

A Mhairead nan Cuiread

Scottish Gaelic lyrics

Tha mulad, tha mulad,
Tha lionn-dubh arm fhèin,
Hì rì hoireann ò, hì rì hoireann ò.
Tha de mhingean air m' aire,
Nì nach aidich mo bheul,
Hì rì rì o ho, roho hì hoireann ò.

M' an òganach ghasda,
Ùr-mharcach nan steud,
M' an taca seo 'n uiridh,
Bu thoil leat m' fhurran ro cheud,

Cha mhò ort mi' m bliadhna,
Na eunlaith nan speur,
Tha sac trom air mo chridhe,
Nach tog fidheal nan teud,

Chan innis mi dham phiuthar,
Meud mo chumh' as do dhèidh,
Na dham mhàthair a rug mi,
Chuir mi cudtrom na ceum,

Ach a Mhairead nan cuiread,
'S dàn a chuir thu arm breug,
Thilg thu arm-sa mar ailis,
Nach b' uilear dhomh 'm bréid,

Gu robh leanabh am pasgadh,
Fo asna mo chlàibh,
Cuim nach innseadh tu' n fhirinn,
Mar a dh'innsinn ort fhèin,

Ann an làthair mo thighearna,
Far am bithinn 's tu rèidh,
Thilg thu arm-sa mar dhearrais,
Gu robh m' athair an èis,

Cha b' ionann dha m' athair,
'S dha d' athair-sa fhèin,
Cha b' ionann dhan taighean,
'N àm laighe don ghrèin,

'S ann a gheibhte, 'n taigh m' athar-s',
Cinn is cnamhan an èisg,
'S ann a gheibhte, 'n taigh m' athar-s,
'Cinn is casan an fhèidh,

A Vye-rut nun koo-rut

phonetics

Ha moo-lat, ha moo-lat,
Ha lee-un do a-rum hayn,
Hee ree haw-run o, hee ree haw-run o.
Ha jih vee-yun ayr mah-rih,
Knee nach a-jeech moe vale,
Hee ree ree o ho, roho hee haw-run o.

Man awww-kun-uch ghasda,
Ooor-var-kuch nun sh-chayd,
Man ta-ch-ka shaw noo-ree,
Boo hul let moo-ran row ch-yate,

Cha voe orsh-ch meem blee-u-nuh,
Na ee-un-lie nan spare,
Ha sach-k trawwm air mow chree-uh,
Nach toke feel nun chayt,

Chan eensh mi gham few-her,
Mayt mow choo as dough yay,
Na gham vaa-her a rook me,
Choor me koo-chum na kyame,

Ach a Vye-rut nun koo-rut,
Sdaan a choor oo a-rum brake,
He-lick oo armsa mar aah-lish,
Nach booler ghawm bray-ch,

Goo raw len-iv um pass-kug,
Foe asna moe chlay-v,
Kooeem nach een-sugh toon knee-reen,
Mar a yeen-sheen orsht hay-n,

Awwn an laaa-her moe he-ur-nuh,
Far am bee-eeen stoo ray,
He-lick oo a-rumsa mar yar-ish,
Goo row ma-her an nyaysh,

Cha byoo-nun gha ma-her,
Sga da-her-sa hay-n,
Cha byoo-nun ghan te-hun,
Nawwm lie-yih don ghrayn,

Sawwn a yiv-chin tiy da-hers,
Keen is crav-un an nyae-shk,
Sawwn a yiv-chin tiy ma-hers,
Keen is ka-sun an nyae,

Wily Margaret

literal translation

Sadness, sadness,
Melancholy am I,
Hì rì hoireann ó, hì rì hoireann ó.
There is such despair in me,
Which my lips will not confess,
Hì rì rì o ho, roho hì hoireann ó.

About the fine youth,
Young rider of steeds,
Around this time last year,
You liked my banter above hundreds,

This year you like,
The birds of the air as much,
There is a heavy load on my heart,
That no stringed fiddle will lift,

I wouldn't tell even my sister,
How much I mourn you,
Or the mother who bore me,
On whose footsteps I weighed,

But wily Margaret,
Boldly you lied about me,
You cast up to me the slander,
That I needed a wife's kertch,

That there was a child hidden,
Behind my ribcage,
Why couldn't you tell the truth,
As I would about you?

In the presence of my Lord,
Where you and I would be on equal terms,
You cast up to me, for spite,
That my father was poor,

My father was different,
From your father,
And their houses were different,
At the time of sun setting,

In your father's house,
Heads and bones of fish were to be found,
In my father's house,
Heads and feet of deer,

Pronunciation guide

When next to an a, o, or u, **ch** as in 'loch'.
Otherwise ch as in 'chair'.

To pronounce a Gàidhlig 'd' or 't' sound, put your
tongue behind your top teeth.

Gh = tired g sound.



Kertch Highland white linen headscarf worn by married women.
The kertch was often a gift to a new bride from her mother on the
day of her wedding and was a treasured article.

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Words and Music Traditional

Kate Nicholson was filmed leading this Gàidhlig waulking song in Uibhist a Deas (South Uist) in the Outer Hebrides in 1970, her friends forming the chorus. As they sang the women were beating a circular length of wool or tweed on a board, to the required thickness and softness. This ancient process of waulking cloth (luadh) to rhythmic singing (òrain luaidh) was a social institution; once the work was done, food, drink, more singing, and dancing followed.

During the long and arduous work, the call-and-response structure of waulking songs, like shanties, allowed for improvisation and nonsense syllables; to restate words might bring bad luck. In an 1867 account by Alexander Carmichael from Miùghlaigh (Mingulay) he related that his request for the repeat of a song was refused as the cloth would "become as thin as before and instantly lose all its colour and become pure white!"

Harmony 1

Air

(phonetics shown below lyric)

1. Tha mu - lad, tha mu - lad, Tha lionn - dubh a - rm fhèin.
 Ha moo - lat, ha moo - lat, Ha lee'un do a - rum hayn,
 (Verses 2-9 see block lyrics)

Harmony 2

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H. 1

Hì rì hoi - reann ò, Hì rì hoi - reann ò.
 Hee ree haw - run o, Hee ree haw - run o.

Air

Hì rì hoi - reann ò, Hì rì hoi - reann ò. Tha de mhing - ean air m'air - e,
 Hee ree haw - run o, Hee ree haw - run o. Ha jih vee - yun ayr mah - rih,

H. 2

Hì rì hoi - reann ò, Hì rì hoi - reann ò,
 Hee ree haw - run o, Hee ree haw - run o,

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H. 1

Hì rì rì o ho, ro - ho hì hoi - reann ò.
 Hee ree ree o ho, ro - ho hee haw - run o.

Air

Nì nach ai - dich mo bheul, Hì rì rì o ho, ro - ho hì hoi - reann ò.
 Knee nach a - jeech moe vale, Hee ree ree o ho, ro - ho hee haw - run o.

H. 2

Hì rì rì o ho, ro - ho hì hoi - reann ò.
 Hee ree ree o ho, ro - ho hee haw - run o.