

GRUOCH NÍ BHOITE *

She hiked to the crest of a hill ... sat, and looked down on the place
where generations of her people were born, lived, loved and lay buried.

Their blood, her blood, flowed in these stony veins ... stacked walls in bas relief ...
a holy well, a place of pilgrimage ... sacred stones, standing guard, unseeing sentinels ...

She held, now, her hands, fingertip to fingertip ... as though an opened book. They ached
... an atavistic memory of labors past ... as she, enshrouded in a sudden mist, gazed upon
her history ... every glance greeted with a familiarity far beyond her years.

A tear rolled down her cheek ... clung, an instant, on her knife-edged jaw ... then fell ...
to water an earth, watered so long, by so many of her name ... as silence ...
the densest of all fogs - smothered any sound which dared enter onto this solitary stage.

[long thoughtful pause]

How many fled to this distant glen? The water ... so brackish ... as to make it unclean ...
the soil ... all peat, too wet ... famine set in ... hunger, disease ... one makes you weak ...
the other ...

[a long pause].

In those fields countless thousands died ... and she found herself asking ... why?
Could it happen again? Who drove them here? What made them stay ... ?

Some they called hardened ... others, knavish brutes ... but in truth ... ?
a truth far more certain to offend ... they were simply determined to NEVER give in ...

Name upon name - the requiem rings on ...
Name upon name - laid, now, in hallowed ground ...
Name upon name - driven out, dispossessed ... thru greed, hatred of this accursed race ...

But they never knelt ... or bowed their heads ...

[silence]

Yes ... her hands ached ... yet, her voice, still strong, speaks on ...

* Gruoch Ní Bhoite was the name of the person William Shakespeare slandered under
the title "Lady MacBeth". She did none of what he wrote - but such is the way an
"accursed race" is treated. Her name means "Rosy-cheeked daughter of Boite".