

Bean tSleibhe ag Caoineadh a Mic

Pádraig Pearse

The woman of the mountain laments the death of her beloved son.

Bad cess to death,¹ it has broken my heart
Stolen my son and left me in agony
Without friend or companion under my ceiling
On my own, I am left crying and grieving.

Going over the mountain in the evening
I hear the birds sadly singing
The call of the curlew and the sound of the snipe
Telling me that my darling son has died.

I called out to you but your voice I heard not
I called out to you again but no answer I got
I kissed your mouth and Oh God it was cold!
And cold alas is your bed in the lonely graveyard.

Oh grave of the green sod where my child is lying
Oh narrow little grave, since you are now his bed
My blessing upon you, and my thousand blessings
On the grey green sods that are over my darling.

Bad cess to death, you cannot deny it
It steals both young and old from us away
And gentle son I am tortured each day
Knowing your beautiful body is making clay!

¹ Bad luck to death