

THE VIGIL - [Two voices. At rise, *W* 'in state' on table, white cloth up to her breasts, feeble, near death. *M* beside her, arms/hands straddle her. They gaze on each other.]

Beat/Unit 1 *Turned over table/chair. Carrys her plaid. Sighs. Then startles. Looks up, out ... Where is voice coming from? Whose voice is it? Frightened.*

W: Sighs ...?

M: Ní, mo chroí. Naught but the wind on a brisk Fómhar's e'en.

Beat/Unity 2 *He crumbles at overturned chair. Her plaid in hand. Loud crushing cries. Covers face. Broken but wanting to reassure 'her'. He sees her coming closer to him. Looking out SR diagonal.*

W: Tears ...?

M: Ní, mo stór. Naught but rain seeping through untended thatch.

Beat/Unity 3 *Stands, looks to table, rubs face, holds heart. She is coming on steps SL side. He looks. W line. Embarrassed. Steps close to her. Then M line.*

W: Sorrow ...?

M: Ó, ní, mo rún. Naught but a firelight's shadow on an aged face.

Beat/Unit 4 *Holds plaid, her body, up and out. Hurt, desparate to reassure.*

W: Will I stay with you ...?

M: Ne'er will I leave you, mo ghrá.

Ag Tobar Bhríd, I will lay thee down. [drapes plaid on 'body']

On Samhain's Eve, I will keen thee there. [kneels, holds heart]

On Cholm Cille's stone, I will take my place. [carresses her]

And naught will pass my lips, [looks up to God]

'Til God, in His mercy, grants our wish. [at end, sits, then dies]