her livin, ye see. An she only saw her when she came down the garden to walk, the young princess. So here, the ould wumman's son Jack, he lay at the fire-side aa the time, very lazy he was. But a good fella in a way. Y'know what I mean? Very fond o animals, and good, but he just lay there aa the time. An at that time, there was an open hearth, an aa the ashes used tae come oot roon about him, an when his mother did lay intae him wi a stick and get him outside tae do something, and went outside the wee thatched door an gien hissels a shake, he just blindit the place for about three days wi ashes an stour off his claes, ye see? [Bennie laughs] So one day he was oot, his mother got him oot for tae break sticks, he's muckin about, ye see, an he looks and sees aa the knights and the earls and swordsmen an - aa passin, goin towards the king's residence, this big palace, away in the distance. So one o the men at the finish up was comin along. He stops him. He says, "I say, sir," he says, "where's all the soldiers and knights goin? An fightin men?"

"Oh," he says, "they're goin tae the palace," he says, "the queen's daughter, the king's daughter's went missin." An he says, "They're searchin the country fur her, an can't get her." Ye see? An he says, "There's a great reward," he says, "a great reward for any one," he says, "that can throw any light on it." Ye see?

So Jack comes in an he says tae his mother. He says, "Did you hear that?"

"Aye," she says, "I heard it. Two or three days," she says, "the lassie's been a-missin." An she says, "For over a week now," an she says, "they're feart o her gettin intae some o the rest o the king's hands, or princes! hands from other outlyin districts," she says, "and they would never see her again." An she says, "there's a great reward," she says, "the girl's hand in marriage, when she comes of age, or anyone 'at can find her." Ye see?

So Jack's he's sittin, ye see, an he's thinkin tae hissels. He says, "Na, I could never get her," he says, "because," he says, "as far as I would walk," he says, "roon ma mither's hoose, here," he says, "and up tae the wood an back doon again," he says, "she wudna be there! That would be combed," he says, "ages ago." But anyway, his mother came oot an she says, "Gon on tae the wuds," she says, "and fetch a wee bundle o sticks in," she says, "I'm needin firewood." So he gets a rope an away he goes, 'way up through the wuds, through this fir trees, an that. The sun was shinin through them, y'know, it was a lovely day. An he listens, an he hears this moanin sound, ye ken, and the bushes rattled. An he goes across. He was frightened that it was somebody wi a sword or something ready tae charge him, ye know what I mean? An he looks and here he sees a white stag, an it's standin wi it's leg hangin like this, an it's tryin tae keep itsel on it's feet, ye see? So, I said, he was very good animals, Jack was, 'cause he was always fixing his mother's hens and ducks and birds o aa classes an discriptions. Well, anyway he goes across an the stag looks at him. A pure white stag it was, wi big pink eyes| Y'know? An Jack looked at it an he looked at it, an he got it round the neck by the horns, and led it doon tae the cottage. Wasnae that far away, y'know. An he put it in a wee shed

at the back. An he bathed the leg, and sorted it, an put healin stuff on it. Oh there weren't the same in healin stuff then, as what was not, but the like o butter wi herbs in it, or somethin like that, wi plaster on it, till eventually the stag's leg came aaright. An he went doon this morning, an "I think I'll let it away now," he says, "back tae it's own place o runnin about."

So he takes the stag out, an he take it by the horn, an he takes it intae the wood, an says, "On ye go, now, ye're fine now, your leg's aa right."

It looked at him, it says, "Jack, you've been very good to me," the stag said tae him, ye see.

Jack says, "Oh my goodness, ye can speak!"

"Oh yes," he says, "I can speak," he says. He says, "other people doesnae hear us speakin, but," he says, "if we want you to hear us speakin," he says, "we can make ye hears us." An he says, "If I was you," he says, "Jack," he says, "I would go up tae the king's palace," he says, "and volunteer," he says, "fur tae go an look for the princess."

Jack says, "Where could I go an look for a princess?" he says. He says, "No, not even a hardly a bit o claes tae pit on ma back," he says, and he says, "look what I'm wearin for a sword!" he says, "a scythe blade!" An a straw rope roon his middle, y'know, as a belt, an a scythe blade in it! He says, "Where could I go an look for a princess?"

He says, "You go up," he says, "and volunteer tae get the princess!" An he says, "When ye come away," he says, "tae look for her," he says, "go towards the sinking sun," he says, "that's the west."

An Jack says, "What'll I do then?" he says.

He says, "You'll know what to do." Ye see.

So Jack come back. The deer galloped away through the woods, ye see. So Jack come home tae his mother, sat doon and he had a barley bannock, and some braxy bree, ye see. An he says tae his mother, he says, "I think," he says, "I'll go up tae the king's palace the morra," he says, "an volunteer," he says, "offer ma help," he says, "tae get the young princess." An he says, "I'll maybe"

"What!" says the mother, "what! Atch!" she says, "ye silly fool!" she says. She says, "The folk'll kill you if you go up near the palace, a lad in your state!" she says. "They'll chase ye!"

"No, no," says Jack, he says, "they'll no chase me." He says, "I'm gonnae try it anyway."

"Well," she says, "woe betide you," she says, "if onything happens to you," she says, "don't blame me!"

Ye see?

Now, he tightens the straw rope roon his middle, the scythe blade - he gies it a wee bit rub wi an oily rag, tae make it look better. Sticks it down in through this straw rope, ye see, an away he goes up. An there was no big avenues, or anything like that, at that time, just rough bits o roads that horses had been walkin up an down. So he walks an walks an walks tae he comes up tae the palace. An he goes up, an he goes tae go tae the front doork but aw! crossed swords and spears an this an that, at the door, ye see!

"If you've any vegetables, round the back! If you've any vegetables or potatoes round the back!" Ye see?

An Jack says, "I don't want the back," he says, "I want tae see the king."

O here an awfa scurry-burry! And yin o these knights steps forward tae him wi a drawn sword, and Jack steps back, and he draws his scythe blade, and the king's lookin oot the windae. Does that, he hears the noise outside and looks out, pushes the windae open. There were no glass windaes at that time. It wud be open, y'know. An he shouts down from the wall. He says, "What's wrong down there?"

He says, "Aw, it's a poor man," he says. "We don't know who he is."

He says, "Wait there till I come down."

So he comes down, and he looks and he seen Jack, and he says, "By the way," he says, "I think it's your mother that works in the garden."

Jack says, "Yes, it's my mother that works in the garden," he says, "does that make her any poorer or any better if she works in the garden?" He says, "My mother's a woman just the same as any other body." And he says, "I'm a man the same as them!"

The king started laughin, ye see. He says, "Well, what was it you were wanting?" he says. "I'm not in a mood," he says, "for laughin," he says, "because my daughter's a-missin." He says, "I suppose ye've heard that."

"Oh," Jack says, "I've heard about it," he says. "I've heard about it." And he says, "I've come," he says, "to offer my services."

The king looked at him. He says, "Services! What?"

He says, "To go an help to find your daughter."

"Well," he says, "it's very nice of you," he says, "to do that."

But Jack says, "There's one thing I want to know." He says, "Is is the truth," he says, "whoever finds her that'll get her hand in marriage?"

He says, "Yes," he says, "he'll get her hand in marriage, an," he says, "half the estate, if they can bring my daughter back alive."

So Jack says, "Well, sir," he says, "I'll go," he says, "and push ma fortune."

"Take your time!" he says.

Jack says, "No, no," he says. "I'm off!"

And he's away out through the gates, and awa - ay - follied the sun.

He looked an the sun was settin, ye see.

So he walks an he walks an he walks an he walks an he walks. An he walked an he walked and he walked the next day.

He says, "I wonder where I'm goin now?" And he was standin like that, lookin towards this big black woods, y'know. An what does he see, but the white stag! An it's doin this tae him, rearin up an pushin it's head agin the bushes, y'know. Jack says, "That's my cue!" he says. "I'll follow the stag." Ye see?

So he follows the stag, an it's keepin away in the distance in front o 'im. An he's goin plunderin down banks, owre wee burns, up braes, and on an on, till he came tae a wee thatched hoose. An who was in this hoose but an oul, oul, oul man! An he could see the stag standin away about five hunder yards from the house, standin lookin back wi its head right up in the air, y'know. And Jack says, "I think it wants me tae go in here, or, ye see, it wadnae be standin so close."

So Jack goes tae the door an he chaps, an this oul, oul man came out. An he says, "Oh hallo," he says, "we don't get many strangers this way," he says.

"No," Jack says, "I don't believe ye would," he says. But he says, "I'm on an errand," he says, "for the king."

He says, "What king?"

"Oh," he says, "about three days walk from here," he says, "back," he says, "to the east," he says, an he says, "I'm lookin for his daughter."

He says, "I thought I heard some word," he says, "about somebody missin," he says, "because there was a lot o fightin men," he says, "wi swords an that," he says, "and armour, passed," he says, "a few days ago, going that way." He says, "An what were ye wantin?"

Jack says, "Well, I want tae know," he says, he says, "if you would know," he says, "anything about it."

"No," he says, "I don't. The only thing I can tell you," he says, "is to beware o that black wood," he says. He says, "Beware o that black wood ye see in the distance," he says, "because," he says, "there crushing trees. If you go to walk through it, they crush ye like that." An he says, "I'll give ye something here," he says, "that'll help ye."

So he come outside wi Jack, and he went intae this wee shed, an he took an auld bit o sparky rope, kin o coil o sparky rope. He says, "Take that wi you," he says, "and whatever way ye're goin, fling the rope away out in front o ye," he says, "and follow the rope till ye get through the wood." Ye see?

So Jack come out an he's clutchin this sparky rope, an he looks an he sees this deer then goin away for this wood, an he follows an follows an follows. An when he come up to the wood he couldnae see the deer. But he forgot about the rope in his hand, and he went tae walk into the wood like that, and two trees came boo! right like that, crushin him, y'know. And every step he took, the trees was doin this, towards one another. So he gets this rope, an flings it away in front o him, an keeps a hold o the end o it, and the trees aa stood, an he followed the rope, right through, right through, throwin it in front o him, walkin, throwin it in front o him again, walkin, ye see? Till he come through. Till he got through the wood.

Now, when he come tae the other side o the wood, he looks again, and he sees the stag again, ye see. An he comes walkin up an walkin up an walkin up an the stag doesnae go away this time. It waits. An it says tae him, "Jack ye got through one o your real difficulties, that wood." An he says, "Do you see that old tree across there?"

Jack says, "Aye."

"Well," he says, "go on across there," he says. "There's a houlet's nest there." That's an owl. We call it a houlet in Scotland. He says, "There's a houlet's nest," and he says, "put your hand in there," he says, "an if you find a wee bit o a rag, a cloth," he says, "take it oot, and pit it in your pocket."

So Jack goes across an he looks up an he sees this hole in the trunk o this old tree, an he has tae get a couple o big stanes tae stan up, an he gets his han and he feels this cloth, like a bit o a sail. An he pulls it oot, an it's folded up. An he never looks at it. He just puts it in his pocket. An the deer then goes away for, still away for the settin sun. So he walks aa that day and aa the next day, an the next day. He forgets time. But about a week after that - he would reckon it was a week fae he got the cloth in the hole fae the houlet's nest - he come tae the seaside, where the sea come in like that, an went back. An it was a lovely day, but the raging sea was goin like that, an there were whirlpools like that, right across, as far as he could see across to the other side. Ye see?

The deer says, "Now, Jack, this is one o your difficulties." Ye see. "You'll never get across there." He says, "Even hardly a boat could get across there, wi the currents and the whirlpools." But he

says, "If ye jump on my back," he says, "and keep a hand on my horns, I'll swim."

So Jack climbs on this white deer's back, and he gets a haud o its big antlers like that, ye see, and it plunges intae the sea wi him. An it's swimmin an it's swimmin an it's swimmin an it's swimmin, an it's gettin whirled round like this, but it's tryin tae belch through the currents, it's tryin tae get across, an the water's whirlin it round, whirlin roon an whirlin roon an whirlin roon. Ye see? An it says tae Jack, it says, "Jack, can ye get tae your pocket?"

An Jack says, "What do ye want?" He says, "I might, but I'm half off your back as it is," he says, "wi the waves," he says, "lashin me."

"Well," he says, "try an get tae your pocket," he says, "an get that bit cloth oot."

So Jack puts his, gets hand roon, an he eventually gets his hand intae his pocket, an he pulls this bit cloth out. Ye see? It was like a big muffler, like a big hankie.

He says, "Spread it across my horns, at the back," he says. "Cleek it on the wee points o the antlers." So Jack done this an the deer swimmin an the current's takin it, ye see, the strength o the water. But whenever Jack put the thing on it, oh! away it went like a sailing ship! The wind - the current o wind got this bit o cloth on its horns, and wi it swimmin an it was just pushed along aa the time, ye know, till it come oot the ither side. It gien itsel a shake, an it says tae Jack, "Take that hankie off, Jack," he says, "because ye'll hae tae put it back where ye got it." So he takes this cloth of, rolls it up, an puts it in his pocket.

"Now," the deer says, "I'll no go in front o ye so far this time," he says, "because ye're comin near about," he says, "where that Black King is," he says. He says, "He's sold hissel tae the Devil," he says, "this king!" An he says, "He's got a fierce, fierce army." He says, "Dae ye see that hill, that hill without any trees at all on it?"

Jack says, "Aye."

"Well," he says, "over intae the back o that," he says, "is his palace," and he says, "he's guarded night an day," he says, "by fierce dogs," he says, "and worse men." Ye see?

"Well," says Jack, he says, "I'll have to go."

"Well," he says, "I'll go with ye. Now," he says, "look, jump on ma back again and look in the point o my top antler." So Jack climbed up on it's back, an the stag's about that height, y'know. So Jack jumped upon it's back, an he stood away up, an he looked in the point o it's antlers. It's antlers was like this, ye know. An he looked in the point o that one. He says, "What dae ye see there?"

Jack says, "I see a thing like a whistle."

"Well," he says, "screw it oot." An he done that, an he pulled an pulled an pulled, till this whistle come oot, about that size, ye see. He says, "Keep that it your hand."

So the two o them went on up this brae, on up this hill, through this heather, lookit down the other side, there was this palace. An when they lookit down it was about a mile away tae the palace, an when they looked there was regiments o these battle-clad men wi swords, an fiery arrows, an everything, comin for them, an gret bayin hounds o dogs.

Jack says, "Oh, we're done for," he says.

The deer says, "Don't run Jack," he says. He says, "Blow that whistle." So Jack (whistles on a long note) ye see? Well, you're talking about men! Every bell on tht heather on that hillside turned

intae an armed man! An right at Jack's back they were comin in thousands an thousands an thousands. Every bell on the heather turned intae a fightin man! An they're down that brae wi their swords, and battle axes, an there was a fierce battle, I'll tell you that. But the amount o men that Jack blew on that whistle, could ha overwhelmed half o the China army!

Now, they were aa lyin scattered and dead, an the deer says to him, "Blow one long blast on your whistle, now Jack," and Jack blew one long blast, ye see [whistles on a long note] an the men seemed tae disappear! He - his men, his army seemed aa tae disappear, an the hillside where he was, was the same as it was before.

"Now," says the deer, he says, "we'll go down," he says, "tae the castle." So down they comes tae the castle, ye see. Down they comes tae the castle, an knocks at the door, an there was no answer. There wasn't a soul about. An Jack knocks again, an pulls this big bell, an here he hears this tramp o feet, an out comes this king, an he was about eight foot, an he's oh! the ugliest man ever ye saw in your life, ye see.

So Jack pulls his swo - his scythe blade. He says, "I've come for the young princess," he says.

An this big man looked at him. He says, "You've done all my army," he says, "and ye've killed all my fierce dogs." He says, "Ye've left me," he says, "standin maself," an he says, "I suppose there's nothing I can do," he says, "but tae give her tae ye."

So he took Jack tae this room, an opens the door and there was this young princess. Ye see? So he says tae her, he says, "Come on," he says, "hurry up tae we get away."

So she comes out wi Jack, an she was askin who Jack was, an he tells her like, that he come from her father's place, an that, an when she saw the deer she wondered what the deer was, an Jack says, "That's aaright," he says, "come on, jump on it's back."

So the two o them jumps on the deer's back. They're back to where they come out o the sea, and he says, "Hang on, Jack," he says, "and be ready tae put the bit cloth across ma horns, till I get back," he says, "tae the ither side."

So the deer plunges in. The princess was a bit timid but oh! Jack held her on, and the deer's swimmin across again, swimmin an the currents is tryin tae take it, and the waves is lashin. Ye see? But he gets the cloth across the deer's antlers an when the wind hits it, and helps it wi it swimmin an the wind blowin against it, it just went through it like a yacht! An right oot on the ither side.

So Jack takes his cloth off again, an puts it in his pocket. "Now," says the deer, "we'll take a wee rest here," he says, an he says, "the two o youse get on my back an I'll make as quick a work," he says, "in gettin back," he says, "as I possibly can." So they waited there for a while till they got their breath, and they jumps on the deer's back. An the deer's away, boy! It was very fleet-footed. It's away gallopin, ye know. So they came back to the owl's nest, and it pulled up, an it says, "Jack, ye better go back, an put that cloth back, because one good turn deserves another, and ye never know what ye might be needin that cloth again." So Jack gets doon an he goes across tae the nest, an he rolls the cloth up nice the same way as he got it an puts it back in, ye see. Jumps on the deer's back an they came back tae the wood, ye see. An Jack's away with the princess in front o him, throwin the rope an takin the princess through, an throwin the rope in front, an takin the princess through. An when he landit on the other side, he liftit the rope up quick, an wasn't the deer - instead o the deer goin it's own way, it followed him, ye see. An two trees crushed

the poor deer! An there it was lyin, an it's big pink eyes, ye see. It says tae Jack, "Jack," it says, "I'm finished," it says. "The trees got me." An he says, "Ye'll have tae skin me, an take ma heart, take ma hears, and roll ma heart in the skin, along with the head, attached to the skin." He says, "An carry that back," he says, "wi ye." And he says, "Ye know the brae at the back o your mother's house?"

Jack says, "Yes."

"Well, he's got - take the head then," he says, "off the skin, and go up," he says, "and place it like that," he says, "on that brae-side, on the face of the hill." He says, "Just put it down..."

[Barbara changes reel on the recorder]

So when it looked at Jack wi it's great big pink eyes, it says tae Jack, "Jack ye'll have tae skin me, when I die." An he says, "Take my head attached to the skin," an he says, "put that - ma heart, get ma heart, an put ma heart in the skin, an carry that back," he says, "to your own residence, your mother's wee house." An he says, "Up on the face o that brae," he says, "that place where your mother likes to go for a walk," he says. "Go away up there," he says, "an put my head down on the ground," he says, "facin down the valley," he says, "wi the horns stickin up," he says. "Lay ma head down," he says, "as if I was just lookin down the valley." An he says, "Then ye'll take ma heart," he says, "and bury it," he says, "at the wee laurel tree at the back o your mother's house, that laurel bush. Now will ye remember to do that?"

Jack says, "Oh yes."

"An by the way," the deer says, "before I pass on," he says, "ye've heard o the All-Seeing Eye? Ye've heard of the All-Seeing Eye?"

Jack says, "No," he says, "never."

"Well," he says, "there's an All-Seeing Eye," and he says, "you'll find out," he says, "later on about it. So cheerio, Jack, and good luck tae ye." Ye see? And it died.

So Jack gets his knife out and he skins the deer, and the tears was dropping out his eyes when he was skinning this poor stag. But he cuts the head off, attached to the skin. Then he splits it open, and takes the heart out, puts the heart in the skin, rolls it up wi the great big head and the horns, under his arm. An him and the princess walks now. So they walked an they walked till they come past the old man's house that gave him the rope. An the oul man come out, an he says, "I see ye've succeeded!"

Jack says, "Yes."

He says, "Well," he says, "I'm glad I've helped ye by givin ye the magic rope."

So Jack says, "Well, thank you very much," he says, "I'll never forget it." He says, "There's your rope, and thanks very much."

So him an the princess walks on and walks on and walks on, till eventually they came down the brae tae his mother's wee house, an her father's palace was in the distance, ye see.

Jack says, "You should go on," he says, "tae your father, and tell your father," he says, "that you're gotten."

She says, "No," she says, "I'm waitin," she says, "tae you square things up," she says, "and tell your mother everthing," she says, "then I want you to come up with me," she says, "because it was you 'at saved me, an rescued me." Ye see?

So Jack mindit o the deer's, the deer's heid, ye see. So he trimmed the skin along the back o its neck, and he gets it with the two big pink eyes. Dead eyes, you know. But they were still bright. There were a look about them that you actually thought they were live. So he was away up the hill, see, in a lovely part, where ye had a lovely view, an he sets the heid like that, lookin down the valley.

So he comes back down, an he's sittin gettin his tea, tells his mother aa the story, about what he'd done, an what was this, that an the next thing, an they goes tae bed. So Jack comes out in the mornin an he looks up the brae. You're talkin about a palace! There was a palace the shape o the deer's head, but it was aa the antlers was aa towers, you know o yon red, red polished granite! The beautifullest palace ever ye saw in your life, ye see.

So Jack comes in. "Mither," he says, "somebody's been buildin a palace," he says, "in the hillside."

So the mother come oot an looks. She says, "Where did you put the deer's heid you were tellin me aboot?"

He says, "There aboot where the palace is," he says. "I hope they havenae crushed it," he says, "and built on the top o it."

"Naw," the mother says, "naw," she says.

"Oh by the way," he says, "mither," he says, "whaur's that hairt," he says, "and the skin. I forgot tae bury that hairt and skin," he says. So he goes an he gets the heart an the skin, takes the hairt oot, and goes owre tae the laurel bush at the back o his mother's hoose, an he digs a week hole, fills it wi dry leaves and pits the heart an the skin in it, and covers it owre, ye see. An he comes back an he looks, an he says tae this princess, he says, "Before we go to your father's house, let's take a walk up there," he says, "till we see."

So up he goes, and here he sees this two big - at each side - was two round big windows, wi thick pink glass. You would actually ha thought they were eyes. So he goes in and he goes up this great carpeted stair, you know, and up to this room. An when he went tae this windae, you could look out, and you could see everything in the land. You seen the whole world stretched out in front o you, on either o these eyes, an a voice come tae him, an it says, "Jack, you've the only palace in the world with the All-Seeing Eyes!" Ye see? Then he knew, it was the deer! You know, it was the deer's eyes he was lookin through. So he came doon an he was half-cryin tae hisself, you know. So he come doon an he went up, an he went away up wi the princess tae her father's palace an rung the bell. An the father come out, and oh! he was overjoyed tae see his daughter, ye see. An there were great festivities an one thing an another like that. Jack he was forgot, he was left outside. The poor chap wi the scythe blade for a sword was left out. But when the lassie, when the princess missed him oh! She commanded all the soldiers tae get away out o there. She wanted tae see Jack, an she took Jack in and told her father everything that Jack had done.

"Well," he says, "I promised that fellow your hand in marriage," he says.

"Well," she says, "I wouldn't have it any other way," she says.

Now her and Jack gets married, and there's three days festivities, great balls and feastin, ye see. An her and Jack comes back tae the palace that he had, his own, wi the two big eyes in it, ye see. So he's down at his mother's one day. he says, "You'll need tae come oot o there, mother," he says, "and come up tae the castle," he says, "and live," he says. "Because," he says, "you couldnae stay in this wee hoose, nae mair!"

THE WHITE STAG

"But," she says, "who's gonnae feed the hens?" she says, "an who's gonnae feed the two wee deers 'at's at the back?"

Jack says, "Two wee deers."

She says, "Aye. Come roond till A show ye."

An he went roon the back, and instead o two, there was three. There was a white doe deer, there was a white stag, and a wee faun. The identical same stag as Jack buried the hairt. So Jack says, "Oh," he says, "that's the deer, that's the deer!" Ye see? But they runs round him four or five times, brayin an jumpin, an then away through the wood they went, you know.

So Jack got his mother, took her up tae the palace, an he went back tae that king, the girl, the princess's father. He says, "Our two palaces," he says, "are too close together." He says, "You go," he says, "over tae that palace," he says, "where I rescued your daughter." He says, "It's a fortnight, three weeks, maybe or a month's march from here." An he says, "You can have that palace, and all that land up there. An I'll have this one, an aa this ground here."

So the girl's father says, "Well," he says, "That's very good," he says. He says, "I'll just do that."

So they done that an they lived happily after.

John Stewart

Now ye see, the second time round - the second time round they say is all the better. Order please for Mr. Stewart, telling a story!

Once upon a time there was a king and he had three daughters, lovely daughters. The youngest one was named Patsy, Patricia, there was one called Sheila and one called Margaret. An every one of these girls, these princesses were very, very lovely, you couldnae get nicer lookin girls in all the land. Now at that time, kings and queens had chancellors, they had knights, they had soldiers, but none of these girls would ever look at one of the men round the castle. Now the Patsy one was famed for her singing she could sing like a nightingale - even better. The very birds of the air would fall down from the sky and sit on branches and tufts o grass and bushes listening to her. Ye saw the tears runnin out o the little birds' eyes wi listening tae this little girl singing. But while the girl she was singing, Sheila, she was knitting. And ye never saw a better knitter in all your life. The needles seemed to go by themselves, and she could make anything in the world that anybody wanted. Now the Margaret one, she wasnt so gifted, she was more of a solemn type, a very, very nice intelligent girl.

But anyway this day they were out, way up the hill, above the castle, where they used tae go and play and wander. An they were sittin down among the heather and the tussocks and the bushes, and they looks down the hill and here they sees a wee old man, who had one shoulder up and one shoulder down, like a little hunchback, and big feet, and he had - his clothes was all patches, red and blue and green an every colour. And an old torn hat on his head and a big beard, and he was just about two feet high. Took him all his time gettin over the heather. But he came up and he says, "Good-day princesses! I see you're out enjoying your walk and your sittin there nicely." He says, "Patsy," he says, "I've heard you sing," he says.

Patsy says, "Where did you hear me sing?"

"Oh," he says, "I've ways and means of hearing you," he says, "I've ways and means of hearing you. The very birds," he says, "talk about you." He says, "You maybe think the birds and that can't talk, but," he says, "they do. An," he says, "Sheila," he says, "you've a great gift," he says, "because of the knitting." He says, "You could knit," he says, "and never get tired," he says. "But," he says, "Margaret," he says, "is not so good," he says. "She missed the gifts when they were handed out. But," he says, "I'll give her a gift," he says, "to make youse three kind of equal." And he says, "Tomorrow," he says, "bein her birthday."

The girl looked. She says, "How did you know that?"

He says, "I know," he says, "a lot." He says, "Far more," he said, "than anybody in the land," he says. "An if you come here tomorrow," he says, "at twelve oclock," he says, "I'll tell her what I'm giving her."

So, to Patsy he says, "Sing me a song while I'm walking down the hill," he says, "Tae help me on ma way." So Patsy she sang a song, liltit a song to him, and aa the very birds come down and sat round about, listening tae the song, for ye never heard anything like it in your life, as the old saying goes, the paralliles o your life. So the old man waved tae her when he went down over the hill and the three girls sat there for a while, crackin about the old man, an this an that an the next thing, tae the sun was startin tae set, so they said, "Oh we'll have to go away down. Dad'll be wonderin where we are, an we'll be late for tea." This an that an the next thing.

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Down they goes tae the big house, the castle, an the father says, "Where were yese?"

"Oh, we were just out for a stroll, Dad, we weren't far away. We were just up the hill. Wir usual round."

So anyway they were - thinkin o what this old man was sayin to them and were frightened to talk in case their elders would hear them. They says, "I wonder what he's wantin, I wonder what he's wantin."

But the girl says, "You've got a party tomorrow have you not?"

"Oh yes," says Margaret, "I've a party. I forgot about that," she says.

"Well," she says, "we'll have to postpone it some way," she says. "What'll we do?"

Margaret says, "The only thing," she says, "we can do," she says, "I'll say I'm not well." An she says, "I'll go 'ae bed." An she says, "if it takes a trick," she says, "we can sneak out an get away up tae the brae," she says, "where the old man said he'd meet us."

So the next mornin the mother and father says, "You've got a birthday party today, Margaret."

Margaret says, "Oh I'm not fit for a birthday party," she says. "I've got a sore throat," and she says, "I'm not feelin well at all," she says.

"But ye'll have to have your party!"

"No," says Margaret, "could we not make it later on, could we not make it for the next day?"

"Well, we could, but it's not - it's not natural to make a birthday for the next day."

"Oh," Margaret says, "I couldn't go tae a party, I'm dreadful, I'm - oh I'm ill!"

But anyway they put her tae bed, waited, and the other two girls waited. They sneaked down the passage when it came about eleven o'clock, half past eleven, and they down the back stairs, out into the courtyard and right away up, an right away up through the trees, this birch trees and right away up the mountain side, right along to where they had been the day before that. So they sat there and they didn't have long to wait. It was about a quarter to twelve when they looked down and they saw the old man comin, this wee old man comin, trampin an taipasaying [?] and fallin, trippin through the heather.

"Oh," says Patsy, "here's this wee old man comin now," she says. She says, "I wonder," she says, "what he's gonnae say tae ye, Margaret."

She says, "I don't know," Margaret says. "I hope it's something good. He'll maybe give me something."

"Oh he might. Well, he said he was goin tae give ye something. He was gonnae give ye a gift. That might be a pair o shoes, or something."

"No, I don't think it'll be that." Ye see?

But anyway, he comes up an he says, "Well," he says, "girls, princesses, ye're all sittin there enjoyin yourselves," he says. "Yese are three lovely girls," he says, "princesses," he says, "an I've come up here tae keep my promise to make youse all the same," he says, "an give Margaret her gift an make yese all happy. Well," he says, "ye know what I'm goin tae give ye Margaret?"

"No," she says, "I don't."

"Well," he says, "your highness, princess," he says, "I'll give you a gift," he says, "doesnae matter what you talk to," he says, "that it'll speak back to you," he says. An he says, "Don't be frightened," he says, "to say these thing to them, because," he says, "ye know everything speaks," he says, "although we don't understand," he says,

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"what it is, the birds speak together, the bees, the flies," he says, "anything that makes a sound," he says, "can communicate with one another, like me communicatin with you now.

"Well," says Margaret, "sir," she says, "that's very, very nice o ye."

"Well, now," he says, "I'll go because," he says, "I know you have a party today," he says, "this is your birthday." He says, "In case they miss ye, an wonder where ye are," he says, "I'll let ye away quick." He says, "Sing me the song, Patsy," he says, "as I'm goin down the hill," he says, "an," he says, "that'll satisfy me." He says, "We'll meet again, sometime." So he's taked - traced away down the hill, trippin an trottin down the brae an Patsy hummed an sang a song tae him as he was goin down, an the birds were aa listenin flying from all directions, sittin on the heather tops an rocks, listenin tae this wee girl singing, this little princess.

So the three girls sat there for a while an they says, "Come on noo, we'll hurry back an maybe ma mother an father'll not know we've been out." So they all ran away down the hill, right down to the bottom o the brae, through the wood, round the corner, through the courtyard and Margaret ran up the stair an she went into her bed. The ither two walked in, quite the thing. They says "Where's Margaret?"

"Oh, she's - I don't think she's so very bad - eh, now. Will we go up an see, Dad, see if she's all right?"

"Yes, go up an see what like she is."

So they went away up an Margaret says, "What did they say."

"Oh they sent us up tae see what like ye were. Come on down. Clean yersel up an come down."

So she brushes her hair, cleans hersel, an come down an the father says, "Oh you're there?"

"Yes."

A lot o the courtiers were standin, thon men wi the white stock-ings on them an thon poles that does this - bump! bump! [Bumps imaginary pole on ground] "So-an-so's comin in, that one's comin in!" Ye see? An the mother she was sittin, crown on her heid at the top o the table, everything was busy an the three princesses came an stood beside their mother an father an the table was set, the birthday greetins was said, everything went as a birthday party should do. So everything went fine.

So the next day they were out in the courtyard, the three girls, an her father had a lot o lovely cows, but there was one old cow, she had a calf an the calf was always ailing, an a lot o the cows werenae givin milk. The father was complainin about it. Ye see? Some days he'd gae out an he'd maybe get one dead now an one dead again. He'd tae get the men tae bury them. But anyway, Margaret says, "I'm goin down to the byre," she says, "come on," she says, "an I'm gonnae talk to the wee calf, see what's wrong with it."

So down they goes through the yard, down the path, the road round by the sheds, and they went intae the calve house where the kye was kept in. She looked at the wee calf an she says, "I hope it speaks. I wonder, will it?"

"Oh," the other, Patsy and Sheila says, "ask it and see! Ye'll not know tae ye ask!"

She says, "Little calf, little calf!"

It says, "Who's talking?"

Margaret says, "It's me," she says. "I'm talkin."

"Oh," she says, the wee calf says, "it's you that's talkin."

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Margaret says, "Yes," she says. "What's wrong with you that you're always cooped up an can't run about the same as the other calves an there's somethin wrong wi the cattle an one thing an another like that?"

"Well," says the little calf, "there's a long story there. The - eh, ehe, eh, I wouldn't like tae tell ye unless I asked ma mother."

"Oh," says the wee girl, "I'll ask your mother. Where is she?"

"She's over there gettin a drink o water."

So the wee girl, the ither princess, says, "Mother cow!"

The cow says, "What is it?"

She says, "Why is it," she says, "your little calf," she says, "is so decrepit, an cannae walk, and one thing an another like that?"

"Well," says the cow, she says, "your father," she says, "knew another king," she says, "in a far off part o the country." An she says, "He had some lovely cattle an stuff," she says, "this other king." She says, "Your father," she says, "made a raid on his land," and she says, "he took a lot of his beasts, cattle beasts, an brought them back to his own domain." An she says, "We are some o that breed, an we'll never do any good, because, we've been taken away from the place where we belong to."

"Well," says - eh, says Sheila, she says, "why no," says tae Margaret, "why no ask it tae tell her, tell it tae take us there an we'll see if we can rectify the thing."

So this - eh, Margaret says, "Why not take us there," she says, "show us the way tae go an we'll see this other king."

"Oh," she says, "you couldn't do that 'cause it's too far away." She says, "There's only one way you could do that. An it would take ye a lot o bother."

She says, "What's that?"

She says, "You would have to go for the Master Bull of the herd." An she says, "The Master Bull o the herd," she says, "ye know there are a lot o bulls on this herd." She says, "There's aboot fifteen, easily, wanderin roon aboot." An she says, "It's findin out the Master Bull, because they're all the one colour an all the one size."

"Well," says the the - eh Margaret, she says, "how would we know? You're bound tae know."

"Well," she says, "ye wad have to go," she says, "and examine their feet." An she says, "the one," she says, "in the cleft o it's foot," she says, "ye'll see like a silver line." An she says, "That's the one, the head bull." She says, "That's the one, that could take ye to where that other king is," she says. An she says, "The way he can't -"

An she says, "How do yese not just get up an go?"

She says, "We can't, because," she says, "your father's got an invisible fence that you don't see. An invisible barrier," she says, "between this an where we came from."

"Well," she says, "that's queer," she says, she says, "we never seen anything like that."

"No," she says, "you wouldn't see it. But," she says, "we - we would."

An she says, "But," she says, "there's bound to be ways through the fence, maybe gates or one thing an another like that."

She says, "We can't." She says, "Any time we go out of here," she says, "we could wander for a certain distance to get grass an stuff like that. But - along with the bulls, along wi the calves, along wi

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the rest o the cattle." She says, "Once we come near any place where we could escape," she says, "there's a little herdsman knows right away, an he informs the king."

An she says, "A little herdsman?"

She says, "Yes," she says. An she says, "You know him." She says, "A little man," she says, "with patched clothes," she says, "he keeps us all in your father's place. He reports on everything that we do," she says. "Now," she says, "the only way ye can get back is by seein the head bull as I said. But ye'd have to go round all the bulls, you'd have to watch, for there are some o them very wild and wicked. An ye would have tae watch an see that that little man didn't see ye."

"Oh my goodness," says the - says the princesses, "that's a - a -a funny carry-on that," she says, "I never thought," she says, "that the like o that went on."

"Oh yes," says the old cow, "it does."

"Well," says the - says the - Margaret and Patsy, "we'll see what we can do," she says. An she says, "We'll let ye know, within a day or two."

So the three girls - princesses - came out. "Now," says this Sheila, "what are we gonnae do?" she says. "We know about that," she says, "we can't go to wir father about it, because he wouldn't listen," she says. "An we didn't know this before." She says, "We're aa good natured, but," she says, "Patsy, how did the little man come tae us? How did he give you a gift?" She says, "There were something in that," she says, "that we didn't know."

Margaret says, "ye're right enough," she says. "How did he give us the gifts," she says, "because he told us that whoever - whatever I spoke to would answer me back. Now he was runnin the risk," she says, "of me talkin to the cows."

She says, "That's right." Sheila says.

"True," says Patsy. Ye see?

"But," she says, "we'll do what the old cow said, if we can get near the bulls, tae see their feet. How we gonnae do that?" She says, "We'll wait till they're beddit down at night," she says. An she says, "How we gonnae do it?"

"I know," said a voice. An they looked round - this was the wee man! He says, "It's right enough," he says, "what the old cow said." He says, "There's some fierce bulls in that herd. An the fiercest o the lot," he says, "is that red bull," he says, "the head o the clan, the head o the - the - the - the - the herd." An he says, "There's only one way you'll do it."

"An what's that?" says Patsy, an Sheila. The three o them spoke at the one time, they were that excited. "How we gonnae do it?"

"Well," he says, "if you go," he says, "at six o'clock in the mornin, when the suns risin up," he says, an he says, "if Patsy sings a song," he says, "they'll be that interested in her singing that," he says, "the other two o youse," he says, "can go round and look at the bulls' feet an see which one it is." An he says, "Once ye've spotted him, got im," he says, "take this clip," (an it was like a bone clip, made oot o bone, or horn, or something). He says, "Get it's ear," he says, "an stick that on it, like that, like a clip. An then," he says, "come away," he says. An he says, "Once you're away," he says, "then Margaret can talk to it. Ye see? That'll quieten it down."

So they went back up to their big house an they run about it in [indistinct word] aa day. Come out at six o'clock in the mornin. Oh they were all up. They were up at four an five o'clock, they never went tae sleep - waitin on six oclock in the mornin. So they came down

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the stair, hiding intae doorways from the butlers, them that was up early an the men that were lookin after the cattle an feedin them, they were joukin here an there, ye see? But they went round an round the back o where the herd was lyin, an aa the c-c-cattle were aa lyin, rows, three o them, tae keep theirsels warm. An Patsy sang - sang a song, ye see? I don't remember the song she sang, but I know that it would - it would - oh it would charm - charm the angels! The song she sung. An the other two then, went from cow tae bull tae cow tae bull, they went - they knew cows from bulls! An they went an I think it was about the sixth or seventh one they came to, they lifted it's foot like that, an they saw the silver an Patsy got this bone clip that the wee old man gave her, an she got the cow - the bulls ear and slid it on tae the cows ear. An she come runnin away back an they stood beside Patsy an under this tree, tae she finished singing. An Patsy says, "Did ye get the bull?"

She says, "Yes. It's that big wan, at the end."

"Well," she says, wee Patsy, "Walk doon and watch the road, see that they'll no chase us." Ye see?

But Margaret says, "I cannae," she says, "because I can talk to it now. An it'll command the rest."

So Patsy s- Margaret says, "Bull! Bull! Can ye hear me?"

An it got to it's feet, stretched it'self, pawed the ground wi it's feet. It says, "Yes, I can hear you. What is it? Who's talkin to me at this time o the mornin?"

Margaret says, "I'm the - the - the princess that's talkin to you."

"Who gave ye the power tae talk tae me?"

"Well," says wee Patsy, she says, "the little man o the hill," she says, "that we met on the hill gave me the power tae talk tae you."

He says, "Damn him!" he says. He says, "What dae ye want off me, anyway?"

Wee Patsy says, "I want ye," she says, "tae take us to your former master," she says. "Because," she says, "my father's men an his men's always been arguin an fighting an illimosity between them, the two, the two clans, the two estates, as it were." An she says, "If you could take us to your former master, we would to talk to him."

"Oh," he says, "he would maybe kill me," he says, "for doin that," he says.

"Who would kill you?" says Margaret.

He says, "Wir former master," he says, "he thinks we went on our own accord," he says. "It was your father," he says, "took us all away."

"Oh but," Patsy - Patsy an Sheila says, "We'll see to that. We'll tell wir father all about it once we come back."

So here he says, "Well," he says, "just wait there a minute," he says, "tae I go round the herd," he says, "and tell them that I'll be absent for the day. And maybe tomorrow."

So he went away round all the herd. I suppose he'd be talkin to them his way. So he came back and he told the three girls to get on his back. So the three princesses got on his back an he trotted away through the wood, on an on, but he was - he wasn't trottin he was sailin! Ye wouldn't a known ye were sittin on his back, he was goin like a - like a - a - a yacht through the sky. Did ye ever see a sky yacht? Goin through the clouds? He wis sailin like that. An he came down on a lovely clear green valley where there was a great castle an there were thousands o cattle an everything around this place. An he landed down.

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"Now," he says, "I'll wait here," he says. "You'll have to go to the castle yourselves, because," he says, "I don't want to be seen here first," he says, "because I - eh, the - he might take me - the king and his herdsman might take my life, because," he says, "they've all got the black art," and he says, "if I'd a came back here," he says, "with all ma herd, it wad hae been a different thing altogether." Ye see?

"Well," says Margaret and Sheila and Patsy. "You wait there an we'll go up tae the castle. Now don't go away from there, till we come back or we'll not get home."

"Oh," he says, "I won't leave."

So the three o them went on up tae this castle. They came tae guards, soldiers, held their bayonets an things up tae them, old-fashioned spears. "No entrance."

"Oh," says Patsy, "no entrance," she says, "we'll soon get in." Margaret and Sheila sat down, Sheila started tae knit, Margaret sat beside her, wee Patsy started singing. Oh an the spears st - the spears suddenly went down an wee Patsy sang - aw, just like a nightingale, an the three o them walked one behind the other, right past aa the soldiers, on up, right up the steps o the castle, an intae the big hall. An aa the time Patsy was singing they were so enchanted with her voice an the way she was singing that they never - they never really paid attention that they should a stopped them.

But out come the king. He says, "My goodness, my goodness," he says, "what a lovely singer! Where do youse come from?" He says, "Ye don't look like ordinary girls." An he says, "Ye must be of high standard and high quality," he says.

"Oh we come from So-and-so a place."

"Oh," he says, "Be damned to you," he says. "That's the man," he says, "that's the king," he says, "that took my herd."

"Oh no," says, says, says Margaret, she says, "we'll bring your herd back. We - we - don't want any more illimosity or any more fighting in wir land."

"How ye gonnae do that?" he says.

"Because," says - says Margaret, "we've got your head bull here. Ye'll know your own bull. Ye've a private mark on it."

He says, "Yes." He says, "How did you get near it?" he says, "because there's never nobody could ever go near my bulls."

"Well," she says, "we went near it," she says. "Come here an we'll show it to you."

So they took the king down, out to the end o the wood to the bull, an the bulls stannin - oh very ferocious bull. "Now," he says, "ye'd better keep back from her."

"No, no," says Margaret, she says. She says, "Come here, bull," an the bull come over an she lifted it's foot an she says, "is that your bull?"

He says, "Yes," he says, "that's my my - my bull."

"Well," says Patsy, she says, "if ye send two o your men back with us," she says, "tae take your herd back," she says, "we'll deliver you back - deliver them back."

So they all climbed on top o the bull's back, the bull sailed right away back. Oh they'd a long road tae go, an they landed at the father's place. An the three princesses were just goin tae go intae the father's castle tae tell the father all about it, when the wee man stopped them. He says, "Did ye get - did ye get tae the ither castle?"

She - they says, "Yes. We got tae the other castle."

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He says, -eh, "Well," he says, "your father might not believe ye, because," he says, "he's the only one that knows that I'm here and I looked after his herd. Not another one," he says, "knows that I'm here." He says, "Youse know because I gave Margaret a gift. Because," he says, "I liked the three princesses, the three of ye. Well," he says, "I'll go in wi you," he says, "an he'll know," he says, "that ye're tellin the truth."

So the wee man went in wi them, they asked for an audience wi the king, their father, an he gave them an audience, an the wee man that had the black art, his head cattleman supposed tae be, this wee man, told him all about it, all about the story an all about - he didn't even know his daughter Patsy could sing an stop the birds o the air! He had tae hear her for himself. He had to hear - the, - the gift, the Margaret one got, tae speak tae the cattle an the cattle speakin back tae here, an he had tae see his daughter Sheila knittin, like a knittin machine, aa the clothes o the day.

"Well," he says, "ye know this," he says, "I never knew," he says, "that I had three children and princesses like that." He says, "I was lookin for courtiers," he says, "and knights," he says, "tae give them their hand in marriage." He says, "It wad take a treble king tae get any o my daughters." And he says, "For you," he says tae the wee - the wee man wi the humphy back, he says, "I specialised in great cattle," he says, "at one time," he says, "an you helped me along. Well now," he says, "I'm releasing you," he says, "because," he says, "you'll take them back," he says, "you an that other two men that came here," he says, "'ll take them back to their rightful owner," he says, "that was the other king." An he says, "If ye want to come back, an stay here with us, you can, an if you don't," he says, "well," he says, "you can stay with your other master." An he says, "My three daughters can stay here with me an their mother," he says, "but," he says, "it'll take a great king," he says, "fur tae get any o their hands in marriage."

So I don't think there's any o them married yet. I was thinkin o goin round that way masel, an tryin tae get one o them, because you know, there'd be a lot o money attached to them, an that's the end of the story.

II.19 THE FACE

A Alec Stewart

A1 Well, when A was in the Terries, I was doon at the other side of Edinburgh - that Kinghorn? Kinghorn. An we done a fortnight an A was called back through Edinburgh and A was lookin intae a shop windae, a sort o a jewellers an second hand stuff an that, ye know. And A was standin an A was jist thinkin aboot the stuff that was in the window, when there somebody tapped me on the shoulder, an A lookit roon an this was a lassie about twenty or twenty-one. An she says, "Hallo, how're you gettin on?" An A says, "Hallo," an A'm lookin at her an I says, "Who are you?"

B John Stewart

B1 This story was when I went into the RAF. It was about 1939. I went into the RAF and I was stationed at a place they call Walk-in Camp, ye see. And it was my first leave, my first leave, and I dashes doon tae the train. I hurry up tae get home, ye see. I didnae have a lot o money and I was tryin tae save it, because I wanted tae land in Edinburgh, because I had a good long stop in Edinburgh. Know what I mean. I wanted tae keep it, no for an English drink, but for a Scots drink. Know what I mean, ye understand? So I rumbles on and rumbles on an eventually lands in Edinburgh. I'd Montrose tae go tae. So I comes off and I had aboot an hour to wait on the next set train and I comes up and onto the street and it was the time o the blackout, ye see. And I comes oot, walks awa doon - I didnae know whether it was Princes Street or no, as that time, I'd only been in Edinburgh about twice, before that, ye know, and I'm having a half-pint here and a half-pint there, just to have a look to pass the time. So, I'm goin into this pub, theres another couple o half-pints comes and I'm passin - I'm lookin for a chip shop tae get a bag o chips, ye know, and I bumps into this woman and she bumps like that and in the kin o dim light o the chip shop she says tae me, "Hallo John," ye see, and I says to masel, I says, "She must know me well enough," and me havin the uniform an aa, you know what I mean? She was a young woman of about twenty-one or twenty-two. I says, "Hallo, but ye've got me by the short hairs," I says. "I dinny know you. Come owre here intae the light o the chip shop," and I takes her intae the light o the chip shop but I didnt know her there either.

A2 "Oh," she says, "you ken me. A'm your cousin." See?
 I says, "You're ma cousin?" A says. "Who did you come off o, then?" An she told me who she come off o. So, some o the Kelbies she come off o.
 She says, "Where are ye goin?" she says.
 A says, "A'm goin home. Catch the Edinburgh train."
 "When is your train?" she says.
 A says, "Aboot five oclock."
 "Oh," she says, "ye've plenty o time tae come up tae the hoose an get somehin tae eat."
 A says, "Aa right."
 So I went up tae the hoose, was up this closes, ye know, an up a stair an a complicated-lookin place, ye know. So I went in, sat down at the fire - there's a wee fire on o coal, an she went an pit the kettle on. She says, "Now, A'm tellin you the truth. A've plenty tea an sugar," she says, "an mulk, but A've no bread."
 "Oh well," A says. A put ma hand in ma pocket an A gave her ten bob. And A said, "That'll get bread."
 She says, "A'll no be five minutes."

B2 She says, "I'm Jean Stewart. I'm a cousin o your ain." She pits me in mind askin for this body and askin for that body, you know what I'm sayin? "That's fair enough," I says. I'd cracked that long tae her now that I knew fine that if I'd run for my train I would never hae caught it. But I tells her, "I'm finished noo and I'll need to go an look for a bed aa night." She says, "That's all right, come on up to my hoose." So I says, "Whaur dae ye stey?" I couldnae tell ye where she took me. Through more streets and up back streets, see. An it was up one o them ootside stairs then in and up an inside stair and it was a kin o attic where she stopped ken? But oh, when the lassie took me in and it was a lovely wee hoose, furnished tae the door and the fire glitterin, before she put the light on, made it look comfy. So she pits the light on and she says, "Just sit doon there and I'll go oot and get something for the tea. There's a wee chip, d'ye want a fish? I'll pit on some tea." "No," I says, "I'm just efter a fish," I says, "when I come up." She says, "Well, I know a wine shop man at the fit o the road and I'll maybe get two or three bottles o beer off him and he's no bad wi a half bottle," she says. "I know its rationed but I can get it aff him."

So I pits ma hand in my pocket and I think it was a fiver I gien her, six pound. I cannae mind how much. She says, "Just take yer jacket off at the end o the chair there and I'll no be minutes," ye see. She says, "Get tae bed." And it was one o them boxed-in beds. I says, "Naw, where are you gonny lie?" She says, "In the bed."

"I wouldnae do that, I couldnae do that," I says. "I'll sit in the chair aa night."

"Dae what I'm telling you," she says. "Go tae bed."

A2 (Contd)

So she went down and intae the street and went tae the baker's shop. An she came back wi bread and some kind o cakes an that an a half bottle o whisky. So she says, "A hope ye'll no be angry for me buyin the bottle o - half bottle o whisky."

I says, "No me." I says, "Dae ye drink?"

"Oh," she says, "A always take a drink," she says.

"Well," A says, "its aa right."

So she gied me aboot a nip oot o the half bottle and she took a nip hersel. So she made the tea and instead o her takin the tea, she took another slip o the whisky. So I took tea an pastry and that an a bit o bread an she says, "Well," - ye see the pubs closes at nine o'clock, that time - she says, "the pubs'll soon be closed. I'd like to get anither half bottle."

So I looked at her an I says, "Och well, for the sake o anither ten bob, I'll no miss it." So I gave her anither ten shillings an she went oot, and afore she went oot the door, she says, "A don't suppose ye'll be gaun home the night," she says.

A says, "A'll have to go home."

"Not at all," she says, "ye can go home in the mornin."

"Och well," A says, "that'll no make much difference tae me," A says, "A can go home in the mornin."

"Well," she says, "jist take off your clothes," she says, "an ye can get intae bed, an A'll be back in about half an hour."

A3 So she went away and I got intae bed and I lie mother-naked when I get intae a strange bed. I'd no pyjamas nor nothin with me. So I took ma shirt off an went intae bed and I was lyin there, ma hands behind ma head like this, an A'm lookin aa roon the roof, and A heard somebody scrapin at the back o the bed, an there was a big door, slided back, at the back o the bed. An this was a man wi a baird doon tae there, an he had a knife in his hand.

"Aw!" he says, "What are ye doin in my wife's bed?" he says, "A'll show ye what A'm gonny do," he says, and he made a dive at me, you know, and I rolled oot o the bed. An A'm outside an doon the stair an oot the close, naked! An A'm roarin, "Murder! Murder! Murder!" You know.

B3 Well, when she said that, wi the kin o look in her eye, I felt kind o queer, ye ken. I couldnae help thinkin aboot her [points to Maggie] and I wait till she goes oot and I takes my claes off. I looks at the bed, first. My father, my father to this day and he's in his grave, ask you Alec, and my sister Bella done it till she died, when we were young my father made us aa lie without shirts. Without shirts, and I think that was in case o pickin up lice. He was a clean kin o man like that, know what I mean? We had to take wur shirts off, fold them up and pit them under wir pilly, and lie naked. Thats what our father made us do aa the time and my sister Bella did it, didnt she Maggie? My sister Bella did that till the day she went to her grave, lay without a shirt. Now I looked, aw a lovely clean bed, you know! So I gets my troosers off, shoes - shirt off, fold it up, puts it under the pilly, intae bed, lovely clean sheets. I'm lyin smokin a fag, ye see. It was one of these boxed-in beds and there were a picture like that on the back o the bed see? So I'm lying there for maybe five minutes, waitin for her comin back with this half bottle, ken and I hears a rattle at the back o this picture and the whole picture slides doon and there was a man's face and he had a beard there, black and he had a skean dhu and a knife in his hand that length and he leans through like that, and I says, "I'll learn you, you bastard, tae lie in my wife's bed!" And he made a plunge at me! I threw mysel oot o the bed, blankets and everything, and I could hear the knife goin crunch intae the bed. Oh boy, I'm oot that door and doon that wudden stair, doon the outside stair! I thought he was right at ma back y'know. I mean, ye think very quickly when you're in a situation like that. I was thinkin "She's off wi the two or three shillin and he's chasin me." See what I mean, this is what come intae my heid.

THE FACE

A4 So who come doon but two policemen. "Aw," he says, "What's wrong here?" A told them ma story. "Oh well," he says, "come away up tae this house, then." But if I'd been tae Blairgowrie tae get this house I couldnae get it! It was a complicated place. I went in-tae this door an that door, so A seen one o the policemen daein that [makes a sign] to the ither policeman, see?
Andrew: More or less, ye'd a screw loose.

B4 So I ran doon, it was a kin o a cobbled close tae, it was a kin o a brae like that in the middle o Edinburgh, but I see the flash lights. Who was this but two policeman wi those bulls eyes in front o their belt, ken, their square lamps and "What's wrong, what's wrong, what's wrong?" I told them, "Aw a man up the stair made a dive at me wi a knife ye see." "Where about is it?" An I'm chitterin. It was kinna frosty too. It was twelve oclock at night. They asked me where it was, so I explained what happened. He says, "Come on back wi us till we get you placed." But could I find that hoose again. I tried every stair and every close was the same. They were aa the same type o hooses and wi the fright I'd run further than I thought. And heard one sayin to the other "I think he's a bloody loony. I think he's a bloody loony. What'll we dae but we'll just run him in."

A5 Alec: An when A seen that you know, I edged oot, edged oot, till A got tae the main street, an A run for ma life, up this road, an me nakit, I could go, ye know. And A came out in the country an A wis shiverin wi cauld. Ken, thon frosty kin o nights? So A says, "A'll have tae get tae the back o the hedge some way." [Coughs] God peety the cough! I says, "If anybody comes along that road, or even a tramp an a horse an that, be a hell of a fright, so A got tae the back o the hedge an A'm wanderin up the hedge side.

B5 Says I, "You'll no run me in man." And I takes down the close. So I'm tryin tae get some civvy man, some civilian tae gie me a jacket, but the boys are blawin their whistles at me and I'm lookin down this close and doon ontae road and away doon anither road and I come doon tae anither road goin that way. D'ye ever see them sleepered fences? Made wi sleepers? I wheels right like a hare and wi me bein barefit and me naked, I was liftin bits oot the grun. I was like a whippet. And I hears the crowd ahin me and its fadin and fadin and whistles and voices and peepin. But I comes right oot this road and I climbs up this sleepered fence and awa slipped doon the other side and oh, ma feet, it was a railway line I'd got over ontae and I says, "I'll maybe no come onto the railway line," and I'm tryin tae keep time wi the sleepers like this, you know how ye jump from sleeper tae sleeper. On my bare feet, goin and goin and goin. I says, "I hope a train does-nae come," like that, and I'm goin and goin. And I didnae know it was the Forth Bridge I was on. You know, the railway bridge. That's what I was on. I didnae realise till I was half roads over an seen the water on each side then it comes intae my heid, 'The Forth Bridge'. So I runs, and I runs and I runs, comes owre the other side, through some scattered hooses, ontae a road thats goin away up the side o a brae a hill like that. Noo again, by this time it kin o breakin daylight. Noo I says, "If I am caught naked I'll get the jail."

Now what I'm doin now, it was about the back end of the year and it was frosty. I'm tryin tae see the fields it was, where the tatties had been lifted, tae see if I could get a scarecrow and you could get a jacket or something like that, a scarecrow, ye know. I was desperate ye see. So I looks out and I sees this scarecrow upon the skyline and I goes right owre tae it and all it had on it was a tile hat, an auld busted tile hat. No jacket, not a pair of troosers, but a tile hat, ye ken. It was a crossed stick and a tile hat stuck on it, y'know. So I says, "It'll keep ma heid warm anyway." So I sticks the tile hat on and come back onto the road and up roon this corner and I looks across a wee bit field and I sees a wee peep o a light, like that, ken, a wee peep o light. So I says, "I wonder is there anybody in that hoose?"

A6 A'm walkin up an walkin up and A lookit. A field run up a kin o hill. On the skylight there was a gate and a fence and A seen two sittin on the top o the gate. It was a coortin couple, ye see. So A came walkin up an, "A better no frighten them," A says, " or they'll run away. A'll have tae get near enough so's that A can talk tae them."

So A'm creepin up an creepin up an creepin up, an the lassie she was kissin him, ye know, an lookin roon an she saw me! So she rose up her hands like that an she roared an she ran. An the man lookit roon an he seen me tae, an he ran. An they ran doon this hill, down the field, and down at the bottom o the field, there was a wee hoose. An A lookit an A wis standin at the gate an A lookit an A seen them rinnin intae this wee hoose. So A said, "If I got tae that hoose, now, A says, "A might get somehin fur tae cover me." Ye know.

So I went doon doon this hill, doon tae the hoose and I chapped at the door. There was no answer. So I opened the door an went in an they went right through the kitchen an out the back door, an A lookit doon the field and A seen a whole lot of them rinnin. There were seven or eight o them aa rinnin over this field.

B6 And I slides through the fence and owre the point o the field and the hoose was there and there was a wee bush, a blackthorn bush as ye'll ken and I comes across and its breakin daylight mair and mair till at the finish up I could kin o vaguely see. No I seen a man and woman, young, comin oot o this door and they stood talkin, ye see. "Now", I says, "If I could get that boy to look, that fella, I'd gie him a wave, y'know and explain to him." But it was her that looked. Instead o him lookin, it was her. And she's turned to him and I suppose she's said, "Oh the naked man." Ye see. And as they turned to go in the door I says, "Hey," and stood up and roared at them. I says, "I'll make a kirk or a mill o it." But the two o them intae the hoose. And then there were aboot twenty came oot, and they aa looked and seen me naked wi the tile hat on. The whole run. The whole lot run off! Roon the end o the hoose and up aa this field they run and awa up the other side.

A7 So A came back intae the house an this table was set wi aa thing, wine and whisky an - you know what it was? A wake. In this house. So I took a sup o the whisky an A was frozen wi the caul. So A come intae the room an A wis lookin in aa the cupboards tae see if A could get trousers or anythin, but A couldnae get nothin but a long-tailed coat and a lum hat. That's aa A could get in the house.

So A come back an A took some'hin tae eat aff the table. So A said, "A could do wi some kin o a pair o boots, or somehin, ye know." Couldnae get boots, but A got baffies. So A come back intae the room, the next room. A said, "There might be some'hin in here." An there was somebody lyin on the bed. So A went owre tae the bed an felt tham an A spoke - A spoke, an they widnae answer. An this was the dead person and the wake. So instead o goin tae where the head wis, A went tae the fit o the bed an A liftit the cloes, an it was a wumman's backside A saw, instead o the wumman's face. It wis - A says, "By jeeze, that's a funny face!"

A snapped the cloes doon again an A walkit oot an A went along the road, an A came to - it was gettin daylight now - I says, "I'll try again at this farm." My nakedness was covered now, ye see. A wasnae sae bad.

B7 I goes owre tae the hoose and chaps at the door and opens it up. Not a soul in it. The table was set, whisky on the table, fire kennled. I says, " - what's this! I'll hae a slug o the whisky, whether the policeman comes or no. They canny kill me." So I'm rammin bits of beef an stuff intae my mooth and sups o the whisky. Anyway I was ben the hoose, and I'm lookin noo for claes and I got an auld woman's jacket ken, an auld lang black jacket, ken. So I put that on me and a pair o slippers, auld slippers I got, and I went ben the hoose and I'm feeling, and I felt somebody lyin in the bed and it was a deid body. It was a wake. It was a wake that was in the hoose and I didnae know, ye see. So I come oot quick an it's another slug o the whisky quick and I'm off and onto the road and away, ye see. I wasnt just sae bad noo, wi the jacket on.

A8 So A was passin a gateway an there's a big long avenue going up tae a big house, an A heard this thing scrape, scrape, scrape, scrape, at the back o this gateway. So A went up tae the gate an look-it owre an this was an auld, auld man, an he'd a lantern, an he was rakin the leaves off the avenue. So I said tae the man, I said, "Hello there!" He lookit up. "Oh," he says, "What are you doin at this time o the mornin?" he says.

"Well," A says, "if A were tae tell ye the story," A says, "it wad take me dashed near an hour tae tell ye, but A'm on the run," A says. "A've only a jacket on," he says - I says. "A swallow-tailed coat an a lum hat an a pair o baffies. Ye wouldnae hiv an old suit?"

"An aul suit?" he says.

I said, "Aye." I says, "What are you workin for here this time o the mornin anyway?"

"Well," he says, "I'll tell ye the truth." He says, "I'm that ugly," he says, an he says, "every time I come out here in daylight," he says, "that road that wad be there is packit wi people watchin me." He says, "A've the ugliest face," he says, "in the world."

B8 So about two mile fae there, I came to an estate wi a wall, ken, a wall aa roon it and the road went past it. And I heard scrape, scrape, scrape at the back o this dyke. And I thinks it was maybe somebody workin here wad gie me an auld suit or something, an auld jacket and a pair o troosers. And I climbs up and I looks. This was a man and he was just screwin his lantern doon. I said, "Excuse me," and he turned his face away. He said, "Don't speak to me." I says, "How?" He says, "Why I'm out at night workin is I'm that ugly people make a fool o me. People make a fool o me and I'm the gardener here and stay roon the back o the big hoose and I do my job at night wi the light, wi a lamp."

A9 So held up the lantern. He says, "Look at that!"

"Ach awa!" A says, "A've seen uglier than that!"

"Did ye?" he says.

I said, "Aye."

"Well A'll tell ye whit A'll dae," he says. "'f you get an uglier face than mine," he says, "A'll give ye a new suit an five pounds. For if," he says, "there uglier than me I could come out in daylight and ma work."

"Ach," A says, "A've seen uglier many a time."

B9 Says I, "Let me see your face?" And he turned roond, and how he was ugly. It was like thon Hunchback o Notre Dame. Even worse! Says I "Your face is no that bad man. I wouldnae make a fool o that face. I've seen worse faces many's the time." He says, "What were ye wantin, anyway?" I says, "An auld suit, a pair o trousers tae put on me." I telt him I was stuck. "You get a worse face nor mine," he says, "I'll gie ye twenty pound and a suit." "Ah," I says, and I tried an tried and tried him, but no. "Fetch a face that's worse than mine. I'll gie ye twenty pound and a suit."

A10 So I forgot all about him an I walkit away. But goin along the road, I said tae nasei, "'f I went back yonder where yon wumman is dead and thon face that I seen is worse than what the auld man's is."

So I turned back an I went back tae the house an there wasn't a soul in. They were aa away. I said, "I better hurry up." I says, "They might go in for the policeman."

So I got a knife an I skinned this face, in ablow the blanket an A rowed it in paper an A came back tae the auld man standin at the gate.

"Hallo," he says. "You back again?"

A said, "Aye."

"Well," he says, "what d'ye want this time?"

A said, "There! Look at that!" A says, "Thats a worse face than yours!"

B10 So I faas doon the back o the dyke again, and an idea come intae my heid. I runs back, flies back the road to this wee hoose where the wake was. And I goes into the hoose. It wasnae still broad daylight, wasnae just still broad daylight, you know, and I'm feeling aboot and I tears the blankets up and then gets the old carvin knife and I skins and skins and skins and skin and skins and skins till I got this skin off the face ye see. It pits it in a paper and I takes it up this road and he's still scrapin and workin away and scrapin and workin away at the back o this dyke. So I climbs up and goes over - he wasnae there. It was another man that was working. Says I "You're no the man that I was supposed tae see here."

He says, "No, its Bert ye want tae see."

Says I "Will ye tell him I want tae see him?"

He says, "Tae hell, ye'll be lucky if he comes oot." So he goes away and eventually he comes oot doon the back o some bushes doon the side o the waa.

I says, "Its me. I've come back wi that face we were talkin aboot."

THE FACE

All So he held this up an he looked at it like that and looked at it an roond aboot an roond aboot. He says, "The queerest face ever I saw!" he said. "A never seen a face like that before!"

"No," I says, "thats worse than yours."

"Be God," he says, "Ye're speakin the truth," he says, "it is worse than mine! Wait a minute," he says, "come wi me," he says, "an I'll get ye the suit."

So he gied me a new suit an five pound an next day I pit the suit on an went away an catched the bus an got home. An that's the last o ma story.

B11 He says, "Let me see it." So I chucked him the parcel like that, ye see and he opens it oot and he takes it oot and he frees it and looks at it. He says, "It's a queer face that," he says. "Instead o the mouth being that way (horizontal) it's that way (vertical). And there just a roon hole for the nose." It was an auld woman that had been deid and I skinned her airse instead of her face. He says, "Wait an I'll gie ye your twenty pound and your suit."

So that's how I got home.

John Stewart

(There was once a man) that had a big estate and big houses, you know, and he was a great man tae gamble. He'd ha gambled anything, ye see. A great man tae show off - whole big dinners, an aa like this, but regards the poor, he chased them from the door, ye see. But he was horse-bettin, he kept horses, he would ha gambled on anything. So to make a long story short, there was a Scotch painter - cum - crayon - drawer - cum sculptor, who was very, very, very good. But he didnae put his talent tae any use, bar goin from town to town, campin here and there, havin a bite here an a bite there, an drinkin, an spendin whatever he earned, ye see. So he came tae this big town. Now, where this town is I couldnae tell you. I think it was about the Midlands o England some place. An he came tae this town, stayed in the lodgin house, got tae know a few o - as we caa - the buck men, tramps an hawk-ers o aa kinds, and he heard about this man, through different sources, ye see. An he got tae know that he was fond, very fond of a bet, but wouldn't help the poor in any way.

So he's in the town, an he gets a good bit to drink, gettin a bite here and a bite there, an when he's comin out an - he knows through inquiries, enquiring here an there, that he's passin the avenue goin up tae the big house. So wi him havin a bit drink in him he says, "Och tae hell, I'll go up," he says, "just tae see what like a man he is." So he goes away up this big long avenue, an a great front, wi steps goin up tae the big front door, ye see. So when he goes up there, he was needin the toilet, but he thought he could hold it back until such time as he'd finished wi him and come away, ye see. But an idea enters his head, an idea enters his head. He turns back down again, an he does the toilet behind these big rhodydendron bushes an that, ye see. An he goes up tae the end o the house, an he looks round the gavel end. There's nobody there. There had been a car at first, but it had drove away. An he takes his bag - now nearly aa these men that stay in lodgin houses, they generally carry their kit in a like a kit bag, or somethin like that, their tools of their trade, ye see. So he goes up, takes his bag off, an he goes up tae the top, he goes up aa the stairs an right in front o the big doors, wi powder an stuff like that, he draws a great big shit, ye see. He didnae draw it, he made it, he actually made it! To look at it, ye would have - an I'll tell ye another thing, he had stuff in a bottle he shook over it, that was very, very stink, ye know what I mean? Now, he's just finished, when a car drives up, an who is it but the gentleman himself. An he comes oot, an ye know he was one o these bristly moustaches, like a major. "My, my, here, here, what are you doin heah? What are you doin heah?" Ye see.

"Oh excuse me your honour," he says, an he's lettin on, he's kiddin on that he's buttonin his trousers! Ye see?

"What have you done here? Oh my God, look at this! Where's the gardener, quick! How did you get here? What's your name? Oh I'll have to send for the police!"

He says, "Wait a minute sir," he says, "till I get ma trousers buttoned! What are ye on about?" he says.

He says, "That mess on my door!"

He says, "Sir, excuse me," he says, "but there's no mess on your door!"

He says, "Damn it, tae hell," he says, "look!" He says, "Oh I'm pittin you all the way!"

"Well, look, sir," he says. He says, "What do you think that is?"

He says, "it's - it's - it's excremental" - or whatever they may call it in high-falutin language. But," he says, "it's shit in other ways."

"Well," he says, "look sir," he says, "if that's shit, I can draw ma nose through it!" So he went down on his hands and knees, on the top step in front of the door. The gentleman was standin there, some other woman that was with him - not his wife, and the chauffeur, an he drew his nose through it, an he gave a blow an it aa went away in dust.

So he, "My Goodness!" he says. So the boy, the man went tae walk away. He says, "No, no, no," he says, "take your time," he says, "I want to see you." Ye see. He says, "Come inside."

So the chap says, "I'm not very clean sir," he says, "to come into your house." This man was workin the gentleman now. Things had switched, ye see. He says, "I'm not very clean to come into your house, sir," he says, but he says, "I'd like apologise for you thinking that I'd made a mess on your doorstep."

"Oh," he says, "forget about that," he says. "Forget about that." He says, "Come inside. I want to talk to you." So he took him in, and gies him a dram. An, "Ye want something tae eat, now?" and he gave him something tae eat, an gave him a dram. He says, "Now," he says, "tae tell you the truth," he says, "I'm So-an-so an so-an-so," he says. "You wouldnt know anything about me," he says. "I jump about," he says, "with the aristocracy of the country," he says, "an what you would call the blue circle people." An he says, "I'm holding a dinner. Now," he says, "there's a lot of these young jackanapes," he says, "and men," he says, "that I know," he says, "that I would like to give a good damned take-down to." Now he says, "I'll pay you well. I'll pay you handsomely," he says, "if you could do the same," he says, "for me to present on the dinner table!" Ye see.

So the man says, "Well," he says, "I think that could be arranged," he says. "Of course," he says, "it takes a wee bit o time."

"Oh," he says, "you can have all the time in the world." He says, "The dinner," he says, "is for this weekend comin," he says, "you've two days." And he says, "If you're needin any money just now."

So the boy says, "Well I could do with something." So he gied him fifty quid, ye see. So he says, "Well, I'll come back in the mornin," he says, "with the rest o ma material," he says. "And you'll be there," he says, and he says, "you can show me," he says, "where ye want it, what ye want done," he says. "I'm here," he says, "tae please the customer," and he says, "everything'll be done," he says, "to your satisfaction."

"Well," he says, "that's what I want of you, that's very, very good." He says, "I want as good a one as is on the door-step." He says, "That was perfect!"

He says, "I was really taken in! Ho ho!" he says, "when Lord so-and-so and Earl This-and-that," he says, "will they be surprised!" And he's rubbing his hands.

Now, at the back o the gentleman's mind, at the back o the gentleman's mind was bets with other gentlemen, money, ye see.

So the chap went away. He got boozed up that night, wi the fifty quid, and gied his mates a drink or two, but he didnae say a word or two aboot where he was or where he wasn't.

So the next day, he was back with the rest of his stuff. Kit bag on his back. Up and rings the bell, and the butler, "Oh yes, just come in!"

He says, "Is the gentleman - ?"

"Yes," he says, "he's here."

So the gentleman took him. He says, "This is the dinner table." Oh you know, right up, all thon silver ware, white napkins, everything, you know, like a big place is. "Now," he says, "wait." An he shouted the butler. He says, "Fetch the silver tureen." You know, yon big thing ye lift the lid off? He says "Fetch that." An there was a space about the size o that in the centre o the table, where the butler had put - This was the goodies, supposed tae be, ye see. An the silver tureen, and set it down.

"Now," he says, "I want it done in that tureen, because that tureen," he says, "is to sit in the centre there." Ye see?

"Well," he says, "Thats all right."

"Now," he says, "I've tae go on a bit o business," he says. "Do your best tae I come back," he says, "an when I come back," he says, "there'll be a hundred pounds in it for you."

The chap says, "All right."

So he sits about the castle all day, and he's drinkin, he's drinkin the gentleman's drink, ken, the butlers gien him anything he wanted! Because ye see, the gentleman told him, "Give him anything he wants!" Ye see? So he's sittin, he's sittin eatin roast beef, an pluggin and pluggin away, ye know. Drinking! Oh he takes a sore stomach, ye see, he eats that much. So he tells the butler. He says, "Well," he says, "It's time I was makin a bit move," he says, "tae do ma work." He says, "Fetch me that tureen." Oh big silver tureen, ye see. So he puts it on the floor, this big - an he takes the top off. An he puts a shit in it, like that [indicates size].

An it was half diarrhoea, ye know, wi the drink an aa that! It was rotten! Rotten! So he takes it up and puts it right in the centre of the table, puts the lid on. Sits there, drinks away. So the gentleman comes back later on, the boy's kiddin on he's packin his bags. He says, "Oh take your time."

He says, "Oh I wasnae goin away, sir, I was jist gettin ma things set together," he says. "I've made a real good one for ye."

"Did ye put plenty o scent on it? That fume?"

"Oh yes. I did sir," he says. "I made a real good one."

"We'll have a look! Oh thats lovely!" he says, "Lovely!" He says, "My goodness," he says, "I'll give them a fright tonight! Oho!" he says, "This is what I wanted!" Ye see? So, gies the boy his hundred quid, a bottle o whisky, so the chap goes away.

Now, the next night, the guests start on arriving. Ye see. "Mrs - so-and-so and Lord so-and-so," an so they're comin in this door, an they're all yappin away and drinkin, an the gong goes. Goes intae dinner, ye see, an they're aa sittin up right round the table, ye see. He's sittin at the top, so he shouts to the butler, he says "Take the top off." Takes the top off the tureen. See, them aa holdin their nose, some o the ladies takin their handkerchiefs oot, an he says, "What's wrong?"

They're wonderin [indistinct phrase]. They knew right away what it was! It was in front o them!

He says, "What's wrong?" So, another lord, he says, "Look," he says, "Lord so-and-so, are you trying," he says, "to make a fool of us, or something?"

He says, "Where can we sit down an dine," he says, "with that there?"

THE ARTIST

He says, "What d'ye think that is?"

He says, "That's very like - " well, he gied it a special name, for you. Is it excrement?"

Sheila: Yes.

John: "Excrement," he says, "That's excrement, human excrement."

He says, "Look," he says, "that's not!"

"Well," he says, "I bet you a hundred pound it is!"

He touches it wi his finger, this other lord. He says, "It is! I'll bet you a thousand [indistinct phrase]"

And it went up till he bet - this man that belonged tae the place, - he bet everything he had, house an all. And signed paper for it. The ladies is all up arguing, they're drinkin and they're holdin their nose. An - oh, there a terrible carry-on on the table.

So the gentleman calls the butler. He says, "Take all that dishes away a minute," he says. An he shouts the men he had all the bets wi round the table. An he gets up on his knees on that table. Then he says, "if it's shit," he says, "where could I draw my nose through it?" And he drew like that an tried tae blow, but his face was covered! His face was covered! An he was ruined for life! And that's the end o ma story.

II.21 THE BAKER BOY

John Stewart

There was a market at a toon away in the north o Scotland, oh years and years and years ago. It was my father that telt me this story. There was a man there - he could dae aa the tricks o the day. You know what I mean? He was like a mesmerist man, ye know. An this auld wumman, she was oot o the toon, an she was - went right away oot fur tae cut a sheaf or two o corn for her goat. She kept a couple o goats this auld lady, ye see. An she had the corn on her back, the two sheaves o corn on her back, an she comes in, an she's comin through the market, an aa the folk's in a big crowd, ye see. An this gentleman, he's standin in the centre o this ring, an he's tellin them tae come an watch the cock, the rooster that could pull a larch tree! An the folks aa lookin, an this cockerel, its pullin a great big young larch tree wi its beak! Tossin it aboot an pullin it, ye see. The auld woman comes walkin in. She says, "What are they aa lookin at?"

"Oh," the man says, "ye never seen onythin like this, mistress," he says. He says, "a cock," he says, "puin a larch tree."

The auld wumman looked. She says - pushes her way intae beside where this big man was stannin that was directin things - she says, "That's no a larch tree," she says, "that's a corn strae!" Ye see? An this man that was puttin on the performance, he turned roon tae her quick. He says, "I'll tell ye what I'll do, old woman," he says. "I'll give ye a guinea," he says, "for your two sheaves o corn for ma cockerel."

She says, "A guinea? Oh I'll gie ye that," she says, an she gien him the two sheaves o corn an took the guinea. An when she took the guinea and gave him the two sheaves of corn, she looked roon at the cock and she saw it pullin the larch tree. You know what I mean? Ma father telt us that was a man called the Baker Boy. He went roon the fairs when ma father was a wee - a young laddie, an he done tricks an aa thing, ye see.

John Stewart

So one time that samen man was in Campbeltown. I think it was Campbeltown. An ma mither had an uncle they caad Curly Donal. He'd ringlets right doon tae his shouthers, doon there. An they tell me he was a very, very hardy man. There wasnae a travellin man in that North country that would say, "Boo," tae him, know what I mean? An he stood aboot over six feet. So he was in the toon that day, Curly Donal, an he'd been boozin. An he met the Baker Boy. So they - he knew the Baker Boy be gaun roon the fairs, ye see? An he says, "Hallo, Baker," he says, "are ye in the toon the day?"

He says, "Oh aye," he says. "I'll need tae try an get a few bob the day," he says, "Donal." He says, "Hae ye been on the booze?"

Donal says, "Aye," he says, "an A drunk masel oot," he says. "I dinnae have a penny," he says. "A dinnae even hae tuppence," he says, "for a tummler o beer."

"Ach," the Baker Boy says, "here's hauf a croon tae ye," he says, "away an get yersel yin mair yin." So Donal gets the hauf croon, Curly Donal. He goes up tae the pub, an the publican kent him wi gaun oot an in. So he says tae the publican he says, "Give me a half o whisky," he says, "an a gless o beer." He gies him the half croon, ye see. Puts the whisky doon an Donal drinks the whisky. He's away tae lift the beer an the publican lifts the half croon, an goes tae pit it in the till. He says, "Hey Donal," he says, "whit ye playin at?"

Donal says, "Whit?"

He says, "This is no a half croon."

He says, "Aye it's a half croon."

"No," he says, "look Donal. Look at that!"

Donal says, "It is a half croon!"

He says, "Ye're kiddin me," he says. "Here." The publican takes the half croon again; he says, "It's a roon piece o leather, man," he says. "It's a bit o roon leather."

Ah, the controversy got up, there's an argument gets up, ye see, an the publican sends for the sergeant, Sergeant Cauley. An A can mind o that name yet, that ma mither an faither telt us. They sent for Sergeant Cauley, and Sergeant Cauley came, ye see. Noo, by this time the Baker Boy was in the bar an he was standin haein a drink, an he's standin laughin, ye see. Sergeant Cauley comes in. "What's wrong?" he says, "Mr. MacInnes?"

"Oh," he says, "Donal here," he says, "has called a drink," he says, "an he's tryin tae palm me off," he says, "wi a roon piece o leather."

The policeman says, "Let me see the leather," he says. "Let me see it."

So the publican went tae the back o the coonter and he liftit it like that. He says, "Look," he says, "ye cannae buy drink wi that."

Sergeant takes it frae him. The sergeant says, "That's aa right," he says. "It's a half croon!"

The publican says, "It's not a half croon," he says, "it's a lump o leather!"

"Now," says the policeman, "A'll gie you one o mine's an A'll keep this one and," he says, "let the argument finish wi it."

An the Sergeant was turned roon like that, tae pit his hand wi the half croon on it doon his pocket an get anither one o his ain oot, an he looked up like that, an he seen the Baker Boy standin laughin.

He says, "Och, A might hae known. Come on," he says, "Baker, ye'd better get ootside, an start your glamourie some place else," he says.

He had them mesmerised tae think that it was a half croon when it was a piece o leather! Ye see? So the Baker Boy goes oot, an Sergeant Cauley comes oot, Curly Donal comes oot an Curly Donals standin, an the Sergeant says tae him. "That was a funny trick the Baker played on you," he says, "Donal."

"Aye," says Donal, "it was that. But he's no a bad cratur," Donal said, "the Baker. He aye gies me a drink," he says, "when A see him at the fairs an that."

He says, "A'll tell ye," he says, "A'll gie ye a drink tae, Donal," he says, an the Sergeant started smilin tae hissel, ye see.

Donal says, "It's a wonder for you tae gie me a drink," he says. "Ye'll be wantin tae lift me for something."

He says, "No, no." He says, "Dae ye see up at thon ither bar, thonder," he says. "Dae ye see a wee man thonder?" he says. "Up, at that ither bar," he says. "He's jist waitin," he says, "tae go in," he says. "His wife or somethin's gonnae gie him some money."

He says, "Aye."

"Well," he says, "go on up," he says "Donal and gie him a right good hard belt in the ear." Ye see?

Now Donal Says, "Ahaha," he says. "You want me liftit," he says, "hittin a wee man like that," he says. "The wee man never done me any hairm."

"Well," he says, "I'll tell ye Donal," he says, "if you go up," he says, "an gie him a good hard ring on the lug," he says, "A'll gie ye anither hauf croon," he says, "an a guid yin this time."

So Donal says, "are ye sure?"

He says, "Oh aye."

So Donal goes away up, ye see, an he still has his tuppence or thruppence, ye see, oot o his hauf croon that he got frae the Baker Boy. Ye see? As Donal was gaun up tae the ither pub, an jist gaun in, this wee sweep - he was a wee sweep this - landit in the toon tae sweep chimneys - come fae aboot the Glesca side A suppose - an Donal's tower-in away above him. Ane as he's gaun in the door, Donal didnae know what tae say tae him tae get an argument wi him, ye see. Gaun in the door, Donal squeezes up against the side o the waa, like that, ye see. An he turns roon and looks up at Donal like this an says, "Stop your squeezin ye big mink." Ye see. So Donal says, "A'll mink ye!" he says, an gien the wee man a slaver in the mooth. Better he hadnae, boy! The wee sweep jist pit Donal on his back in two seconds! An Sergeant Cauleys gaun intae fits o laughin at the corner, ye see. Because Donal, ye see, was supposed tae be a big hard man. An the wee sweep at him boy, an every time Donal's gaun in, Donal's gaun doon. So Donal's wife comes an she says, "Pit the boot tae him, Donal, pit the boot tae him!" Ye see, she roars. An Donal pits his bonnet, the snoot on his bonnet, doon owre his heid, an he runs in an a chap an a kick wi thon big tackety boots, ye know. We sweep went white - richt in the privates he kicked him and the policeman come up. He says, "There's your hauf croon, Donal," he says, "noo get off your mark, boy, afore aa the ither polisman comes," he says. "A'll see ye aa right." An he says, "Dae ye no ken him."

Donal says, "No."

"God," he says, "that wee man comes frae Glescae," he says. "He's a bother tae us in the toon," he says. "When he gets drunk" he says, "he can fight for fun."

"If I'd ha kent that," Donal says, "you could hae kept your hauf croon!"

II.23 NEILIE JOHNSTON BUYS THE HARBOUR

John Stewart

..... The boat, and hire the boat for tae take his scrap across tae Glasgow, for tae sell it, ye see. So this week he went doon, wi his old top coat on, ye know, jist an old tinker, and he asked the man "When will the boat be in? Is it in yet?"

"Och tae hell," he says - the harbour-master it was - he says, "you lads is aye comin doon," he says, "wantin a boat wi your bloody scrap," he says. "Efter ye get this yin awa," he says, "ye're no gonnae get nae mair," he says, "because he's stopped takin your scrap." Ye see?

So Neillie says, "That'll be aaright," he says. "Maybe the next time I come doon wi scrap, you'll no be here." Ye see?

So the harbour was up for sale - because it was losin money or somethin. This is true - ye can inquire about this. An Neillie Johnston went to whoever was in charge o sellin the thing, an he bought the whole harbour, boat an aa. And peyed it oot o his coat pocket! So on the Monday mornin he came doon an he says tae the harbour master, he says, "you'll have to go an look for a job," he says, "for A've got a man for that job."

An that story goes roon yet. I think that mans people'll be livin yet, Neillie Johnston - he bought a harbour!

Willie MacPhee

Well, this was an old woman and she lived with her son, ye see. And och, she was a frail old body. Now and then she used tae send her son tae the shop, ye see. An he was a drunken sod anyway. So every time he went to the shop he had to get maybe five or six shillings tae get him a drink afore he would come back, ye see. And he had about five mile to walk doon the road, but if he crossed this near-cut, he'd only about two miles, ye see. An this day onyway it come tae his turn tae go tae the shop. "Well," says she, "laddie, I'm tellin ye," she says, "I ken by the way that ye're goin for a drink the day again." An she says, "Don't come back that near-cut," she says, "come right roon the road," she says, "and never come through a near-cut in the dark."

"Ach," he says, "it's aa right mother. Nothin'll touch me," he says.

"Well," she says, "please yersel."

Away he went tae the shops anyway. He got his shoppin and he went intae the pub wi the rest o his money, ye see. Got drunk - hes comin back. "Ach," he says, "I'm no traivellin roon that road," he says. "I'm goin across this near-cut," he says. "I'll be hame," he says, "in half the time, if I cross this near-cut." So he's comin across this near-cut and the moon's shinin, a clear munelicht nicht, across this near-cut. On this part he luckit an he seen this thing shinin on the grund. "I wonder what that is," he says. He bended doon an he liftit the thing - it was a sovereign! He kent by the nicks (?) that it was a sovereign. "It's a sovereign," he says. "Where did that come fae. Wish to God," he says, "I had a come this road in daylight," he says, "I wad hae found that sovereign and I wad hae been a lot drunker gaun hame!" But he come along another wee bit and he seen anither yin shinin and he pickit it up that tae. It was another sovereign. But he went along och! yairds an yairds an yairds and hes funnin these sovereigns as he gaed along. Och an he had about a dozen o these sovereigns. Aa of a sudden these sovereigns took a bend aff the path, ye see. Away up through this wood, his pickin an odd yin here and an odd yin there and he come tae this cave. Gonnae stopped at the door o this cave an he luckit in an he seen a fire away, in, a light, away in. "Oh this must be some auld tramp thats in here," he says, and he says, "he must hae robbit some place, and that was the money that fell oot his bag." He says, "I'll go in here and see him."

So in he goes intae this cave, and he come away in tae the end o this cave. This was the Devil sittin! Wi a fire, ye see. "Aha," he says, "you're there, John?"

An he says, "I'm here."

The Devil says, "How did ye get up here?"

"Aha," he says, "I followed a trail o money," he says.

"Oh ye did?" he says. "Ye're a bad boy, ye know," he says. He says, "Every shilling your mother got," he says, "you've drinkit. Spendin it," he says, "an wastin it." An he says, "That was you," he says, "last night again, doin the same thing."

"Ach well," he says, "it's nae business of yours what I do."

"Oh," he says, "it's the business o me," he says. "It's up tae me aa right," he says. He says, "I'm gaun tae get ye at the lang run!"

"I don't think so," says Jack. "I don't think so." But he sat an he's crackin tae the Devil.

The Devil says "How much money did ye get?"

"Aw," he says, "I got a lot o money."

THE DEVIL'S MONEY

The Devil said, "Let me see't. Let's see the money ye got."
The Devil says, "Ye've nae money."

"Aye, I have money," he says.

"Well, let me see't," he says.

He put his hand in his pocket an when he pullt it oot it was a handfu o earth he had!

The Devil says, "What did I tell ye? Ye've nae money! That's for bein bad," he says, "noo. But," he says, "I'll tell ye what," the Devil says. "There a box o money lyin there. A box of gold sover-eigns," he says. An he says, "I'll gie you as mony sovereigns as that," he says, "as ye can cairry," he says, "if ye can bate me."

"Bate you?" he says. "Ah, maybe I could bate you an maybe I couldnae," he says.

"Well," he says, "it's genuine money," he says. "For every sovereign ye can tak oot o that," he says, "an bate me takin it oot," he says, "ye can have them."

"Aw Christ," he says. Sees the cloven fit, ye see, the cloven fit on him. Noo Jack was that lazy that when he was in his mother's hoose, if his mother telt him tae put on a bit stick or a peat on the fire, instead o usin it wi his hands, he liftit his fit and he liftit the peat wi his fit, ye see, put it on the fire. "Well," Jack says, "what ye gonnae dae?"

"Well," he says, "it's up tae you," he says, "you tak the money oot," he says, "and see if I can tak the money oot."

Jack says, "If I took the money oot," he says, "a way you canny take it oot," he says, "will ye gie me't?"

"The Devil's in order(?)" he says, "on ye go." He took aff his shoe, pit his fit intae the box, liftit a good puckle o siller, liftit wi his fit. The Devil said, "D'ye want tae tak some mair?" He took oot a good heap o siller.

"Now, says Jack," can you do that?"

"Aye," says the Devil, "I can dae that."

"Ah but," he says, "wait." You dae it wi the same fit as me," he says. "Dae it wi that cloven fit." O coorse the Devil couldnae lift naethin wi the cloven fit. The Devil went away in a flash o fire.

But when Jack waukent up, he was ootside the cave an he still had this heap o money lyin beside him. He said, "that was funny," he said. "The Devil. I've never seen the Devil afore," he says. "That's a bloody man!" An he liftit this and he pit it in his pocket and he come batterin hame tae his mother.

"Well," says she, "you're back?"

"Aye," he says, "I'm back," he says. "I'm back," he says.

"Did ye come back the near-cut?"

"Aye, I come back the near-cut."

Says she, "It's a wonder ye didnae see the Devil," she says, "on that road."

"Ah," but he says, "I did see the Devil on the near-cut."

"What?" she says.

"I did see the Devil."

"Well," says she, "it's a wunner that ye're here."

"Ah," but he says, "I seen the Devil an I bate the Devil."

"How did ye bate him?" she says.

He says, "I made him lift money," he says, "oot o a box wi my fit an he couldnae lift it wi his cloven fit."

"Ah, ye're mad," she says.

He says, "There the gold. There the Devil's money," he said. An that kept them goin for weeks, the Devil's money. [laughter]

Thats anither yin o Duncan Williamson's.

II.25 PIPING WITHOUT A CHANTER

Alec Stewart

I mind comin intae Ireland, me an her, an I'd a caravan and didnae even have my chanter, o the pipes - it broke - and nae reed. An I says, "Well, I canny help it." It was Saturday tae I says, "I'm goin tae play this houses without the chanter, nothin but the drones goin!" An I'm marchin back an forward, an I was just didlin tae masel ye know, tae keep me in step. An auld wumman come oot an she says, "Was ye playin there?"

I says, "Aye."

She says, "I never heard nothin! I heard the bullin o your drones," she says, "but the chanter, I never heard ye."

I says, "Ye must be deaf then, missis, because I thought like, it was a wee bit too loud for a chanter, for the drones."

She says, "I never heard it then." She says, "Oh well, we canny help it, we'll jist have tae give ye somethin."

So I got one and sixpence at the door, and that's what kept me an Belle over.

II.26 THE SHOEMAKER'S WILL

John Stewart

There was a shoemaker that had been ailing and ailing for a long time. An eventually he came till he was near dyin an he sent for his solicitor and the minister and one thing and another like that. They were aa standin aroon his bed. He says, "I want tae leave some things," he says, "to ma family," he says, "an tae ma friens."

"Oh yes," says the solicitor, he says, "you just say it," he says, "Mr. Smeaton," he says, "an I'll write it down."

So the solicitor sits down at the edge of the bed, an the minister stands at the foot of the bed. He says, "I'm leavin three thousand tae ma wife."

"Well, that's fine," he says, "yes."

He says, "An three thousand tae ma son."

"M-hum. Uhuh."

"An the old man that came in tae help me wi the boots an that," he says, "I'm leain two thousand tae him." An he says, "My sister," he says, "I'll gie her two thousand."

"Just a moment Mr. Smeaton. I didn't think you'd all that money."

He says, "Who the hell's talkin aboot money?" He says, "It's sprigs I'm talkin aboot!"

John Stewart

.... They went oot scrapin doors an paintin, ye know, painting the doors, an they went tae this cottage an asked the woman could they paint her door an that. She said, "Oh yes, how much was it?" an that. They made a deal wi her an were workin away at the door, an they were in the horrors o the drink cause they were drunk the night afore that. He says, "I wunner if this auld wumman's got any drink in the hoose?" Ye see? He says, "I couldnae tell you," he says, "chap at the door and ask her," see? So they chapped at the door, an this yin says, "Ye dinny have any spirits, whisky or that in the hoose?" he says. "We could do wi some," he says, "fur tae paint the door," he says. "It makes a better lustre aff your paint." He had a story for her, ye see.

She says, "Wait tae I see." So she comes oot wi this wee gless o rum. She says, "I havenae got whisky but there's some rum here."

So they says, "Aw that'll dae." So she shut the door an they halved it atween them, ye see. So they waits another wee while, an he says, "Ask for a taste mair." Ye see? They chaps at the door again. She come oot wi another wee taste. They halves it again. An they works away an works away. He says, "Tae hell," he says, "she's bound tae hae mair than that," he says. "Two wee dribbles like that! So they chapped again an telt her they'd some mair paint tae work away at the bottom o the door. So she come oot wi this wee taste again in this gless.

She says, "That's it all," she says, "an I wadnae hae had that," she says, "only ma man had a sair at the bottom o his stomach," she says, "an I had tae rub it wi a flannel cloth," she says, "an I had tae rub it wi the cure frae the doctor," and she says, "that was the taste o rum," she says, "I kept in the bottle in case I needed it again."

II.28 LICE IN STOVIES

John Stewart

You wouldnae think it happened but ma father swore hissel tae God it was right enough. Him an his two sisters were oot hawkin, ye see, an they hawked aboot aa day, an hawked aboot aa day. Noo when ye were hawkin there were some houses good at givin ye left over dinner. Some o the weemin on the fairms would ask you, "Could ye tak a bowl of soup?" If ye were hawkin, ye see.

So they came tae this ferm an they knew the fairmer, cause my faither had been there before when he was a laddie wi his mother and father. So the wumman says, "Will ye tak a place o tatties? Stovies." An the two lassies says, "Oh aye, we'll tak a plate o stovies." They were all delighted because they were to get stovies, ye see, wi them walkin in the fresh air aa day hawkin, they were hungry.

So ma father - the wumman went in tae the kitchen an ma father come ben the other wey, an he seen the maid was bone combin her hair like this onto a wally blue plate, an then she was goin [Makes nipping movements with fingers as if crushing lice]. This is true, this is true, ma father telt me this. An he says. The wumman come back an she looked an then she shouted on the lassie, an the maid come ben, still carryin the plate, ye see? An she says, "Gie that tae the two lassie an that laddie," she says, "some dinner." The wumman sat them doon at a big table, in the scullery. An this maid came back an ma father says, "I kent the plate." An he says, "I was cheeky kin o at that time. I was aboot fourteen or fifteen. I kent the plate," an he said, "I got the tatties like that. They were kin o thick tatties," an he says, "I got them like that, an cowped them owre like that an liftit them an ye could see the skins o the black lice stickin tae the tatties!" An he shouted the wumman owre an he telt the wumman an there were a funny row in the hoose! Aye the skins o the black lice were stickin tae this col tattie!. Aye.

John Stewart

This was [Maggie: Quiet noo, Bennie] when I was at the school up in Torwood, I heard my father talking about it, 'cause the bull got away and aa the weans was in off the street. It was tae get took to the slaughterhouse and it broke away and the policeman was oot tellin ye tae beware o the bull, ye know, because when they're goin to a slaughterhouse they can smell blood and they go mad, ye know. And the butcher boy, the apprentice - it went up intae a kind o a paddock and naebody would go near it and at that time they'd nae humane killers, at that time. You know, they had to have a sledge hammer. Did ye ever - I suppose ye've never seen them at - I mind when they used tae hit them wi a sledge hammer on the heid.

"Well," says this boy, "I'll take the bull in for ye." He was about fourteen or fifteen and the men aa looked at him, the policeman. "How are you gonnae get him?" He says, "I'll take him in for ye." And he went and he got a great big long stick. I mind my father telling us aa o when it happened, you know. And he tied a snare, a rabbit's snare to the stick, as light as anything, you know, got the men to do it. And he put the big rabbit's snare on the end o the stick and he went out to the fence and he leaned through the fence with the big long stick and he put the snare right over the bull's balls and give a jerk and the bull went "Urrrr", you know and he straddled his legs and kept jerkin him and hittin him and jerkin him and hittin him till he put him right up to the slaughterhouse, ye see.

II.30 OXTAIL BROTH

John Stewart

So I was tellin Peter and Cissie this, and Cissie says, "Oh that remind me when we were up at Moneydie. My father was workin to the farmer there and we'd a little house and we'd wir tatties and wir meal an that, an my father was doin work to the house. And me and Duncan was waitin on my mother and father comin from the town. And we went away down the fence side and there was these big beech trees you know, Maggie, and this big bull was lyin just right alongsides the fence, and she says, "ye wouldnae hinder me and Duncan to go up and we got the bull's tail and we tied the bull's tail to the fence. And," she says, "we went away back off the bull. It was lyin sleepin in the sun and we threw big stones at it and the bull got up, and it made a run," she says, "and it went away and it left it's tail stickin tae the fence [laughter]. It left it's tail stickin tae the fence," she says, "and it made towards the farm and the farmer had to go for the vet and get the bull done away wi." And the farmer says to my father he says, "Henry," he says, "somebody," he says, "has tore the tail oot o my bull," he says and he says, "and I don't know where the tail is, it's some place," he says. "I don't know how that tail was tore out o that bull yet," he says. But the next day, Sunday, my mother had it in the pot making soup for us, broth, ox-tail broth!

"I was up at Hanna's," he says, "you know I work at Hanna's," he says. "Well," he says, "the queerest thing ever happen'd tae me there," he says. "I was goin tae work," he says, an he says, "there's a pit of praties, on that side and, man," he says, "this ould crow was dabbin away at this pratie," he says, "and I watched a while," he says, "I saw a whitterick (that's a weasel), I saw a whitterick comin oot," he says. "And by God," he says, "it was watchin the ould crow," he says, "and all of a sudden the whitterick made a dart," he says, an he says, "right on the crow's back and here, son," he says, "didn't the crow start flyin and it got up," he says, "and up," he says, "and man," he says, "the whitterick's got it's teeth in it's neck." An he says, "The whitterick knew it was killin the crow," he says, "because when the crow died up there," he says, "you know what it done son?" We says, "No."

"Well," he says, "it caught the two wings o the dead crow," he says, "and glided down to the ground again," he says, "and the whitterick sittin on her back." [Laughter]

A John Stewart

We was at Haverhill in England, ye see. Aa the family - there was the son-in-law, the two - Joe an them wisnae married at that time, nor - Matt was married was he? Yes, Patsy was the only one that was married. We was at Haverhill, we were doin a job for the Haverhill Council, and we had a place for four caravans, like that, right in the centre o Haverhill. It was comin on the time for the Scotch tatties, ye see. And we always liked to be so long a time in the South o England, then we'd up - bang on the lorries and vans onto the trailers and dash back tae Scotland for the tatties here.

Now, I used tae take a lot o Irish labour over, ye see? I got fed up takin out Scotch squads, because they were always arguin on the field. They were lookin for hot water for their hands. They were lookin for pies an lemonade, and aa this carry-on. And one bad one would ha upset the whole lot, so I got shot o them. And after that I used tae go across tae Ireland, go tae the Labour Exchange in Londonderry, tell them I was across from Scotland, and I was wantin some good workers tae take back wi me to Scotland.

Now, before I did this, I would go tae a merchant, or phone a merchant up, the likes o Peebles o Perth, Gardner and that, Fenton, or any o these chaps. I mean, or any o them round about. Morris o Burrelton. And I'd say, I'm away across tae Ireland and fetchin a squad back. How many would ye like? Noo, they're desperate for Irish, the merchants, because they know the Irish knows all about their tatties, and they're good workers, on a field. So I got orders for to fetch, was it thirty, Maggie? Somethin like that. An, we left the boys workin at Haverhill and me and her took the train from Cambridge. We went intae Cambridge frae Haverhill, and took the train from Cambridge tae Liverpool. We got off at Liverpool - we had to walk up an doon the street, then we went down to the boat, Andy, and took the boat across tae Belfast.

We came off at Belfast an we went in and saw Rinty Monaghan, that's him that's married tae ma sister, ca'd Rinty Monaghan. We were an hour wi him, then we came oot, and I says to her, I says, "We'll go an get a car." Rinty Monaghan says tae me, "Go tae McAuslan. Tell him I sent ye." Ye see. So I went doon in the tram tae this McAuslan, but I've jumped ahead o ma story. Before I left England my drivin licence was out, ye see, no - I wasnae banned, my licence was oot. An a chap in a hotel in England - outside o Haverhill - I knew him very well, and I told him I was goin tae Ireland, tae bring some squads back, but I'm stuck for a car. He says, "Take my drivin licence, Jock." An the chap gave me a loan of his drivin licence. Now, when I went tae McAuslan's for the car, he says, "Sign that form," and I signed ma own name instead o the name that was on the drivin licence. An he wouldnae give me the car. Then me and her had tae take the bus tae Ballycastle and we got a car in Ballycastle and we landed up, at Eglinton, outside o Derry. We stayed in this Cyclist Rest guest house, ye see [inaudible phrase]. And I says to the - this guest house man - he had a bit o a farm an aa. I says, "You don't know where I could rent a house?"

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"Aye," he says, "I believe I do," he says, "I think I know where you can rent a house. We'll go in the mornin'," he says, "and I'll take ye tae a man," he says, "that has got a house."

So me an him an I think Maggie was wi us as well, I'm not sure, outside then, about seven or eight mile this side o Derry. It was a village and the road went away up alongside o a hill, a back road, and it went over the hill and came right down and over the fork in the river and back down onto the main road again. Y'know? The road came like that - it went up, and round. So he drove along in the car wi me and he says, "There's the house there I was tellin ye about, ye see? An it was up this long avenue, an hedge at each side, an avenue goin up. An there was a wee house at the bottom o the road, an further back that way was a farm and about two field lengths up, this lane going right up to this big farm, and it was like a manse, built like a big manse. Oh it was a lovely place. He says, "That's the house I'm tellin ye about." So I said, "Drive up till we see it," so he went up the lane, the manse was sittin there an it was cottage-shaped, you know, an there was two big iron gates went intae the front, and it was all gravel. There was a bit o an orchard in front, like that. The lane ye came up continued round the back, and ye went intae the big yard at the back, an ye'd aa the sheds, the cow-sheds, the piggeries, the big sheds ye pit hay in, implement sheds an aa that, ye see, at the back. And I says, "Lovely place. It's a big place." So he says, "Well it belongs to Cecil Lynch," he says. "He stays about a mile doon the road, in the new bungalow." He says, "We'll go down and see him." I says, "All right." So down we went to see Cecil Lynch and I reckon we got it for about three pound a week, ye see. So anyway, I phoned over to the boys, that I'd got a house, ye see. An they came over. John came over. Was it - John an -

Maggie: Nancy.

John: John and Nancy. That's right. So when they come across, we went up tae the big house, ye see. Now, there was nothing - it was an eight room. An when ye went round the back, the back door just wasnae right on the house. There was - there was a bit built on the back, it wis a big kitchen, and the door cam out o that. An ye could come in the back door, intae the big house, y'know. An this was a kitchen wi a big Raeburn cooker in it. There was a door through there intae a big front room that looked out on the front. There was a door that went out there intae a big long passage. An there was a big, big stair wi banisters on it, came right doon from the top into that, ye see, to your front door. Ever see yon kind when ye open the front door, there's a great big stair, big broad stair goin up, an a gallery, y'know what I mean. So anyway there wasnae a lot o furniture. I took the things oot o the car, I says, "We'll just," I says, " - we'll rough it for a couple o nights," I says. We'd oor bed claes wi us. She built up cases an made a table o the cases, until we'd get intae Derry, the next day, for tae get some things tae put in it, ye see. So next day we went intae Derry. We left Nancy - Nancy was ten or twelve, may be twelve or thirteen - and we left. Nancy tae watch Bennie, and - some other kids was there.

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I dinnae ken whether Matt and John's kids was there, or no. But we went intae Derry and bought two or three things, and got a chap tae take them oot, and got them in the house, because - for the length o time that we would be there, I just wanted may be one or two rooms kin o furnished and that. So when we went back Nancy was cryin. An the two or three kids - I think it was Madeline's kids that was there - they were aa standin beside her. An she says, "D'ye know this, Da," she says, "as true as God's in Heaven," she says, "there's somebody up that stair!"

I says, "Dinnae be stupid, lassie," I says, I says, "It's been something else."

"No," she says, "No, Da," she says, "I'm tellin ye." Ye see! (We went back into the house.) The wife made the tea an that, John and - the ither yin that was lyin up the stair - no, John and Toby, they were the two that was over. So they said they would take their bed up the stair, ye see, this big widden bed, wi a big spring on it. So I come doon for ma breakfast in the mornin - I didnae come doon, 'cause we were in that other room on the ground level. I came in, Maggie was makin the breakfast. I says tae her, I says, "You know Maggie," I says, "there's somethin aboot this house," I says, "I dinnae like." Like that, you know what I mean. You could feel it.

She says, "I don't know," she says.

And just like that John came in, my son John. Now he was in the RAF for about twelve year before that. He come in, an he says, "You're tellin me!"

I says, "Why, what's wrong?"

He says, "We couldnae sleep in that bloody bed aa night," he says, "we'd tae put wir mattress on the floor."

I says, "What was wrong? What was wrong?"

He says, "It was shakin an bumpin an jumpin aa night, the bed." Ye see.

I says, "Hell."

He says, "Aye, damn right," he says, "and there was a blue light shinin on the waa."

"Well," I says, "there's somethin," I says. "It's queer," I says, "that." So we forgot about that, ye see? So after the boys went away intae Derry tae have a stout, and they knew a few Irishmen in Derry that had been across workin wi them, an they went away in for a cairry on, ye know what I mean? And I went oot tae have a walk roon the steadin. I went oot tae have a walk roon the steadin an the sheds, an I hears this - noo this is in the country in Ireland, and when a place is in the country in Ireland, you could hear a pin fall. You know what I mean? 'Cause, there's not so much traffic, and there's not so much go on it. And I hears this "ca - ca - ca - ca - ca - ca - ca - ca - ca - ca". Ye see? "That's hens," I says. "If I knew where they were, I might get eggs," I says. "I might get one tae kill for the pot." Ye see. An I'm through aa these empty sheds, piggeries, oot intae the - intae where the field come down - it was growin wi barley. I couldn't see a hen about the place. Ye see? If you would listen, you couldn't hear it, but if ye were walkin about, no payin attention, ye heard it! So I came in, I was standin in the

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piggery, an I was lookin out like that, listening again, ye see? I says, "Help," an I hears [makes noise of cow chewing cud]. I turned masel like that - it stopped! And ye know what it was? It wis like a cow chewin a turnip. I was standin in front o the byre. There was a byre an then a piggery, y'know. An there was these cups wi the chains hangin, where the cow was chained, and there was a - bowls like that, where the water came in, for the cows. An I says, "That's queer that! Queer." I says, an I came in an told her.

Every night, if ye were sittin talkin like this, ye wad hear the feet goin across that floor, feet goin across, bumpin, ye see. An there was a wee shed outside, an it was one o these automatic motors 'at was in it. An it was for pumpin water. An it would start every few hours, Andy, y'know what I mean? It would start up, may be go for twenty minutes, aa right, an then cut off, to pump water for ye, ye see. So I says to John, I says, "Something about this place," I says, "ye can feel it."

"Aye," he says, "I would say there's something queer about it."

We went roon every bit in daylight o that hoose tae see. We thought it was rats, or somethin like that, you know what I mean? But I says, "Naw," I says, "rats wouldnae make ye feel like that. You know rats scrapin or a mouse scrapin."

An he says, "Aye, ye're right enough."

Maggie: Did ye tell her about Nancy?

John: Aye, I telt her. An, then, Matt an Patsy came across, an the rest o the family, ye see? An I was tellin them aboot it, I says, "But," I says, "we've been in it aboot a fortnight, about three weeks, noo," I says, "'fore youse come across." An I says, "If ye hear anything," I says, "if ye hear anything, dinnae be sayin tae the other one, 'Listen! An there it's now,' because it'll stop dead. Ye'll no hear it." So I found out, in that house, if ye were talkin through one another, in your own way, your own carry-on, kept wan ear for what you're sayin tae them, an wan ear some place else, ye heard everything! Ye know what I mean? And, I was lyin in bed this nicht, in the room, an there were as many things gaun on, now; ye were actually lyin listenin. Ye see? An ye could hear a wean. D'ye ever see a wee child - this is true, cause I got it proved, I got this proved - know what I mean? You could hear this child away in the distance sayin, "Mammy, mammy." And ye would listen tae hear what it was aboot, but that's what it was saying, "Mammy, mammy." An ye'd actually thought, Sheila, you were listening to it through water. As true as God's in Heaven! I was tellin her about it, ye see. An the rest o them heard it tae. Then at one or two o'clock in the mornin, ye'd hear a rake on the gravel oot on front. Ssh! Rakin the gravel. Y'know what I mean? And then a sickly smell would come. D'ye ever walk into an old, mouldy house, that an old priest or a minister would have and they'd been dead for years, an ye got these old mouldy books, Andy, an ye got a peaty, musty smell o the old books? Well, that was the kin o smell that would come. All of a sudden ye'd be lyin in yer bed and - ye couldnae sleep! And then this smell would come, and then it would be awfy close tae ye, y'know? And then it would fade away.

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An it was the queerest house ever I saw. If ye were sittin, it would go away like that, an ye would feel free, y'know. Then may be in aboot half an hour - this is even through the day, an aa night, through the day, an everything - ye knew when it was comin. Ye could say, "I feel it comin again." It seemed tae come like that, ye know? So, -

Maggie: Tell them aboot the time ye went away for the hens.

John: I know. I know. I was in bed a couple o - I was in bed one or two nights, when I heard a car comin up the lane. Y'know what I mean? I heard this car comin up the lane. An I says, "It cannae be fae the main road. The main road's aboot three bloody mile away." Know what I mean? An I happened tae mention it tae her, but she said she didnae hear it. I'd heard it a couple o times. But this night, I'd an Austin 16 car, an I jumped in the car an I went away up tae this - I was - I went away noo tae buy some hens. 'Cause I like tae see a hen or two rinnin aboot. Even if I sell then, when I go away. An I went away up a glen - what they call a glen in Ireland - right up this glen, among the peats. Right among the Irish Republicans I wis! An I went intae a chap they ca'd Joe Fleming an I bought six ducks and some hens, off a woman Joe Fleming took me tae. An jist as I was sittin - Joe Fleming stayed wi his mother in a wee farm, y'know what I mean. It it was aboot ten o'clock or half past ten at night, an oh! it came a storm! Thunder an lightnin, an the rain was liftin bits out the - an Joe Fleming says tae me, "Oh be God," he says, "Mr. Stewart," he says, "you're not goin home the night." He says, "God, Ye'll be lost." He says, "Ye'll stay here the night, an go away early in the mornin." Ye see. So, he got me coaxed tae stay aa night.

Now, when I was at Joe Fleming's, you tell me what you heard.

Maggie: We were all in the room, you know. We were that frightened o the house, that we had aa the beds in one room. Ye see? So, we were lyin this night, and the windae was just as this windae is here - a great big windae. An I seen this light comin up the avenue. I says tae John's wife, Madeline, I says, "That'll be that midden - he'll be comin back drunk! An he'll no hae a hap'ny on him tae pay his taxi." So I says, "I'll take the money oot tae this, an gae oot the door." An I went oot that room, an I went intae anither big kitchen, and frae the kitchen instead the scullery. Ye could put the light on, an ye could see ootside, ye see.

John: The light was ootside.

Maggie: An but I didnae bother puttin the light on, because I heard the thing stoppin, an I heard the people talkin, ye see. It was men 'at was talkin. I says, "Oh they're here." I says, "Well, I'll just gie him the money." I opened the door an there was nothing there! Nothing! "Oh," I says, "it must be roon the corner," ye see. So I went oot - in ma nightgown tae - ootside, right roon the corner - not a thing there! Ma hair - ma hair stood on end, like that. I says, "Oh!" I made in, like a shot! [laughs]. So I says tae Madeline an them, "There's naebody there?" "Oh," she says, "there's bound tae be, Ma," she says, "'cause we seen the car comin up the drive." I says, "Well there not a thing there, then!"

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- John: When I come hame, then, she telt me this, I says, "Well," I says, "ye wouldnae believe me that I heard a car, too, ye see," I says. "Ye've proved it now." So the next thing - ye could hear things every day - that farm -
- Maggie: Did ye tell them about John comin doon the street efter that - the fitsteps.
- John: - that farm went on aa night, just the same as the people'd be in it workin. Y'know what I mean? The whole lot.
- Maggie: Aye it wis.
- John: Now Matt and Patsy - when they come across, they were up the stair - in that room there, up the big stair at the banisters. An John and them was in this room, and his wife and his two kids.
- Maggie: That was afore we put them in doon the stair.
- John: Two o'clock in the mornin I hears this laughin and screamin and dancin, all roon this stairs. This is true as anything.
- Maggie: Up on the landin it wis.
- John: I says, I says, "Jesus Christ, that's an awfa noise and weans tae be cairryin on at this time in the mornin." Two o'clock in the mornin, y'know. So I jumped oot ae bed, I got mad, y'know, and I jumped oot ae bed, and I shouted, "What the hell are youse daein runnin roon about like that." I thought they were goin back an forward tae the toilet, ye see? An I go over tae them an John was half-wakened. He says, "What's wrong?" Frae his room I says, "Tell them weans," I says, "tae stop rinnin aboot," I says, "and dancin and cairryin on like that," I says. "That's an awfa noise," I says. He says, "The weans is aa in bed."
- Maggie: He says, "In fact," he says, "it's the noise doon the stair we cannae ~"
- John: "There's naebody," he says, "cairryin on up here," he says. "But I hear a noise doon the stair."
- Maggie: We werenae ~ we were sleepin.
- John: See what I mean? So I come back in an I went tae ma bed, an aboot half an oor after that I hears the feet comin doon the stair, because the stair came right doon past the door o this room where we were lying, to the bottom.
- Maggie: I says, "This'll be John doon for a fag."
- John: She says, "This'll be John doon for matches," I says, "Oh aye." I got oot in ma shirt tail oot o ma bed, lifted the matches, went forrit tae the door, an opened the door like that, an there wasnae a bloody soul! Noo, aa this time ye see, ye werenae sleepin, because, actually, even though you weren't frightened, you still couldnae sleep - until the first bird whistlet in the mornin! And when the first bird or cock crew in the mornin, there was a weight seemed tae go away fae that house like that, and ye fell sound asleep, like a wean. Ye see? So next night -
- Maggie: Next night, tell them about him - (Bennie)
- John: Next night, he went up the stair -
- Maggie: He was an affy laddie for goin up the stairs.
- John: He went up the stair, ye see. There was a passage goin along tae the toilet. [Bennie shouts]
- Maggie: He kens what I'm talkin about.
- John: Ye ken, wi a big windae gaun oot on tae the gairden. And he come doon this day, and he says tae me, "A woman up the stair."

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Maggie: We were in the kitchen here, when he was shakin up the stair, and I says, to some o them, "Ye better go up an get Bennie doon. He's in the bathroom, and he's yappin tae some o the weans." And when they went up tae take him oot the bathroom, he was only in hissel! An I says, "What on earth are yese daein up there?"

He says, "Talkin tae Ann," that wumman he'd been talkin tae in the bathroom. She was washin her face -

Bennie: Ann!

Maggie: - and combin her hair. And she must hae been talkin tae him!

Bennie: Broon hair.

Maggie: An he's the only person 'at seen the ghost in that hoose. [Bennie keeps on saying, "Ann! See!"]

John: At the finish up, it was an eerie - see if you'd go up and if the sun was shinin through them windows and you went up the stair and you walked along that passage, past the boxroom, tae the toilet, it wouldnae matter if the sun was shinin at twelve o'clock in the day -

Maggie: Your hair stood on end!

John: Your hair stood on end! Didn't it Maggie.

Maggie: Oh, that was it, m - hm.

John: It was bad enough when I went and got a spiritualist oot o Derry for it, just tae prove it. So anyway, -

Maggie: Tell them aboot the water comin through the roof.

John: Wait noo - that's what I'm sayin - two or three nights after that, just cannae mind when, we were sittin in the kitchen, and oh the water started -

Maggie: Ooh, I says, look at the roof!

John: - dreep, dreep, drp, drp, drp, drp - water was comin through fae the -

Maggie: It was soakin!

John: I says, "I bet ye a shillin somebody's -

Maggie: Some o the kids has left the taps on.

John: - and a great big wet big on the ceiling. I says, "Look," I says, "if that comes -" and you know, it was one o these houses where the ceilin's aa yon carvin, know what I mean? Plaster carvin, an that. "If that comes doon," I says, "we'll be in money for tae get that -"

Maggie: Sorted. Need tae get a plasterer fur it.

John: An I says, "Some o them bloody weans has been up at the toilet, an left the hand basin taps on." An went up the stair - taps wasnae on! It was still dreepin. Ye see? And aa night we pit a bucket doon tae catch the water. Noo, this is a queer thing!

Maggie: Aye, it qu- we jist -

John: There's queerer yet tae come! There's queerer yet tae come! In the mornin when we got up the roof was quite the same as it was.

Maggie: It was jist like that there [points to ceiling]. Nothing wrong wi it at aa!

John: Noo, wait. Noo we sent letters hame tae Scotland, aboot the hoose. And who landit across but big John, Mary, Ann -

Maggie: That's his nephew. Ye ken aboot John.

John: Sammy, and Jeannie before she died. And they landed across, ye see. They come up tae this place, and John was saying, "Oh this would make a right guest hoose," he says. He says, "If ye had this in Scotland, at this rent," he says, "would make a

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right guest hoose." Ye see. He says, "But it's hauntit." I says, "Aye, ye'll hear it," I says. Says I, "Dinnae pay attention tae it," I says, "because if we go in there and start speakin aboot, it'll no come." Says I, "cairry on the way you're goin," I says, "and keep your wits aboot ye, and your ears, and you'll hear things that shouldnae be there at aa." And John - he is superstitious-natured hisself, the auld traveller's in him, y'know what I mean? An Sammy was lyin on the sofa here, and John and Mary Ann was in a shake down in that corner in this kitchen place here. So, he says, "I hear something up that stair." I says, "Dinnae speak or it'll no come." But he says, "I feel it." He says, "I can feel something in the hoose." He says, "I hear something bumpin up the stair, walkin and bumpin up the stair." He says, "I'll tell ye what tae dae," he says, "come on an we can sit in the big empty room on the other side o the landin, on the bottom. We'll listen there." Well, this was a lovely big room on the other side of the passage. We had no furniture in it at aa, y'know what I mean? An I says, "All right then." So me an him went doon. It was about ten - nine or ten o'clock at night. An pit the electric - no, there were nae electric light in it.

Maggie: Naw, we took the bulbs oot.

John: Tae cut off. Naw, there were electric light in it.

Maggie: We took the bulbs oot for the bairns.

John: Aye, but no the bottom one. So me an him went intae the bottom one, and we put the electric light on, and he kept the door open, like this - this is what he done [shows room door half open] he kept the door open, like this. He says, "Noo, we're away fae them talkin," he says, "we'll hear better," he says, and he kept the door like this [holds it half open]. An me an him's sittin, and d'ye ken the three way light - y'know thon three-way lights? It's got a bowl each on them. The three bowls started tae go like that [moves hand up and down] on the light, and the trampin up the stair. And John says, "Look at that, look at that, look at that, look at that!" Ye see? Now, the door he was holdin open gave three bangs in his hand like this [bangs door from one hand to the other]. Well, he's went oot that door - as he went out that door into the passage. I grabbed him. I says, "Don't run, dinnae run, man," I says. "Ye'll only make yersel scareder if ye run." Ken! Well, he was - d'ye know what he done - wi the fright he got? Whit did he dae Maggie?

Maggie: He messed hissel.

John: He messed his long johns, wi the fricht he got.

Maggie: He did definitely.

John: He did.

Maggie: He wisnae weel owre it.

John: Jeannie faintit. There was a - Sammy says, "I hear some'hin outside," and I says, "no, it'll be nothin." And just like that a stone smashed right open the window. An - never broke the windae, Andy. I went oot wi a lightit candle. I says, "if somebody - if some person or somebody threw a stone at the windae," I says, "the size o that stone, it'll be lyin ootside at the bottom o the windae." There was nae stone at the windae, and the windae wisnae broke.

Maggie: Jimmy said there were a cat in there.

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- John: Wait, noo. And Sammy Thomson was lyin in this place on a sofa here, late on, and me and John was sittin like that there. Noo I proved what they said before that, but I never told them. Sammy says tae me, "There's a cat on the top of my legs, there. Somethin rubbin against ma legs." An I says, "Naw." He says, "There wis a cat. Have youse no got a cat noo?" I says, "Naw, there's nae cat here!" "Well," he says, "I could hae swore," he says, "I felt a cat lyin on the top o my legs, rubbin itsel agen me." An I says, "No, for we dinnae have a cat." When I said tae him I felt the cat doin that up against my leg. [laughs] Ye see? So anyway, Jeannie, she faintit.
- Maggie: Aye she did.
- John: She faintit, faintit oot for the count.
- Maggie: Did ye tell them aboot the wumman -
- John: Wait a minute.
- Maggie: In the hoose.
- John: Eh?
- Maggie: The wumman that telt ye the [indistinct word] said they were haein a party.
- John: John then and Toby, came across tae Burrelton there. Y'know beside Coupar Angus, Andy?
- Andrew: Aye.
- John: Well, I had a squad workin there. Now Toby and Joe would go one week to run the squad, and come home, and Matt and Raymond and Joe an them would do the next week. An they would be com- in back an furrit like that, aa the time. So John and Toby left an I went away doon tae phone them. Down away at the end o the lane, and ye turned right back that road we came up tae the place, and there was a farm. I just forget what ye called them. He was a widow man and he had his son and his daughter-in-law, on this farm. And I used tae do ma phonin' fae there. So this day I went down, an I says, "Could I use the phone Mrs So-an-So?" I just forget her name. An she says, "Oh yes, Mr. Stewart. Come on in." Y'know in Ireland they're very welcome, they're very homely. Know what I mean?
- So I went in, an I was sittin on the chair like that an the auld man says "What like do they do the spuds in Scotland, Mr. Stewart? What do they do at the dressin, an how do they do them?" An this an that an the next thing. An I was talkin away to him. The son-in-law came in, an he says, "Will ye have a stout, Mr. Stewart, a Guinness?" I says, "Oh yes, I'll have a Guinness." He went tae the cupboard an he took out this case o Guinness, an he left them doon, an he gave me wan, his father wan, his wife wan an his- sel wan, see? We're sittin crackin. Noo, I says tae masel, "I'll ask this folk, these people, about the farm that I'm in." So I says tae them, I says, efter we talked a good long time, I says, "Tell me this," I says, "that place up there's no a bit - somethin wrong wi it," I says. "What's wrong wi that place up there?"
- Maggie: He says, "Is it hauntit?"

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- John: The wumman - no I didnae. It was the wumman that said that. The wumman done. An she looked at her man, like that, y'know [meaning look]. An he's looked at me like that. He says, "Mr. Stewart," he says, "you've got that hoose set." Noo, they call rentin "set". "You've got that hoose set off Cecil Lynch, and we wouldn't like tae say much about it," he says. "Ma father here was gonnae buy it, because there's eighty acres o ground with it, and my father -
- Maggie: Aye, we didnae take the ground.
- John: Was goin tae buy it at one time, but," he says, "we didnae take it," he says. "But," he says, "the man tae tell ye aboot that house," he says, "is Docherty, some boy Docherty," he says, "he only stayed a fortnight or three weeks in it," he says, "because he couldnae get any sleep in it, and he had tae leave it." An he says, -
- Maggie: Ye must hae had a guid party on.
- John: The wumman says tae the man, she says, "Look," she says, "ye're as well tae tell Mr. Stewart." She says, "Look, Mr. Stewart, the place is haunted."
- Maggie: She says, "It is haunted."
- John: She says, "Did ye know that?" "Well," says I, "I didnae know that." I kidded her on, ye know? I says, but I says, "There's some queer things goin on up there." Says I, "Ma laddie, my boy Bennie, him that is no right," I says, "saw a wumman up the stair." I says, "He said she had broon hair, and was washin her face in the toilet." I says, an I says, "He said they called her Ann." Well, ye know this? That farm wumman near faintit!
- Maggie: She says, "Ah, my God."
- John: She says, "That was Annie Gilchrist," she says. "She died in there twenty five year ago."
- Maggie: She used tae go aboot - she used tae go aboot wi wan o thon things ye know?
- John: She says, "Wait till I tell ye." She says, she says -
- Maggie: Ye could hear it goin across the floor.
- John: She says, "That woman, Annie Gilchrist," she says, "an her man," she says, "that had that farm up there, and their father was livin at the time," and she says, "they thought an awful lot o that -"
- Maggie: Their heart was in the farm.
- John: She says, "They had new carpets on that stair," she says, "and they wantit me tae go up tae see it," she says. "It's years an years an years ago." And she says, "I didnae bother gaun up." And she says, "She had wan child," and she says, "she went kin o paralysed, after she had the child, and the doctor told her not to have any more, or she would die." Ye see? "Now," she says, "they were out at four and five o'clock in the mornin." She says, "They were out at four and five o'clock in the mornin, milkin kye." An she says, "They would take that little baby," she says, "and let it sit in a chair in the byre, in the cold mornins -
- Maggie: It got pneumonia.
- John: - while they milkit the kye." An she said, "the child took penumonia -"
- Maggie: An died.

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John: ~ and she says, "The child died." An she says, "Annie Gilchrist," she says, "could only go about the house," she says, "wi a chair in front o her, like that," she says.

Maggie: That's wan o yon things.

John: "That way." An this is what we ~

Maggie: This is what we heard up the stair. Dy'ye understand what I mean?

John: Noo, this made, this made me ~ [laughs].

Maggie: An she says, "Youse must have had a right party the ither night!"

John: Wait a minute, I'm comin tae that! She says, "But don't tell nobody," she says, "Mr. Stewart, I told ye," she says, "'Cause I dinnae like to be setting thingmy stories, 'cause," she says, "an to tell ye the truth," she says, "you're the longest in it."

Maggie: Aye we were the longest in it.

John: There was a Navy man, from the Intelligence in Derry. No at Derry, there's a Naval Depot. Y'know what I mean? The Navy ships goes in. An there's a Naval base.

Maggie: It's finished John [meaning Barbara's tape.]

Barbara: I think I could use a Scotch after this!

B John Stewart Junior

We went to Ireland - we were working down in England at the time, Sheila and Andrew, to let you know. Now, my father and mother - we wanted them to go for a holiday, so I said to my father, "Where would you like to go?" So he said, "I would like to go back to Ireland." So all the sons pushed in so much money apiece. We said, "All right, away youse go." So away they went to Ireland. We were down about Newmarket, we were in tents, and my Mum and Dad went away back to Ireland for a holiday. They were going back, and my father says, "When I go back, if I can get a place over there, will I take it?"

So all the boys said, "Yes. Take it, if you can find it." So he wasnae across a week, when he sent back for more money. Typical, eh?

Belle: Typical John Stewart, right enough.

John: So we sent back more money and a couple of weeks later, back came the telephone, "Phone so-and-so." So we phoned the number, we got him on the phone and he said, "Aw, I've got a fabulous place for us. I've rented a whole farm, all the steadings, yes, and all the ground for £5 a week." Yes! [Laughter and an outburst of incredulous exclamation.]

Cissie: That was cheap!

John: Yes. This is true, Andy. After I put down the phone, I turned to my brother Alec and I says, "This is very peculiar. I can't understand how he could get a place like that for the money."

My brother Alec said, "Why worry?"

I said, "I'm no worried. He knows what he's doing."

Belle: And he does, John.

John: He does, yes. You want to meet him -

Ciddie: I'll second that any time.

John: You want to meet him. He looks like an eejit, but he's

Belle: He's no a bit like Alec at aa.

John: He's got -

Cissie: I would say, "Is he one of the Stewarts?" [Indistinct joke about Alec from Belle, followed by laughter.]

John: He's got a brain like a razor blade. [More laughter.] In his own way, he's got a brain like a razor blade. So I says to him - we phoned him a couple of nights after this and asked him, "What's up now, Pop?"

He says, "Any more money?"

I says, "How much do you want?" So I sent it on. Back he comes to Newmarket. "It's a fantastic place," he says, "ten miles - about ten miles - from Derry. A big farmhouse - seven rooms in the farmhouse, all the steadings, everything," he says.

I says, "How much?"

He says, "A fiver a week."

"Are you jokin?"

"No, "I'm no jokin," he says, "I've paid the bloke three months in advance." Well, so he said, but you know how much he fiddled it. [Laughter.]

Belle: Come on, John, go on with the story.

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John: After we finished working down at Newmarket - well, to be quite honest, we were working for some of the horse trainers down there. When we left there, the whole family - we're a terrible family you know - I'm the black sheep of the family, says my father, I keeps clear of the rest.

Unidentified Voice: I don't know why. I find ye sociable enough.

John: We all baled across to Ireland, to the house, you see, and - what a place! You should have seen it! Great big farm house, quarter mile drive up, big gates, you know, big steadins [laughter] you want to've seen this, it was out of this world, really. Absolutely fantastic. Great. All the boys in. Great. Everybody work to do. We're aa sittin in the house at the time, and we thought, "We'll go tae bed."

I've got a brother who's a mongol. When he was born, the doctors gave him till he was seven years old. Then, when he came to seven, well the doctors said, "We'll give him to fourteen." And when he came to fourteen, they gave up. [Laughter.]

Belle: And he's still going strong.

John: And now he's thirty six! He never forgets - he never forgets a - if he sees somebody, he never forgets them. If he saw you here, Sheila and Andy, five years later, he would still remember you.

Belle: He's the main person really in this whole story.

John: Well, we'd been there for three weeks and everything was going grand. Brutus - this is what I caa my father. All my brothers call my father Brutus, but he wasn't there with Caesar, you know. [Laughter.]

Belle: That's Alec's brother, you know.

John: He was going to get these - what do you call them - indoor chickens?

Andrew: Battery hens?

John: Battery hens! He was going to get these battery hens into this place. [Laughter.]

Belle: He did have lots of poultry, John.

John: Aye, he did have a lot of poultry of his own, but he was going to build this battery hen place. He's all the plans sent up, and I had it all passed and this junk.

So everybody goes to bed. Great big farmhouse. So I heard doors banging, open and shut, toilet going. [Laughter.] I thought, "There's that toilet again. We'd do well to put a penny slot on that thing!" [Laughter.] The first thing I hears is the door open down the stair, you know, and Brutus shouts up, "Woi."

I shouted, "What's up?" I shouted from the bedroom. "What's up, Dad?"

"What the bloody hell's gaun up that stair? Never seen a toilet before?"

I said, "I've never been oot o the room."

So, ye see, across the hall, the door opens - my brother-in-law, Matt, he says, "What's wrong, Da?"

He says, "It's aa your bairns, Matt. They're runnin tae that bloody toilet like they're madmen."

He says, "The bairns has never been out."

So the door opens down the hall and my brother Joe sticks his head out and says, "We've never been out, father."

Then across the hall, my sister Nancy sticks her head out and she says, "Margaret and I have never been out, father."

THE HAUNTED FARMHOUSE IN IRELAND

So he says, "Well, by Christ, if you've never been out, the place is bloody haunted!"

So about ten minutes later we hear this clomp, clomp, clomp, clomp, clomp, ye see. He shouts up the stair again. "Will ye all go tae bed!" And it was like a comedy film, you know. Aa the doors open and they says, "There's nobody been out!" [Laughter.]

"Well," he says, "there's somebody gaun tae that bloody toilet! And I'm sure it's not me!"

Unidentified Voice: A ghost with diarrhoea.

John: Definitely. A ghost with diarrhoea. The Epsom Salts kid, you know. So I got back intae bed. Suddenly the bed start to go [whirring sound]. So the bed starts quivering, so Alec says, "What is it?"

I says, "It's all right, son, it's only the generator outside. It's just the vibration."

The generator was about - oh - eighteen inches tall, by about two feet wide, you know. Vibratin a bed? It was about three hundred yards away from the house! He says to me, "Are you sure it's the generator?" I says, "It can't be anything else but the generator, but I'll tell you one thing - my drawers is full!" [Laughter.] But not wanting to upset my younger brother, I told him, "Oh don't worry about it. But move over the bed - " [Laughter.] It's absolutely true. So he goes back to sleep again, but I wouldn't go back to sleep. The bed is still starting to vibrate - rrrrrrrr. Then Alec wakes up again and says, "I'm no sleepin' in this bed." So we bales out o the room, and when he baled out and Matt baled out, I thought, "Well, what the hell, I'm no stayin maself!" Diarrhoea Dan, that's me. Back out the door, down over the banisters, you know, into the hall, right down the hall - the mattress, the blankets, the sheet, everything - bar the bed! [Laughter.] We didnae tak the bed - it was movin" [Laughter.]

My father opened the door down the stair. He says, "What the hell's gaun on?"

I says, "The boys'll no sleep theirsel up the stair, father." We didnae want tae upset him, ye see, so we covered it up a bit. He says, "All right, go into the living room, throw your mattress on the floor. Sleep there."

Five minutes - Matt shouts down the stair - that's my brother-in-law. "Da!"

He says, "Matt, what the hell's wrong wi ye? Can ye no go to sleep either?"

He says, "I'm no comin back to Ireland. This is the worst bloody house I've ever been in. Cannae get a moment o sleep. Da," he says, "come up and see this."

He says, "I've seen the river before," he says. "I was here years ago."

"No, Da. Come up a minute!"

My father went up the stair and the three wee lights like you've got here Andy, is dancin! See - it's gaun up and down, like that, aa the time. It is! So he says, "Oh ye better go down the stair. It's nothin. I think it's only vibrations."

He came back doon, and my father said to me, "Come here a minute, I want to see you." He took me oot tae the kitchen, and he says, "Somethin's wrong." [Laughter.]

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Unidentified Voice: That's the understatement of the year!

John: He says, [here the tape is indistinct]

Next minute, there's a squeal up the stair, and doon comes Nancy and Margaret. They run down the stair - nothin on but pants and bras, you know - whoosh, whoosh! [Laughter] Everybody slept in the one room. [Indistinct comment from Belle.] Ah, but wait a minute. I'm comin to it. Everybody baled doon the stair and everybody gets into the one room. It was nae bigger than this. Twelve by nine or twelve by six, or something like this. My father's doon in Derry, the next day, so he phones Jeannie, and at the time when he phones Jeannie, oor John was there. So he says to him, he says on the phone, he says, "Would ye like tae see a haunted hoose?"

He says, "Where?"

He says, "I'm stayin in it."

He says, "I don't believe it. We'll come across." And the next day, they were right across. The whole lot of them. Right across. They came across tae see it.

But before they get there, you know, my mother and Patsy were down at the next house, taking a phone call from Scotland, and on the way back up the drive, every light on the upstairs was bleezin, you know. Every light was on. So coming to the house, my mother says, "You better watch yourself."

He says, "How?"

She says, "Ye're gaun tae pey a fortune for electricity. Every light upstairs is on."

He says, "They cannae be. I took aa the bulbs oot, the day." [Laughter]

She says, "I saw Bennie up the stair." This is my mongol brother. She says, "He was lookin oot the windae as I was comin up the drive and he was wavin at us."

My father says, "He cannae be. He's outside in the car. He's asleep in the back of the car, pet." Now Bennie had a nasty habit o leavin the house, Sheila, and goin intae the back o the car and goin tae sleep, because his younger brithers aye-ways torment him, Joe and Raymond, and them aye torment him, ye see, and he goes away be hisself and has a sleep. He says, "I'm feart o Matt's bairns goin up the stair and switchin the lights on a leavin me up here wi an electric bill," so he goes up the stair and tries aa the lights. There's nae lights in, up the stair. She says, "Well, how did I see, comin up the drive, aa the lights on?"

"Never mind," he says, "John," he says, "and Mary Ann and Annabel and John and Sammy and Jeannie are comin owre."

So they come, ye see. Your son John got tae the door and he says to my father, he says, "I'd never hae found the hoose, Uncle John, but aa the lights is on up the stair." That's right! You ask John! "Aa the lights is on up the stairs," he says.

My father says, "They cannae be," he says. "Maggie came and telt me tae dae that tae," he says, "and I took aa the bulbs oot." This was about ten o'clock at night. John came to the door, he says, "You must be haein a right cairry on. Aa the lights on up the stair and everything. You must be haein a right ceilidh!"

My father says, "What?" He says, "There's nae bulbs in up the stair." And John went up, him and my father and my uncle Sammy, and there wasn't a bulb in - he proved to them -

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Cissie: And lights were on!

John: So he came doon. There was about twenty two o us, aa sittin in a room this size - aye. So Bennie said he wanted to go to the toilet. So nobody would go wi Bennie to the toilet [Laughter]. The toilet was up the stair. So finally, I says, "I'll tak ye tae the bottom o the stairs, Ben, all right?" And Bennie sayd, "Aye." Bennie didnae care. So getting to the bottom o the stair, I couldnae let my mongol brother go up the stair hissel, so I went to the top o the stair, wi him, and I saw him richt in. So when he cam oot he says, "Ji." The family sometimes call me Ji instead of John. I says, "What?" Bennie says, "Eh-oh, eh-oh, 'oom." [Here John imitates Bennie's mongol speech.] You know how a mongol speaks. I says to him, "What woman?" He says, "I' here. That's - in there." I says, "There's nae woman in there, Bennie." "Aye." I says, "Who?" "Anne." I says, "What Anne? There's nae Anne in there, man." "Aye." I says, "What was she daein?" "Ashin e' 'ace." "Washin her face?" I says. "She couldnae be in there. You were in there, weren't ye?" "Aye." I says, "What colour was her hair?" He says, "'oon." Her hair was broon. And then I says to him, "And what was her name?" "Anne." I says, "And she was washin her face?" "Aye." I says, "And why did ye stay in there?" "'Eedin a' ee." He was needin a pee. I says, "Come on, we'll go back and see if she's in there." But Bennie didnae bother. "Ee a'ay." She's away. "E e'ay." So I went back doon the stair and never said anything aboot it, ye ken. This is true, Andy, may I never rise from this seat - it's true! So a wee while after that we were aa doon the stair and Bennie went to the bathroom again and my father saw to him, and when he came back he said to my father. "Anne." Now I had never mentioned this to my father. My father said "What was she daein?" "Ayin a 'ath." Haein a bath - this time! My father says to him - ye ken, he's no like a father at aa, he's like an elder brither tae us - he says, "Was she washin her pappies, man?" "Aye, Da." "What was she daein?" "Eh-ah! Eh-ah! Doing like this. "Was she washin her legs?" "Aye, Da. Eh-ah! Eh-ah!" Like that, Bennie was goin through aa the motions to my father. Bennie had gone to the toilet and seen her washin her pappies and washin her legs.

THE HAUNTED FARMHOUSE IN IRELAND

Downstairs there were twenty two relatives aatgether in a room this size. There was nobody else asleep in any rooms in the house. So Uncle Sammy said to me, "Are you game to go up the stair?"

"Aye," I says. "I'm game to go up." When we got to the top of the stair, we had to turn left to get to the bathroom, and before we come to the bathroom there was the boxroom. I put my hand on the handle of the door and tried to open it. I said to my uncle Sammy, "It's a bit stiff." So my uncle Sammy says, "I'll try it." So he took hold of the door knob and I had my hand on his fist, and we put all our weight onto it, but we couldnae open the door. So I says, "Och maybe it's locked." We went on and looked in, and when we looked round, the boxroom door was open! [Laughs] We'd to pass the boxroom to get to the stair and I'll bet you - I'll bet you there were two Olympic records broken, runnin doon that stair!

Everybody piles back into this room and my father says to his nephew Donald, "Come on, me and you'll go and have a look." They was oot - they were away for about ten minutes. My father comes back quietly. He comes back doon and intae the room

.....

[The tape becomes indistinct for a few seconds.]

... a man with a heavy tread, going from right to left and coming back from left to right again, as if someone had been sort of crippled, with a sort of dragging of feet ... Back into the kitchen and in the kitchen Margaret says, "Oh Sammy, there's the cat" There was no cat there. "It's a ginger cat. Can ye no hear it?" Naebody seen it, but naebody wanted her tae be upset, so they said, "Oh aye, the cat. It's a bonnie wee cat." My uncle Sammy was standing at the fire place, like that, and she says, "Oh Sam, the cat's away for ye," and my uncle Sammy felt something touch his leg and away he went [Laughter] - out like a light he went! He felt the cat rubbin up against his leg and oh! he went out like a light. And see when he hit the deck. There was a crack at the window - and your John - he nearly went through the window there! - and my father went outside and he says, "Come here and hear this!" And in the steadings, you could hear the cattle crunchin neeps in the steadin, and there was no cattle or beast - or anything - for ten or twelve year!

Noo after everything was over, my father was doon the road to the next farm, to the people in the farm next door and he was talking to them. The people who were in the house before us was a man out of - he was an Intelligence Officer out of the Navy. Noo my father says to them. "Now, I want to know the truth." He says, "I've a boy who's a mongol," he says, "and he seen a woman called Annie - in the bathroom."

The woman said "Oh my God," she says, "that must be Annie Gilchrist! She died a hundred and fifty year ago. But they made the house so well, that she didnae want to die. When she did die, so she came back and haunted the house."

John Stewart

Barbara: Where in Ireland did you rent the house?

John: Eglinton.

Maggie: Eglinton, an Carmony Farm wis the name of it.

John: It's in the Six Counties. On this end, as you get off the boat, it's no far from ye, ye know what I mean? It lies between Derry an Larne, like that, kinna on the coast there. But anybody - y'see, that's the kin o holiday I would like. A bit o a laugh, an a bit o a fright, know what I mean? A bit o excitement, [Laughter]. An have tape-recorders an things with ye, to prove the thing.

Maggie: When we had took it first -

John: Oh I forgot tae tell ye, aboot this. Aboot goin for the spiritualist, to Derry. For this house. Just before A left - they all went away bar ma and John, an the wife. They were aa back here workin an wi the tattie squad, an I was tae follow over the followin week, know what I mean? So I was in Derry an I went intae Dalton's Bar an why I went intae Dalton's Bar, Sheila, wis they aa knew Toby there - he was like a bad penny. Ye see aa your bad - ye see when ye hear on the news there aboot the Leckie Road an aboot the Bogside in Derry, an Craigen an aa these places? Well, see aa these boys that's runnin aboot wi guns an bombin an everything like that? Wad give Toby anything! 'Cause they knew him fae he was that size [indicates small height] buskin! When he was buskin there, everyone knowed him, know what A mean? Noo, the way we went back intae Dalton's Bar - it was a jolly bar. Ye got music an they aa knew us. See? So I went in there, me an Toby, that's on the bottom o the Bogside in Derry. So Mr. Dalton's talkin away tae me. He was askin, "Where are ye now?" he says. I says, "I'm owre in Scotland for the tatties," I says. "I was across for some men tae take back." He says, "Oh aye. Is Toby still playin the box yet?" I says, "Aye." He says, "Oh Christ, a great little player that wee fella!" They knew him as a boy, know what I mean? So there was a man says tae me - I knew the chap - Friel, they caad him, Eddie Friel. An he heard me tellin Mr. Dalton that there were somethin wrong wi the hoose, an that, y'know. Giein hints aboot the hoose being haunted, and Dalton says, "Aye, by Christ, it could be." This Eddie Friel's standin listenin, an I gien Eddie Friel a Guinness. He says tae me, he says, "I was interested in what ye were sayin aboot that hoose," he says, "John," he says. He says, "Any chance o comin oot wi ye?" he says. He says, "I do the likes o that." I says, "Well please yoursel," I says. Well I knew this Eddie Friel was very fond o a drink. So I bought a half bottle o whisky and a dozen Guinness, or two dozen Guinness, or somethin like that. An I put them in ma car, me an John - that's John that's in Montrose, now. You ask - if ever ye see John. Noo, John's nae fule, he was wi the RAF a long time. There's nae stupidity wi him, an he's an educatit kin o a boy, isn't he?

Sheila: Oh yes.

John: Well, you ask John aboot it. So me an John an him went oot tae Eglinton. Now, you werenae there Maggie, you were owre here.

THE SPIRITUALIST AT THE HAUNTED FARMHOUSE IN IRELAND

Maggie: Naw, I was a week owre here, a week afore ye cam owre.

John: Me an Patsy an Madeline an John was there. Noo, we came off, we cam intae the kitchen, an A pulled this Guinness for Eddie Friel, an whisky - A knew he liked a drink. Noo this was after twelve o'clock at night, an it was about a - it's - actually it's about ten mile fae Derry, know what I mean? Well intae the country too. An I poured his whisky oot. No, before we came out, he says, "Drive up round by the chapel." That was the chapel in Derry. An he says tae Dalton, "Gie me a bottle fae ye." Y'know, a small bottle. An he says, "Wash it oot."

So, he got this bottle, an I drove him up roon by the chapel. I says, "What does he want tae go up roon by the chapel for?" Ye see. But this was for holy water. See what I mean? 'Cause they have a great belief in Ireland, and Catholics do, in the holy water, ye see? Now I drove up roon the chapel, and when we landit out, put the drink out on the table, poured a drink for Eddie Friel, a stout, a drink for John, a drink for masel. An Eddie Friel says, "Before I take that," he says, "where's this place up the stair goin to the toilet," he says, "where ye say your hair rises when ye'll won't even pass it in daylight, in goin tae the toilet?"

I says, "Up the stair, Eddie," I says. "That passage along there."

He says, "Aa right." He lit a cannle, he took the bottle o holy water wi him, an he went away up the stair, to the top o't. Passage for the toilet.

Noo, listen tae this, an think. He was up there for about ten minutes, or a quarter o an oor, an he came back down, he never touched his whisky, and he never touched his Guinness. He says tae me, "Where can I get a run out?"

Maggie: An him up the stair!

John: I says, "Eddie, just go out the back," because it was a big yard, y'know. I says, "Just go out the back through the kitchen an out the back." I never saw him yet.

Maggie: He never was seen or heard tell o!

John: I never saw that man yet!

Maggie: That was queer!

John: Now that was queer, wasn't it?

Maggie: He never said -

John: I think he saw something up that stair, boy!

Sheila: And he went away. Must have.

Maggie: And he just went away.

John: Now where was he goin tae go? There was no buses at that time o night! He would have ten or twelve mile tae walk.

Maggie: That was queer.

John: An he wasnae drunk! He'd had a drink, but he wasnae drunk. Know what I mean? Some o these - something like as if ye'd have three or four, Andy, y'know? Noo that man must have - I still, I maintain, that man - I've often said tae Maggie, there, I'd like tae meet Eddie Friel again, to ask him, how he went away sae -

Barbara: You never saw him ever -?

John: Never saw him again!

THE SPIRITUALIST AT THE HAUNTED FARMHOUSE IN IRELAND

Barbara: When did this happen? What year? When did this happen?

John: About fourteen year ago, anyway.

Maggie It would be that, aye.

Barbara: And you've never seen him.

John: Never seen him.

Maggie: Never saw him. Ye'd think someb'dy'd swallied him up -

John: Never saw him, never saw him since. He must - whatever he saw in there - he must hae went oot the back an startit runnin home for Derry, an never came back, y'know. Never saw him, that's as true as God's in heaven, never saw the man since.

Alec Stewart

Before I was married, I had a caravan in Ireland, and I travelled myself. I used to be with my father and mother, but I got fed up with them, because I had tae - tae tell ye the truth, I had tae dae everything. So I went and I got a caravan o my own and I travelled through Ireland maself. And I come to this old road, and I seen marks where there used tae be caravans on that old road, and I pulled in there, and just about a hundred yards, or a hundred and fifty yards up the road, there was a house, a wee thatched house, and I says, "I wonder where I'll get water here." I says, "I'll have to go up to the house and ask for some water." So I went up to the house, and I rapped on the door, and there was a man says, "Come in." So I opened the door and went in.

"Oh," he says, "I never saw you before."

I says, "Naw," I says, "I'm a stranger here."

He says, "Well, what do ye want."

I says, "I want a bucket o water."

"Oh my God, he says, "ye'll get plenty o water here." He says, "I've one o the best wells," he says, "in the country."

"Oh well," I says, "I could do with a bucketful, anyway."

"Well," he says, "sit down a minute and have a talk."

So I sat doon and he was blethering about this and about that and askin where I come from, and I told him in Scotland, I come from Scotland. He says, "I was never over there," he says, "but I had a brother over there, stayed in Glasgow."

"Oh," I says, "that's mostly Ireland, you may say, because there are an awful lot o Irish people there."

"Oh," he says, "I suppose there would be."

So I got roon the back, and I got my bucket o water and I went down tae the caravan and made ma supper. So I stayed there for three or four days, and I always used tae visit the old man at night. I had a chaff, and there was three or four other ones used tae come down, and a wumman come and done his housework and cooked some food tae him. He was a man about eighty-seven or eighty-eight. Very old man, and he went about on the two sticks. And he was once or twice down at me, and this night I went up he was in bed. "Oh," I says, "I'm sorry for comin and disturbin ye."

"Ach," he says, "it's all right." He says, "I've got a dose o the caul, I think," he says.

"Oh," I says, "where d'ye think - where does it affect ye?"

He says, "Ma chest," he says. He says, "I've an awfy cough." He says, "Sometimes I'm aa right for a couple o hours, an then I cough," he says, "for about ten minutes, before I get it away."

"Och, but," I says, "ye'll soon get over that."

So I went away back down home, went to my bed, and I heard a chap at my door at two o'clock in the morning. So I lookit out and I says, "What's wrong?"

This was a woman. She says, "Auld Docherty's jist aboot passin away."

"Oh," I says, "cannae be. I was up there the night."

"Well," she says, "he's very bad anyway. I sent for the doctor."

So the doctor come and he says, "Oh dear."

He says, "The old man's just about finished."

And I says, "What's wrong with him."

He says, "Pneumonia, in both lungs. I don't think he'll recover."

OLD DOCHERTY'S GHOST

So next mornin he died, anyway, and I went up tae the wake. They have wakes there, and they ask ye tae go up, and I jist went up. They tell stories and smoke and singing. So time rolled past and one o the boys said tae me, he says, "Do you want," he says, "to go to the funeral?"

I says, "Well, I'll go to the funeral."

Ye see, in that days, they had no cars, nor nothin. Ye had tae walk. And I said, "Where's he gettin buried?"

"Just down in the village, there," he says, "not very far."

So we got to the funeral, and when we come out from the graveyard he says tae me, "D'ye like a drink?" he says. "Would ye take drink?"

I says, "I don't drink much," I says, "In fact," I says, "I never tasted drink in my life."

"Oh," he says, "now you're jokin," he says.

I says, "I'm tellin you." So I went in anyway, and I had a bottle o stout. That's what they had, a bottle o stout.

"Now, he says, "would ye like tae come round tae our house?" He says, "One bit o the road rolls the ither." He says, "Ye go from the house to your place, it's jist about the same distance as from the village tae your place."

"Oh well," I says, "I'll go round wi ye fur tae pass the time."

So I went right round there and I got my tea, told jokes, and tellin stories and singing songs. It come tae about twelve o'clock, between eleven and twelve, and he says, "Well, I'll convoy ye on the road a wee bit, and," he says, "I've tae get up in the mornin," he says, "tae ma work." He says, "I don't suppose you work."

"Oh aye," I says, "I work." I says, "I can get up early in the mornin too."

So he convoyed me on about two mile, on the road. I'd only about a mile tae go then.

So he says, "I'll leave ye here," he says, "and ye can walk," and he says, "a safe journey on you."

So I says, "All right. Goodnight." An walkit away and I walked away. So, I was thinkin tae masel, comin along the road, trudgin along the road, and all o a sudden it struck me that I had tae pass this auld man's hoose. I says, "Aw, there'll be no harm passin his hoose. The auld man's dead, noo."

So I came on till about fifty yards from the house, and I look-it, and I saw the old man standin at the gate - wi his two sticks - standin at the gate, and he was lookin straight at me! Off my direction, anyway, I says, "What'll I dae?"

So I pulled my cap over my eyes and I ran past the auld man, and I ran right tae the caravan. It took me about five minutes afore I got my breath back.

So next mornin I got up and I met the auld woman that used tae go and clean the house, an, "Well," she says, "he had a nice funeral."

"Yes," I says, "he had a nice funeral. A lot o people there. Well," I says, "a thing happened tae me last night," I says. I says, "I was passin at his house, I went round tae such an such a farm, and I had tae come by his house. An," I says, "the old man was standin at the gate when I was passin."

"Naw!" she says, and I says, "Yes. He was standin at the gate wi his two sticks, and his auld cap on his head."

"Oh dear, dear, dear," she says. "Did he speak tae ye?"

I says, "I didnae tae time tae stand an speak tae him," I says, "I ran wi fright."

OLD DOCHERTY'S GHOST

"Oh tut, tut," she says, "if ye had a spoke to him," she says, "he might hae had somethin fur ye. There might be somethin buried in the house or some place, an he might had had somethin fur ye."

So that was the last o my story. That was a true story.

John Stewart

She (his mother) went away to Skye and she stayed away doon by the shore. And at the time, the travellers went to caves in them beaches and they used boats. My mother's father and mother and her grandfathers and grannies aa used boats round the coast. And they stayed in caves. And my mother went oot hawkin this day and she walked an walked away roon, right up and it was comin that way on, ken, kin o grey at night and she says, "I'll turn back and when I come back I know there's a near-cut. I heard people talkin about a near-cut goin right owre the moor here." So there was two roadmen workin at the side o the road. She says, "I suppose they'll maybe be on overtime or something."

She says to them, "Is there a near-cut fae here across -" mentions the village, "back doon tae the village?"

He says, "Aye," he says, "bit sometimes ye cannae see the path," he says, "and ye might wander aff it." He says, "It wouldnae be a nice place," he says, "tae wander aff, across that moss," he says, "it got kin o dark if ye missed."

She says, "Och, I'll chance it anyway," she says. "It's nearer than goin back the road I came." So she went on the road, on this bridle path place an she was walkin an walkin an walkin an walkin down this way, comin up that way, an she comes to an auld wallsteads - no roof on it - just two chimneys, one at each end. And outside the door there was a big tall rock o a stone, see? And standin up again the stone was a young man, wi his back against the stone like that, lookin down that way and she was comin this way, see? So my mother was very fond of old fashioned things, and old castles an things. I've saw her take us oot when we were younger, in Ireland and if there was an old castle about at aa she would be down at it wi us, showin us this an tellin us about that an the next thing, ye know.

And she says tae the young chap, "It's a fine night."

He says, "It's a nice night, missis."

She says, "That'll be an old building."

He says, "An old building," he says, "all right. It used to be a miner stayed in there."

My mother says, "I never thought there'd be miners here."

He says, "It wasn't coal or anything like that. It was silver they used tae mine for here." An he says, "It was an old man that run the mine, oh about three or four hundred yards over the back there." An he says, "The mine workings was gettin heavy for him and," he says, "he took a partner, a young man. Now," he says, "the auld man was mairried tae a young, young woman and one afternoon," he says, "the auld man came back up for a drink o water or something and he looked through the windae, as he was gaein to go to the door there," he says, "and he saw the young man kissin his wife. So," he says, "he never said anything. He went back down to the mine and he set an explosive charge and a tim-in wire on it, you know, and fuse. And," he says, "he came runnin up an he burst in the door and he says, 'I've discovered riches,' he says, 'a new vein,' he says, 'tons o silver. We're rich! We're rich!' The young boy grabbed his cap an run oot the door and just when he went in-tae the mine, the blast went off."

My mother says, "Was he killed?"

A GHOST IN SKYE

He says, "No. He was able to crawl back," he says, "to the door there," he says, "as the ould man had cut his wife's throat," he says, "and he hung her above the door there, and," he says, "the young chap crawled back to that door, the front door there," he says, "and he died."

My mother says, "He must have been sorely hurt," she says, "God help us."

He says, "Aye, the whole side o his face was blown clean off," he says, "just like that."

It was the ghost she was speakin to.

An there was no face on the man that was speakin to my mother.

John Stewart

They were comin here (his mother) and her parents, big Belle, I've heard her mention them a thousand times, and the Big Dummy, some other yins was comin over some hill in the north o Scotland there. Aw, they knew the roads, every bit o them, knew where tae stop, and they were makin for this - eh, what d'you call them a kiln. You know, a kiln? That they burn stuff in? Well, this is a big kiln and it was rainin you know, if it rained, you could go in there and make your bed. Didnae need tae put up a tent or nothing up, you know what I mean? And where this kiln was situated was on top o big precipice like that, and you could walk oot an look over the gorge and the river went doon. Right doon the fit o the brae past a wee hoose about a mile doon, this rushin river.

So they had their beds doon and they were efter their tea and they were sittin some o them was in bed, lyin smokin, crackin, y'know, and I suppose it wasnae fags at that time, it was clay pipes. When there was a young man appeared at the mooth o the kiln door and his hair was aa wet. This is supposed to be true. My mother told us often - it's a wonder Alec didnae tell ye this. And his clothes was soakin wet and he looked like that and laughed and nodded tae every one o them and then plunges - threw hissel right owre the cliffs!

So my mother and them were aa feart, my mother said; she was only a lassie at the time. But when they shifted next morning they were goin doon past this wee house and they knew the woman in the house and they tae aa - if they didnae make tea that mornin, they generally went tae this woman for tae get hot water tae get tea made ye see. My mother went in and the woman says, "Oh hello Belle," she says. Knew them aa by name this wumman. "Where were yese last night?"

Belle says, "We were up at the auld kiln and we," she says, "we got an a fricht up there last night."

She says, "What was it?" she says.

She telt her aboot the man comin tae the mooth o the kiln and him all wet and him noddin tae them an laughin tae them and he threw hissel owre and threw hissel owre the gorge.

"Oh," she says, "that's nothing." She says, "He comes here often," she says. "That was my daughter's fiancee," she says. "Often when my daughter's combin her hair in the room there," she says, "at the windae, he'll come," she says, "and look intae the windae and smile," she says, "and nod in tae here. He wouldnae hurt ye, Belle," she says.

That jut shows ye there's things - you know what I mean?

- John: Him an this Davises wis pearl-fishin - noo A jist forget the river - it was in the North of Scotland, and they were fishin this pool. You wade the streams wi waders. But in the deeper water ye've got a pearl boat. Y'know a flat bottom made like that, jist a square [indistinct phrase] and ye have a plank along it, and ye lie on your stomach like that, wi your glass-bottom joog, and your pearl-stick. Y'know, and ye'd pick up wee shells. Well, ma father an this Davises was fishin, an ma father was oot on the bank, openin shells. Y'see, chuckin them in for there were nothin in it, openin them an chuckin them in. But he got a ball, he got a ball, a lovely ball it wis! About may be twelve, fourteen grain, ye see. An he put it in cotton wool and put it in his match box. An this gen'leman come doon. Noo, some o the gen'leman, for the sake o the salmon fishin, would try an put ye off the water. Y'know what I mean, Andrew? So this gen'leman, came doon. He says, "What are ye doin?" My father says, "I'm pearl-fishin," he says, "Lookin for pearls." "Oh you're a pearl-fisher?" "Yes." He says, "Did ye get any?" Ma father says, "Yes," he says, "I got one," he says, "nice pearl." So, ma father - he says, "Could I see it?" Ma father took it oot showed it him - a lovely ball, y'see? He says, "Where did ye get that one?" Ma father says, "I got it in a pool there." Y'know, he walked straight to the edge of the pool. He says, "That's the pool I was drowned in," and he plunged in heid first.
- Maggie: Aye, it was the ghost - right enough!
- John: The Davieses and ma father'll tell ye that. He plunged straight from the bank, straight into the pool! Ma father swore hissels and that Eddie Davies -
- Maggie: They never fished there again!
- John: Noo that was queer, wasn't it.
- Barbara: Where did that happen?
- John: In the North o Scotland But the name o the place A cannae mind. Cannae mind.

John Stewart

My family was school age, and I was stopping up there at Alyth and there was a chap - an Irish tinkers came across here, the Wards, and I met one o them down at Ball [cough] in Blairgowrie. And he knew, like, we were in Ireland, and we knew a lot o the places an a lot o the people that he came off, and he says, "Where are you stoppin?" an he says, "I'm stuck for a camp."

I says, "I'm stoppin up above Alyth."

He says, "I'll pull oot up there beside ye. It'll be company."

I says, "Fair enough."

So him an his wife an his family come up, Martin Ward, they called him. An he was a great chap for sittin tellin cracks an stories at the fire at night. So, we'd a big outside fire up there, an I was tellin him aboot the bull at Balleek. No - I didnae tell him about the bull. He was tellin me the story.

He says, "I remember one time," he says, "John," he says, he says, "comin oot o Balleek," he says, "just me an the wife," he says, "and we'd only one child." Now the man didnae know about this at all, see what I mean? And he says, "We stopped at a nice green bit," an he says, "where there were an avenue down to an old castle." An he says, "I put up the camp," he says, "an I'd a white horse," an he says, "I lowsed the ould horse out o the ould cart," he says, "an hobbled it," an he says, "I put it up the road tae graze. Now," he says, "there's a field opposite," he says, an he says, "I didnae want him tae break in-tae any of the farmer's fields." But he says, "I looked," he says, "an there were a field there, wi a wall all round it," he says, "like an estate field," he says, "an a big iron gate. An I knew she'd be right enough out, that's out on the road, because she couldnae do no harm." An he says, "We just got to wur bed," he says, "after we got a sup o tay," he says, "an I'm lyin," he says, "talkin to the wife," he says. "Well," he says, "there was a crack like thunder right on the roof o the tent!" An he says - noo they were Catholics - "Oh my God Almighty! What's wrong?" An the wife started cryin. An he says, "After that went away," he says, "I heard my horse's feet goin away up the road."

An she says, "Ye'd better go oot," she says, "an see where the horse goes, in case it goes away that far you'll no get it."

So he says, "I got ma trousers on," he says, "an I just went out in my bare feet," he says, "and my mare - she knew me." She wouldnae gallop away fae him, ye know what I mean? An one mare. An he says, "I went out," he says, "an I saw my mare walkin up the road," he says, "hobblin up the road, wi hobbles like this," he says, "and I went up after her, shoutin tae her an shoutin tae her. But she kept goin," he says, "an I startit runnin wi ma bare feet." An he says, "Couldn't get any closer tae her. She was always the same distance," he says. "I went about a mile." An I says, "Och to hell wi you. Let you go. I'll get you in the mornin." So he says, "I come back tae the tent an ma wife's in hy-sterics! The crackin," he says, "we thought the tent was down," he says, "wi this noise which was round about the tent!" He says, "I couldn't tell you what it was! But eventually," he says, "she was down on her knees prayin." An he says, "In the mornin," he says, "I went out," he says, "in daylight, to look for ma horse." He says, "And d'ye know where my horse was?"

THE HOBbled HORSE

I says, "No."

He says, "It was over in the field," he says, "beyond the wall." He says, "There was no way into the field! An it was standin wi the hobbles on it, in the centre o the grass field!" He says, "I still don't know yet," he says, "how my horse got intae that field!"

And that was the samen place that we saw the bull! Noo, that was queer that man tellin me about that, aboot the same place, without him knowin what we saw there.

John Stewart

Ah but there's a lot - there's lots o things that ye - dinnae know, you know what I mean? There was a bothy there, at Arnprior, that was haunted.

Barbara: Is this in about the same place?

John: No, there at Arnprior.

Barbara: Oh - just up here.

John: This was the last squads I had. That was just about nine or ten year ago. I'd an Irish squad in there. Went out - run them out tae the bothy, got off the lorries, went intae the bothy, got aa their stuff in, the Irish people got aa their stuff in. But the beds up, 'cause we'd tae start the next day. An go intae Irish bothies, y'know, if there's Irish people in before you, ye'll see aa their names cut out in the widden rafters, an aa this carry-on, y'know. An I would say, "I know that boy, there. That's Hughie Gallagher. Aye, he must o been here." Harry Duffy, an aa this carry-on. The names, y'know. So there was one bit burned intae the wood. It says, "This hut is haunted." Ye see? On this bit wood. She'll tell ye [points to Maggie]. So I left my wife an went intae the house that weekend, I went away intae Bucklyvie for a drink. An when I come back, Patsy an the Irish girls - we'd six Irish girls in the bothy too - in my squad. An they were aa caryin on. Patsy said, "The tea pot riz in flew off the gas-stove - nobody near it." The clock stopped - a light went on the clock an the clock stopped at that time. An five bags o coal riz from the corner where the coal man had put them, an came right across an half-pushed her intae a corner. She couldnae get oot for the coal! An she says there wis feet-steps - a man walkin aa roond the bothy. "Well," I says - an the girls told me - the Irish girls. "That's right, Mr. Stewart," she says, "it's right," she says. "We've heard that feet-steps two - ree times," she says, "but we didnae want tae say."

"Well," I says, "the night," I says, "come in, if ye hear it, come in an tell me, an I'll come in tae your -". The woman a different place, ye know what I mean? An I says, "I'll come intae your place," I says, "an stand an wait till I hear the fit steps." So, she was - as I said, she was in Glesca [?], an I was lyin in the front, this bit in front, by maself. About one o'clock Patsy came ruinin tae the door, ye see. "Da, there's the fitsteps now, there's the footsteps now!" The bothy was in three sections. The front section was there wi a door in there, where the big hotplate was, an that's where I had ma bed. An ye walked straight through my place to the big partition an there was a door, an that was the wumman's place, ye see. Noo tae get tae the men's place, ye had tae come outside, an go round the other side, tae the other end, tae get tae the men's place, see what I mean? So my daughter Patsy came tae me, an chapped, an came intae my place, 'cause she could come through the partition at her door. The door was open. An she says, "There's that fit-steps noo Da," she says. "Honest to God, we heard them again."

A GHOST AT ARNPRIOR

So I went up, put ma troosers on an cam in, and I had a candle and matches in ma hand, 'cause there was no electric in this bothy. An I shut the door, like that, and I held the candle like that, an I heard that front door open, comin intae my place, the front door, that front door place open and the big heavy tackety boots, ye know, nailed boots came trampin up, right up. Straight up, till it come tae this door, and when it came tae that door, I opened the door quick and held the candle like that, an the footsteps went right past me, right through the partition, right on, straight oot! That's the wey o't, as true as God's in Heaven. But I never saw nothing. I heard it an I never saw nothing. Mind Maggie, the footsteps at Arnprior - Patsy, an the Irish - she was blocked up wi five bags o coal!.

Maggie: She was greetin in it. An the teapot was stood up in the air.

John Stewart

I've told two or three folk this. The first year me an her was married, I was married to her at a place they ca' Boar-hills, in Fife. About five or six miles oot o St. Andrews. And we were workin for Rodger o Kenley Green. After the tatties finished aa the travellers were moved, ye see? And I didnae go - I shifted fae where they stayed. I shifted up about quarter o a mile to the Whitegates, [Clock strikes eight] The White Ladyhill Road, they caa it the Whitegates, in't it Maggie? The White Lady's supposed to be seen on it. It's a green road, goin up like that, a nice broad kin o road, and it's aa green grassy and it goes right on up - whins here an there on it y'know. And I left my car at the fit o the road and a hikin tent I had, when I married first, one o them square tents and I carried the baggat up, stuck the tent up, and we wasnae bothered at that time, because ye could hae beggit your livin at the hooses at that time, because there were none o these fridges for to keep anything in. If we went tae the butchers or went tae the hamshops, we got a load at the weekend. Well, anyway, me an her's sittin, an I was a great chap for a good dog, an fishin at that. That night we went to wir beds, an did we have a wean at that time Maggie?

Maggie: No.

John: I didn't think we had oor first one.

Maggie: I was expectin John at the time.

John: You was expecting John, that's right. Well, me an her's lyin, and we were maybe aboot three hunder yards from the road, you know what I mean. And that road, there's no a lot o traffic on and there wasnae a lot o traffic at that time. And it was aa grassy, gaun right up. We was lyin - and this is true. This is as true as God, and I'm lyin like that. Whether it was early or no, I couldnae tell ye, but I hears voices.

"Maggie!"

"What?"

"I hears voices. A woman laughing."

She says, "So do I."

I says, "I'll look oot."

She says, "Just close to the back o the tent."

The tent would be here and you'd actually think they were just aboot the door. Know what I mean? So I sneaks oot and it was heavy, heavy dew. In my shirt-tail tae. Heavy dew. And I goes on ma hands and feet, like that, on my hands and feet and I could hear her - this is what she said, as true as God's in heaven! The words - ye've heard me tell this often. You heard it as well as me. I heard her sayin tae him, "Don't! And don't! Your hands are very cold!"

Noo, I thought, it was a man and woman come fae the road up and followed up and flopped doon, a courtin couple, but - the whole point is - they had three or four hundred yards o grassy road before they come tae my tent. Why should they come up and lie at the back o the tent? Just at the back o the tent! And I went up and doon pas there, and could see nothing?

THE GHOST AT BOARHILLS

Maggie: Nothing there at aa.

John: There was nothing. Noo, it was only after that, that her father and a lot more people told me, that that was the Whitegateshill Road, there was a White Lady seen there. Noo that could hae been the White Lady. See what I mean?

John Stewart

This is true. I'm not tellin ye no word of a lie. In fact, I would go wi ye and give ye half the petrol just tae prove tae meself. The back road leavin St. Andrews, goin to Strathkinness -

Maggie: Maybe a certain time o year, ye'll see that.

John: No, ye'll see it Maggie, listen. I was comin along that road wi a lorry, twenty year ago, no more. And I was drivin along there and passing two big gates that goes intae a big house there. There was a great big beach ball, black and white beach ball come right out in front o the car and I went straight past it an I never felt nothing. Now, I thought about it, but I didnae think about it in any supernatural way.

Bennie: Sheila. Sheila. Sheila.

Andrew: Maybe some children had been -

John: That's right.

Andrew: - knocking it across the road.

John: Now listen. Me an Toby, Avril, his wife and Maggie, four or five year ago, there, was drivin at twelve o'clock at night back that road, and on the same part there was a car passed us, like that, and on the samen spot, this car was just past when this ball come out. This is true, Andy, God strike me dead? The beach ball came out and it bounced in the headlights thon slow way and it got bigger and bigger - you ask Toby and Avril - and bigger and bigger, till it come right up in front o the car. Then I remembered o myself seein it wi the lorry. Now, later on, I was askin aboot that hoose, and it was supposed tae be a hoose, like, for orphans and I think there were some folk, maybe a wean, killed aboot that bit o the road, and I bet ye if anybody passes there, roon aboot twelve o'clock at night or between twelve and one, passes there wi the lights on, they'll see that beach ball. Mind Maggie?

Maggie: Yes.

John: It got as big as that tae.

Maggie: Aye, it was a great big one. We thought it was gonnae go in - it was just right in front o the car.

Andrew: Ye thought it was goin tae hit the car.

Maggie: I thought it was all over.

II.42 THE PHANTOM PEDESTRIAN

John Stewart

You ask Joe. Ye ken, Joe that was in? Doon the other side o Royston, we were comin on he road and we hit this oul' man - bang on! Stepped right oot in front o the car, bang - hit him. I said, "Better go to the police Joe," says I. "Don't - thingmy, we'll hae tae go to the Police." Straight intae the police, telt them we hit a man on the road. "Where about?" Jumped in the patrol car, we gaed oot and searched the road upside doon - there was nothing, not a thing. And there were nae marks on the car or anything.

Sheila: Yet you felt the bump.

John: We ken we felt the bump.

II.43 THE PHANTOM HITCHHIKER

John Stewart

But look at that was in the paper the other day. The boy that gave the girl hitch-hiker a lift. Did ye read aboot that? This is nae sae long ago there and the lassie was daen that [thumbing] and he opened the door an let her in and drove on and he says, "Where d'you want off, darlin?" She says, "Along here." And when she got out the door of the car she says, "This is where I was kilt by a motor," and she disappeared like that. And she sat aside him and got a lift. Now, it's just curious, in't it? I'm not sayin there is ghosts, or anything like that, but -

Maggie: I believe in ghosts, I believe anyway.

John: There's some things that no-one can explain.

Maggie: Because I mean, ye get that certain things that ye say to yourself, well, that's no right. It's supernatural some way.

John Stewart

John: There's some queer things, man there is. Now look at him [Bennie] now I wouldnae tell a lie aboot him, one o ma own, well, mongol-type laddie. We was at - what d'ye ca' that place, between Irvine - mind ootside Irvine, Maggie, where we stopped at yon caravan site. It's a place no far fae goin oot by Saltcoats. It's a place oot that way.

Andrew: Going out by Saltcoats?

John: Aye, there's a place - aboot five - Kilwinning - that's it. Well, we were on the caravan site there see. Now, that auld Maggie, that's in the hospital, my sister, her man was badly at that time and wasnae long oot o hospital wi an operation for his bladder. And he was just aboot croakin you know what I mean? So he was in bed. Noo, he never dreams, he never gets up at night and says he's dreamin or anything like that. But this night, when we had the big caravan, we used to lie on the two seats and in case o him maybe peein in the seat - he doesnae do it at all now - but at that time, if he drunk too much, if ye didnae get him up through the night, he'd be inclined tae do it. So, we always had a half mattress. We'd make oor own bed doon, she'd put a half mattress on the floor for him and his bed. So this night he wakens up and he's half greetin, and I says, "What the hell's wrong wi ye man? What's up? What's up?"

"Donald," he says.

Bennie: Donald!

John: Be quiet. So Donald was a great man wi him, ye see. If I went to Donald's and my sister Maggie tae see them and ye were tellin Donald a crack, Donald wouldnae be listenin tae you at aa. He had more interest in Bennie. He would put a humph up Bennie's back he would buttom him up, then he would start goin in fits o laughin, ye know all these auld tricks wi him. Noo that night I says tae him, "What's wrong?"

He says, "Donald's chokin me."

I says, "Not at all. Hae ye been dreamin?"

He says, "Donald."

The next day I got word, he was deid! That day, that next mornin I got word he was deid, next mornin. So he must ha -

Andrew: Sensed.

John: - sensed, or Donald's spirit, if there is a spirit, must hae come tae him, after he deid. Must hae done.

Maggie: He telt me ma mither was deid an aa.

John: He telt her Granny was deid.

Bennie: Granny.

Alec Stewart

Well, Sheila, this is supposed to be a true story. The man said it was true. I was masel intae Ireland and pulled ma wagon into a - beside Letterkenny, a back road. And I was stayin there for a couple o nights and the last night I seen this auld man comin doon and I was jist new hame an I was makin supper. So he was passin, he said, "Hallo there. How're ye gettin on? Ye've a good fire there," he said.

And I says, "No bad," I says. "Ye can have a seat there." I'd a couple o chairs, ye know. I says, "Ye can have a seat there, till I get my tea."

So I gave him a cup o tea and he sat there, "But nothing tae eat," he says. "I'm jist new after my supper."

And I says, "Dae ye stay here?"

And he says, "Oh yes. I stay at the top o the town there," he says.

And I says, "What do you do?"

I'm a blacksmith. I've a blacksmith's shop."

"Oh," I says.

"And," he says, "it's a queer way I got that blacksmith's shop.

"Oh," I says, "what dae ye mean?"

"Well," he says, "I was a young lad," he says, "just like yourself, and" he says, "I was on the road. And," he says, "I seen the blacksmith and heard him chappin away until this blacksmith's shop and," he says, "I just dandered over," he says, "and the blacksmith lookit up and he seen me and he says, 'Hallo there.' I says 'Hallo,' and I said tae him, 'Are ye needin anybody for a helper?' He says, 'Are you a blacksmith?' 'Well,' I says, 'I served for two year in a blacksmith's shop.' 'Oh,' he says, 'well, I'm needin a man, right enough. But I dinna make very much here in the blacksmith's shop. Just a few horses and that, and a plough or two. 'Oh,' but the man said, 'I dinnae need much,' he says, 'because I havenae a home. I've no place to go tae.' 'Oh well,' he says, 'I've got a place,' he says, 'next door there. It's a good wee house,' he says. 'Ye can stay in there. And,' he says, 'I'll pay ye about ten bob a week. Will that do ye?' 'Oh,' he says, 'that'll do fine.'

Well, time it rolled on and he was a very good blacksmith this young lad and he says, "One night the auld man, he heard the auld man roarin." So I went in and this was the auld man lyin on the sofa, he looked up and he seen me and he says, 'Hey,' he says, 'Paddy,' he says, 'is there something wrong wi me?' He says, 'What can be wrong wi you? You was aaright the day.' 'Ah but,' he says, 'I'm losin ma breath and you know,' he says, 'I'm not a young man, and,' he says, 'if I do go, I'll leave the blacksmith's shop tae you.' 'Och away!' he says, 'ye're no tae speak like that,' he says. He says, 'Ye'll be aa right in the mornin.' But he got worse and I sent for the doctor and the doctor shook his head. He says, 'He's full o bronchitis,' he says and he says, 'Evey tube in his breast is choked and,' he says, 'ye know we can't cure him. We may ease him but we can't cure him.' But a couple of days after that he died, the old blacksmith. So they got him buried and he started wi his blacksmith's shop now. He had the whole lot tae hissel. So he said tae me, he says, "The very same thing happened," he says. "I was workin one day," he says, "intil the blacksmith's shop and," he says, "it was about eleven o'clock," he says, and he says, "who walked in but a young fella. And he says, 'Have ye anything tae sort or have ye got a horse tae shoe or onything?' 'Na,' he says, 'I have not,' he says, 'but I was lookin for a job,' he says, 'I cannae

gie ye much,' he says. 'But I've no home,' he says, 'and I've no father and mother,' he says. 'I'm orphaned.' 'Well,' he says, 'I'll tell ye what I'll do,' he says, 'I'll gie ye ten bob a week, an that house next door.' 'Oh,' he says, 'that'll be grand,' he says, 'ye dinnae need tae start the day,' he says. 'Ye can start tomorra.' 'Na, na,' he says, 'I'll start today.' So he says, "I had had very little to do, ye see." He was the best blacksmith that ever I saw. He could do anything and they called him mic. "Well," he says, "we workit like that for about five year and," he says, "I was gettin kinna aulder. I said to Mick, 'I think I'll go, down to Belfast the day.' 'Down to Belfast?' he says, 'Yes.' 'What'll ye do in Belfast?' Mick said. 'Well,' he says, 'tae tell ye the truth, I widnae tell nae ither body but yersel,' he said. 'I'm goin tae look for a woman, a wife, and,' he says, 'I'm sick o makin my supper and ma denner and ma breakfast.'

So time rolled on. Next day came round. 'Now,' he says, 'Mick,' he says, 'just you carry on the same as you're doin now,' he says, 'and ye'll be all right.' Mick says, 'That'll be all right,' he says, 'you carry on.' So he went doon tae Belfast and he went tae dances and he went tae pubs and he went this, that and everywhere. Till he came tae - he was in a guest hoose, ye see. He was in a guest house and the landlady said tae him, 'Where do you come from, Paddy?' He says, 'I come from Letterkenny.' 'Oh, Letterkenny,' she says, 'and what are ye doin down here? You're here about three or four days.' He says, 'Well,' he says, 'tae tell ye the truth, mistress,' he says, 'I'm lookin for a woman. A wife. Cause I'm sick and tired makin food.' 'Och,' she says, 'there plenty of them knockin about.' 'Well,' he says, 'I was in dances and in pubs an -' 'Just you wait a minute,' she says. 'In a couple of hours time and I'll get ye a woman.'

So he's sittin waitin ye know, and this lassie come in, and she come owre and she spoke slow tae him and hearkened tae him and he's sick. He says -

'How would that one do ye?' she said tae him.

'Ach, ye're jokin!' he says. 'That woman wouldnae take me. That woman was only about twenty one or twenty.'

'It doesnae matter,' she says. 'She's no home, she's an orphan.'

'Oh well,' he says, 'she'll be the same as masel,' he said.

So she went over and she spoke tae the lassie and the lassie came over and spoke tae him and the two o them combined with each other and she came home with him, up tae Letterkenny.

So Mick was workin away, ye know, and when he came in, he says, 'Well,' Mick says, 'did ye land lucky?' He says, 'I did,' he says, 'a beauty she is. But,' he says, 'we're not married yet.' So Mick came in and looked at her. 'By God,' he says, 'if she's good and her looks like that, she'll be a topper. Generally,' he said, 'when they've the good looks, they're a bad wumman.' Paddy says, 'Well, she knows the door if she's bad.' But they went and got married next day, anyway, by special licence.

And time rolled oh and oh! she was a good woman! A good baker, a good woman for makin grub. So time rolled on till one night she was oot, she went tae the town and she came back and she was soakin wet. The water was runnin out her. 'My God,' Pat, he says, 'how did ye go out on a day like that? Did ye no tak your umberella wi ye or your waterproof coat?'

THE BIRCH BESOM

She says, 'Ach I forgot all about them,' she says. 'It was a good day when I went away.' So that next night she says, 'Paddy I don't feel well.' She turned worse in the middle of the night so they sent for the doctor again. The doctor came up and he says, 'My goodness,' he says, 'she turned and she got pneumonia. Have you got any poultices?' In those days there were no kaolin poultice, ye know, it was just an oatmeal poultice. So they made poultices aa night, and she died next mornin, the woman.

So Paddy came to Mick and he said to Mic, he says, 'She's dead.' 'Oh, no,' he says. 'Yes,' he says. 'She's dead,' and he says, 'I don't know how it happened - her goin out tae the shops and no coat on, no shawl, nor nothin.'

So next day they sat up for the three nights with her and had the funeral and they went in these jantin cars they had in these days, Irish jantin cars, and they went tae the funeral.

So Paddy, he's sittin noddin, ye know, comin hame and he says, 'It wasnae a bad funeral, a big funeral.' 'Oh,' Mick says, 'it was a good funeral.' So they travelled on and Paddy's just aboot sleepin when Mick pulled up the horse. He says, 'Paddy,' he says. Paddy lookit owre. He says, 'What's wrong?' He says, 'have ye see what's comin? If I'n no mistaken, there's something queer gaun on here.'

So they sat and this person come right up tae them. This was his wife! Her they burit that day! He says, 'My God,' he says, 'it cannae be her.'

'Yes, it's her right enough,' Mick says and she came right up tae them. She says, 'Whit are yese daein standin there?' she says. 'ye better get hame and get the kettle on.' So they went hame and pit the kettle on, sittin waitin till she come back. And she had a basket on her airm, full o messages. And they come into the house and Paddy he went across and felt her airms and her shoulders and that ye know. She says, 'What are ye doin?'

'Oh nothin at all,' he says. So they went down - Mick says, 'The best thing we can do,' he says, 'is go down to the priest.' They went down to the priest, Paddy and Mick. Paddy told the whole story. 'Well,' says the priest, 'it's impossible,' he says. 'Ye burit her the day. She cannae be up at the hoose.'

'Well,' he says, 'come on away up and ye'll see.' So they went up, the three o them, and they stood at the door and pit the priest in. The priest went in and, 'Hallo,' she says, 'Father. How are ye gettin on?'

'Oh, I'm gett on on fine,' he says. 'How are you gettin on?'

'Oh I'm champion,' she says. 'Couldnae be better.'

'Dear, dear,' he says. So he come out, the priest come out, and spoke to Mick and Pat. He says, 'Wait until tomorrow morning,' he says, 'and we'll take up the coffin and see what's in the coffin.'

So they went next mornin down to the graveyard and got the grave-digger and they dug the grave up. And do you know what was in the coffin? A birch besom. Aye a birch besom. And that woman lived for about twelve year efter. And that's the last o my story.

John Stewart

My father went doon to the police station (this is him away in Aberdeenshire) and he seen Davie at the police station and my father was comin hame, clear moonlight and a wee fence, a footpath, wi a rickle o a wall and a wee fence - over like that, a wee fence wi staples in them - a wee wall - and my father says when he was walkin along his hand would be about the height o the palin, and this black dog jumpit right up like that on the top o the fence, went through the fence and it was that close tae him that my father says, "Tch, tch, tch, c'he, c'he" and his hand went right through it. Now my father has telt us that often and my father's dead. I wouldnae tell a lie about.

[Bennie is muttering about a "gog" (dog) all the way through this story.]

We was in Ireland - Alec can tell ye this [Bennie, be quet man!] - We was in Ireland and I had a dog. Jack and Alec had a dog and the dog I had, he would ha fought the Devil or another dog, but he was a good hunter. [Bennie keeps saying "you?"] And Alec has a big dog he called Fey, and he could race. Now we were oot in the moonlight poachin ye see. Noo, in Ireland there's nae poachin laws. Ye can wander any place ye like so long you're daein nae damage and hunt and poach as ye want. And we were in this field and there were clumps o - bits o whins, and the moon was that bright and the frost that glittery, ye could see for miles. Just like that there. Wir dogs was scentin something, were hot on a trail round about us, they were goin like that, and we were watchin them, ye see, and just like that there - this is true Andy - was a big, black retriever that size and curls roon like that. Ye could actually see the moonlight through the curls. And I could see a glitter o a belt on his neck. And it was standin like that - stiff as a poker. Now our dogs was scentin back and forrat, round about, up and doon, like that, an never noticed that dog. Now, what made us run - we thought it was the gamekeeper, or some gamekeeper, and we run on to the road and it was after we were away, and thinkin aboot it. How did oor dogs no growl at it? How did oor dogs no growl at it? How did oor dogs no pay attention to it? Then it came into oor mind about the dogs that follow the Stewarts, ye ken.

Andrew: And are these dogs that follow, does it signify anything.

John: I don't know. I don't know, it doesnae signify anything tae me, bar - maybe they selt their soul to the devil or something like that, years and years and years ago, I don't know. But my father telt us, a dog follows the Stewarts, and they're supposed to see them three times.

Noo, there was another time I saw a dog, and that was between Kirriemuir and Forfar, thon wae gaun down. You know that railway crossings as you go down tae Kirriemuir and gaun tae Forfar, there used tae be a railway crossin before the people were killed? Well, as you passed that, there were two buildins on the right-hand side left hand side, and you go round the corner like that and you go away on there and then you go down a long hill, well, it was comin back, comin up that hill wan moonlight night - no I think it was through the day. It was through the day. Me an the wife there. And this dog came right oot o the road and it seemed to get in fr- mind, Maggie, thon black dog comin fae Forfar.

II.47 THE SILVER SIXPENCE

John Stewart

That was a man that knew the people of this glen, know what I mean? Seemingly when he come tae the hoose tae visit the folk, that they were talkin, complainin aboot no gettin the milk fae the kye, ye see? So this man says, "What's happenin?"

"Well," he says, "I don't know," he says. "We take the kye in," he says. He says, "They're no in nae time," he says, "an we go in and have wur tea," he says, "an when we go oot tae dae the milkin," he says, "there's no a coo," he says, "will hardly yield a pint."

He says, "Dae ye no see naebody in aboot the place?" he says.

"Naw," he says, "I never saw a sowl," he says, and he says. "They couldnae dae that anyway," he says, "because we would see them," he says, "cairryin it awa."

He says, "Did ye never see nothin?"

"Naw," he says, "not a thing."

"Well," he says, "I'll tell ye," he says. "I'll go oot tae the byre," he says, "when ye take the kye in," he says, "and I'll sit and watch," he says.

So they took the kye in that night an the boy got the auld muzzle-loader gun an primed it up, loaded it wi a silver sixpence, a bent silver sixpence. So he's lyin in the byre amongst straw teedin oot, ye see. An he hears this scurry an he looks an it's a big brown hare comes hoppin o'er the bank an through this wee hole outside o the door the hens goes oot an in. An he goes roon every cow in the byre an takes aa the milk. An as it was gaun oot the door - he was that dumb-founded, he couldnae shoot at the time he was watchin the hare, whit it was doin. Just as it was gaun oot the fire, he fired the shot at it, but it scurried away, ye see. An it was in the winter time. So he went in and telt the man. "Noo," he says, "we'll go oot," he says, "an see where it goes."

So they went oot and they could see a spot o blood here an a spot o blood there in the snow, an they tracked it owre tae this auld wumman's cottage, the ither side o the glen. An they went tae the door, an she roared tae them that she couldnae come oot. An they pushed the door open an they come in, an she was lyin in bed. An the man caught her; he seen bandages roon her hand, white cloots tae keep it frae bluidin. An he took the bandages aff, an got his pocket knife oot, an pickit the silver sixpence oot o the wound in the loof o her hand.

II.48 THE STRAW LEGGINGS

John Stewart

In the samen glen, on the ither side, the folk wad work the same way wi the milk fae their coos, an the same man was gaun up that road an he met a man comin wi straw leggins on. Ye see at wan time, years and years ago, they had straw leggins, wrapped roon their legs. An this man that was comin up the hill, the road, he was walkin as if he was cairryin a burden, know what I mean? As if he was cairryin a burden. An he spoke tae him, an they sat doon by the side of the road, an he tok his knife oot again and ripped the straw leggins an the milk flowed doon the road, oot o the straw leggins. He was a witch man, like a broonie.

Maggie: A warlock.

John: And he was takin the milk oot o the glen tae. So there's anither wee story for ye.

BLACK DOGS

Maggie: Aye, that's right.

John: It seemed tae get right in fron ~ mind o that? It seemed tae get right in front o the car and I never felt nothin ~ I lookit back, and ~ nothing! But I'll tell ye Andy, where ye'll see something. If ye really want tae see something.

John Stewart

An she (Maggie Moloch) made away an she landed in Kilmarnock. An she steyed in a wee cottage in Kilmarnock. (An ma mither telt me this often when I was a wean, ye ken, an we were wantin ma mither for stories.) An she was there a good while, workin away an jist gettin her livin an that, ye ken what I mean?

But the old-fashioned police got on tae her, the auld-fashioned policemen, and they done for her, boy, them an the prosecutin fiscals, an magistrates an that, came for her at this wee house. An they got her, boy, an takes her oot an were gonnae burn her, ye see. An they asked her, they says, "Well listen, Maggie," he says, "is there any request you want," he says, "before we pit the match tae this blazin sticks."

She says, "Lowse that - an hand," she says, "a minute, an ma feet," an she says, "go into the house," she says, "and get my two pewter plates, I want tae take them wi me." Ye see? Y'know them big pewter plates, ye've saw them in ould churches, Andy, for gaun roon. Big old pewter plates. Pewter plates for the collection. So they came oot an they lowsed her hands. She took yin like that [under her arm] - this is true - it's supposed tae be true - it's in history, Scottish history - she pit one aneth that airm, an one aneth that airm, and done that [flaps arms] an away she went boy! She says, "Yese can aa suck ma arse!" she said. "Tomorrow's Kilmarnock Market!" An they never saw her again.

Belle Stewart

....oh I cannae mind, I wad be tellin a lie an I dinnae want tae tell lies an that, 'cause other people'll be listenin tae it an I want tae tell it as I've been daein all along, an I cannae tell ye - and this was o ma granny, ma granny used tae tell this, and ma father of course, and as I told you long ago my granny was eighty nine when she deed. They were camped away some place in one o the Glens, I dinnae ken where it was, anyway. There were a wee burn kin o thing, an you know the travellin folk long ago always camped as close as they could to water, ye ken. An maist o these wee burns that passed fairm hooses, - ye've seen them where ducks an that were gaun tae, Andrae, and may be a wee kin o a dam - but this was a wee burn, that run doon past the fairm hoose, and they were owre intae the wid at the back, an there was a wee cottar hoose at the fairm, and there were two old sisters and a brither bid in this wee hoose, and they never got married. But they werenae travellin folk, na, na. They werenae travellers. The folk o the Glen. An they had aa their hoose, even as poor as they were long ago, they always kept Hogmanay Night, you know, New Year's Night. An they did aa the hoose an they used tae lift oot the ashes an aa the rest o it fae the fireplace, an see that everything's aa right before twelve o'clock. An they had to go, not to this actual burn, no tae the actual burn, ye ken, 'cause mind ye, they are particular the country people in that days tae they were feart tae drink oot o burns. They washed their claes wi it, but they didnae want tae drink the water. But there was a spring well on the bank, ken, on the bank o the wee burn, a spring well. An it wis widden buckets they had, ken, widden buckets. An everything was aa done an the one auld sister was cairryin them - she may be wasnae an auld sister at that time, but there were twa sisters an a brither anyway. An she "Oh now! Look!" she says, "it's almost twelve o'clock. It'll tak ye aa your time. Are you gaun for the water the night, or am I gaun?" So one sister says tae the other, "You'll better go for it," she says, "an I'll get the things aa ready here for twelve o'clock." Now I don't know how near to twelve it was, but it must have been very, very near to twelve o'clock. An the auld sister didnae want tae be the first fit. She wanted tae get back intae the hoose afore twelve o'clock, ye ken. But passin the burn tae get tae the spring well, she dipped the two buckets in like that to wash to the wood, ken. An she threw the water oot wan o them, an it was awfy bright moonlicht, an she looked at the ither bucket. She got an awfy fright! But instead o poorin' the water oot, she went right back to the cottage, an she never still didnae go for the ither water oot the spring well. Because wi the light o the moon, she could have swore it was a bucket o blood she had. An when she got back intae the hoose, - noo this has been told repeatedly tae - a lot o aa the timber folk - because they worked on that fairm where they bid an when she went back in an she pit it doon (on the table) they times - ye ken, nae tablecloth. They looked at it, an they smelt it - an it wis the brither that came forward an lifted a cup, an he took it oot, and he said, "That's no water. An that's no bluid," he said, and he took a drink o it - and it was a bucket of wine! And seemingly as the history an the story went aboot the thing, whatever it was, I don't know - that at a certain minute, either the one minute past twelve, or the one minute before, that one wee particular burn ran wi wine! But never naebody -

THE BURN THAT RAN WINE

they heard o this, long before this happened, they heard o it often, spoken aboot in the Glens, an that's no tinker's talk, that was the people o the Glen. But nobody ever seemed to be there at the right minute to get it, but they heard of it. But this auld wumman jist rished oot - or young wumman, whatever she was - an she didnae ken she was bein there at the right time. When she come back, she had the bucket o wine, an that proved the thing tae be true. But that's no a tinker's tale, tho' it was my granny, a tinker that telt me, an ma mither an aa. She came back wi the bucket o wine.

Belle Stewart

But ma granny never ever seemed tae hae a complete version of the thing. She wad tell ye, "Oh aye, that pits me in mind o the auld man," - we used tae say, 'the auld buck man' - "the auld tramp man," she says, "the shearer o Glenshee." An then I heard ma mother - an ma mother wasnae a storyteller, but she jist kent aboot it wi it bein, ye know, a place no far from us.

Well, the way the story went as far as I know, as far as I can mind, because I was jist a lassie when I heard it first - there was this auld man - I cannae use the traveller word - the buck man - because people wadnae know tae listen tae that - the auld tramp man, anyway. An he was makin up Glenshee. Where he came fae I cannae tell ye, whether he came fae Blair or where he came fae. But he was goin up the Bridge o Cally way towards Glenshee. An it was wearin intae the very far back end o the year, ye ken. An he wouldnae be very far past the Bridge o Cally seeminly, when an awfy blizzard began tae blaw up, ye ken, wind and snaw an sleet. He was meanin tae go right up tae Braemar. Anyway he's goin on an on an on, till he comes up tae aboot the Spittal o Glenshee. An oh! it's gettin jist unbearable, an it's night now, it's dark, pitch dark, apart fae the white snaw which give him a wee bit o visibility, ye ken. An he's goin on an on an on an he says, "God bless me," he says, "I doot I'm goin tae be smothered in this snaw." 'Cause the Devil's Elbow was a devil's elbow at that time. An he's getton on an on an on. An he looked and he says, "Is that a light I see?" An it wis. An he says, "Spare me God, for God's sake, tae get tae the door o that hoose," he says, "I see a light there." Anyway, he trailt up this road an he got tae the door o the hoose.

Just as he was goin tae the door - long, long ago they used tae keep the collie dogs in the cairt sheds, what we call the cairt sheds, ye know - an they aa started barkin - one or two dogs, I cannae tell ye, but they started barkin. He went up tae the door onywey, trachlin, keepin his heid doon for the gale, an he batter-battered at the door. An the auld man an wumman was sittin at the fire. An I dinnae ken whether it was the wumman or the man said - some - tae each other, "There's somebody at the door."

"Och away for God's sake!" It was the auld man. "Away for God's sake wumman," he says, "who in the name of God wad be at the door on a nicht like this?" He says, "Ye cannae be wyce, wumman. Hoo could onybody - it's the wind!"

But anyway they sut quiet for a wee while an here it come again louder. I think the auld man must hae kicked the door. "Aye," he says, "I think you're right, wife," he says, "I think there is somebody there." Anyway the auld man went tae the door. Ken, long ago, for tae go tae a door they had a - ken, but whit they caad a lantern, ye ken, an he held it up at the door an he saw the auld man. "My God bless me," he says, "whoever ye are, come inside," the auld man said tae him, the fairmer. An he went intae the hoose, an was shakin the snaw - excusin hissels for bein - for his feet makin a mess an that, ye ken. There was snaw on his feet. But they took him owre tae the fire, onywey, an he's gey far through. Anyway they got him - came roon - whether they gien him a dram or a cup o tae, I dinnae ken, but they let the man sit roon the fire for a good while. An he says, "Well, I dinnae ken where I could go the nicht," he says. "Ye've nae place at aa that ye could gie me tae lie doon in?"

"Oh aye," says the auld fairmer, "I'll gie ye a place tae lie doon aa richt."

THE SHEARER OF GLENSHEE

So the fairmer's away oot tae the barn wi him - took the lantern, ye know, an he's awa oot, a hurricane lamp or lantern, an he jist put him in the barn. "But there's only one thing," the fairmer says, "I hope ye'll no be strikin matches," he says, "for I'm no wantin ma place to go on fire."

"Aye," he says, "I'll no strike a match the nicht," he says, "for I dinnae hae nae tobacco for ma pipe." So he says, "I cannae. I'll no get a smoke."

Anyway, the fairmer left him, away he went. But the next mornin the snaw had stopped but aw! there was an awfy amount o snaw had fell durin the nicht. Twa three feet or that. So the fairmer says tae his auld wife, he says, "I wunner if that auld man's aye there."

"Oh," she says, "he'll be there. Where could he go on a night like that?"

So the fairmer trudged owre onyway, tae the barn, an here's the auld man sittin among the straw. "Oh," he says, "ye're there," he says, "well, ye better come owre tae the hoose an get something warm tae drink. Something tae, fae the wife."

So the man came owre an went intae the [indistinct word]. The man was still comin an goin, heavy shooers, ye ken, off an on, aa the next day, aye for a hale week. So the fairmer says, - he began noo tae help the auld fairmer aboot - cuttin neeps for the cattle, helpin him tae bed the coos, an one thing an another, an daein wee odd jobs roon aboot the fairm. 'Cause the auld man could never have gone on the road. Ken, the places was aa blocked. I dinnae ken hoo they got meat an stuff, whether a van got up or not, I couldnae tell ye. Anyway it wore on till the weather kind o cleared. So the auld man made up his mind. "Well," he said, "I cannae bide here nae longer. I'll have tae get goin." But he was such a good worker an such a civil auld cratur o an auld man, that ye could say onything tae, the fairmer says, "Will ye no bide wi me?" he says, "an gie me a wee han aboot here?" he says, "tae the Springtime."

He kin o thocht for a wee while - it wasnae a job he did he didnae dae muckle work. Ken, he'd raither go fae door tae door, this auld tramp man, an get his livin. But they got him persuaded anyway, an he bud at the fairm, a good while helped them as usual. The snaw kin o went away a bit, an he wasnae comfortable, he wasnae content bein in the barn, because, well - he wasnae allowed tae smoke in the barn - he took a smoke afore he went in at nicht. So he said tae the auld fairmer, he said - he looked awa doon a good bit doon fae the fairm. He says, "Is that an auld shed ye've doon there?"

"Oh aye," he says, "that used tae be a place I used tae keep ma wool in," he says. "A kin o a buchts, an that. We used tae hae the fanks doon there, ye ken for steepin - for dippin the sheep."

The auld man had a walk doon onyway, him an the collie dug, an aw! it was pretty shabby, ye know, kin o faain tae bits, an maist o the auld shed, but he asked the fairmer if he could take some o the slabs an kin o sort it up, because he wantit tae be on his own. So he went doon an got it sortit up an he was in it an he was stayin there aw! a long, long time, I think, he bud maist o the summer there, aa richt on, this auld man. But they were - noo the sheep shearin time come roon, the month o July or August. Different months they can cut the wool, ye ken. An the fairmer says, "Ye'll gie us a hand wi this shearin?"

"Man," he says, "I dinnae think I'll be muckle good at that," he says. "Ye ken," he says, "I've never had onything tae dae wi shearin."

But says the fairmer, "It's no hard tae learn."

THE SHEARER OF GLENSHEE

So anyway, the fairmers used tae come from Glenisla owre tae Glenshee - the workers like the ploomen an the fairmers - an they would gie the Glenshee people maybe a hand wi their sheep, and when the Glenshee folk fairmer's sheep were finished, they would go owre tae Glenisla, then, and help the fairms an that's what they did. So anyway, this fairmer, that the auld man was wi in Glenshee, it was his clippin day anyway an there was two or three o them come from Glenisla owre tae help. An the auld man he's watchin them, ye see, the tramp is watchin them clippin the sheep. He thought tae hisselt, "Well, it doesnae seem a hard job," he says, "the only difficult bit I see in it," he says tae hisself, he says, "is haudin the sheep doon." Ken the way the sheep jump an jump aboot, ye ken, when they're tryin tae clip them. Anyway he had a go at it the first day an he was makin an awfy good job, but he wasnae daein a lot, because it was takin him too long, he hadnae the knock o the thing, ye see. Anyway, it went on an on, till he was gettin better, an better an it came the turn noo that this fairm that he was on that their sheep was aa oot an clipped, an the folk fae Glenisla wanted the clippers tae go over there. So the auld man went owre an oh! he was becomin an expert at it, ye ken. Of coorse, like aa travellin folk, they usually gaved (?) on their thing - ken what I mean like - if it's something they want tae dae - if they have an interest in it, they'll keep goin. So the auld man really became perfect, he was daein twa sheep for the other men's one. An that was experienced shearers, ye ken. So he became very, very well-thoot o - he was good at aa kin's o fairm work. But he went - he was up on the hill one day, him an the collie dug, an it come an awfy rain, it wasnae the snaw, it wasnae snaw, it was rain, a thunderstorm. An oh! he really - ken, he was fair trachled comin through the heather an that, an he come doon, anyway, tae the fairm, owre tae his wee hut, but he hadnae come up for his mulk, ye see. He used tae get his mulk fae the fairm. He hadnae come up for his mulk that night. So the fairmer said, "I wonder what's wrong wi him?"

"Och," says the auld wumman, "he'll be tired an he'll be just lyin doon."

So they forgot aa aboot him that night. They didnae bother. But however he didnae come up the next mornin and the fairmer took a walk doon an here's the auld man lyin an oh he wasnae well. He really wasnae well. Ken, he was really fevered, an breathin awafy heavy, an a bad cough. He says, "My goodness," he says.

"Oh," he says, "I got an awfy soakin," he says, "on the hill an," he said, "when I come hame I jist lay doon." An the wet claes on him, ye see, he didnae even light a fire. An he says, "I'm no feelin weel the day at aa," he says, "fairmer."

"Aye," he says, "I think ye better come awa back up tae the barn," he says. "We'll mak ye mair comfortable up there."

"Na, na," he says, "I'll just bide whaur I am." However the fairmer kennled up the fire, ye ken, the auld grate that wad be in the shed, kennled up the fire, an went up tae the hoose an got some dry blankets an things an put them - but he'd still lyin. But the next day he wasnae sae bad but he's still - the fairmer said, "I think ye'd better bide whaur ye are the day." But in the efternoon again, the fairmer went doon an oh! he really is ill! Great fever, awfy temperature, terrible. Noo the first doctor, as far as I ken at that time - there wasnae a doctor at the Bridge of Cally - an there wasnae a doctor in Glenshee - but maybe this wisnae true, this wee bit o it, because - kin o - wee bit rather doubtful - but this is the way I got it anyway - maybe nane o it's true for that matter o the thing - but tae me it was

THE SHEARER OF GLENSHEE

telt as a very true story. Anyway, they had tae go tae Blair. An the fairmer went on horseback rather than tak the machine wi him - he had a machine tae. He went doon tae Blair anyway. An the doctor wouldnae come that day but by the time he come the next day tae see the auld man, he was in a sort of a coma. An he just more or less hung on like that for two or three days, but he never ever gained consciousness and he died.

So there naebody - they didnae ken nothing about his relatives, or where he come fae or nothing aboot him an the fairmer just explained how he come tae his hoose on a caul winter's night and he'd been there aa the time ever since. So naturally they made arrangements tae bury the auld man an they come fae Glenisla, seein he was saw well kent, they come owre fae Glenisla tae the funeral. Noo there is a wee kirk-yaird up at Glenshee. An they had tae cairry him of coorse, an it was a good wee bit, fully a mile if no mair, fae the fairm hoose tae the kirk-yaird. They didnae talk aboot cemeteries then it was jist wee kirk-yairds awa in the country. Anyway they were cairrin him, the men fae Glenisla an the men fae Glenshee. But having so far tae go on the rough heather, ken, owre the moore tae get tae the kirk-yaird, they got tired, an they laid him doon tae rest, the coffin. But the arguments still go up among them - there was an argument at the actual service - that they wanted him - that he was as much belonging tae Glenisla as what he was tae Glenshee. The Glenisla folk was fightin tae get him owre tae Glenisla, he should be buried in Glenisla, and the Glenshee folk said, "Na, na, he should be buried in Glenshee."

So anyway, I suppose they'd had a fair dram because they usually took a good dram at these wakes an funerals long ago - I think a lot o them made their ain whisky up in the hills. But they're cairryin him anyway an they laid him doon again. Wi them haein a dram in them, they began fightin this time, o where he was tae be. Noo it was in the middle o the day, just broad daylight, an suddenly jut oot the - just in a second, it became darker than twelve o'clock at night. Pitch dark. The one couldn't see the other that was standin beside them. Not one o them could see each other. An they stopped fightin for they wondered what was wrong. An it was that way for a good wee while. An then suddely it was daylight come again, broad daylight. An when they looked there was too coffins lyin side by side. Two coffins instead o one. So naturally they get a fricht, an they asked God tae bless them and hoped it wasnae their fightin an, "How did that happen?" - Ken, hoo they were talkin amang theirsels, aboot the two coffins. So the Glenisla men got one coffin and the Glenshee men got another, and took one coffin tae Glenisla, an there's one buried in Glenisla, an there's one in Glenshee, an to this day, they do not know where what they caad him, the Shearer o Glenshee is buried. An they say it was a parable of God, the way they fought aboot it, that was the two coffins instead o one. That's the way I heard the story.

Belle Stewart

Well, this wee story that I'm gonnae tell, I heard it from ma father-in-law, John Stewart, who in his time was a pretty famous man as far as tinker people's concerned. An of course, whoever's listening tae this'll know that I'm of the tinker folk. We use the word traveller nowadays but tinker long ago was a terrible stigma. An still is in many places. However, get on wi ma wee story. This is how I heard it. There may be other versions as I have heard, over the year, y'know, among travelling folk only, and I knew it was the same story, but there was different bits in it. But I'll just tell it my way. The way I heard it.

Now this was a fisher wumman, and her husband and two sons. Two sons. An that was their only means of living, was the fishing. But I cannae tell ye what island they were in, because I'd be tellin ye a lie. I don't think the name o the island was ever mentioned to me, in the story. However, they had to go out fishing - well, it was an awfy, awfy bad winter and after the winter the Spring was terrible, how ye get Spring tides an aa that sort o thing, y'know, an the cauld weather an the wind.

But the youngest laddie, was an object. This is a traveller's word. I'll have to explain this tae ye, a tinker. An object meant a handicapped person. But that was the way I have tae tell ma story - the wee object laddie. See what I mean like? Or I would be cuttin bits oot o the story that wouldnae be worth tellin ye. So he was a wee object laddie, but he was awfy fond o gettin a sail in his father's boat, when they used tae come in wi the fish. Just along the harbour a bit ye know. But he grew up anyway till he was a young man. But he never had his full abilities o his body or that or his legs. He could walk but he was very handicapped.

So he kept harpin an harpin at his father. He says, "Father, for God's sake, take me oot some day wi ye, when you're fishin, you an ma brither."

He says, "I cannae take ye," he says, "my God," he says, "what if a storm come up?"

He says, "Och but," he says, "it'll no hurt me".

"Ach well," he says, "och I'll think aboot it, I'll think aboot it."

However, they had a very good catch this particular day, the father and the older son, an it was a bonnie, bonnie nicht, ye know, in the gloamin as they talk aboot, the late evenin. And he finally got his father persuadit tae take him oot in the boat a bit. But when the father got out so far in the water, he was seein, he was seein the fish jumpin like anything. "Ye know," he says, "my God," he says, "I could still have a fairly good catch the night yet." Ye know. So he kept goin further out an further out, an the wee laddie's enjoyin it, a teenager, but as regards to abilities he was just a wee laddie. An so the father started fishin, but a huge gale - oh, terrible, an the boat - which was a very old boat - sort o sprung a leak an the water was comin in as well. So the wind was ragin, it was howlin, and he says tae the wee laddie, he says - I cannae mind his name - he says, "Come doon oot o there son," he says, "and sit doon in the bottom o the boat." Ye know, where the water was comin in. "Sit doon in the bottom o the boat." An he give him a tin or some sort o thing jist tae try an bail some o the water oot. But there was a huge gust o wind, an the old man was thrown overboard an he was drooned. They never even got the father's body.

THE LITTLE TAILOR

Now this wee object laddie, ye know what I mean noo by object, this wee object laddie's sittin in the boat an it's fillin up wi water an fillin up wi water. It was an awfy cauld night, terrible.

But the wind's ceased as quick as it come on, as far as the story goes. So now, back hame, the mither an the aulder brither an the rest o the people o this wee island, got very very worried aboot the gale, ye see, an the laddie and the auld man oot on the water. "Oh somethin must ha happened," they said, "because he would ha definitely come hame, wi the bairn." They called him a bairn, although he was fairly auld, ye know. But however they set out tae go tae the water an see what happened. Finally saw the wee boat away oot on the water. An as they draw nearer, they knew there was somethin wrong because the old man wasnae there. But the wee boy was sittin an he'd sat so long in this water that was comin through, strangely enough the boat didnae sink - as far as the story goes, anyway, and he's sittin there all huddled up, ye know, he was frozen stiff. So his brother got him an they took him back home to the house. He was ill for days an days, an they had the doctor at him, ye know. He was ill for days an days. Not well at aa. However he picked up his strength but he never ever could walk after that. Never ever walked. Couldn't even stand. As regards to his body he was physically well that way, but he had no power of his legs whatever. He could move his hands. So it was a gey job for his mither in lookin efter him, ye know. They hadnae the facilities they have the day for these handicapped bairns.

So one night his brother come hame from the pub, the aulder brother. He says, says, "Ye know, you lead an awfy lonely life," he says. "How dae ye no come along tae the pub wi us some night?" he says. "Ye dinnae have tae drink, ye know," he says. "Come along," he says, "an meet the folk. They're a right homely crowd down there."

"Ah," he says, "I wouldnae get intae the pub. I cannae even walk."

"Ah dinnae let that worry ye," he says. "I'll take ye doon the next night I'm goin doon." So the brother took the laddie doon tae the pub ye know, an he's fair enjoyin it because there was singing an they were palyin dominoes, an aa the usual thing that goew on in a pub. An he's sittin there.

There was this two fairmers cam in, an what we speak aboot in the traveller way - gentlemen farmers. Very posh. See? We caa them gentlemen farmers. They're no like the ones that works in the field. They're the ones that produces the money and the poor man kills hissel for it. And hooever - they come in and they're up at the bar ye know, and one was a great horse racing man, great horse racer he was, ye know. And they were talking aboot their horses. This yin would win an that yin would win and aa the rest o them. An he says, one said tae the other, that's the fairmers like, one said to the other "Tell ye what I'll do. If there's any man in this bar," he says, "I'll give them five pound an a bottle o whisky," he says, "if he'll go an sit in the graveyaird aa night." 'Cause they were gettin kinda drunk now, ye see.

The other man said, "What's the graveyaird got tae dae wi horse racing?"

"No, but," he says, "there's some folk in here" - I'll talk polite - "some people in here," he says, "that have got tae pass the graveyaird on the way home." An he says, "I wouldnae pass it the night. I would go a roundabout." He says, "There's something wrong there."

THE LITTLE TAILOR

So wee - the wee object laddie's sittin in the corner, an he says, shouted tae his brither at the bar tae come an lift him owre, cause he couldnae walk, ye see. Carried him owre an put him up on the bar. He says, "I'll go tae the graveyard and bide in it aa night," he said, "if ye gie me five pound. I'm no wantin your bottle o whisky."

His brother says, "Oh aye, just you tak the whisky tae if you can dae it, because," he says, "I can aye drink it."

So they just thought he was foolin around, ye know, the kin o wee laddie he was, but however, "No," he says, "no, no."

Now, I forget tae tell ye that bein handicapped, but that had the use o his hands, I forgot tae tell you he took a wee job sewin. That's hoo they caad him the wee tailor. He was never really a professional tailor. But he did take a - ye know, whiles, sewin things. He says, "I cannae go without a web o cloth or somethin." Now there's some folk tells this story an it's supposed tae be stockings he's knittin, but tae me, it's a web o cloth tae make a suit. I'm tellin it my way.

"Oh I dinnae think that would be very hard tae get," he says. So it was supposed tae be the man o the bar, the hotel owner, or inn - they used tae caa them an inn long ago didn't they, or an ale hoose or some'hin. There weren't the posh motels an that in thae days. "Oh ay," he says, "I think we've a bit o cloth," he says, "the wife bocht tae mak somethin for hersel," he says. "If you can make me a pair o troosers," he says, "or if there's enough cloth tae mak a suit, I'll get ye the stuff."

"Fair enough." It was aa planned. So he got the cloth an they put him in a horse an cairt an they took him oot tae the graveyard. "Ah but," he says, "I cannae stand," he says. "No, no, we ken that." So they looked till they got a flat tombstone ye know one that was lyin, whether it had been knocked down or whether it was one o these I don't know. They sat him on that. "Ah," he says, "that'll jist dae fine. Gie me ma cloth," he says, "an give me ma needles, an ma threid an ma shears." Ye ken that what thir - I'm tellin it my way. So he got that an Johnny was there an his brother says, "Are ye sure.?" (Oh I called him Johnny - must ha been his name.) "Are ye aa right now?"

"Aye," he says, "of coorse I'm aaright." he says, "how no - how could I be wrong?" He says, "I'm quite comfortable, an as long as I've got ma sewing."

So he wasnae long sittin. They were aa away an he was left. He wasnae very long sittin, when he looked jist at the next grave, he jist turned his heid roon, an he saw the earth movin on the other grave, an a hand came up! A hand came up oot o the ither grave jist quite close tae Johnny, an said - it said tae him, "Do you see that, with no flesh nor blood on it?"

"Aye," Johnny says, "I see that, but I'll cairry on wi this in the meantime." An he's sewin away, ye see. So then, the hand came up tae the elbow. And again it said, "Do you see that, wi no flesh or blood on?"

"Aye, I see that," he says, "but och! I'll cairry on wi this in the meantime." Then the head and the shoulders came oot. See? Same thing happened. But the whole body came, the whole body came up out o the grave. He was a very very tall man, an Johnny's lookin. He's gettin a wee bit scared noo, when he saw the whole body. He says, "Dae ye see that," but he didnae give him time tae say what he said. Johnny rolled off the tombstone and this corpse or remains it hit - it was meanin tae hit Johnny as he's sittin there. His hand went right intae

THE LITTLE TAILOR

the tombstone and the mark of it's there to this day. An Duncan Williamson and his wife was up there last summer, tae see the partic - it's true, that happened, whether it was a tailor or don't ask me but that's the story anyway.

However the wee tailor got up. Now he had maybe a quarter o a mile not a full half mile, but he would have a good quarter of a mile back to the hotel, where they had made the bet with him. An he never discovered that he could run till he got to the hotel door. An he started batterin on the door, an batterin on the door. When they opened it they couldn't believe it. An it was then he discovered he had the power of his legs an he could walk. He ran off the tombstone! Left the cloth an everythin lyin there, so maybe that remains made a suit for itsel I dinnae ken. But Johnny got his five pound and his bottle o whisky, an that's the way I was told "The Wee Tailor."

Alec Stewart

Well, this is about my father and my uncle and his brother, they were hawkin round about a district, and when it comes to a certain time, they have tae get a place tae lie down. So the one would take one house and the next would take the next house, keepin goin like that all the time. They sold a good few basins an tinware. So my father was a good tinsmith. So they came to this farm, so my father says, "We'll have tae get intae some o the fairms," he says, "because it'll soon be time for the burkers."

"Oh," he says, "I forgot aa aboot that, Jock."

He says, "We'll try the next farm, because there's a better man's in that, because I know the fairm."

He says, "Aa right."

"So it's about two mile on," he says. He says, "I hope the burkers doesnae come before that."

But they're just near the farm when they hear this machine comin, ye see. So they ran, and they hadnae time tae go tae the door and rap. They went roon the back o the stacks, and they got aboot a half o a stack, you know, aboot this height, and they got up on top o the stack, and poked a hole right away doon near the ground, and they made a wee hole at the side - and they're waitin!

So the machine came right in, right roon near the stack, and they'd two dogs with them. And my father done that [nudges] tae Davie, and said, "Listen. They've two dogs with them."

My father said, "Aye."

So the dogs is goin roond aboot you an roond aboot, and they got the scent o my father an them goin tae the stack.

My father says, "We're done, now," he says.

He says, "Have ye got a knife, Davie?"

He says, "Naw, but I've ma breid knife." Gied him the breid knife. So he got the bread knife, an he made anither wee hole, an he's lookin like this, an he seen this dog passin an he caught it by the tail, cut the hale tail off it! And the dog's away owre the field, so the burker says, "Ah they're away over there!" he says. "Come on!"

And they jumpit in the machine an they run away down the road.

"Now," he says, "that'll keep youse quiet for a wee while," he says.

But they never come back, and next mornin when they got up, they went down and the farmer said, "I heard some commotion," he says, "round about the steadin. Was it youse boys?"

He says, "Aye," he says, "the burkers were after us."

He says, "How did ye escape?"

He says, "There's the tail o the dog," he says, "that I cut off."

"My goodness gracious!" he says, "gie me the tail," he says, "and I'll notify the police. And any dog that's runnin aboot," he says, "without a tail, the police'll know of it."

So he gave him the tail, and they got their breakfast there, and that was one burker story.

A Alec Stewart

A1 So my great-great-grandfather, and his wife, and their family and that, they were lookin for a camp, and they went intae this wood. They pit their camps up, and they'd a donkey, and a wee cart, and they always backed the cart next the tent, tethered the donkey round about the tent, ye see. So they could hear any commotion, if they trippit and they lay to the rope, they would know then and get up an sort it. So the ould man, my great-great-grandfather, he says, "Listen, we should hae went farther back intae the wood, because if the Burkens comes an sees that wee tent here," he says, "we're done for."

He says, "I forgot aa about that," the other man said. "I'd forgotten about that."

He said, "I tell ye what we'll do," he said. "We'll get up," he says. "I've got a burr itchin at the back o ma heid, ma neck," he says. "I think they're gonna be here the night." He says, "We'll get up," he says, "and we'll leave the donkey here. We'll tie it to the tree, and we'll go tae the farm."

The farm was jist doon below them.

"And," he says, "we'll try an get intae the barn there, aa night."

They said, "Aa right."

B John Stewart

B1 Now, I'll tell ye a good Burker story, (Doctors) one time had tae have bodies. An these lonely tinkers an people that stayed in wuds, an they were looked down on, even two or three o them went a-miss-in and ye went tae the police, the police wouldnae bother. Know what I mean? Ma mother was a wee lassie an there was an aunty o hers or something, they ca'd the Big Dummy. An ma mother's mother, Belle Reid, she was six foot in her stockin feet, which any o the aulder tinkers can tell ye.

An, her uncle Rob, ma mother's uncle Rob, was wi them. Now the Big Dummy, she had tae be, she had tae be cairried in a chair, cause she couldnae walk, ye see. An Rob had a Spanish cuddy, as ma mither would call it, a Spanish cuddy, wi seggets on it. Ken whit seggets is? Seggets. You know thon things hingin oot owre each side o it, an his tent sticks tied on there, alongside the cuddy, aa their paraphernalia, and their blankets, and their tins and their pans and their things, hangin owre the cuddy's sides. An they went away up - they come on this road and on this road, and they were gaun up tae a wud that they kent, ma mither has lay in her bed when she was quite young, and when she was old, and telt us this story dozens o times, and swore hersel tae't tae her own family, I wadnae think she'd be wrong in it. Know what I mean?

C 1 Willie MacPhee

John: What'll A tell them Willie - a Burker story? Can ye mind o any?

Willie: Well, it's up to your brains. I don't know what you're gonnae think o.

John: I tell you one I was tellin Sheila aboot Willie, and her here. An you know that was right tae, at the time 'at they - they - they left the cuddy an they - when aul Belle an them was up in the wud. An they went an they took shelter in the toll hoose. When they went back up the cuddy was - the donkey was - feet was up tae the brench and its guts was lyin in among its feet.

Willie: Aye, that's no a story - that's true!

John: There ye are now! What did A tell ye? What did A tell ye? That's true, in't it, Willie?

Willie: That's - that's true, aye. That's the truth. That's no a story - that's a true fact.

John: That really happened.

Willie: That's happened tae my granny an grandfaither.

John: That's right. My grandfather was kicked tae death in Greenock, ma grandfather.

Willie: No, excuse me John, Dunoon.

John: Dunoon, was it? Dunoon. For playin the Boyne Water on the pipes. So there was twenty or thirty Irishmen kickin him tae death. He didnae know it was a party tune. That's right enough. But it's right enough aboot the - aboot the - the donkey cairry-on.

Willie: Ay aye. That was right.

Andrew: Tell us the story John.

John: I've told it tae them already.

Andrew: Some haven't heard it here. [Voice heard saying "No heard it".]

John: Well, Willie knows it an just see if Willie differs from me. Tell them it, Willie.

Willie: A mean it's - it's no a story, John.

John: No, it's a true - it's - I know, but we - I got it as an old fashioned story noo. Know what I mean? But it's the truth.

A2 So they went down, an they got intae the barn. They went on their tiptoes, you know, feart the dogs would start barkin on the farm. So they got intae the farm, and the auld wumman was kin o deaf an they couldnae speak tae her and she was wonderin how they were takin her doon there, leavin the camp. An the auld man, he was [makes throat-cutting gesture and sound] and she kent then what they were meanin - the burkers!

So they were lyin there an they were aa doverin asleep, you know, an they heard the machine comin in. An they heard the burkers sayin, "I think they'll be in the barn. There were none o them in the camp, so they must be in the barn."

So they went intae the barn and the auld man got up, and he got a big stick and the ither yin got a big stick, and they're standin waitin. But there was three men in the car, and they were aa young men, and they overpowered the auld man, and the ither yin, the grandfather. And they threwed them down on the floor, and they caught the auld wumman, and they put her intae a bag, and they tied the mooth o the bag, wi a rope, pulled it tight. With the commotion that they're makin an the roarin, didn't the farmer wake up, and they were carryin

B2 So they went away up tae this wud, up a cart kin o a track, in tae this wud. An Rob he took the stuff off the cuddy an he pit up a tent, y'know a bow tent like this, y'know, bow tents. An took the Big Dummy oot an let her sit an kennlet a fire, went for wa'er, pit the kettle prop in like that, ye see. An hung the can on the fire, an the tea intae't. Ye see, they pit tea an sugar an milk, when the tea was boiled, they put the sugar in and then the milk and stirred it aa in the one thing. Just the same as they would do in Australia, oot in the bush. An that was their tea can. They put the tea can on, an made a big can o tea, an A suppose they fried a bit ham or something like that, because bits o ham at that time in any shop wud gie them tae ye for nothin for it wud go bad wi them, y'know what I mean? Because there were no freezers or anythin like that. So it was gettin kin o dark. They were, at that time, they were always wary o Burkens or men comin aboot yer camps lookin for women. There were a lot o that at that time! Know what I mean? In fact, there's a lot o that yet. Ha, ha! I'm tellin ye! See doon in Forfarshire there? Even yet, if a man and woman an lassie goes campin, in certain places, they'll come aboot ye bully-raggin ye yet.

But anyway, the kennlet the fire, Rob kennlet the fire, an the donkey was tied tae a tree. They'd a wee puckle hay for it, or cut grass or something, and they'd a wee dog, no much - the size o that [points to Yorkshire terrier] as Belle was standin at the fire an she looked way doon in the dark, y'know, aboot - roon about half past ten or eleven o'clock, and she seen two peeps o light comin up through the wud. Know what A mean? Belle says, "There's a steejie binging." Ye see.

A2 (Contd)

the bag out tae the machine. And the farmer got the gun, and fired two shots across their head and they droppit the bag, and jumped on the machine an they're away. And the farmer came owre an he looked at the bag. My frandfaither went doon and he was lows in the bag, you know, case she would choke in the bag. An he says, "My gosh," he says, "what's wrong wi you?" He says, "Where wus yese?"

He says, "We wus in the barn," he says, "we wus campin in the wood, an we jist come doon here, fur tae pass the night."

He says, "A good thing ye come here," he says. He says, "Is the auld woman aa right?"

"Oh," he says, "she's aa right."

So they went back tae their camp next mornin an the donkey was tied up with its two front feet like that [up high] and its inside was right oot - they cut right up wi a knife, an aa its puddens was at its feet. An the camp was aa torn doon. The machine they had for the wee donkey, it was throwed away doon owre the bank, and it took them a whole day fur tae bury the donkey, and get the machine back doon tae the fairm. An they left, an they never went back that district again.

That's the last o ma burker story.

B2 (Contd)

"Whaur?" says Rob.

"Dik! Comin up the road, up the oul road."

An they looked an they could see the shape o the coach, an a pair o horse. Noo anybody wud know! What was a coach an a pair o horse daein up that way? Know what A mean? So Rob says - he trampit the fire oot, y'know - trampit the fire oot, an he says, "Gie me the wee dug," an he took the - my mother told us this for the truth - an in case o the wee dug barkin, he took it an he broke its neck. It was that wee sma dog [clap] he broke the dog's neck and threw it owre among the bushes. He got the Big Dummy on his back, and Belle got up, my mother was a wean, a lassie about seven or eight year auld, through the trees, ontae the road, ye see. Noo the way he went doon that way wis there was a toll-hoose where the machine, and the collection for letters, parcels an things that was left the mail hoose, or whatever it was, you know. An the man in this place know Rob. Kenned him like a traveller, and boy that aye come aboot, you know.

So they run doon and they chapped at the door, o the lodge, an the man come oot, an Rob says, "Could you let us in fur the night. Ony place you could let us in," he says. "They're up there wi a machine," he says, "an we ken its the doctors."

The man says, "Look," he says, "they're here every night. Every other night," he says, "searchin ma wee bits o ootbuildings an that, an one thing an another like that," he says, [indistinct phrase] "I know," he says, "what you're on." But he says, "I'll let youse lie in the loaby." Ken the lobby. He says, "have ye your ain bedclothes?"

"No," he says, "we'd nae time tae tak bed clothes."

22 (Contd.)

"Well," he says, "there a puckle jaickets, one thing an another, tae," he says, "keep warm the noo." An he says, "I've got a big dog there," he says. "It'll bark." Ken?

So they were there for maybe half an oor, an the coach came right roond boy, back doon again and right up tae the mail hoose. An these men with the silk - ken, wi like the lum hats, an thon tippets or cloaks on them, an that was the way that Dr. Crippen kind went at that time, that was their dress. As they rode horses. And now the man let his dog oot, the mail boy that kept the letters, for the mail van pass-in. He let his doog oot. Noo the coach had a dog wi them, and the two dogs started tae fight, ye see. An the man at the toll hoose liftit his windae up, an his gun oot an he says, "Call in your dog," he says, "or I'll shoot it."

An they wadnae do it. They were gonnae come off an search the sheds.

He says, "Call in your dog," he says, "or I'll shoot it. Now I'm givin ye warnin!"

An they wadnae, so the man up wi the gun an shot the dog. An they got intae the coach, and went away.

Now in the mornin the man gien them some tae each, an that. He says, "When ye go up tae your camp noo," he says, "I think ye'll be all right. They'll no come back the night again." But he says, "If I were youse," he says, "I wadnae be up there," he says, "I'd get up an get your bits o things," he says, "and get out of it."

So they traivelled away back up the way they come doon, and when they got up, the camp was made in ribbons! Everything was kickit aboot the place, an the donkey was tied up by the two hind legs, tae a branch, and its stomach ripped and its puddens amang its feet! You ask Big Willie is that right! You ask Big Willie aboot that story. Every auld traveller in the north knows that story. Noo, if they werenae up tae any badness why should they do that? Know what I mean?

An they come fae there an they come right doon, wi their bun'les on the back, tae a place on the Deeside, an they were campit.

C2

- Willie: My granny and ma grandfather aff ma father's side like, they were campit some place - I don't know where the hell it wis - don't ask me that because A don't know. And the weemin, they went tae the toon hawkin an that, an they met these gentlemen, an these gentlemen asked them whaur they were stoppin. An he said, "Eh, we'll come up an see you tonight. An we'll gie ye some money." Well, they said that was all right. So they came back home efter they'd done their bit o hawkin, an - I don't know where it was, but efter they come back hame, they telt the old man, my grandfaither an of coorse he asked them what kin o men they wur. An the old woman telt 'im, what they wur an what they wur like. "Oh," he says, "we better no be here when they come," he says. "We'll better," he says, "clear out," he says, "an jist lea the tents as they are," he says. "An we'll see," he says.
- They had a donkey, a cuddy, an they had no cairt or onything, they werenae - at that time there were no cairts. They just put seggets owre its back for tae cairry the weight, ye know. Ye'll see them here an there, in pictures. Just a bundle over its back. They had no cairt or nothin. So they just tied the wee donkey up, an of coorse they all cleart out. I don know where they went. Some farm or some place, but when they come back in the morning, what they found in the mornin - their tents was aa upruptit torn down an everythin like that. An the donkey was tied tae the wee tree an it was rippit fae the throat right down tae the - right along - an its guts was hingin out - an the meat they had was pit in the centre o the fire an it was half burned through. An there was a wee note written - there were nane o them could read at that time - but they took it to the polis, when they reportit what happened to them, an what it said on the note, it says, "If we had o got you down - you lot, we would ha done worse on youse." An that's no nae story - that's - that's true.
- John: It's nae story.
- Willie: It's true fact. That was kidnappers at one time. That was a true fact.
- John: Now that's still different from my one, ye see.

II.55 BURKERS AT THE BOGLE BRIG

Alec Stewart

..... "Now," he says, my father says, "this is the Bogle Brig. This is where the burkers is." An I started tae laugh at him. He said, "Ye neednae laugh. Get doon on the bottom o the cairt and lie quiet." So I got down on the bottom o the cart, and I'm lyin there and I was wantin tae see (laughs) I was keepin get up, an he was always hittin me tae lie down, nd just at the beginnin o the arch, there was, as I thought it, a wumman, because he had his jacket off, an it was a shite shirt. An I thought it was a blouse, a woman's blouse, and his bare heid, and intae the middle, my father put the whip tae the horse, and in the middle o the bridge again, there was anither two. An at the far side o the bridge again there was anither two. There was five o them aathegither. An they'd aa their jackets off, just waitin on anybody walkin.

Belle Stewart

Belle: They say they used tae dress up as women, though.

Alec: Aye, they dressed up as women.

Belle: Ye mean, the doctors. You're aye usin the word "burkers". Ye see, people listenin tae that tape'll no ken what that is.

Alec: Body-snatchers.

Belle: Aye well, burkers - it jist seems like a personal name, which of course it was, Burke and Hare, but - some bits o the thing.

Alec: Body snatchers.

Belle: Body snatchers, aye. Oh a lot o the old travellin folk long ago was never seen - they were known to be at this certain place, ye know.

Sheila: John's wife told us about one at St. Andrews, an old woman that went into - when she was hawkin, she went into one of the colleges, and she never came out again, but her mutch was found on the gate, hanging.

Alec: Aye. Could be a bad place St. Andrews. It's them aa students there. Aberdeen's a bad place too.

Belle: Aye, Marishal's College. Listen, there's a hell o lot o yon tinkers in Aberdeen went an sold their bodies tae them.

Alec: Danny the Burkner!

Belle: Och aye, he got that name. He sold them. This man they caa Danny the Burkner - was it Kelly his name was? Aye Kelly - Danny Kelly, aye it was Danny Kelly. It was a regular thing for him to go up an get a couple o pound or three pound. At the time I'm talkin aboot, - I only heard this - an it was tell where there were some lonely people tinkers camped. He used tae go up tae the College an tell them.

Alec: An if they got them they gien him five pound, you know.

Belle: An if they did get their bodies, it was five pound, but he still got two pound for tellin them where the folk were camped. And that was the name they gave him - Danny the Burkner. Everybody was terrified of Danny the Burkner.

Alec: He's dead noo.

Cissie Stirling

Cissie: When I was between four and five years of age, we were at a place not far from Perth here - Glenalmond. My father went up there every year to thin this particular farmer's turnips. And we were staying in the bell-tent just at the side of the road. It wisnae a bow-tent - it was a bell-tent. My father and my uncle, a man called Donald Whyte, were all standing round the camp fire like they would do - and here, I fell asleep, so my father carried me up from the fire and put me in the tent. I had terribly long hair. My father was always frightened I was cold and he used to take off his jacket and put it round me. My long hair entangled into the buttons of the jacket, and when I was being lifted out of the tent, it was the weight of the jacket, hanging onto my hair, that made me scream, and this lad, they called Donald Whyte, he shouted to my father, "Oh Henry, there's somebody away with wee Isabel. Would you look - the bairn's gone!" And my father and Donald Whyte and his brother Davie - and this was up at a place they called Little Glenshee - they scrambled up and went over, and gave chase to the man that was carrying me - and they were almost at him. When they were just about to put their hands on his shoulder, he dropped me in a ditch full of water. My father stopped to pick me up, and this lad Donald Whyte ran after him - but by that time he was away.

Belle: Have you any idea who the man was?

Cissie: Yes, we knew it was a doctor from Trinity College at that time.

Belle: Oh my gosh.

Cissie: We knew it definitely.

Belle: And that did go on.

Cissie: It's a fact.

John: They'd want your body for experimental purposes.

Cissie: That's what they wanted it for.

Cissie Stirling

Cissie: Just a minute till I tell you this. This is not so very far away as Aberdeen, this is only up the road there at Moneydie, a place they call Whitehills. There's Blackhills and there's Whitehills, both farms. I would be about nine years of age at the time and as you know, the most of the travelling people took contracts. This particular one was gathering wrack - and I'm going back a few years when I talk about gathering wrack in the fields. It had to be disposed of off the fields before they could put in another crop. Now my father had taken this contract with this farmer - I could mention his name but I don't know that it's very wise to - but it was Whitehill farms. Now the farmer engaged my father and he said to my father, "Mr. Macgregor," he said. "I'm a bad riser in the morning. Will you wake me in the morning?" And my father said he would, which he did, every morning. At six o'clock in the morning he used to shout up to the bedroom window and waited until he answered him. Now, my father, he was very suspicious about this farmer, and what made him suspicious was that there was a woman who arrived the very day my father arrived, with a wee girl - as a housekeeper - and within two days neither the housekeeper nor the wee girl was ever seen again.

The farmer said to my father. "You've got a number of children there, Mr. Macgregor."

"Aye," said my father, "I've got five of them."

"Well," he said, "I've plenty of clothes if you're needing clothes."

We were sleeping in the barn, and that's the truth, and my father had a sheltie, a pony, and a trap. He put the pony in the stable. And we had a wee dog, and we also had a white rabbit. So the first go-off was the white rabbit disappeared, but my father paid no attention to that. But the foreman's wife down in the little cottage, a couple of days after that, said to my father. "Hve you seen the new housekeeper?" My father said, "I seen her when she arrived, for she gave the little lassie milk at the back door, but we haven't seen her since."

But as the arrangement was, my father wakened the farmer every morning, and we had our breakfast and went out to work. So this particular morning, my father went to waken him. He had told my father not to leave the door till he appeared at the window. And this particular morning, the contract was just about finished, gathering this wrack, and my father went and shouted up to him. He didn't come to the window himself, he came to the window with a gun - and this is the God Almighty truth, or may I never rise off this chair - but instead of walking away from the window - my father did get a fright - he walked into the wall, which saved his life actually, when he fired the gun. So the farmer shouted to my father, "Oh I must have frightened you, Mr. Macgregor. I'll be down in a minute."

"That's all right," said my father. "I'll be waiting for you when you come down."

BURKERS AT MONEYDIE

He came down and he said to my father, "I just woke with a start and didn't realise it was you that was shouting for me."

So he's taken my father up to this granary which was above the barn, right away at the top, and he said to my father, he said, "Now look, I've all these trunks here, and I've clothes of every description, both for you, your wife and your children. Have your pick."

And when my father opened the trunks, they were all blood-stained, and my father wouldn't touch them. But my father, although he was a cautious man, he wasn't a frightened man. He went out that day and finished the job, and he took every one of us children out with him, my mother and all. He wouldn't leave any of us in the farm steading. He took us all out with him and he finished the job about three o'clock in the afternoon. He came in and before he went to the farmhouse, he packed up all our belongings, and put them in the trap, yoked up the sheltie and we were ready for the road. And then he went to the door - I might as well mention the name now, it doesn't matter, it's all been very long since found out - he said to Mr. Wilkie, "Now, Mr. Wilkie, I want paid up for my job."

"Oh yes, Mr. Macgregor," and he paid him up for the job, and my father there and then said to him. "These clothes that you've got up in the granary, how the hell did you get all these clothes? And what happened to the housekeeper who came here the same day as us, and has never been since?"

And he very casually turned round to my father and he said "Look Mr. Macgregor, there are five brothers of us," he says, "and we are five doctors."

And it was our bodies he was wanting too! He was stringing us along, but my father was that step ahead of him. It was common knowledge.

John: You couldn't tell the police about it. It was quite impossible.

Cissie: When we came down to Bankfoot, everybody knew about it. People in the Lodge knew about it. Everybody knew about it.

John: Being travelling people, it was common practice.

Cissie: It was common practice and that's not so very long ago.

John: It was common practice among travelling people, because travelling people moved here and moved there, and there were no records of where they had been to or where they went to. No record of where they come from. Travelling people moved anywhere and everywhere. They moved where they could make a shillin and if they didn't make a shillin here, they moved on to the next place.

Willie Macphie

Sheila: And - I've heard ye telling Burker stories, Willie.

Willie: Oh (laughing) I've been threatened wi Burkers a few time!

Sheila: Have ye?

Willie: I have, aye. Not so very many miles fae here.

Sheila: Tell us about that.

Willie: This happened - oh it was a long, long time ago. It's at Crieff that I hawkit a bit and it was only a push bike I had, ye see. An a wee new marquee tent, a wee new bowie, ye know, put on this bike. An I come tae this place in Bridgend o Crieff and it was in the back-end o the year, maybe the end o October or something like that. It was the tattie time anyway. An I put up this new tent, anyway. An I went tae ma bed. An that wee tent it wasnae very big. It wasnae broad enough that way that I could go - lie that way. I had to put ma feet to the door, ye see, lying wi ma heid this way. An it was one o these wee tents, ye kin o lace them, one lace over the other like that. Wance ye can get them aa laced, ye can put a pin in the bottom at the inside, ye see. So I'm lyin sleepin anyway. And I waukened up an I felt this thing at ma feet.

[tape ends]

[Side two]

Willie: I was tired: I'd been cycling aa day. I dovered tae sleep again. This thing waukened me again. An I says, "Hoosh! Get away wi ye." It went away again. But I didnae sleep this time - I kept wakened this time ye see. I says, "I wunner what that is." It come back again. An startit wi the door again. They had difficulty opening the door the wey it was laced tae the inside wi this pin, ye see. So I'm lyin wi ma feet tight up agin the door like that an the breadth o ma back. But o course I had ma troosers on me, an ma shirt, ye see. Am lyin wi ma feet tight up against it, an this thing come back again workin wi the door again, so I just left it alane, ye see. But they finally got the door opened - they opened the door an it was dark. I couldnae see that! Two hands came right down below the blankets and right roon ma two ankles. So he must have been a big man tae put his hand right roon my two ankles. An he pullt me oot through the door like that. Pullt me through the door like that. An as he pullt me oot there was some other body spreading a sheet or something, because ye could hear it faain on top o the leaves, outside. Rustling.

I says, "That's no a dog -." But he's still pullin oot. I says, "Shush, get away wi ye!" an pullt ma feet in like that, ye see. An instead o goin out through the door o the tent I went oot through the side o the tent like that, an scooted away through the bushes. But when I come oot there were another two o them or three o them. They just stepped back a wee bit - they didnae try tae rush me. They just stepped back a wee bit in amongst the bushes. So I went away up the road to some friends I had, away up the road. An I was maybe twenty minutes up there, when this motor car come by. It just passed this fence, at the back o the hoose. They were

BURKERS AT CRIEFF

at the back o a big hedge - they couldnae see them. They went away up, they went up tae this farm. An aa the dogs starts barking on the farm. Starts like that tae keep them away tae. An the next when I come back tae ma wee tent, ma wee tent was ram-sacked and cowped and knocked doon. There were the track o this big car whaur it turned just right aside whaur I was. But when I run oot that nicht I never seen nae car nor nothin, for it was too dark and I was goin too bloody fast tae notice onything.

John Stewart

...in the paper often. A body found, a dead person found, there was no identification no identification marks, the cause of death was unknown, one thing an another like that. Well, that's the new type o' Burker. Because I heard, fae good sources, that they go roon wi a car noo, an they'll give ye a lift, an they knock ye oot in the back o the car, wi wha'ever, maybe, a scent, or even a cigarette. An instead o - they - they - they've a - a basin - wi hot water or some'hin, or some kin o tank wi hot wa'er. They stick your two feet in it, an they slit a vein, they cut a vein, an aa yon blood runs intae a tank, y'know what A mean? An when every drop o blood's out o your body, they chuck ye oot! An maybe the punc'ure that's in your body is just the least wee thing that nobody would notice. An there's no a taste o blood in your body! An there's nae identification marks o murder or nothin. Now ye see that - that's - a lot o that went on recently.

Belle Stewart

Belle: I'll tell you of the tragic family Alec's mother's people were. Her mother's (mother) was Belle Reid. That's Alec's mother's mother. And as all the auld tinkers long ago, she was fond o a dram and it was winter time, no very long before the New Year and there was a big storm on the ground and she'd been into a wee - they wouldnae caa them a pub - I was checked for ca'in them a pub in ma story - it was an inn or an alehouse at that time, it was the name they gave it - at Struan, you know, up Calvine way, Andra, Struan - that was whaur the wee pub was. And they had been drinkin in there - I don't know who was all with her - I don't know if her man was with her, or who was with her, but they used to camp a lot up there during the winter time. And she'd been intae this pub and god a good wee dram. Then she came oot and it was a night of a blizzard and a storm, and she just went a couple o hundred yards from the alehouse and sat down at the side o the dyke for shelter, to light her pipe. 's aa've [It's all have] smoked pipes those days. And she was gotten frozen tae death in the morning and her pipe was in her one hand and her box of matches in the other. And that was Alec's granny, auld Belle Reid. Ye see? That was Alec's mother's mother. Then, Alec's mother's father, that's his grandfather, he was murdered with Irish navvies. He went intae a pub. It was - I think it was in Argyllshire some place - was it no Argyllshire?

Alec: No it was the railway going up past Pitlochry - the Inverness railway -

Belle: Oh aye, that Highland railway they were building, and the navvies were working there. And he was a piper and, you know, he went intae the pub and he would always have - the bar or whatever it was - and he could always get a drink for playin his pipes. He was a good pipes - he wasn't a professional, but he was a good piper, ye ken whit I mean like. So he knew if he would take his pipes and go into the bar, he wouldnae be short o a drink. And aa these navvies were working at the railway at the time, and naturally the pub was full o these men on a Saturday night. And he was playin ootside the door but they went oot and asked him could he come in and play inside the hotel or whatever it was, and he came in and he was playing inside. So one of these Irishmen went up to him and says, "Could you please play 'The Boyne Water'?"

But he was sensible enough for that. "Oh," he says, "that's a tune I never learnt." You see he couldn't play 'The Boyne Water', ye know. Of you could play it [laughs]. He says, "A tune I never learnt."

"Och get on with it. I'm sure ye know it."

"No," he says, "I diven't." But they kept feedin him wi drink till they got him three parts drunk. And he played 'The Boyne Water'. He went oot, that was it, there was no more to it, and he'd to go up some dykeside or something to where they had their tents pitched, you know. And they got his body in the morning; his pipes were broken in bits an he was lyin murdered. The Irishmen followed him and killed for

playing 'The Boyne Water', after making him do it, you know. So that was tragic. That was the mother gotten perished at Struan and the man was - the father was gotten murdered by the Irish. Then she had a brother. Now I cannae tell ye his name. And him, his wife and three of a family - you know how they all dealed and swapped in auld horses these days? Well, of course, when they got a few drinks and that was a habit the tinkers had, you know. "Oh we'll gie him a guid drink and we'll get his horse or we'll get his yoke, or we'll get him tae deal wi us, type o thing, ye know. And that was what happened. And the horse they gave him - I what they called him, Andra - I don't know if ye would use the word but in the travelling way o speakin they caad him a reist. You know, it was a horse that wouldnae go forward, that wouldnae pull a cairt. It was aye gaun back.

Alec: If it cam tae a wee hill it stopped.

Belle: Aye, it wouldnae pull. And the travellers' word that they had for that was, "It's nae - it's a reist." And that was a reist. That's what they caad it Andra.

Andrew: It was aye reistin!

Belle: What the meanin o it was, dinnae ask me, but that's the way it was anyway. So they were at Fort Augustus, the Canal, there's a canal at Fort Augustus. And instead o the horse goin forward when he whipped it and telt it to go forward, it went back, back, back, and it backed right intae the canal and him and the wife and three bairns were drooned.

Alec: And the horse.

Belle: And the horse. So I mean it was just tragedy that followed Alec's mother's folk, ye ken.

Alec: And ane o her sisters.

Belle: Then, now she had a sister, her name was Bella, Bella MacPhee and she was Willie's Bella's granny, this woman I'm goin tae tell ye aboot now. That was Bella's granny but she was also Alec's mother's sister. That's where the connection is really, ye see. Now aa the travellers ca'd her the Deif Lassie. Deaf - but they say deif. She was ca'd the Deif Lassie - her name was Bella MacPhee, but I suppose in the tinker folk there'd be a lot o Bella MacPhees and to know the one they were talkin aboot they'd say, "Ye ken wha I mean - it was the Deif Lassie." Now her dochter was wi her. She was a young lassie and she was havin her first bairn. And she was just almost her time, you know, jist a matter o days till she'd hae her bairn - and the auld Deif Lassie like - the lassie's mother was wi her and - whaur was the place, Alec, whaur was the place?

Alec: Dumbartonshire.

Belle: In Dumbartonshire. And they were going across a level cross-
ing - and the train had tae come roond a turn. Well, the auld woman ran in front, the Deif Lassie, the Lassie's mother. She hurried across first and she never heard the train. She was practically deaf. And the lassie that was goin tae hae the bairn ran right after her mother tae catch her and she only got her in the middle of the rails, and the three o them was made mince. That was another sister that was Bella's granny. It's a wonder Bella never telt ye that, which of course was Alec's aunt, ye see, his mother's sister.

THE TRAGIC MACPHEES

So I mean, if ye look back on it - in the canal drooned, murdered wi the Irishmen, her mother gotten deid at Struan dyke and then that - you know what I mean, killed wi the train - it was really, it was tragedy, just throughout Alec's mother's family ... Definitely it was.

Belle Stewart

My father did work at harvest. He was a great man for among wood, a great man for among wood, you know. And then of course my mother - this was her time when she was young, before ever had bairns at aa or married even, or had my father - she was counted one of the best in Scotland at peeling larch trees. Ye see they used tae peel the larch trees long ago for the telegraph poles, Andra. They peeled them you know wi a peeler like, you know. Put them up an they used tae peel them. They couldnae beat ma mither at that - no at peelin trees - among the women folk. I mean - the men could possibly beat her, you know. But it was just one o the things that she - and then they used tae go tae the oak peeling which - an oak tree - ye cannae get a big long skelf o bark off an oak tree - it comes off in bits - and they used to do the packin o that. I don't know what they used it for -

Alec: Dye.

Belle: For dye or something and the women got a job at that. Oh maybe sixpence a day. The men did the peelin of the oak trees which is too hard I think for a woman to peel really and I think they peeled them wi spades, what they called spade peelin, not with the common ordinary hand thing that my mother used tae dae - [Alec makes an indistinct remark] Then they cut them in lengths. The women cut them in lengths and packed them. Well, that's what an awful lot o the tinker women did, an sixpence a day they got for doin that. And ma mither got her finger cut, ye know, wi the bark, wi the bark o the tree or something, ye see. And it went intae a whittle, ye know, a whittle? Am I sayin the right words Andra?

Andrew: Yes. Aye.

Belle: Oh well, fair enough. I have to say it to you as I know it. An - eh well they were camped up about - I think it was away up Strathardle somewhere - towards Kirrie - Kirkmichael way, up that way. An there was a whole lot o tinkers aa them ye know, aa workin at the wid. The men was cuttin and sneddin the branches an that. The women was packin this bark and it was oak. An whether it was the rosit or the rosin o the tree or what, got intae ma mother's hand, I cannae tell ye. But it poisoned and went intae this whittle. Noo long ago they used tae get the water that they used oot o wee spring wells. Ken, there was aye wee springs aa through wuds at that time, ye ken. An they would try an pitch their tent as near as possible to the water, so that they wouldnae have far tae walk for it, especially at night, ye ken. But - o this was when ma granny and grandfather and ma mither were quite young. My mother must ha been only sixteen or seventeen at the time. An ye know what like a whittle could be? Well, they never went near a doctor, cause they were miles fae a doctor. I suppose Blairgowrie would be the first doctor at thattime, away up that way, or Bridge o Cally way. An they never went near a doctor. So ma grandfather - ma mother's father-like - "The only thing we can dae," he says, "she got peace when she pit it in the caul water, ye see - ken, pittin

LARCH AND OAK PEELING

the hand intae the caul water, it was easin the pain. An they had the wee bow tents. Well, there was ma mither and her sister Bella, who I'm called for. She's dead a lot o years ago. She died of cancer. An they slept on this wee tent theirsels, ye see. But ma granny and ma grandfather an some o the rest o the bairns had a - [tape runs out]
[Belle goes on to tell how her sister lay with her hand in the spring water for three days and nights and the infected part healed.]

Belle Stewart

Sheila: When did your - how long's your brother Donald been dead?

Belle: They both died just a week between them, Sheila. Donald died - Donald died on the - on the 20th December, 1964, at a quarter past five on a Sunday evening. That was Donald. On the Monday morning Andy and I went along tae Alyth, to Mr. Bell the undertaker to make the arrangements for Donald's funeral. Nothing wrong wi Andy. Did all the arrangements, got it all fixed and on the Monday. Him dyin on the Sunday, we couldnae get offices open or anything, ye know. And Donald was buried on the Wednesday. And - Alec and I went down to Blair on the Saturday of that same week Donald was buried on the Wednesday. Went down on Saturday to do wir shoppin - we were staying in Alyth at the time. An when we were comin back - Andy owned that big, big house at the bottom o the hill beside the shop doon there - Craiglea they called it, ye know. Jimmy Ritchie's sister that's in it now, ye know Jim Ritchie, the fiddler?

Sheila: Oh yes.

Belle: His sister's in that house that Andy - that was Andy's house. Well, that Saturday Alec and I went down, he says, "We'll no stop at Andy's the noo, we'll go in on the way back." So, we went in tae see him and he's sittin at the fire and he's jist sittin wi his socks on - he hadnae his shoes. That must have been about two o'clock in the afternoon. I says, "What're ye sittin like that fur at this time o the day?"

"Oh," he says, "Belle, I've an awfy cauld," he says. "An awfy cauld - it's all in ma heid."

I says, "That was that stannin at that graveside, ye know." Because, he was just like Alec, he was very bare on the top, Andy. Well, naturally, ye've tae take off your hat in a case o that kind, ye know. I says, "You've caught a cauld, Andy, at the graveside, there that day."

"Aw," he says, "maybe I did."

That was Saturday. We had a cup o tea and Alec and I went back to Alyth. He says, "I'll come along and see ye the morn, Alec an Belle."

I says, "No," I says. "You've got a cauld," I says, "We'll come an see you. You're no comin out wi that cauld ye've got." See? That's all there was to it.

My John says, "I'm along tae Blair," he says, "tae see if ma uncle Andy has sold any cars this weekend." That was ma brother Andy, his uncle. But John wasnae very long away when he come back. He'd be about an hour away, and he says, "Mother, ma brother Andy - ma uncle Andy's no feelin awfy well."

I says, "I ken, he's got an awfy cauld."

"Ah but," he says, "he's got an awfy pain in his stomach."

"Ach," I says, "he's maybe had a dram again." Like that, he was - but no! he hadn't.

So John says, "But," he says, "mother I'll tell ye what. I'm goin tae get a shave," he says, "an are ye comin along wi me tae see him."

I says, "Aye, certainly I'll go along and see him."

Alec says, "I'll no bother the night," he says. So John was gettin shaved, he wasnae finished shavin, when Andy, my son Andy pulled up wi the car, at Alyth. Och, Andy was dead -

TWO BROTHERS' DEATHS

Sheila: Goodness.

Belle: - he was dead. At a quarter past five on the following Sunday, the same minute of the clock as Donald died, the Sunday before. Both on a Sunday. One week between. The reporters came to me from the - from the Daily Express, ye know, because it was such a coincidence - it was the timing. Quarter past five Donald died on the Sunday - quarter past five Andy died on the Sunday. Sittin talkin to us [indistinct phrase] So that was all the family there was - and I'm the on that's left. The Dei'ls aye guid tae his ain!

Andrew: It must have been quite a shock to you.

Belle: Aw, it really was, Andrew, aye.

Sheila: Both of them..

Belle: Aye.

Andrew: Both of them so quickly.

Belle: I mean, there was nothing wrong with Andy. If it had been something wrong wi him, I mean like. Donald was an ailing man wi bronchitis for years and we knew he was goin. That was understood. But oh! my God! It was all ever I knew, because ma mother's forty year dead and I never saw ma father an Donald and Andy was all I had. An that's why - an it's ma auldest brother Donald that learnt me that song - taught me that song "The Twa Brothers." An that's why it means so much to me 'cause I only had - always had the twa brothers.

Andrew: Twa brothers.

Belle: Ye know what I mean like? It's just - certainly doesn't refer to them. They weren't scholars or college boys or anything tae that effect but they were my twa brothers, ye know.

Sheila: And you learned quite a long of songs from him?

Belle: Oh aye. Frae Donald? Ay aye. Donald -

Sheila: Would you say you learned most -

Belle: I would say most o the aulder ones an - such as these fragments o the real auld ballads, ye know. I got them aa fac Donald, I really did.

Belle Stewart

Belle: When we had the berries. At the Cleeves, out at the - before you go to Essendy - we had aa travellers. Aa travelling folk camped on oor berryfield. Twenty five or thirty families, ye see. Alec and Andy and the berries between them, and we went to Blair-Oliphant. I don't know if ye know that man at Blair House. He's dead now. His wife was an Irish woman -?

Sheila: Yes.

Belle: - she married this man o Jordanstone. And he's dead now too that man o Jordanstone. Well, he had the adjoining field, and there was no water in our field for the campers. No running water, ye see. So that man Blair Oliphant had the adjoining field and -

Alec: No it wasnae the adjoining field, it was the wee hoose. He come tae the wee hoose.

Belle: I ken. But he owned it, Alec.

Alec: Aye, the hoose, but no the adjoining field.

Belle: No but he had a water trough for his cows in the adjoining field.

Alec: No.

Belle: Across fae the wee hoose. Ye ken, the lodge hoose.

Alec: Och, go on, go on, go on, go on.

Belle: Well anyway, we'll get aroon tae the water thing. We'd no runnin water and they wouldn't allow campers to stay at any place in berries at that particular time if there wasn't runnin water for them and toilets. So Hodge the solicitor - he had a ferm wi hundreds o acres o raspberries - and various other ferms roon aboot - Macintyre and them aa - not one of them had runnin water in the actual field. The berrypickers had the bothies, had to walk maybe a quarter o a mile, half a mile, to a tap up at the farmyard for to get that water, ye ken. However, Blair Oliphant gave a sanction to have a connection from his water supply at the hoose, as Alec talks aboot, and we got a runnin tap in the field. And Alec and Andy had three toilets for woman and three toilets for men. Noo, aa they big ferms wi hundreds o acres, they only had one for men and one for woman. They were naturally dry toilets, you know. So James Kelman was the Officer of Health at that time in Perth and for the surrounding district, for sanitation, ye ken. Dr. Kelman - he died some years ago. Well, the sanitary inspector came out frae Blairgowrie - cannae mind his name, Cunningham or something, cannae mind his name - and we used to pick late at night, if we had a good crop, which we had, a really good crop o berries. We were kind o late that night and we went hame.. When we came back the next mornin there wasn't a camp in the place. They'd all shifted to the bottom. Now we'd had them right beside the tap, ye ken, and we had an auld fashioned sink so that they could wash their buckets, wash their claes, wash their face and hands in it. When Alec came back next mornin, all the tents were away from the top beside the water away doon aboot three hundred yards or no, four hundred yard drill, at the bottom, see. We were summonsed, summonsed to go to court for having aa these folk, so I went to James Kelman. He was ta'en oot, he came oot and he looked at the toilets. Now, Sheila's man, Ian, was Andy wi him tae, dug doon aboot eight feet, really

THE BERRYFIELDS COURT CASE

eight feet down, for these toilets, and I had one o thae what them ca'd - a wee luggie, ye ken, a wee bucket ye pick the berries in full o chloride o lime. I had one o them and Sheila and Andy's wife (Andy wasnae mairrit at that time, sorry) we had a wee bucket o chloride o lime, ye ken, the powder - and that was in every toilet. Now Proctor of the sawmill in Blairgowrie made these toilets and they were really made perfect, with seats and everything, you know, and things for across your feet, tae sit and with this big drop. Now whenever anybody used that, they would put a handfu o this chloride o lime in it, and it was aa away through the ground. There was nae bucket, there was nae need o a bucket. So when Kelman came and looked at them, "My God!" he says, "Who's complaining?"

"Oh," says Andy and Alec, "the sanitary inspector o Blairgowrie. They're complainin aboot that."

Well, they went round aa the rest o the fields. We was taken to court and Lionel Daiches - I don't know if you know him?

Sheila: Yes.

Belle: Hamish Henderson got him to come and speak for us - and it was taken to court, we were being charged, because our campers were too far away from their runnin water, after this sanitary inspector in Blair put them from the runnin water. We were getting trouble because they were too far from it. So Lionel Daiches - it was only ten minutes he was in that court room - ten minutes, and he had it aa thrashed out - they couldnae - they hadnae a foot to stand on, between him and James Kelman. So we were allowed tae - while we were sitting waiting to go into court - Hamish was there with me - Lionel Daiches and myself. I was the one that was supposed to be in charge o the - and I was the one that was charged for the campers. I lost the cutting but I was photographed right out on the steps of the court house in Perth yonder, at Tay Street with Lionel Daiches -

Sheila: What paper was it in - the Blairgowrie -?

Belle: I cannae mind. I couldnae tell you.

Sheila: It could maybe be traced back.

Belle: I couldnae tell you. And it told how a travelling person was conficted of all these campers and all the rest of it. We certainly won the case, but we had to pay Lionel Daiches £100 - £100, £100 Alec. Yes, we had to pay that. That was his fee for coming from Edinburgh you see. Well, however when we were waiting sitting waiting to be tried - I was taken up to be tried for aa these campers - Hamish was with me - Hamish will verify this. I wrote these verses. I didnae put a tune, like, to them.

THE BERRYFIELDS COURT CASE

It happened at the berrytime
When the travellers came to Blair.
They pitched their tents on the berryfields
Without a worry or care.

But they hadnae been long settled
When some heid yins come fae Perth (it was the
police, ye ken)
And told them they must go at once
And get off the face o the earth.

These folk of course were worried
For of law they had no sense.
They only came to the berryfields
To earn a few honest pence.

For it was hard to make them stay there
When the policeman said to go.
So they just packed up and took the road
To where I do not know.

It's a hard life bein a traveller
For I found it to be true.
I've tried in every possible way
To live in times that's new.

But we're always hit below the belt
No matter what we do.
But when it comes to the Judgment Day
We'll be just the same as you.

And Lionel Daiches took a copy of that with him. He wrote it
and took it away with him. Hamish'll tell you.

II.65 JOHN STEWART AND HUGH McMILLAN

It is of a poor but honest man these words I sit and write,
He was not an educated man, but a genius within his right.
For he mixed with lords and ladies and gentry of high
degree

He also travelled the country round, a life that was hard
but free.

He was Scotland's greatest piper, he held that title for
many a year.

And to listen to his piping, people came from far and near,
He took part in all the gatherings from Dundee to John O'
Groats,

And there wasn't a piper in all the land could ever compare
his notes.

He competed with all the champions and was never at a loss,
With MacColl, MacLennan and many more, including Willie
Ross.

When I think about the things he did, it makes me proud tae
think

Of the vast amount of talent that was born in a tink.
He taught many pupils in his time, including Hugh McMillan,
And to pipe him to his resting place, Hugh was more than
willin.

But I saw a tear come to his eye, as they lowered him in the
ground,

And many hearts were breaking as they heard that haunting
sound.

Sheila: Very good, very good.

Belle: Now, Hugh McMillan, his folks, his father and mother, when he
was a young man, owned a big grocer's shop in Kirkmichael. You
know Kirkmichael.

Alec: They had a farm up there.

Belle: Aye there was the farm as well.

Alec: Many's the time I was in the hoose, me an ma mither.

Belle: Aye and his father used tae teach this Hugh McMillan, you
know, as a young boy. Now, they gave up the shop. There was
one sister, Flora was an awfy good piper as well, Flora
McMillan. But auld Jock, a man wi no education or schoolin,
nothing but self-taught the music, taught Hugh McMillan.
Well, when he died, Hugh McMillan was piper, and chauffeur and
gardener to Jordanstone, where that Mrs. Oliphant I told you,
married the man of. Well, when Alec's father died, Alec and I
went along at night to Jordanstone to see Hugh McMillan, to
see if he would pipe at Alec's father's funeral. And he stood
and the tears runs run doon his face at the door. "Oh my
God," he says, "old John Stewart's not dead, is he?"
"Aye," said Alec, "my father's dead. I've come tae ask you
will you pipe at his funeral."

He stood a while and he said, "Honestly, Alec, I couldn't.
When I think back," he says, "the sort of teacher he was and
such a man, taking him all over, the kind o man he was," he
says, "it would break my heart," he says. "I would break
down. I couldn't do it," he says. "No, I'm sorry."

"Oh well," Alec says, "that's all right though. I'll go into
Perth and I'll get Pipe-Major Sinclair of the Black Watch."
That was in the Black Watch with them. "Aye," he says, "we'll

go in there and get him." But we were just back at the bungalow, we wouldnae be half an oor in the hoose, when this big car pulled up. This was Hugh McMillan.

"No," he says, "Alec, I've been thinking about it. It wouldne be fair if I didnae play." He says, "After all," he says, "he's the man that taught me to play the pipes. Why shouldn't I play to him now? But," he says, "one thing I'll have to do, Alec. I'll have to take another pipes with me, a friend of mine, to stand in, in case I break down." And he did. Now they've given up the shop. There - I think some o them - where'd the other one stay? At Lochgilphead. Was it at Lochgilphead? His brother?

Alec: Aye.

Belle: Now this Hugh McMillan went to Rhodesia not very long after Alec's father died. He started a pipe band over there. He had about forty pupils. He had a marvellous pipe band, his name was all over the place in Rhodesia, and just about six months ago, he died in Rhodesia, never came back. And - well, just to think, that Alec's father, an ordinary common tinker man, taught that man and had the qualifications to do what he did and started that band in Rhodesia. See what I mean like?

Sheila: Yes.

Belle: It all - sort of - ties up to - he really was a piper, there's no doubt about it, but he did, he came and piped at the funeral.

Alec: He was a champion.

Belle: He was champion of Rhodesia. Definitely. A champion piper. That was all through John Stewart learning him.

Belle Stewart

So his father got on so well like that, and then they went to Ireland, at the beginning o the war. The 1914 War, I'm talkin about. Because I'll be very truthful with you: his two sisters, Alec's two sisters were married to the Higginses. There was Bella was married to Andy Higgins. Maggie, the woman that's so ill at the moment, wi the bad leg in hospital, she was married to his brother, Donald Higgins. So, like two sisters married on two brothers. Noo, the tinker people always said, "What in the name of God are we gonnae fight for? We've no country." 'Course Alec's folk were settled and so were we, but the ordinary tinker person at that time, they had no country to fight for. They were hunted about, nobody wanted them, they were a despised race. People didnae have any time for them. So, Ireland was a free country and they wouldnae be called up for the army there. So that was the reason they went to Ireland, when Alec was sae young. They didnae want to be a - didnae want to fight. You could be a conscientious objector sort o thing in any o the wars. I don't know. But that's what took them to Ireland and Alec travelled Ireland aa these years. And we hadnae seen Alec's father nor mother nor Alec for - it must have been ten or twelve years, more maybe. His mother was writing - we got a letter from his mother, I dinnae ken when it was, but however we got the letter. And she said, "Why dae ye no come tae Ireland? My God -" Donald and Andy and my Uncle Jimmy were all great pearl fishers, - "and it's a great country for pearl fishing. Why dae ye not come over for a wee while?" Well, of course, my mother, no, she wouldnae go. But Donald and Andy - Donald and Jimmy and myself - I was workin in Dundee at Lindsay and More's factory at the time - and Donald and Jimmy couldn't read and write. Now Jimmy was an uncle, my mother's brother, and he couldnae read or write, so they were goin tae Ireland and they thought, "Well, when we come off the train in Glasgow how're we goin tae get tae the boat?" and aa that sort o thing. So they asked me to give up my job in Dundee and come through and go with them to Ireland, so that I could read the stations, ken, the boats at the Broomielaw, and aa that sort o thing, read and get the tickets for them. And we went tae Ireland and we went tae a place just above Londonderry, called Carrigan. It's on the borders to County Donegal. And that's where we met them for the first time in years and years and we all went pearl fishing. That's where I met Alec, then. I would be - oh what? Eighteen and six month. Something like that. I was just turned eighteen, anyway. And of course Alec's two year and eight month aulder than me. And we went pearl fishing. But my brother Donald was always a sick man, he always had this bronchitis, ken what I mean? He wasnae well, and the fresh water in the burns didnae suit him at all. He was always no well and coughing. So he wanted hame. But my Uncle Jimmy didnae want to go back to Scotland. So he stayed wi Alec's folk in Ireland and went pearl fishing with them. So Donald and I cam hame and - then my brother Andy says, "My God, I wish I had my fare," he says. "If I'd my fare I'd go back to Ireland and to fish pearls," he says. "It would be all right for me." Well, I sat doon and wrote a wee letter to Alec's mother, care of the Post Office, where she told us to write to, and I telt her we hadnae wir fare - we couldnae get back to Ireland. So she sent us a five pound note, auld Nancy, Alec's mother. Andy and I, we packed up and back to Ireland. This time we went to a place called McGuire's Bridge, and there was people called Douglasses there! Travelling people, Charlie Douglas and their family was aa there, and they were aa

BELLE AND ALEC'S MARRIAGE IN IRELAND

fishing pearls at the time. And that day we landed there, Alec's sister, the one that's in hospital now, oh she had an awfy sair hand. They always kept goats. They used tae follow the caravans, you know, and this was a great milkin goat they had, and just a couple of hours before Andy and I landed there, the goat put the horn right through - right through her hand. Of course she never went to a doctor, and oh my God she was in pain, in agony! So Andy and I stayed there anyway. I dinnae ken hoo lang we were there and Alec's father and Alec and Andy went pearl fishin and was it in the River Moy ye got the big pearl, Alec? Or was it the Blackwater? Aye, it was the River Moy. So Andy and his father was fishin and they got this real big pearl. It was a huge pearl. And they tried to sell it in a place caad Omagh, in Ireland. Don't know what you were offered for it. What was ye offered for it?

Alec: Forty pound.

Belle: Forty pound in Omagh. Aye, Omagh [indistinct phrase] So however we decided to come back to Scotland to sell the pearl. Alec said to his father and mother, the night afore, he says, "Mother, I'm goin tae Scotland wi them." Course it was me he was gaun wi richt enough. He said, "I'm goin out tae Scotland." So we cam here and it wis jist aboot berrytime. My Uncle Davie was bidin doon the back there. And Alec stayed a fortnight wi us, wi my mother like and Donald. And he says, "I think," he says, "me and Belle's gettin mairried. Have you any objections?" But they said no. But what angered my mother was, she thought me bein the only lassie, I should hae been mairried here. Instead o that we went back tae Ireland, got married in Ballymoney in the County Antrim. And my mother always held that grudge against Alec, because she - well, right enough, I should he been, with a widowed mother, and she always held that grudge against Alec. That's hoo we mairried, that's hoo I met Alec - in pearl fishin, and we cam owre and we got married and that'll be fifty three years if God spares us, on the 17th of August comin.

II.67 WHISTLIN AT THE PLOO

Belle Stewart

Belle: Oh well, I'll tell ye aboot them. About, "Whistlin at the Ploo". I'll have tae talk and tell ye aboot them. A good few years ago when Alec was really well and at himself, he used tae take on tatties by the acre, you know, contracts. And I think it was, who was it - Halley - I think -

Alec: Aye. Halley.

Belle: Halley, Coupar Angus. Alec used tae take on the acres, because he could aye guarantee a good squad. It was aa travellin people, and they can really work, you know. And of course, it was by piece work, by the acre. Now we did a place awa doon between Coupar Angus and Newtyle. Was it Damheid, or what, they call the fairm. I cannae really mind exactly the name o the fairm, but that's where we was workin anyway. And ye know it was one o those very, very bitter cold, keen, frosty nights at tattie liftin time, and to the forenoon till about eleven o'clock it was real caul, you know, liftin the tatties, wi the frost, but it came out the most beautiful day ye ever saw. You know how the sun comes oot, efter the frost, and Alec was, of course, the gaffer. In the efternoon, it was three o'clock, we got a piecie time. We get a break in the mornin from nine o'clock till quarter past and in the after-noon we got from three till quarter past, and we were sittin on wir basket, and I just looked owre, and two fields breadths away was this plooman, and it had been a bonnie day, sleeves rowed up ye ken, and he'd two white horses, real white horses and he was whistlin. And I thought it was the most marvellous sight, after so much tractors and mechanism and aa the rest o it, you know. To think back on the ordinary plooman, well, plooin wi two horses, so I jist sat doon and I said to Alec, "Could I get a page oot o your book?" Ye ken, the book for takin doon the names o the fowl for their peys an that. "What ye gannae dae wi a page?" I says, "Gie me it and a lend o your pencil." That was the hardest work he did, takin the folks' names! We were aboot half murdered. Big long pits and the digger comin and the harry at the back ot it! Never mind, I got the paper and I sat doon and these are the few verses I wrote.

WHISTLIN AT THE PLOO

(Tune: Tramps and Hawkers)

Noo I'm jist a common plooman lad
That whistles at the ploo
The story I'm aboot tae tell
Will seem gey queer tae you.
For I'm no keen on skiffle groups
Nor onything that's new,
For I am quite contentit
Jist gaun whistlin at the ploo.

Noo I'm workin wi a fairmer
And he bides no far fae Crieff
But if he'd hired a teddy boy
I'm sure he'd come tae grief.
Wi this new-fangled rock and roll
And ither things that's new.
Naw, he wouldnae be contentit
Jist gaun whistlin at the ploo.

Noo jist take a common plooman lad
That works amang the neeps.
I'm sure he wouldnae feel at ease
In a pair o yon ticht breeks!
Nor wi his hair growin owre lang
And hinging owre his broo,
Naw he wouldnae be contentit
Jist gaun whistlin at the ploo.

But we cannae blame the teddy boys
That's just their way o life
So I think that I will settle doon
And take masel a wife.
We'll bide in yon wee cottar hoose
And she'll ne'er hae cause tae rue
O the day she wed her plooman lad
That whistles at the ploo.

Noo I think my story's ended
But I'm shair that you'll agree
There's nae life like a plooman's life
As far as I can see.
We rise contentit in the morn
And we work the hale day through
And we never seem tae worry
When we're whistlin at the ploo.

John Stewart

Away back before I was born - I cannae go back that distance - I've to just tell you what we've heard passed doon through the faimily, passed doon through the family, you know what I mean? I was born in - in Aldour at Piloehry and gin my mind started to think aboot who I was an who I wasnae, and what ma name was, an one thing an another like that, I was goin to school at Torwood at Birnam thonder, ye see. Alec was born at Alyth, ye know where that is. An ma father, the time I remember first aboot ma father, was, he was piper tae Lord Dudley, in Dunkeld Hoose. Because aa the laddies an the wee lassies I used tae run aboot wi in Torwood there, would aa standin lookin when they saw the car come up to ma father's door for a bisit, or some o Lord Dudley's family come oot on horseback, an they always stopped at our house, ye see. An the people were aa wonderin, ye know what I mean, what the Lord's family was daein aa round there, roon the door an that, talkin tae us.

Before that ma father was wi the Duke o Atholl - now I'm gaun back to when I dinnae mind, or before I was born. I'm tellin ye what I know, wi bein one o the family, ye see. He was with the Duke o Atholl and he was in the Atholl Highlanders or the Scottish Horse. He was Pipe-Major o Pitlochry Pipe Band, he was one o the members in the Fishing Club. Goin back before that, he was wi Laird Stewart at Rannoch. And actually I've heard it said, that Laird Stewart was the same Stewarts. I've heard that mentioned. There was a thread o evidence through the history before that. My father was piper tae him, ma mother worked in the laundry, ye see.

Angus McRae was a piper for Lord Dudley, and he wanted another man and Angus took ma father doon and got ma father the job as another piper wi the Lord, ye see, wi Lord Dudley. Any time the Lord wanted him ma father had tae be there. But when he wasnae, he went out wi his horse an cart. He's the dishes aa among straw in the back o his cart. I think they've got another name for them doon in the north o England there. They call them potters.

Sheila: Potters, m'hm.

John: Potters. Ma father would go up aa these glens aa roon, Strathbraan, an up by Pitlochry, roon aa - aa the houses. He was there that long, an winnin so many Gameses, his name this - great John Stewart the piper, his name everyone - the kids on the street knew Jock Stewart, ye know what I mean, the piper, ye see. So he was there wi Lord Dudley, an I remember him comin back one day and he'd a new bicycle. Because in the mornins he had to be down at seven o'clock and he'd to walk fae Torwood across to Dunkeld, it was about a mile or a mile an a quarter, iw his pipe box. So Lord Dudley was comin out the front door this mornin when ma father was goin down. He says, "Stewart! Stewart!" Ye see, smoking a big cigar, the old army man, walked wi a stick, thon knickybockers on 'im, and he had a lame leg where he got hurt in the war. "What are you doin walkin?"

Ma father says, "Oh," he says, "I walk every mornin, sir."

He says, "Have you not got a bicycle?"

Ma father says, "No," he says, "m'lord," he says, "I haven't got a bike."

"Well," he says, "You just go in," he says, "to the cycle shop, when you're goin back," he says, "and tell them to give you a cycle. Put my name down." Ye see?

RECOLLECTIONS OF OLD JOHN STEWART

So I think, I'm nearly sure, a new bike at that time was £20, a new Raleigh. So ma father came back wi the new Raleigh. His brother says, "Where did ye get the bike?" he says.

"Lord Dudley bought it for me," - Fred Ellis the bicycle shop man got the bicycle, ye see.

Then we was goin to school there, goin tae school there. Ma father went tae Glasgow one day, on some business o some kind. An he bought a picture machine. For the old silent films, wi the handle. An I remember the name o that outhin yet. They called a Gaumont Malt-ese Cross. That was the name o it. An it was rolled in the - in a sheet, and then the picture screen - you know the white screen - it was folded aa roun it. An there was a tripods for it - aa this gear along wi it, an it was in a big chest, like this, about that height. He comes back and he was in at McCairney one day. In Perth, sellin his stuff. He kept his stuff for a certain length o time, an then sold it. Maybe every couple o month or so, three months, ye see. So he was in wi a load o stuff into McCairney, an ma father seen McCairney's car sittin at the door. An outh Ford. Mind thon aul TT Ford? So ma father was intae the garage an "One o them wad suit you John." Ye see.

Ma father said, "So it would." Now, what went through ma father's heid was - the picture machine, ye see? So ma father bought the car off him - I think it was £150 or £166 he gien for the car. So ma father came drivin home with it, sittin in this, open, wi the auld hood at the back, ye know, folded down, open - this auld TT Ford, wi brass lamps on it. An aa the folk was oot lookin at Jock Stewart comin back fae Perth in a motor car. Ye see? So he showed his pictures in the Insitute in Birnam, one night, then he would take it over tae Dunkeld an he wad show it in Dunkeld another night, then he'd put it in the back o his - back o his car, wi his spools o film an he got them fae Green's o Glasgow. That was the - the - aa the - nearly, Green's nearly owned aa the picture hooses in Glasgow at that time. An theatres.

Sheila: Green's Playhouse.

John: Green's Playhouse - that's right. That was the Green's. So ma father would get a - a - a complete weekly programme, an - I cannae mind - I think it was three or four pound, or something at that time. Or a fiver. For a week's programme o films. An he wad go up the glen, maybe Amulree, an these wee country halls, ye see, an show them, each night; then back again an jist the samen routine again.

II.70 THE CROSSING TO IRELAND

John Stewart

We were up there cuttin an tyin wi a man ca'd Archie McKay, an when we were finished school I used tae get the rest o the kids, we were a way up the hill an we'd tae pull them from among the trees out tae a clear bit, where they could get transport tae get them away out o the way. So that went on there for a while an ma mother's missin the lassies, this that an the next thing, ye see. An she'd likely have got him for tae up an sell everything. So he gave up his china shop in Dunkeld. I showed you the shop two or three times, haven't I Meg?

Maggie: Yes.

John: He gae up the china shop in Dunkeld. He selt his car tae, I think it was a fella Henderson, that stayed roon beside his stables. An he selt the horse, selt everything. An we went, I remember goin tae Glasgow wi him, the lot o us, there wis a big family o us. An on the boat an right across to Londonderry, an I remember the name o that boat yet, it was the Rose. The Rose. An it was 7/6 for your ticket at that time for your passage.

So we come off at Londonderry, we was stood aboot on the quay. Ma father went now tae look for a horse an a cart, 'cause there still wasnae many cars aboot, ye know what I mean? So he went an he got a man they caad Mickey Ward, he was a horse-dealer in Derry. An he selt ma father this oul black horse; it was a thin as a rake, ye see, wi a big long heron neck oot it, an this cart. We got aa wur baggage an wur stuff in it, aa up on the top o it, an we were goin along the road ye see wi this horse an cart. So we had to go fae there - Donald and Maggie an them were stayin at a camp, they were, at a place caad Ballachie outside Donegal. An we went to Ballachie at Donegal, met them.

That started the Irish stay.

Sheila: What year was that?

John: Oh here, wait - we were in it sixteen year. I was seven when I went to it, an I come back when I was twenty one, or twenty two. How long would that be?

Sheila: You were born in -?

John: Say I was seven when I went to it.

Andrew: You were born -?

John: An I come back when I was twenty two. How long was - wh wh -

Sheila: Sixteen years.

John: Aboot sixteen year. I was right, aboot fifteen or sixteen years.

II.71 AULD NANCY SELLS LACE

John Stewart

Now we stayed there. Ma father was goin tae show his pictures but the people in Ireland were that funny, that he was frightened to show them in case he would get mobbed, or a riot start or something like that, ye know what I mean? So instead o doin that, ma mother started hawkin an drookerin. Ye know what drookerin is?

Sheila: Tellin fortunes.

John: That's right. An she would buy her lace in Shutkey St. I showed ye the shop [to Maggie]. In Shutkey St. an you got it from a card. So many yards o lace, ken? Thon fine lace, ye see. Well ma mother would put that in her basket an she'd have her crystal. She never took - ma mother never took cards with her, 'cause ma mother always said the cards were the Devil's books. She wouldnae [indistinct word] the cards at aa. But she would, there were great hawkin, she an Maggie an the lassies were aa good hawkers as travellers, or gypsies. An they would ring the bell an they would say, "Oh good mornin ma'am, ye've a lucky face," an aa this cairry-on, ye see. They'd get the wumman talkin an they would sell her maybe a couple o yards o lace. I remember ma mother - on woman would maybe say, "I'll take three yards," - ma mother would measure it on her [indicates hand] I think it was six o them she measured tae the yard, o the lace. "Cause when I was wee I used tae stand at the [indistinct word] watching them dacin it. An then ma mother would maybe get a shillin or a couple o bob off her, to read her fortune, then her mother would sprach her for eggs, ken, 'cause aa the Irish hooses had plenty o hens, eggs were easy got. They were only aboot threepence or fourpence a dozen in the shops. So she'd get eggs an maybe she'd get flour meal in her bag, an some hooses would give her tea. Ken, an she'd maybe have a good few bob an this in her basket comin home, ye see.

John Stewart

We went back up tae Donegal, county o Donegal, tae a wee place they caa Castle Phin and then me an Andra and Alec, started sellin fish. We drove fae there about forty, forty five mile, maybe fifty mile, tae Killybegs and we waited tae the early hours o the mornin till the boats were comin in and we'd buy wur fish when they were auctionin them at the boats there. I could tell the price o a cran o herrin there yet. It was - the last time we bought them there, they were three and six a basket an there were four baskets tae the cran. So the men that sell fish there, the dealers, they've aa their donkey cairts an wee yokes standin there ye see, an the the Scotch boys is in there at the quay, and they'll tell you, "Oh don't buy them yet boys, don't buy them." They want the price to come down, ye see. But we'd a long ro - way to go. An when the man says "3/6 a basket" - he asked five bob first but he come doon tae three and six - noo the Irish donkey men were still waitin to try an get them for half nothing. But Alec an men, an Andra says (we were quite young, ye see) "What's the good of waitin? We're wastin time waiting here. We could still give that for them an be back get away back owre the hill and hawk them roon Ballybofey an aa them places where they hardly seen fish, before they could get out of the way wi their donkeys an carts. Know what I mean? So we give the three and six a basket for them an we were pittin them in wur lorry an the rest o the people - the rest o the fishmen were wild, ye see. But we done that for a good few weeks till the boats went away then we started on the deep sea fish.

When the herrin boats go away, great big, big trawlers come in. An if ye got tae Killybegs while they were a trawler in, ye could go out in a boat an buy your fish off them. So me an Alec landed up - this fish boy looks at him - it was about five o'clock in the mornin - it wasnae five - when we pulled in wi the car. An the boy comes oot, he says, "I'm sorry boys, ye're late."

He says, "How?"

He says, "The Scotch boats are aa away."

He says, "We knew they were away," he says, "this mornin," he says, "because when they're goin away, they blow their horns." [Imitates ship's siren.] That's them aa back for Scotland," ye see. But he says, "I'll tell ye, there's a trawler oot there," he says, "an there'll be fish on it."

So we got a boat an this boy took it out tae the trawler. The trawler fish are no herrin. They're any kin o big fish at aa. Y'know what I mean? The likes o crooners and great big oul cod and site an aa that, an they're aa on ice. An they can gether them there oh! for months an still take them back home, ye see.

So we bought some off him, three or four boxes we bought off him, an pit them on wur lorry. After half a day when the sun come oot, ye could hae felt the smell o it, ye could [Laughter] hae felt the smell o it a mile away. They were rotten! They were gettin rotten ye know, wi the heat. We had tae dump them in a ditch. So, I think it was one - two - I selt, two fish I selt aa that mornin.

II.73 PIPERS MEETING

John Stewart

But I took the pipes this day at Irvine, an Andra, an I went out the Glasca Road, tae - oot by the toll, an me an Andra was taking house about tae play, ye see. An I was playin in front o this hoose, was it a privet hedge, kin o a cottage, wee cottage, in through an iron gate. An I was on the pavement an I was playin, ye see, an this wumman come oot, grey heidit, tall, thin, gray haired wumman, nice-lookin wumman, an another younger wumman, an she spoke tae Andra an then Andra stopped an she said, "What do they call you?" Jist shows ye!

I says, "Stewart."

She says, "I thought that." She says, "Are you any friend o - will ye not be a son of John Stewart?" Ye see?

Now, ma father didnae want anybody tae know at all aboot Ireland and the bad time he went through an comin back, ye see.

She says, "Where are ye stayin?"

I says, "We're stayin in a caravan - a trailer in Irvine."

She says, "Tell your father, when you go back," she says, "me an ma husband'll be in to see him."

She gave me half a crown. Well, half a crown at that time was a lot o money.

So I came in an I says to ma father, "There's a man an wumman oot there," the wumman telt Alec what happened, so we were just sittin after wur tea, when this car came in. A young man drivin it an an oldish man an this wumman. An he comes oot an he looks at ma father an he says, "Good God Almighty! Jock!" Ye see? What a shamin ma father got, he must ha done, he lands up wi a caravan trailer, ye know what I mean. He says, "Good God, Jock!" he says, "what are ye dacin here min?" Ye see?

It was the Campbells, Alec Campbell, and Roddy Campbell, they've tunes in the book, professional pipers, ye see.

We were talkin away aboot auld times there an he says to ma father, "Does your laddie play - aw I neednae ask that, ma wife was tellin me aboot him." He says, "Play me a tune." So I played a tune tae him, an he says tae ma father, he said, "Does he no go to the Games, Jock?"

Ma father says, "No."

"Well," he says, "leave him wi me an I'll have him goin tae the northern meetins in six months." Ye see?

So I went back oot tae him an he learned me pibroch, ye see? An he wanted me tae go tae the Maclellan Galleries in Glasgow, tae compete, but we shifted again before that, ye see.

John Stewart

But we comes across tae Blair an puts up this tent, this was the laugh I was gonnae tell ye aboot. An I put an iron bed in it tae keep us up off the grund, ye see, wi a mattress. It was aa thon way, ye know. Wi us having the wee young wean, she put - I put a wire at the top o the bed and screwed it an made a hole where I could stick the cannle through the hole, y'know [Maggie heard saying, "I used tae walk the ground at three o'clock wi him greetin."] an the wire was sittin like that wi this loop on it an the cannle stuck through it, ye see, up at the bed end for her tae light it when the wean was [indistinct word] it, ye see. [Maggie says, "I waukened -"] She wakened through the night tae dae somethin, an she lay doon an she forgot, aboot the cannle. [Maggie: "No, I waukened"] It burned doon, Andy, tae the hole, [Maggie: "An I fell asleep] then it dropped through onto the straw o the bed [laughs]. If I hadnae wakened - [Maggie: "Everything was blazin!"] I looked up an there were bits o the blinkin carpet fallin on top o the bed. I dived! An I grabbed her an I gien two roars, an I liftit th wean wi one airm an I kin o half tore her tae, an oot, oot o the thing an it was jist in blazes. An me standin there in ma shirt tail! The wean aneth ma oxter, she was standin lookin - [Maggie: "That's aa we had! We were left wi everything was burnt] Left wi not a thing, not a thing.

II.75 THE BEST DEAL EVER I LOST

John Stewart

But the best deal ever I lost wi him. He went oot an he bought a target that was lyin oot on the sea for the Air Force tae shoot at, like a great - two great big barges. But they were made o metal, the metal was that thick, iron, and he bought them off Arbuthnot. So I drove him out wi - hissel - an Jimmy Mann the - the blacksmith, was oot there an aa his men. An they cut them up in squares aboot the size o that [bangs table top] aboot the top o that table. An they heaped them aa up on the beachy sand. An I come back in a fortnicht after that. Oh there were aboot two or three thousand ton o scrap, ye see. An he says tae me, "You wantin that scrap?"

I says, "Hoo we gonnae shift it?"

"Well," he says, "ye could shift it wi a yoke," he says. "Hand barra." Ye see?

I says, "How much?"

He says, "Take it for nothin, I'm no wantin it." Ye see?

So I goes oot, an when I went oot I looked - I said, "I'll no get in there." Because there were pill-boxes, ye know thon things, high things like that? They keep tanks fae comin oot. An ye couldnae get in wi a lorry, on the sandy dunes an doon tae the beach, ye couldnae get right doon. I says, tae her, "I'll get a yoke, a yoke'll go through there." I says, "I'll take it oot," I says, "a few hundred-weight at a time. That'll take me long enough," I says, "but I tell you, it's always money."

So I waited for about a fortnicht or three weeks, an went away down tae have another look at it. And when I went doon there was no scrap at aa! It was aa washed away wi the tide! The whole tide lifted it aa away. [Laughter.]

John Stewart

Well we used to go in greatly for good dogs, ye know. A dog that couldnae kill a hare and fetch it back tae ye, was nae use tae us. 'Cause that's what kept the pot boilin. Noo we landit, although there's no huntin laws in Ireland, an where there's no huntin laws, ye've got hares like lightnin, because they're chased tae death. Ye know, eh, Andy? See, the fields are that wee, an ye've got one, two, three different classes o hares in Ireland. Ye've no white hares. But ye've got the ordinary brown hare ye've got here, then ye've got what they call the typical Irish hare, he's a coffee colour. Dark. Then on the mountain ye've got what they call the wee Jack hares. An they're a rust colour. But they're aboot half the size o an ordinary big hare, an they can all fly. So me an Alec had this two good dogs, ye see. Decent dogs. An this man, oul farmer, come doon this day. Says he, "Ye gaun for a pooch?" That's what they call poachin over there, "away tae a pooch."

An Alec says, "I don't know," he says. "Our dogs is no much good."

"No," he says, "I've got a dog here," he says, "a black one," but he says, "there's a mate o mine," he says, "on the far end o the turf road," he said, "I generally go up tae him," he says. "He's got a dog too."

So we walked up wi the three dogs - this man's dog an weer two, an went intae this wee thatched hoose.

This big oul Irishman come oot. "Aye surely tae God I'll go for a hunt wi youse boys. Wait till I get ma dog." Ye see?

Now it was jist wee fields Andy, an the corn was stooked, I mind o that yet, the corn was stooked, jist wee fields. So he went to this wee thatched shed and he opened the door and this - this hound came oot, black and white it was. You ask Alec aboot this, black and white, it stood aboot that height. An it was after drinkin buttermilk. You could see a dish wi buttermilk and bits o meal through it, in the shed, ye know.

Took it owre tae this bits o whins where our dogs never seen where the hare went, a hare got up [whistle] - away, back tae the man's wud. Another wan, an it was that fast an wheelin that quick, it was knockin the stooks off the corn - ye know the sheaves - it was cowpin corn sheaves an everything. After this hare an kills that one, an then kills another one. An Alec says, "I never seen the like o that dog in ma life." He says, "An that was wi oul Irish hares," he says tae me. [Laughs]

Mac

Willie Macphee

Any little charge that had tae be done, I was the one that had tae dae it. An of coorse I had tae learn tae make baskets. That was the first thing I had tae learn. An ma mother selt them. Then in after years, efter I got married, I learnt tae be a tinsmith, what ye call a tinsmith. An I was also a blacksmith for two years.

Sheila: A blacksmith?

Willie: A blacksmith for two year. That's why I get the name o the Blacksmith! Bowler's Haugh, that's in Dunfermline. Two year there. A blacksmith. An also a mechanic. There was a blacksmith's shop an a garage all in one, ye see. The old man ran the blacksmith's shop, and the son, he done the mechanicking. I done the mechanicking, an I'm a very good mechanic, although I say it maself. [Chuckling]

Sheila: [Showing peastrainer and basket] These are the things that you've made for me.

Willie: Aye. This is one o the small items I've made for you.

Sheila: But you don't really make them now to sell?

Willie: Aw naw, Sheila! It wouldnae pay ye noo. Because ye couldnae buy this tin an make a profit o't. Tae make that thing the day, ye'd need tae get aboot a pound for that, today. An it wouldnae be worth it, because it wad take an oor or maybe an oor an a half tae sit an make that. If ye had the material there just tae make it, ye know. But it's strong enough. It'll last for years an years, that. Faur better than the plastic stuff they're makin - aye. [Laughs] Aye, far better than the plastic.

Sheila: And ye still occasionally make a basket? [Showing the basket]

Willie: Aye, I mak these things. That's for haudin waste paper. And I also make smaller sizes than that, an a hannle on for message baskets. No that shape - square and oval shape.

Sheila: And what do you use to make the baskets with?

Willie: Well, when I started makin baskets first, Sheila, ye're maybe no gonnae believe this, but fourpence was the best you could get for them. Four pence. Four pence then was - it would get you a lot in a shop, four pence then.

Sheila: Is it willow you use?

Willie: Wild - that's wild willow. An in the summertime, ye can cut them in the summertime. An ye can peel the bark aff them in the summertime. An they're white when ye take the bark off them. In the wintertime when ye cut them, ye have tae steam them, in a big long tin about this size, an ye put them in standin up straight like that, an then, ye wap plugs or anything we can tae haud in the steam right roon aboot a bit o canvas right roon aboot them, half fillt wi water, set them on a fire. An they're maybe on the fire for maybe an hour, when ye see the steam comin out through the top, ye take a wee bit fae the top an pull one out. Ye jist take wan out tae see if it's - if the skin's comin off. An once the skin comes off ye know they're ready. The steamed wand is the strongest an it's the best, for makin baskets. They lest far far longer. An through years a boiled one - what I say a boilt one - that's means steamt - it'll turn brown-coloured jist like that there [indistinct word] turn brown as they get older. They laut for years and years and years.

TRAVELLER'S OCCUPATIONS

Andrew: Are these steamed wands?

Willie: No these were cut in the summer wands - out in the summer, yes. Cut in the summertime. They wands come frae Aberfoyle.

Sheila: From Aberfoyle.

Willie: From Aberfoyle. That's where I got them. In fact I have some oot in the van there yet.

Sheila: And did you make these brushes with heather?

Willie: Scrubbers, ye mean? Oh aye, scrubbers. Heather scrubbers that length. Ye took a bunch o heather and ye walted it owre a stone, ye see? Ye take aa the wee sma heids off it. An when ye've got all the thingummies bare, ye caught it thegither like that an take a wire an wap it, wap it canny like that. They're tremendous things for cleanin pots an pans. They'll last for years tae. Well looked efter. I think Belle has one o them in the hoose yet that I made. I'm sure she has. I was tae make a bisom but I never got roon tae that yet. Ye cannae get nae heather here of coorse. Ye need tae go up tae Aberfeldy an that, an get heather. That scrubber that I made for Belle, the heather that's in hit come fae Rannoch. I went tae Rannoch for't. Some lovely heather there at Rannoch.

Sheila: So mainly now, rather than tinsmithing and basket making you do other things now.

Willie: What I usually dae in the summertime, I go away piping in the summertime, tae gentry in the summertime I think Belle can show ye some [indistinct words] some photies, of piping.

Sheila: An these are your pipes, aren't they, Willie?

Willie: [Taking up pipes] These are the - these are the - this is the instruments of death!

Sheila: They've got lovely silver mounts on them, haven't they?

Willie: [When he has put pipes together and started to blow up the bag] We'll see if there's a squeak in them.

II.78 MOVING ON

Willie Macphee

Sheila: You've been staying here at Redgorton -?

Willie: Eh -

Sheila: - quite a wee while now, haven't you?

Willie: Four year.

Bella: Four year.

Sheila: Before that you used to get moved along a bit a lot, didn't you?

Willie: Well, we were up in - last year. We were up there eighteenth month and o course the polis chased us oot o that. I got fined for bein up there. It's been a campin place for years an years. Years an years there were a camp there. I was fined. I was fined £20. Stayin there. I was also fined off the Doubledykes for campin there tae. £50 or £60 we were fined.

Bella: The farmer here's a real -

Willie: But the man -

Bella: - Christian.

Willie: He's a real man, though this, ken?

Bella: A real gentleman.

Sheila: Do you work for him when there's -

Willie: I dinnae work for him, 'cause it's the boys -

Sheila: The boys work.

Willie: But there's nae work this winter.

Bella: He wasn't gettin sale -

Willie: He couldnae get sale for his stock.

Sheila: But he still lets you have this -

Willie: Oh aye, oh aye. He never bothers me. Ye see, when the quarry was here, I think this is the reason why - he took an interest. When the quarry was here no one got in past here, we used tae lock the gate and no let nobody in there.

Bella: Watch the - watch the quarry.

Willie: An watch the quarry, ye see? An there were some people stealin diesel doon there. We reported them twice, went to the farmer and reported them twice for stealin the diesel. So I think that's -

Sheila: You were helping - each other.

Willie: Aye. That's got a lot tae dae wi't. Well, when you've got a friend like that, it's as much as ye can dae tae help him. He's helpin you, ye see.