



## NANNY REILLY

and the Secret Rescue Mission to the Banshee's Cradle. Book 1.

agus An Misean Tarrhála Rúnda go Cliabhán na Banshee. Leabhar 1.

A Novel, by Annette O'Leary-Coggins

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## Introduction

Nanny Reilly and her dog Henry Daly are tricked by a mean leprechaun king into kidnapping his niece, Princess Tara.

Nanny's kindness and innocence brings out the best in King Brian and they are invited to the leprechaun dance on midsummer's eve.

Nanny, Henry Daly and their new friend Ned dress up in their Sunday best and go to the dance.

On their way to the dance, Princess Tara and her father King Rory are caught by a mean man named Bull Cullen.

Bull is looking for the crock of gold and is ready to surrender Princess Tara and King Rory to the Banshee, a mean old witch who takes all her victims into her Banshee's Cradle in the heart of the forest.

Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly rescue them.

For their bravery, they are presented with a gold whistle each and two magic ponies. The gold whistles give them the same magic powers as a leprechaun.

One day, while out beachcombing on their ponies, they come across footprints in the sand. They follow the prints and find a distraught fisherman,

## Réamhrá

Cuireann meánrí leipreachán feall ar Nanny Reilly agus a madra Henry Daly chun a neacht, an Banphrionsa Tara, a fhuadach.

Tugann cineáltas agus neamhchiontacht Nanny an chuid is fearr den Rí Brian amach agus tugtar cuireadh dóibh go dtí an rince leipreacháin oíche lár an tsamhraidh.

Gléasann Nanny, Henry Daly agus a gcara nua Ned suas ina gceann is fearr ar an Domhnach agus téann siad chuig an rince.

Ar a mbealach go dtí an rince, bíonn an banphrionsa Tara agus a hathair Rí Ruairí gafa ag fear darbh ainm Bull Cullen.

Tá Tarbh ar thóir an chrainn óir agus tá sé réidh leis an Bhanphrionsa Tara agus an Rí Ruairí a thabhairt suas don Bhanchee, cailleach meánach a thugann a cuid íospartach ar fad isteach i gCliabhán Banshee i gcroílár na foraoise.

Tarrtháil Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly iad.

Mar gheall ar a gcrógacht, bronntar feadóg óir an ceann agus dhá chapailíní draíochta orthu. Tugann na feadóga óir na cumhachtaí draíochta céanna dóibh agus atá ag leipreachán.

Lá amháin, agus iad amuigh ag cois trá ar a gcuid capaillíní, tagann siad trasna ar lorga sa ghaineamh. Leanann siad na priontaí agus aimsíonn siad iascaire suaite,

named Fran O'Toole whose friend Mike Donovan has been captured by the Banshee.

darb ainm Fran O'Toole a bhfuil a chara Mike Donovan gafa ag an mBanshee.

These footprints are the beginning of a magical adventure.

Tús le heachtra draíochta is ea na lorg coise seo

They land deep within the Banshee's Cradle where they discover an underworld of unusual characters and activities.

Tuirlingíonn siad go domhain i gCliabhán na Banshee áit a aimsíonn siad domhan thíos de charachtair agus de ghníomhaíochtaí neamhghnácha.

How in the world will they pull off this rescue mission and escape the wicked Banshee of Raven's Point?

Conas ar domhan a bhainfidh siad an misean tarrhála seo amach agus an éalóíonn siad ó Bhanshee ghránna Raven's Point?

## CHAPTER ONE

## CAIBIDIL A HAON

One evening, while out picking mushrooms, Nanny and her dog Henry Daly came to Magandy's Pond.

Henry liked to sniff his way through the reeds around the pond. It was one of his favorite places, especially when the ducks swam close to the bank.

Nanny and her older brother would sometimes spend the summer evenings fishing there.

"One day, Henry Daly," said Nanny, "I'm going to find out what's at the bottom of Magandy's Pond.

My brother said it has no bottom, and if I fell in there, I would go all the way to Australia.

If I wanted to come back home, I would have to find some magic beans and plant them like Jack did to get the beanstalk to grow.

Then I could climb the beanstalk all the way back to Ireland."

"Ah, will ya go away outta that. Ya surely don't believe that, do you?" said a voice from nowhere.

"Who said that?" asked Nanny looking around for Andy Magandy, he's the farmer who owned the field she was in.

Tráthnóna amháin, agus iad amuigh ag piocadh beacáin, tháinig Nanny agus a madra Henry Daly go Lochán Magandy.

Thaitin Henry a sniff a bhealach tríd an giolcacha timpeall an locháin. Bhí sé ar cheann de na háiteanna ab ansa leis, go háirithe nuair a shnámh na lachain gar don bhruach. Uaireanta chaitheadh

Nanny agus a deartháir níos sine oícheanta an tsamhraidh ag iascaireacht ann.

"Lá amháin, Henry Daly," arsa Nanaí, "tá mé chun a fháil amach cad atá ag bun Lochán na Maighdine.

Dúirt mo dheartháir nach bhfuil bun ar bith aige, agus dá dtitfinn isteach ann, rachainn an bealach ar fad go dtí an Astráil.

Dá dteastódh uaim teacht ar ais abhaile, bheadh orm roinnt pónairí draíochta a aimsiú agus iad a phlandáil mar a rinne Jack chun an gas pónairí a fhás.

Ansin d'fhéadfainn an gas pónairí a dhreapadh an bealach ar fad ar ais go hÉirinn."

"Ah, an rachaidh tú as sin. Is cinnte nach gcreideann tú é sin, an ea?" arsa guth ó áit ar bith.

"Cé a dúirt é sin?" d'fhiafraigh Nanny ag breathnú thart ar Andy Magandy, is é an feirmeoir é a raibh an réimse ina raibh sí.

“Who’s there? Where are you?”

"Cé atá ann? Cá bhfuil tú?"

“Australia is the land down under, but it’s surely not under Magandy’s Pond,” laughed the voice.

"Is í an Astráil an talamh thíos, ach is cinnte nach bhfuil sé faoi Lochán Magandy," a dúirt an guth.

“Come out and show yourself,” Nanny said in an agitated voice. “Is it a coward you are? If so, be off with ya, and leave me alone!”

"Tar amach agus taispeáin duit féin," a dúirt Nanny le glór corraithe. "An bórd thú? Más ea, bí amuigh leat, agus fág mé i m'aonar!"

“I’m no coward. Sure, I’m one of the bravest men in Ireland, and if you’ll open your eyes and look down instead of looking up in the sky you’ll see me,” replied the unidentified voice.

"Ní borgaire ar bith mé. Cinnte, tá mé ar dhuine de na fir is cróga in Éirinn, agus má osclóidh tú do shúile agus má fhéachann tú anuas in áit breathnú suas sa spéir feicfidh tú mé," a d'fhreagair an glór neamhathanta.

Nanny looked to the ground. Sitting relaxed on top of a mushroom with his arms folded as though he was expecting Nanny was the smallest man she had ever seen.

D'fhéach Nanny go talamh. Ina shuí go suaimhneach ar bharr muisiriún agus a lámha fillte mar go raibh súil aige gurbh í Nanny an fear is lú dá bhfaca sí riamh.

He stood about ten inches tall, wore black boots with extra large gold buckles, green trousers, a yellow and green-checked waistcoat, and a green cape with gold trim that hung to his waist.

Sheas sé tuairim is deich n orlach ar airde, chaith sé buataisí dubha le búcláí móra breise óir, bríste glasa, waistcoat buí agus glas seiceáilte, agus Rinn glas le Baile Átha Troim óir a bhí ar crochadh ar a choim.

On his head sat a gold crown sparkling with emeralds. He had sullen green eyes, and a red beard about three inches long all around his jaw line.

Ar a cheann shuigh coróin óir súilíneach le emeralds. Bhí súile glasa sullen aige, agus féasóg dearg thart ar thrí orlach ar fad timpeall ar a líne jaw.

“Jeepers,” said Nanny in astonishment. “Are you a leprechaun?”

"Jeepers," a dúirt Nanny le hiontas. "An leipreachán thú?"

“Aye, Lass, you just hit the nail on the head,

"Aye, a Lass, ní bhuaileann tú ach an tairne ar do cheann,

I'm a leprechaun all right, but I'm no ordinary leprechaun. I am King Brian," said the little man, reaching for the lapels of his waistcoat and sticking his chest out with pride.

Henry Daly stood at Nanny's side and growled at King Brian.

He sensed the little man was up to no good and it was his job to protect Nanny.

He pushed his snout into Nanny's hand and whined several times.

"I'm King of all the leprechauns in Coolrainy, and you've been stealing the roofs off our houses," said King Brian, his voice taking on a serious tone.

"I didn't know you lived under the mushrooms," said Nanny. "Nobody told me. I can put them all back, and I'll never do it again."

"It's too late for that," King Brian said with a hint of mischief in his voice. "You owe me a favor, or else I'll have to put you under leprechaun's arrest."

"Leprechaun's arrest? What's that?" Nanny asked, starting to wish she'd never come out to play that day.

"Leprechaun's arrest means that all my leprechauns will surround you and your dog, Henry Daly, right here at Magandy's Pond,

Is leipreachán mé ceart go leor, ach ní gnáth leipreachán mé. Mise an Rí Brian," ars' an fear beag, ag síneadh amach a chliabháin agus ag stracadh a chliabhach le bród.

Sheas Anraí Daly ar thaobh Nanny agus rinne sé caoineadh ar an Rí Brian.

Mhóthaigh sé nach raibh aon mhaitheas ag an bhfear beag agus gurbh é an obair a bhí aige Nanny a chosaint.

Bhrúigh sé a smuit isteach i lámh Nanny agus whined arís agus arís eile.

"Mise Rí na leipreachán go léir i gCúil Raithin, agus tá tú ag goid díonta ár dtithe," arsa an Rí Brian, a ghuth ag glacadh le tóin thromchúiseach.

"Ní raibh a fhios agam go raibh cónaí ort faoi na beacáin," arsa Nanaí. "Níor dúirt aon duine liom. Is féidir liom iad go léir a chur ar ais, agus ní dhéanfaidh mé go deo arís é."

"Tá sé ró dhéanach chuige sin," ars' an Rí Brian le leid aimhleasa 'na ghlór. "Tá fabhar i gcomaoin agat orm, nó eile beidh orm tú a chur faoi ghabháil leipreachán."

"Gabháil leipreachán? Cad é sin?" D'fhiafraigh Nanny, ag tosú ag iarraidh nach dtiocfadh sí amach ag súgradh an lá sin.

"Ciallaíonn gabháil na leipreachán go mbeidh mo leipreacháin go léir mórthimpeall ort féin agus ar do mhadra, Henry Daly, anseo ag Lochán na Magandy,

and no matter how hard you try, you won't be able to break through the circle of leprechauns, until every mushroom you picked all summer grows back and all my people have the roofs back on their houses,"

King Brian said, folding his arms over his round belly.

Henry Daly heard King Brian mention his name. He barked one time at him and whimpered at Nanny.

"But that will take weeks," Nanny said. "I have to go home tonight to get my supper, and my big brother is taking me to the fair tomorrow."

"Well, unless you promise to do me a favor, you're going to be under leprechaun's arrest from this very moment, and you'll get no mushroom soup for your supper.

Nor will you be able to go to any fair." The leprechaun paced around the top of the toadstool looking small but important.

"Not tomorrow, or the day after that, or any day in the near future. Not until all those mushrooms have grown back," King Brian said with a glint of achievement in his eyes.

He reached behind his head and tipped his crown down slightly on his brow.

King Brian was a crafty old soul. He knew he had left Nanny no way out. He was feeling like cock of the walk and proud of himself for being so clever.

agus is cuma cé chomh deacair a dhéanfaidh tú iarracht, ní bheidh tú in ann briseadh tríd an gciorca de leipreacháin, go dtí go mbeidh gach beacán agat. piocadh fásann an samhradh go léir ar ais agus tá díonta ar a dtithe ag mo mhuintir go léir,"

arsa an Rí Brian, agus é ag filleadh a lámha thar a bhroinn chruinn.

Chuala Henry Daly an Rí Brian ag lua a ainm. Choirt sé uair amháin air agus whimpered ag Nanny.

"Ach tógfaidh sé sin seachtainí," a dúirt Nanny. "Caithfidh mé dul abhaile anocht chun mo shuipéar a fháil, agus tá mo dheartháir mór ag tabhairt go dtí an aonach amárach mé."

"Bhuel, mura ngeallann tú fabhar a dhéanamh dom, beidh tú faoi ghabháil leipreachán ón nóiméad seo, agus ní bhfaighidh tú anraith beacán le haghaidh do shuipéir.

Ní bheidh tú in ann dul chuig aon aonach ach oiread." Chuaigh an leipreachán ar siúl thart ar bharr an stól buafa ag breathnú beag ach tábhachtach.

"Ní amárach, nó an lá ina dhiaidh sin, nó lá ar bith go luath amach anseo. Ní go dtí go mbeidh na muisiriúin sin go léir tar éis fás ar ais," a dúirt an Rí Brian le gliondar éachta ina shúile.

Shroich sé taobh thiar a chinn agus thit a choróin síos beagán ar a mhala.

Sean anam cróga ab ea Rí Brian. Bhí a fhios aige nár fhág sé Nanny aon bhealach amach. Bhí sé ag mothú cosúil le coileach na siúlóide agus bródúil as féin as a bheith chomh cliste.

Nanny didn't like what she heard. Henry Daly took a step towards King Brian and growled again. He knew Nanny was bothered by what she heard.

"I'll set my dog after you," said Nanny. "My brother told me that Henry's grandfather won the greyhound derby in record time, and he left the whole pack at the starting gate.

He can catch any rabbit around here, and he surely will be able to catch you."

"Catch me? He would have to be able to run faster than the speed of light to catch me," chortled King Brian. "Watch this. Now you see me, now you don't."

King Brian snapped his tiny fingers and disappeared.

All Nanny could hear was laughter. Then King Brian snapped again, and appeared on the mushroom cap, fine as you please.

Nanny knew Henry Daly was fast, but he wasn't magical. He was just a good old dog.

"What kind of favor do I have to do?" she asked, wishing she too could snap her fingers and disappear, right back home.

"All you have to do is carry a small sack for one mile to Ballineskar, the next village, and back to me here in Coolrainy on Saturday night after everyone has gone to bed.

Níor thaitin an méid a chuala sí le Nanny. Thóg Henry Daly céim i dtreo an Rí Brian agus d'fhás sé arís. Bhí a fhios aige go raibh Nanny buartha faoin méid a chuala sí.

"Cuirfidh mé mo mhadra i do dhiaidh," arsa Nanaí. "Dúirt mo dheartháir liom gur bhuaigh seanathair Henry an derby con san am is mó riamh, agus d'fhág sé an paca ar fad ag an ngeata tosaigh.

Is féidir leis coinín ar bith a ghabháil thart anseo, agus is cinnte go mbeidh sé in ann tú a ghabháil."

"Beir orm? Chaithfeadh sé a bheith in ann rith níos tapúla ná luas an tsolais chun mé a ghabháil," a chrot an Rí Brian. "Féach ar seo. Anois feiceann tú mé, anois ní fheiceann tú."

Ghearr an Rí Brian a mhéara beaga agus d'imigh sé as.

Bhí gáire ar fad a d'fhéadfadh Nanny a chloisteáil. Ansin rug an Rí Brian arís, agus tháinig sé ar an gcaipín muisiriún, go breá mar is toil leat.

Bhí a fhios ag Nanny go raibh Henry Daly go tapa, ach ní raibh sé draíochtúil. Ní raibh ann ach sean mhadra maith.

"Cén sórt fabhar atá le déanamh agam?" a d'fhiafraigh sí, ar mian léi go bhféadfadh sí a méar a léim agus imeacht, ar ais abhaile.

"Níl le déanamh agat ach mála beag míle a iompar go Béal Átha na gCearr, an chéad sráidbhaile eile, agus ar ais chugam anseo i gCúil Raithin oíche Shathairn tar éis do gach duine dul a chodladh.



And if you do that, and meet me right by this mushroom, your debt will be paid and I'll grant you one wish."

King Brian's face tightened and turned very serious, his green eyes clouding. He pointed his finger and looked Nanny right in the eye.

"But you have to promise me this," the King said, "under no circumstances are you to look inside the sack.

If you do, you'll get no wish from me, or any other leprechaun. Not now or ever, and the biggest mushroom you have ever seen will grow out of the top of your head.

You'll never be able to get rid of it, and everyone will tease you until you cry all the time."

Henry nudged Nanny with his nose and whimpered. She knew he was warning her about King Brian.

"I don't like the sound of that," said Nanny. "If Ned Franey sees a mushroom growing out of the top of my head, he'll be calling me names all day, and so will everyone else."

Nanny had visions of her archenemy, Ned Franey, gathering a posse of the village children and following her everywhere, calling her all kinds of mushroom names like 'mold head', 'fungus brain', and 'toadstool girl.'

Agus má dhéanann tú sin, agus go mbuaileann tú liom ar an bpointe boise seo, íocfar d'fhiacha agus deonóidh mé aon mhian amháin duit."

Tháinig teannadh ar aghaidh Rí Brian agus d'iompaigh sé an tromchúiseach, a shúile glasa ag scamall. Léirigh sé a mhéar agus d'fhéach sé ar Nanny sa tsúil.

"Ach caithfidh tú é seo a ghealladh dom," adeir an Rí, "níl tú in aon chor féachaint istigh sa phoca.

Má dhéanann tú, ní bhfaighidh tú aon mhian uaimse, ná aon leipreachán eile. Ní anois nó riamh, agus fásfaidh an muisiriún is mó dá bhfaca tú riamh as barr do chinn.

Ní bheidh tú in ann fáil réidh leis go deo, agus beidh gach duine ag spochadh as tú go dtí go gcloíonn tú an t am ar fad."

Anraí nudged Nanny lena srón agus whimpered. Bhí a fhios aici go raibh sé ag rabhadh di faoin Rí Brian.

"Ní maith liom an fhuaim sin," arsa Nanaí. "Má fheiceann Ned Franey muisiriún ag fás as barr mo chinn, beidh sé ag glaoch orm ainmneacha an lá ar fad, agus beidh gach duine eile mar sin."

Bhí fíis ag Nanny ar a seandéanamh, Ned Franey, ag bailiú scata de pháistí an tsráidbhaile agus á leanúint i ngach áit, ag glaoch uirthi gach cineál ainmneacha muisiriún mar cheann múnla', fungus brain', agus toadstool girl'.

“I’ll do it,” said Nanny, giving a confident nod. Her auburn curls emphasized her nod. She looked King Brian in the eye and stood tall.

Nanny also knew no matter what, she didn’t want to be called names of any kind.

“Do you promise me you won’t look in the sack?” King Brian asked.

“I promise I won’t look into the sack,” answered Nanny, picturing a puffy brown and white mushroom growing out of her head and shuddering.

“Good lass, Nanny Reilly,” said King Brian. “Meet me here on Saturday at midnight, and don’t tell anyone.”

The King held his finger to his lips, looking sinister for all his smallness.

With that, Nanny and Henry Daly ran off home. Nanny’s thoughts were on King Brian’s warning.

What would happen to her auburn curls if a mushroom grew out of her head? She never thought of her one wish.

"Déanfaidh mé é," arsa Nanaí, ag tabhairt nod muiníneach. Chuir a gcuacha auburn béim ar a nod. D'fhéach sí ar an Rí Brian sa tsúil agus sheas sé ard.

Bhí a fhios ag Nanny freisin is cuma cad é, ní raibh sí ag iarraidh go dtabharfaí ainmneacha de chineál ar bith uirthi.

"An ngeallann tú dom nach mbreathnóidh tú sa phoca?" D'iarr an Rí Brian.

"Geallaim nach mbreathnóidh mé isteach sa phoca," a d'fhreagair Nanny, agus í ag léiriú beacán puffy donn is bán ag fás as a ceann agus ag screadaíl.

"Dea chailín, a Nanny Reilly," arsa an Rí Brian. "Buail liom anseo ar an Satharn ag meán oíche, agus ná hinnis d'éinne."

Choinnigh an Rí a mhéar ar a bheola, ag breathnú go doiléir mar gheall ar a chuid beag.

Leis sin, rith Nanny agus Henry Daly as baile. Bhí smaointe Nanny ar rabhadh Rí Brian.

Cad a tharlódh dá gcuacha auburn dá bhfásfadh beacán as a ceann? Níor smaoinigh sí ar aon mhian amháin a bhí aici.

## CHAPTER TWO

On Saturday morning Nanny took Henry Daly to the village to mail a letter. The village store also acted as a post office and gas station.

Henry stayed outside lying in the sun. He liked to lay with his front paws crossed while he observed the activities of the villagers. Nanny went in to mail the letter.

Just as Nanny was paying for the stamp, Ned Franey and his mother walked in.

Ned stood behind his mother, looked at Nanny, and stuck his fat tongue out. Nanny frowned at him and looked away.

“How are you today, Nanny?” asked Mrs. Donohue, the owner of the establishment. She was placing a tray of freshly made toffee apples on the counter.

“I have a headache,” replied Nanny. Nanny was very worried about the task she and Henry had ahead of them at midnight.

“A headache!” Mrs. Donohue said. “What could possibly give a nine-year-old like yourself a headache?”

Nanny looked at Ned’s mother, wishing she could tell her the truth. Ned opened his mouth as if he wanted to say something mean to Nanny, but he couldn’t because his mother and Mrs. Donohue would hear him.

## CAIBIDIL A DÓ

Ar maidin Dé Sathairn thug Nanny Henry Daly go dtí an sráidbhaile chun litir a phostáil. D’fheidhmigh siopa an tsráidbhaile freisin mar oifig phoist agus stáisiún gáis.

D’fhan Henry taobh amuigh ina luí sa ghrian. Thaitin sé a leagan lena lapaí tosaigh crosáilte agus é ag breathnú ar ghníomhaíochtaí mhuintir an bhaile. Chuaigh Nanny isteach chun an litir a phostáil.

Díreach mar a bhí Nanny ag íoc as an stampa, shiúil Ned Franey agus a mháthair isteach.

Sheas Ned taobh thiar a mháthair, d’fhéach sé ar Nanny, agus chuir sé a theanga ramhar amach. Nanny frowned air agus d’fhéach sé ar shiúl.

"Conas atá tú inniu, a Mhamáí?" a d'fhiafraigh Mrs Donohue, úinéir na bunaíochta. Bhí sí ag cur tráidire úlla taifí úrnua ar an gcuntar.

"Tá tinneas cinn orm," a d'fhreagair Nanny. Bhí Nanny an bhuartha faoin tasc a bhí sí féin agus Henry rompu ag meán oíche.

"A tinneas cinn!" A dúirt Mrs Donohue. "Cad a d'fhéadfadh tinneas cinn a chur ar leanbh naoi mbliana cosúil leat féin?"

Bhreathnaigh Nanny ar mháthair Ned, ag iarraidh go bhféadfadh sí an fhírinne a insint di. D'oscail Ned a bhéal amhail is go raibh sé ag iarraidh rud éigin a rá le Nanny, ach ní raibh sé in ann mar go gcloisfeadh a mháthair agus Bean Uí Donohue é.

Nanny sighed with relief, she surely didn't need to hear a smart comment come out of Ned Franey's mouth. Nanny had enough going on with her headache.

Nanny knew she couldn't tell anyone about meeting King Brian at Magandy's Pond. If Ned Franey heard, he wouldn't believe her.

He'd be laughing at her and chanting, "Liar, liar, your pants is on fire, your tongue is as long as a telephone wire."

"I think it's the change of weather giving me the headache," Nanny answered as she handed the stamped envelope to Mrs. Donohue.

"Would you like a toffee apple for your headache, Nanny?" asked Mrs. Donohue, her round face turning into a smile.

"A toffee apple!" said Nanny. "Yes, please!" Nanny quickly glanced over her right shoulder and saw Ned Franey crinkle up his freckled nose.

"Here you are, Nanny." Mrs. Donohue handed Nanny a homemade toffee apple, "I hope you're feeling better soon."

"Thank you very much, Mrs. Donohue," replied Nanny. Her frown turned into a smile. It was a rare thing to get a free toffee apple from Mrs. Donohue. "I have to go now. My mother wants me to go straight home and no dilly-dallying."

Nanny sighed le faoiseamh, Is cinnte nár ghá di trácht cliste a chloisteáil ag teacht amach as béal Ned Franey. Bhí go leor ag dul ar aghaidh ag Nanny lena tinneas cinn.

Bhí a fhios ag Nanny nach bhféadfadh sí insint do dhuine ar bith faoi casadh le Brian ag Lochán Magandy. Dá gcloisfeadh Ned Franey, ní chreidfeadh sé í.

Bheadh sé ag gáire léi agus ag canadh, "Liar, a liar, tá do pants trí thine, tá do theanga chomh fada le sreang gutháin."

"Sílim gurb é an t athrú aimsire a chuir an tinneas cinn orm," d'fhreagair Nanny agus í ag tabhairt an clúdach litreach stampáilte do Bhean Uasal Donohue.

"Ar mhaith leat úll taifí le haghaidh do thinneas cinn, a Nanny?" a d'fhiafraigh Mrs Donohue, a héadan cruinn ag casadh ina gáire.

"Úll taifí!" arsa Nanny. "Le do thoil!" spléach Nanny thar a gualainn dheis go tapa agus chonaic Ned Franey ag cromadh suas a shrón bréige.

"Seo thú, a Nanny." Thug Bean Donohue úll taifí baile do Nanny, "Tá súil agam go mbeidh tú ag mothú níos fearr go luath."

"Go raibh míle maith agat, a Bhean Uasal Donohue," d'fhreagair Nanny. Bhí a frown iompú isteach i aoibh gháire. Ba rud annamh a bhí ann úll taifí in aisce a fháil ó Bhean Uí Donohue. "Caithfidh mé imeacht anois. Teastaíonn ó mo mháthair go rachainn díreach abhaile agus gan stró ar bith orm."

Nanny looked at Ned. She smiled and raised her nose in the air. She suddenly forgot all her woes and walked out of the store licking her toffee apple and leaving Ned Franey frowning.

His red freckled face blended with his fiery red hair. Nanny thought about sticking her tongue out at him, but she didn't.

That night Nanny went to bed in her jeans, sweater, and sneakers, which felt lumpy and weird, but what could she do?

Henry lay stretched out at the end of her bed. His long tail would occasionally wag and hit the bedpost as Nanny spoke softly to him.

"What if we don't wake up in time, Henry Daly?" wondered Nanny. "Will I wake up tomorrow morning with a mushroom growing from my head?"

Nanny shuddered thinking about the events that may occur on Sunday morning.

"Jeepers!" she said, if I wear a scarf on my head, the mushroom will be sticking up underneath it. The whole village will see me at Mass. We'll have to pack our belongings and leave Coolrainy!"

Near midnight, everyone was in bed asleep except Nanny. She put a soccer ball and a pillow under the blankets. That way, if her mother looked in on her, she would think Nanny was there. Nanny and Henry were very careful not to make any noise as they crept out the back door.

D'fhéach Nanny ar Ned. Rinne sí aoibh agus d'ardaigh sí a srón san aer. Rinne sí dearmad go tobann ar a léanta go léir agus shiúil sí amach as an siopa ag licking a úll taifí agus ag fágáil Ned Franey frowning.

A ghaidh bréige dearg chumasc lena ghruaig dearg lasrach. Shíl Nanny ar a teanga a ghreamú amach air, ach níor dhein sí.

An oíche sin chuaigh Nanny a chodladh ina jeans, geansaí, agus sneakers, rud a bhraith lumpy agus aisteach, ach cad a d'fhéadfadh sí a dhéanamh?

Henry leagan sínte amach ag deireadh a leaba. Ó am go chéile bheadh a eireaball fada ag spochadh agus bhuaileadh sé cuaille na leapa agus Nanny ag labhairt go bog leis.

"Cad é mura dúisíonn muid in am, Henry Daly?" wondered Nanny. "An dúiseoidh mé maidin amárach le muisiriún ag fás as mo cheann?"

Shuddered Nanny ag smaoineamh ar na himeachtaí a d'fhéadfadh tarlú ar maidin Dé Domhnaigh.

"Jeepers!" a dúirt sí, má chaithim scairf ar mo cheann, beidh an muisiriún ag gobadh aníos faoina bhun. Feicfidh an sráidbhaile ar fad mé ag an Aifreann. Beidh orainn ár gcuid earraí a phacáil agus Cúil Raithin a fhágáil!"

Near meán oíche, bhí gach duine ina chodladh ach amháin Nanny. Chuir sí liathróid sacair agus pillow faoi na blaincéid. Ar an mbealach sin, dá mbreathnódh a máthair isteach uirthi, shílfeá go raibh Nanny ann. Bhí Nanny agus Henry an chúramach gan aon torann a dhéanamh agus iad ag titim amach an doras cúil.

It was a full moon so Nanny didn't need her dad's flashlight. Henry Daly struck out first and the two made their way to Magandy's Pond to meet King Brian.

Nanny and Henry left the back yard through the gate and jumped over a ditch behind the house. They headed off down Katie's lane.

"You go first, Henry Daly," whispered Nanny, "dogs can see in the dark."

Henry trotted through the gate with his ears pricked and his tail straight up in the air.

Nanny walked briskly down the moonlit lane and kept to the center. She was afraid something might jump out at her from either side.

About a quarter of a mile down the lane, Nanny climbed over a wooden fence and Henry crawled underneath.

An owl hooted from the tall elm tree down the lane. The hair stood up on the back of Nanny's neck and shivers ran down her spine.

"Let's run, Henry Daly," she said. "We'll get there faster." The two ran across the moonlit field all the way to Magandy's Pond.

When they got there, King Brian was waiting on the same mushroom that glowed in the moonlight, he was holding a sack.

Gealach lán a bhí ann agus mar sin ní raibh gá le splancsholas a hathar. Bhuail Henry Daly amach ar dtús agus rinne an bheirt a mbealach go Lochán Magandy chun bualadh leis an Rí Brian.

D'fhág Nanny agus Henry an clós cúil tríd an geata agus léim thar díog taobh thiar den teach. Chuaigh siad síos lána Katie.

"Téann tú ar dtús, Henry Daly," a dúirt Nanny, "is féidir le madraí a fheiceáil sa dorchadas."

Trotted Henry tríd an geata agus a chluasa pricked agus a eireaball díreach suas san aer.

Shiúil Nanny go briskly síos lána na gealaí agus choinnigh sí go dtí an t ionad. Bhí eagla uirthi go léimfeadh rud éigin amach uirthi ó gach taobh.

Thart ar ceathrú míle síos an lána, dhreap Nanny thar chlaí adhmaid agus shreap Anraí thíos.

An owl hooted as an crann ard leamháin síos an lána. Sheas an ghruaig suas ar chúl muineál Nanny agus chroith sí síos a spine.

"Rithimis, Henry Daly," ar sise. "Beidh muid ann níos tapúla." Rith an bheirt trasna na páirce faoi sholas na gealaí an bealach ar fad go Lochán na Maighdine.

Nuair a tháinig siad ann, bhí an Rí Brian ag fanacht ar an muisiriún céanna a bhí ag lasadh faoi sholas na gealaí, agus é ag coinneáil saic.

Henry growled at King Brian and stood close to Nanny.

King Brian was beaming from ear to ear when he saw Nanny. He scowled at Henry, and for a minute, Nanny thought there might be a dog-leprechaun tussle.

But Henry Daly stuck close to her legs, though he growled softly every few seconds.

“There ya go, Lass,” King Brian said. “Take this sack with this rabbit in it to the middle of Katie’s Field in Ballineskar. When you get there, you’ll see a rabbit’s burrow.

Open this sack over the entrance of the burrow and let the rabbit run lickety-split into the burrow. Wait there for a minute with the sack still open and another rabbit will run into the sack.

Close up the sack as quickly as you can, and bring it back here to me.” The King rubbed his hands together and hunched up his shoulders in delight.

“You must be back here before dawn breaks,” he warned. “If you’re not, a mushroom will start appearing on your head.”

King Brian reached into his cloak and pulled out a small shillelagh. He waved it at Nanny as though it were a magic wand. “And whatever you do, don’t look in the sack.”

Anraí gríosaithe ag an Rí Brian agus sheas gar do Nanny.

Bhí an Rí Brian ag éirghe ó chluas go cluas nuair a chonaic sé Nanaí. Scowled sé ag Henry, agus ar feadh nóiméid, Nanny shíl b’fhéidir go mbeadh tussle madra leipreachán.

Ach d’fhan Henry Daly gar dá cosa, cé go n’éireodh leis go bog gach cúpla soicind.

"Seo leat, a Mhuire," arsa an Rí Brian. "Tóg an mála seo leis an coinín seo isteach ann go lár Katie's Field i mBéal Átha na gCearr. Nuair a thagann tú ann, feicfidh tú poll coinín.

Oscail an sac seo thar bhealach isteach an poll agus lig don choinín rith go leasc scoilte isteach sa pholl. Fan ansin ar feadh nóiméid agus an mála fós ar oscailt agus rithfidh coinín eile isteach sa mhála.

Dún suas an mála chomh tapa agus is féidir leat agus tabhair ar ais anseo chugam é." Chuimil an Rí a lámha le chéile agus chrom sé suas a ghualainn le háthas.

"Caithfidh tú a bheith ar ais anseo roimh breacadh an lae," a dúirt sé. "Mura bhfuil tú, tosóidh muisiriún le feiceáil ar do cheann."

Shín an Rí Brian isteach ina chlóca agus tharraing sé scilling beag amach. Chroith sé ar Nanny é amhail is gur slat draíochta a bhí ann. "Agus pé rud a dhéanann tú, ná féach sa phoca."

The rabbit was making brave attempts to jump from the sack.

Henry was moving his head sideways with his ears pricked forward staring at the busy sack. He yelped several times.

“This rabbit is not for chasing Henry Daly,” said Nanny, “we have to make sure this rabbit stays right where it is until we get to that burrow.”

Nanny felt the top of her head to make sure there was no sign of early mushroom sprouts.

She threw the sack over her shoulder and took off across the fields with Henry Daly at her side.

Bhí an coinín ag déanamh iarrachtaí cróga léim as an mála.

Bhí Henry ag bogadh a chloigeann ar an leataobh agus a chluasa pricked chun tosaigh ag stánadh ar an mála gnóthach. Yelped sé arís agus arís eile.

"Ní hé an coinín seo dul sa tóir ar Henry Daly," arsa Nanaí, "caithfidh muid a chinntiú go bhfanfaidh an coinín seo san áit a bhfuil sé go dtí go sroichfimid an poll sin."

Mhothaigh Nanny barr a cinn lena chinntiú nach raibh aon chomhartha ar sprouts beacán luath.

Chaith sí an mála thar a gualainn agus d'imigh sí trasna na páirce le Henry Daly ar a taobh.



## CHAPTER THREE

Nanny was relieved that Henry seemed to know where they were going by the way he trotted along with his nose to the ground.

He had the same sense of urgency about him that Nanny had. He led the way across the field and down the bog road to Clancy's footbridge.

Even though this was familiar territory and Nanny often fished there, she stayed close to Henry.

Everything looked different at night. Everything looked spooky and strange. Large leafy limbs of a big oak tree hung over the footbridge and blocked the moonlight.

Henry stopped and sniffed the air several times.

"What is it, Henry Daly?" asked Nanny, her teeth beginning to chatter. "Is there something there?" Nanny felt cold and started to tremble.

She saw the outline of something large at the other side of the footbridge. Now she wished she had brought her dad's flashlight.

Henry growled and took two steps towards the predator. Then they heard a snort and the large outline took off at the gallop.

Nanny sighed a sigh of relief. "It's only Tom, the plough horse," she said.

## CAIBIDIL TRÍ

Bhí faoiseamh ar Nanny go raibh an chuma ar an scéal go raibh a fhios ag Anraí cá raibh siad ag dul ar an mbealach a throid sé lena shrón go talamh.

Bhí an phráinn chéanna aige agus a bhí ag Nanny. Threoraigh sé an bealach trasna na páirce agus síos bóthar an phortaigh go droichead coisithe Clancy.

Cé gur chríoch aithnidiúil í seo agus gur minic a bhíodh Nanaí ag iascaireacht ann, d'fhan sí gar do Anraí.

Bhí cuma difriúil ar gach rud san oíche. Bhí cuma spooky agus aisteach ar gach rud. Bhí géaga móra duilleacha de chrann mór darach ar crochadh thar an droichead coise agus chuir siad bac ar sholas na gealaí.

Stop Anraí agus sniffed an t-aer arís agus arís eile.

"Cad é, Henry Daly?" D'iarr Nanny, a fiacla ag tosú ar chatter. "An bhfuil rud éigin ann?" Mhothaigh Nanny fuar agus thosaigh sí ag crith.

Chonaic sí imlíne rud éigin mór ar an taobh eile den droichead coise. Anois theastaigh uaithi go mbeadh splancshoilse a hathar tugtha léi.

Anraí gríosaithe agus ghlac dhá chéim i dtreo an creachadóir. Ansin chuala siad snort agus bhain an imlíne mór amach ag an gallop.

Chlaon Nanny osna faoisimh. "Níl ann ach Tom, an capall céachta," ar síse.

“We scared him as much as he scared us.”

Tom ran about twenty yards, then stopped suddenly, quickly turned, and stood to attention with his nostrils flaring.

“Don’t worry, Tom,” said Nanny in a soothing voice. “It’s only me, Nanny Reilly, and Henry Daly is with me. I’m sorry we woke you and scared you, but you scared us too.”

We can’t stop and talk to you now, we’re in a hurry. And shhh,” Nanny put her finger to her lips, “don’t tell anyone you saw us.”

Tom nickered into the night, sounding comforting and friendly. Nanny let out a sigh and continued across the footbridge in a brisk march. Her curls bounced in rhythm to her every step.

The rabbit continued to jump around a little. Henry didn’t mind the rabbit so much now. He trotted beside Nanny wagging his tail.

“I’ll see you tomorrow Tom,” Nanny called out. Tom snorted again and continued to stand to attention until Nanny Reilly and Henry were out of sight.

They marched up the ferny trail on Sarah’s hill and down into O’Brien’s half-acre. Just ahead of them, Nanny could clearly see Ballinesker and Katie Murphy’s whitewashed cottage, tucked into the far corner of her field.

“Chuireamar an oiread faitíos air agus a chuir sé eagla orainn.”

Rith Tom timpeall fiche slat, ansin stad sé go tobann, d’iompaigh sé go tapa, agus sheas sé ar aird agus a shrian ag bladhmadh.

“Ná bí buartha, a Thomáis,” arsa Nanaí le guth suaimhneach. “Níl ann ach mise, Nanny Reilly, agus tá Henry Daly liom. Tá brón orm gur dhúisigh muid thú agus chuir muid eagla ort, ach chuir tú eagla orainn freisin.

Ní féidir linn stopadh agus labhairt leat anois, tá deifir orainn. Agus shh," chuir Nanny a méar ar a liopaí, "ná inis do dhuine ar bith a chonaic tú sinn."

Tom nickered isteach an oíche, sounding comforting agus cairdiúil. Lig Nanny osna amach agus lean sí trasna an droichid choise i máirseáil brisk. Phreab a gcuacha ina rithim chuici gach céim.

Lean an coinín ag léim timpeall beagán. Ní raibh mórán suime ag Henry don choinín anois. Throt sé in aice le Nanny ag caitheamh a eireaball.

“Feicfidh mé Tom amárach thú,” a ghlaoigh Nanny amach. Chuaigh Tom ar snort arís agus lean sé air ag seasamh in airde go dtí go raibh Nanny Reilly agus Henry as radharc.

Mháirseáil siad suas an rian báid ar chnoc Sarah agus síos go leath-acra Uí Bhriain. Díreach chun tosaigh orthu, d’fheiceadh Nanny teachín bán-nite Ballinesker agus Katie Murphy go soiléir, sáite isteach sa chúinne thall dá páirc.

“We’re almost there Henry Daly,” said Nanny. She lengthened her strides and picked up her pace. Henry did the same.

Finally, they reached Katie’s field.

“Find that rabbit’s burrow, Henry Daly,” said Nanny, pointing across the moonlit grass. “We’ll have to be quick. The sun will start rising in a few hours and I don’t want a mushroom growing out of my head.”

Henry sniffed his way along, his nose combing the grass and his tail in the air as he zigzagged through Katie’s Field.

Then he stopped, stood perfectly still, and sniffed the air all around him. He stood tall over the burrow wagging his tail and barked once for Nanny’s attention.

“Good boy, Henry Daly,” said Nanny. “Now all I have to do is let the rabbit into the burrow and wait for another rabbit to run out into the sack.”

Nanny was feeling more excited than afraid now. She carefully did all she was told to do. She knelt down by the rabbit burrow and opened the drawstring at the neck of the burlap sack.

She could smell sweat from the scared rabbit in the cool night air. The sack was barely large enough to cover the mouth of the burrow and Nanny lost her grip.

“Tá muid beagnach ann Henry Daly,” a dúirt Nanny. Chuir sí a dul chun cinn níos faide agus phioc sí suas a luas. Rinne Henry mar an gcéanna.

Ar deireadh shroich siad páirc Katie.

“Faigh poll an choinín sin, Henry Daly,” arsa Nanaí, agus í ag díriú trasna an fhéir ar lasadh na gealaí. “Caithfidh muid a bheith sciobtha. Tosóidh an ghrian ag éirí i gceann cúpla uair an chloig agus níl mé ag iarraidh muisiriún ag fás as mo cheann.”

Sniff Henry a bhealach ar aghaidh, a shrón ag cíoradh an fhéir agus a eireaball san aer agus é ag dul i zigzag trí Pháirc Katie.

Ansin stop sé, sheas breá fós, agus sniffed an aer timpeall air. Sheas sé in airde ar an bpoll ag caitheamh a eireaball agus chuaigh sé ag tafann uair amháin ar aird Nanny.

“Buachaill maith, Henry Daly,” arsa Nanaí. “Níl le déanamh agam anois ach an coinín a ligean isteach sa pholl agus fanacht go rithfeadh coinín eile amach sa phoca.”

Mhóthaigh Nanny níos mó sceitimíní ná eagla anois. Rinne sí go cúramach gach a dúradh léi a dhéanamh. Chuaigh sí ar a glún ag poll an choinín agus d’oscail sí an sreangán tarraingthe ag muineál an tsaic burlap.

D’fhéadfadh sí boladh allais ón coinín scanraithe in aer fionnuar na hoíche. Is ar éigean a bhí an mála mór go leor chun béal an poll a chlúdach agus chaill Nanaí a greim.

The frightened rabbit almost slipped away, except Henry Daly was hovering over the whole situation and scared the rabbit into the hole.

Nanny regained her hold on the sack and held it as best she could over the burrow. Then in an instant, the sack began to bounce around vigorously.

The other rabbit had scampered into it and was fighting very hard to get out. Nanny struggled to tie the drawstring.

After several attempts she managed to tie up the sack and she quickly threw it over her shoulder, then she and Henry Daly headed back to Magandy's Pond.

The rabbit in the sack was kicking like crazy. Henry whimpered and whined at the overactive sack.

If Nanny had allowed it Henry Daly would take that sack and shake it up and down and around and around.

“Stay quiet in there,” Nanny said in a loud whisper; concerned she might awaken the farmers sleeping in the cottages nearby. “You’re hurting me,” she complained, “My back will be full of bruises. The other rabbit was much quieter than you.”

“I’m no rabbit,” a high-pitched voice yelled from the sack.

Beagnach shleamhnaigh an coinín scanraithe ar shiúl, ach amháin go raibh Henry Daly ag hovering thar an staid ar fad agus scanraithe an coinín isteach sa pholl.

Fuair Nanny a greim ar an mála arís agus choinnigh sí é mar ab fhearr a d’fhéadfadh sí thar an poll. Ansin ar an toirt, thosaigh an mála ag preabadh timpeall go bríomhar.

Bhí an coinín eile tar éis titim isteach ann agus bhí sé an-deacair a fháil amach. Rinne Nanny iarracht an sreang tarraingthe a cheangal.

Tar éis roinnt iarrachtaí d’éirigh léi an mála a cheangal suas agus chaith sí go tapa thar a gualainn é, ansin chuaigh sí féin agus Henry Daly ar ais go Lochán Magandy.

Bhí an coinín sa mhála ag ciceáil mar a bheadh craiceáilte. Rinne Henry whimpered agus whined ag an mála róghníomhach.

Dá gceadódh Nanny é thógfadh Henry Daly an mála sin agus chroith sé suas agus síos é agus timpeall agus timpeall.

“Fan ciúin ansin,” a dúirt Nanny le cogar ard; imníoch go bhféadfadh sí na feirmeoirí a mhúscailt ina gcodladh sna tithe in aice láimhe. “Tá tú ag gortú orm,” adeir sí, “Beidh mo dhroim lán de bhrónaí. Bhí an coinín eile i bhfad níos ciúine ná tusa.”

“Ní coinín mé,” adeir guth ard as an mála.

“And if you don’t let me go, I’ll turn your ears into rabbit’s ears, then you’ll have no doubt in your mind what a rabbit looks like.”

“I already know what a rabbit looks like,” Nanny said, “so stay quiet in there. I’m taking you back to King Brian, king of the leprechauns of all Coolrainy.”

“Don’t you dare take me to King Brian of Coolrainy. I am Princess Tara, daughter of King Rory, king of all the leprechauns of Ballineskar.

If you take me to King Brian, I will turn your ears into rabbit’s ears and your nose into a pig’s nose.”

Nanny couldn’t believe her ears.

“Now what will I do, Henry Daly?” she said. “If I look in the sack to make sure I have a rabbit in there, a big mushroom will grow on my head, and if I don’t look in the sack I’ll grow rabbit ears and a pig’s nose.”

Nanny sat down on a dew-covered rock and started to cry. Henry Daly sat beside her, licking the tears from her face. Sadness filled his big brown eyes.

Princess Tara made comforting comments, she spoke softly like Nanny’s grandma. The Princess said, “If you let me out of this sack, I can help you, and I promise I won’t turn your ears into rabbit’s ears and your nose into a pig’s nose.”

“Agus mura ligeann tú dom imeacht, casfaidh mé do chluasa isteach i gcluasa coinín, ansin ní bheidh aon amhras ort i d’intinn cad is cosúil le coinín.”

“Tá a fhios agam cheana féin cén chuma atá ar choinín,” a dúirt Nanny, “mar sin fan ciúin ansin. Gabhaim ar ais go Rí Brian thú, rí leipreacháin Chúil Raithin go léir.”

“Nách miste leat mise do ghabháil go Rí Brian ó Chúil Raithin. Is mise an Bhanphrionsa Tara, iníon an Rí Ruairí, rí na leipreacháin go léir i mBéal Átha na gCearr.

Má thugann tú chun Rí Brian mé, casfaidh mé do chluasa go cluasa coinín agus do shrón go srón muice.”

Ní fhéadfadh Nanny a cluasa a chreidiúint.

"Anois, cad a dhéanfaidh mé, Henry Daly?" dúirt sí. "Má fhéachaim sa mhála le deimhin a dhéanamh de go bhfuil coinín agam ann, fásfaidh beacán mór ar mo cheann, agus mura n-amharcaim sa phoca fásfaidh mé cluasa coinín agus srón muice."

Shuigh Nanny síos ar charraig clúdaithe le drúcht agus thosaigh sí ag caoineadh. Shuigh Henry Daly in aice léi, ag lí na ndeor óna aghaidh. Líon an brón a shúile móra donn.

Rinne an Bhanphrionsa Tara tuairimí compordacha, labhair sí go bog cosúil le seanmháthair Nanny. Dúirt an Bhanphrionsa, "Má ligeann tú amach as an mála seo mé, is féidir liom cabhrú leat, agus geallaim nach gcuirfidh mé do chluasa i gcluasa coinín agus do shrón go srón muice."

Nanny sat down on a dew-covered rock and started to cry. Henry Daly sat beside her, licking the tears from her face. Sadness filled his big brown eyes.

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The Princess said, "If you let me out of this sack, I can help you, and I promise I won't turn your ears into rabbit's ears and your nose into a pig's nose."

"But if I look in the sack, a mushroom will grow on my head and all the village children will be laughing at me, especially Ned Franey. He always laughs at me and calls me names."

"Well then," said Princess Tara, "don't look in the sack. You can let me out without looking."

"But if I go back to King Brian with an empty sack, he'll make a mushroom grow out of my head," whined Nanny "Why did you have to run into the sack anyway? Why didn't you just let another rabbit run into your burrow and you stay put?"

"Because that burrow is my house," Princess Tara replied, as she kept pushing the walls of the sack.

"When that rabbit came charging in, I got a fright and came charging out. You had the sack open, it's dark in there, and I couldn't see. I didn't realize I was running into a sack. As soon as I realized, it was too late, you had already tied up the sack, and I couldn't get out."

Shuigh Nanny síos ar charraig clúdaithe le drúcht agus thosaigh sí ag caoineadh. Shuigh Henry Daly in aice léi, ag lí na ndeor óna aghaidh. Líon an brón a shúile móra donn.

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"Ach má fhéachaim sa mhála, fásfaidh muisiriún ar mo cheann agus beidh na páistí sa sráidbhaile go léir ag gáire fúm, go háirithe Ned Franey. Bíonn sé i gcónaí ag gáire fúm agus cuireann sé ainmneacha orm."

"Bhuel mar sin," a dúirt an Bhanphrionsa Teamhrach, "ná féach sa mhála. Is féidir leat mé a ligean amach gan breathnú."

"Ach má théim ar ais go dtí an Rí Brian le sac folamh, cuirfidh sé an muisiriún ag fás as mo cheann," a dúirt Nanaí "Cad chuige a raibh ort rith isteach sa mhála ar aon nós? Cén fáth nár lig tú díreach do choinín eile rith isteach i do tholl agus go bhfanann tú curtha?"

"Toisc gurb é an poll sin mo theach," a d'fhreagair an Bhanphrionsa Tara, agus í ag brú ar bhallaí an mhála.

"Nuair a tháinig an coinín sin ag luchtú isteach, tháinig faitíos orm agus tháinig mé ar mhuirearú. Bhí an mála oscailte agat, tá sé dorcha ann, agus ní raibh mé in ann a fheiceáil. Níor thuig mé go raibh mé ag rith isteach i mála. Chomh luath agus a thuig mé go raibh sé ró-dhéanach, bhí an mála ceangailte agat cheana féin, agus ní raibh mé in ann dul amach."

“But why does King Brian want you? Why does he want to take you away from your father, King Rory of Ballineskar?” asked Nanny Reilly.

“Because he wants the crock of gold,” Princess Tara said. “King Brian is my uncle, my father’s brother, and is banished forever from Ballineskar.

That’s why he tricked you into coming here. If he steps foot into Ballineskar, he’ll turn into a rabbit.”

“He’ll turn into a rabbit? Is that a curse like a mushroom growing out of the top my head?” Nanny asked.

“Yes it is,” answered the Princess, “and he’ll stay a rabbit as long as he stays mean.”

Nanny wondered whether Ned Franey could be turned into a rabbit.

“Why was he banished forever? And why does he want the crock of gold?” Asked Nanny.

“He was banished forever from Ballineskar because he played too many mean tricks on people. He wants the crock of gold because whoever has the crock of gold shall have all he or she desires, and King Brian wants all of Ballineskar and Coolrainy.”

“But what does that have to do with you? Why does he want you?” asked Nanny, sitting up a little straighter and pushing her sneakers in circles on the cool grass.

“Ach cad chuige a bhfuil an Rí Brian uait? Cén fáth a bhfuil sé ag iarraidh tú a chur ar shiúl ó d’athair, Rí Ruairí Bhéal Átha na gCearr?” a d’fhiafraigh Nanny Reilly.

“Toisc go dteastaíonn an crogall óir uaidh,” a dúirt an Banphrionsa Tara. “Is é an Rí Brian m’uncail, deartháir m’athar, agus díbrítear go deo as Béal Átha na gCearr é.

Sin an fáth a ndearna sé feall ort teacht anseo. Má théann sé cos isteach i mBéal Átha na gCearr, casfaidh sé ina choinín.”

“An iompóidh sé ina choinín? An mallacht é sin cosúil le muisiriún ag fás as mo cheann?” D’iarr Nanny.

“Is ea,” d’fhreagair an banphrionsa, “agus fanfaidh sé ina choinín chomh fada agus a fhanann sé gan chiall.”

D’fhiafraigh Nanny an bhféadfaí coinín a dhéanamh de Ned Franey.

“Cén fáth a díbríodh go deo é? Agus cén fáth a bhfuil an crogall óir uaidh?” D’iarr Nanny.

“Cuireadh díbirt go deo ó Bhéal Átha na gCearr é mar gur imir sé barraíocht cleasanna ar dhaoine. Tá an crogall óir ag teastáil uaidh mar an té a bhfuil an crogall óir aige, beidh gach is mian leis nó léi, agus tá an Rí Brian ag iarraidh Béal Átha na gCearc agus Cúil Raithin go léir.”

“Ach cad a bhaineann leis sin leat? Cén fáth a bhfuil sé uait?” a d’iarr Nanny, ina suí di suas straighter beagán agus ag brú a sneakers i ciorcail ar an féar fionnuar.

“He wants me because he knows my father, King Rory, will give him anything he asks for to get me back,” replied Princess Tara.

“Can King Brian really make a mushroom grow on top of my head?” asked Nanny in a sad inquisitive voice.

Henry sat beside Nanny and put his paw in her lap. He looked up at her, blinked his soft brown eyes several times and whimpered.

“He can,” replied Princess Tara, sounding determined. “And I can turn your ears into rabbit’s ears, and your nose into a pig’s nose, so you better let me out.”

“Can you help me? I don’t know what I should do,” said Nanny. “I would like to let you go, but I’m afraid King Brian will make a mushroom grow out of my head.”

“Of course I can help you, just don’t look in the sack. Turn away while I climb out of here. Then when I’m out, we’ll make a plan to trick King Brian, and maybe then he’ll never trick anybody again,” said Princess Tara.

“I’ve learned a trick or two myself.” The little Princess punched the side of the sack to punctuate her words.

“OK,” said Nanny, “here goes.” Keeping her eyes shut, Nanny opened the sack with one hand.

“Tá sé ag teastáil uaim mar tá a fhios aige go dtabharfaidh m’athair, an Rí Ruairí, dó rud ar bith a iarrann sé air chun mé a fháil ar ais,” a d’fhreagair an Banphrionsa Tara.

“An bhféadann an Rí Brian muisiriún fás ar bharr mo chinn i ndáiríre?” d’iarr Nanny i nguth fiosrach brónach.

Shuigh Anraí in aice le Nanny agus chuir sé a lapa ina lap. D’fhéach sé suas uirthi, blinka a shúile bog donn arís agus arís eile agus whimpered.

“Is féidir leis,” a d’fhreagair an Bhanphrionsa Tara agus í diongbháilte. “Agus is féidir liom do chluasa a iompú isteach i gcluasa coinín, agus do shrón go srón muice, ionas gur fearr leat mé a ligean amach.”

“An féidir leat cabhrú liom? Níl a fhios agam cad ba cheart dom a dhéanamh,” arsa Nanaí. “Ba mhaith liom tú a scaoileadh saor, ach tá eagla orm go ndéanfaidh an Rí Brian muisiriún fás as mo cheann.”

“Ar ndóigh is féidir liom cabhrú leat, ach ná breathnaigh sa phoca. Cas ar shiúl agus mé ag dreapadh as seo. Nuair a bheidh mé amuigh ansin, déanfaidh muid plean chun an Rí Brian a bhualadh, agus b’fhéidir nach ndéanfaidh sé feall ar dhuine ar bith arís,” a dúirt an Banphrionsa Tara.

“Tá cleas nó dhó foghlamtha agam féin.” Bhuail an banphrionsa beag taobh an mhála chun a focail a phoncaíocht.

“Ceart go leor,” arsa Nanaí, “tá anseo.” Agus a súile dúnta, d’oscail Nanny an mála le lámh amháin.



She placed her other hand on top of her head. She thought if a mushroom started to grow, she could push it back down.

“Free at last,” sighed Princess Tara; sounding much clearer now that she was out of the sack.

“May I open my eyes now?” asked Nanny Reilly.

“You may,” answered Princess Tara.

Nanny opened her eyes. Before her, on the grass, stood a girl no more than eight inches tall with long wavy red hair.

She wore pink pajamas with tiny green shamrocks all over them, and a gold crown with diamonds all around it on her head.

“You surely are tiny,” said Nanny. “You’re smaller than King Brian.”

“Of course I am,” replied the Princess as she wiped her forehead with a tiny pink lace handkerchief.

“I still have a lot of growing to do. My mother told me I’m going to grow as tall as my Aunt Betsy, and she’s nine and a half inches tall.”

The little Princess sneezed. “It was very stuffy in there. Have you ever been tied up in a sack before?” she asked.

“No, I haven’t,” Nanny said, “but Ned Franey locked me in the coal shed once.

Chuir sí a lámh eile ar bharr a cinn. Shíl sí dá dtosódh seomra muisiriúin ag fás go bhféadfadh sí é a bhrú ar ais síos.

“Saor ar deireadh,” a ghlaigh an Banphrionsa Tara; fuaim i bhfad níos soiléire anois go raibh sí amach as an mála.

"An féidir liom mo shúile a oscailt anois?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny Reilly.

“Is féidir leat,” a d'fhreagair an Banphrionsa Teamhrach.

D'oscail Nanny a súile. Sular sheas sí, ar an bhféar, cailín nach raibh níos mó ná ocht n-orlach ar airde agus gruaig fhada dhearg air.

Chaith sí pitseámaí bándearga agus seamróga beaga bídeacha glasa os a gcionn, agus coróin óir le diamaint timpeall uirthi ar a ceann.

“Is cinnte gur beag bídeach thú,” arsa Nanaí. "Tá tú níos lú ná an Rí Brian."

“Is mise gan dabht,” a d'fhreagair an Bhanphrionsa agus í ag glanadh a héadan le ciarsúr lása bídeach bándearg.

“Tá go leor fás le déanamh agam fós. Dúirt mo mháthair liom go bhfásfaidh mé chomh hard le m’aintín Betsy, agus go bhfuil sí naoi n-orlach go leith ar airde.”

An Banphrionsa beag sraothartach. “Bhí sé an-stuifiúil ansin. An raibh tú ceangailte i mála riamh cheana?” d'iarr sí

“Ní dhearna mé,” a dúirt Nanaí, “ach chuir Ned Franey faoi ghlas mé sa tseid guail uair amháin.

He told me Henry Daly was trapped in there and couldn't get out. I ran in to rescue Henry Daly, and sure, he wasn't in there at all. Then Ned Franey slammed the door behind me and locked it."

Nanny shuddered, remembering the metallic smell and the darkness of the coal shed.

"I was in there all day until my mother opened the door that night. She came to get coal to light the fire."

"Why didn't you shout and kick to get out like I did to get out of the sack?" asked Princess Tara.

"I did, and then I fell asleep, and when my mother opened the coal shed door she got the fright of her life.

Coal dust had made my hair, face, hands and clothes as black as the pots, and she thought I was a hairy monster," Nanny said.

Princess Tara laughed, which Nanny thought was a little rude since she had just let the Princess escape.

"I like you," Princess Tara said smiling at Nanny, "even though you tried to kidnap me. What's your name?"

"Nanny Reilly, and this is my dog Henry Daly," answered Nanny. "Henry Daly comes everywhere with me now since Ned Franey locked me in the coal shed."

Dúirt sé liom go raibh Henry Daly gafa ann agus nach raibh sé in ann dul amach. Rith mé isteach chun Henry Daly a tharrtháil, agus cinnte, ní raibh sé ann ar chor ar bith. Ansin bhuaill Ned Franey an doras i mo dhiaidh agus ghlas sé é."

Shudded Nanny, ag cuimhneamh ar an boladh miotalach agus an dorchadas an chaillfidh guail.

"Bhí mé ann ar feadh an lae go dtí gur oscail mo mháthair an doras an oíche sin. Tháinig sí chun gual a fháil chun an tine a lasadh."

"Cén fáth nach ndearna tú scairt agus ciceáil le dul amach mar a rinne mé chun éirí as an mála?" a d'fhiafraigh Banphrionsa Tara.

"Rinne mé, agus ansin thit mé i mo chodladh, agus nuair a d'oscail mo mháthair doras an tseid guail fuair sí eagla a saoil.

Rinne deannach guail mo chuid gruaige, aghaidh, lámha agus éadaí chomh dubh leis na potaí, agus cheap sí gur ollphéist gruagach mé," a dúirt Nanny.

Rinne an Bhanphrionsa Tara gáire, rud a cheap Nanny a bhí rud beag drochbhéasach ós rud é go raibh sí díreach tar éis ligean don Bhanphrionsa éalú.

"Is maith liom thú," a dúirt an Bhanphrionsa Tara agus í ag gáire le Nanny, "cé go ndearna tú iarracht mé a fhuadach. Cad is ainm duit?"

"Nanny Reilly, agus seo é mo mhadra Henry Daly," d'fhreagair Nanny. "Tagann Henry Daly liom i ngach áit anois ó chuir Ned Franey faoi ghlas mé sa tseid guail."

“It sounds to me like Ned Franey is a little bit like King Brian,” said the Princess. “He likes to play mean tricks on people.”

Princess Tara scratched her head and her crown tipped a little. Then she righted her crown and stood tall and straight.

Nanny felt herself sit up a little taller and put her shoulders back.

The Princess removed her diamond studded crown and placed it carefully on the grass. She tilted her head to the right, gathered her long red hair over her shoulder, and braided it.

She snapped her fingers and a tiny green velvet ribbon appeared in the palm of her hand.

She tied a neat bow at the end of her braid, threw her hair back over her shoulder, and then placed her crown back on her head.

Nanny had seen this finger snapping magic before by King Brian at Magandy’s Pond, but it still amazed her.

“It’s time for us to stop King Brian once and for all. We have to make a plan so he won’t play any more mean tricks on anyone.”

She paused and then said, “I have an idea. Here’s what we should do.”

“Is cuma liomsa go bhfuil Ned Franey rud beag cosúil le Rí Brian,” a dúirt an banphrionsa. “Is maith leis cleasanna meánacha a imirt ar dhaoine.”

Scríob an Bhanphrionsa Tara a ceann agus thit a coróin beagán. Ansin cheartaigh sí a coróin agus sheas ard agus díreach.

Mhóthaigh Nanny í féin ina suí suas beagán níos airde agus chuir sí a guaillí ar ais.

Bhain an Bhanphrionsa a coróin leáite diamaint agus chuir sí go cúramach ar an bhféar é. Chlaon sí a ceann ar dheis, bhailigh sí a gruaig fhada rua thar a gualainn, agus braid sí é.

Ghearr sí a méar agus bhí ribín beag veilbhít glas le feiceáil i dtearmann a láimhe.

Cheangail sí bogha néata ag deireadh a braid, chaith sí a cuid gruaige ar ais thar a gualainn, agus ansin chuir sí a coróin ar ais ar a ceann.

Bhí an mhéar seo feicthe ag Nanny ag baint draíochta roimhe seo ag an Rí Brian ag Lochán Magandy, ach fós chuir sé iontas uirthi.

“Tá sé in am againn stop a chur leis an Rí Brian uair amháin agus go deo. Caithfidimid plean a dhéanamh ionas nach n-imreoidh sé cleasanna meánacha ar aon duine.”

Stad sí agus dúirt sí ansin, “Tá smaoineamh agam. Seo cad ba cheart dúinn a dhéanamh.”

## CHAPTER FOUR

## CAIBIDIL A CEATHAIR

“Let’s hurry, Henry Daly,” said Nanny, “it’s almost dawn. We need to get back to Magandy’s Pond.”

Nanny made it back to King Brian in time. She had the sack over her shoulder.

“Well now,” said King Brian, “you made it. I hope for your sake you didn’t look in the sack.”

“I surely didn’t,” answered Nanny

“Here’s your rabbit, may I go home now? My mother will be calling me for breakfast in a couple of hours, and I won’t be in my bed. She’ll be terribly worried and wondering if Ned Franey locked me in the coal shed again.”

“Not so fast there, Nanny Reilly,” said King Brian, “I have to make sure you brought me the right rabbit. If you didn’t, then with a click of my fingers, I’ll make the biggest mushroom you ever saw grow on top of that head of yours.”

King Brian slowly opened the sack. He peeped inside, and a broad smile came across his face. He saw Princess Tara curled up asleep in her pink pajamas.

“You did well, Lass. This is the right rabbit all right, and a beautiful rabbit she is too. Be off with you now, and never touch another mushroom in Coolrainy,” said King Brian.

“Déanaimis deifir, Henry Daly,” arsa Nanaí, “tá sé beagnach breacadh an lae. Caithimid dul ar ais go Lochán Magandy.”

Thug Nanny ar ais don Rí Brian é in am. Bhí an sac thar a gualainn aici.

“Bhuel anois,” arsa an Rí Brian, “is tusa a rinne é. Tá súil agam ar do shon nár fhéach tú sa phoca.”

Is cinnte nach ndearna mé,” d’fhreagair Nanaí

“Seo do choinín, an bhféadfainn dul abhaile anois? Beidh mo mháthair ag glaoch orm don bhricfeasta i gceann cúpla uair an chloig, agus ní bheidh mé i mo leaba. Beidh sí an-bhuartha agus ag smaoineamh ar chuir Ned Franey mé faoi ghlas sa tseid guail arís.”

“Nílím chomh gasta ann sin, a Nanny Reilly,” arsa an Rí Brian, “caithfidh mé a chinntiú gur thug tú an coinín ceart chugam. Mura ndearna tú, ansin le cliceáil ar mo mhéara, déanfaidh mé an beacán is mó a chonaic tú riamh ag fás ar do cheann féin.”

D’oscail an Rí Brian an sac go mall. Peeped sé taobh istigh, agus aoibh gháire leathan tháinig trasna ar a aghaidh. Chonaic sé an Bhanphrionsa Tara cuachta suas ina codladh ina pitseámaí bándearga.

“Rinne tú go maith, a Mhuire. Is é seo an coinín ceart ceart go leor, agus coinín álainn tá sí freisin. Imigh leat anois, agus ná bainigí i n aon chor eile i gCúil Raithin,” arsa an Rí Brian.

He carefully tucked the sack under his arm as he ushered Nanny away with the back of his hand while taking several steps towards her.

“Off, home with you now before I change my mind.” He pointed in the direction of Nanny’s house and then turned away from her. King Brian kicked up his heels.

He was so elated his body wriggled with delight.

“I’m not going home until you grant me my wish,” demanded Nanny, standing with her hands on her hips.

“You told me if I brought you back that sack, you would give me one wish. I want my wish.”

“Sure, you’re a smarter lass than I thought you were,” smiled King Brian as he turned back to face Nanny.

“What kind of a wish would a young lady like yourself be wanting?”

“My big brother told me that leprechauns can dance jigs all day and night and never get tired. Is that true?” asked Nanny.

“It surely is true,” answered King Brian.

“Leprechauns are the greatest dancers Ireland has ever known, and sure I’m the greatest dancer leprechauns have ever known.”

“Are you able to do the Darby O’Gill two-step?” asked Nanny.

Chas sé an mála go cúramach faoina lámh agus é ag tabhairt na hAiní siar le cúl a láimhe agus é ag tógáil roinnt céimeanna i dtreo.

"Amach, abhaile leat anois sula n athraím m'intinn." Léirigh sé i dtreo teach Nanny agus chuaidh sé uaithi. Phic an Rí Brian suas a shála.

Bhí sé chomh elated a chorp wriggled le gliondar.

"Níl mé ag dul abhaile go dtí go ndeonóidh tú mo mhian," a d'fhiafraigh Nanny agus í ina seasamh lena lámha ar a cromáin.

"Dúirt tú liom dá dtabharfainn ar ais an mála sin duit, go dtabharfá aon mhian amháin dom. Ba mhaith liom mo mhian."

"Cinnte, is cailín níos cliste thú ná mar a cheap mé go raibh tú," a dúirt an Rí Brian agus é ag tabhairt aghaidh ar Nanny.

"Cén sórt mian a bheadh ar bhean óg cosúil leat féin?"

"Dúirt mo dheartháir mór liom gur féidir le leipreacháin poirt rince a dhéanamh ar feadh an lae agus na hoíche agus nach n éiríonn siad tuirseach riamh. An bhfuil sé sin fíor?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny.

"Is cinnte go bhfuil sé fíor," d'fhreagair an Rí Brian.

"Is iad na leipreacháin na damhsóirí is mó a bhfuil aithne acu ar Éirinn riamh, agus cinnte go bhfuil mé ar na leipreacháin rinceoirí is mó a d'aithin na leipreacháin riamh."

"An bhfuil tú in ann dhá chéim an Darby O’Gill a dhéanamh?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny.

“Indeed I am Lass. Sure, that’s the finest step in the whole of Ireland, didn’t I create it myself? I danced it for the first time when I was a young lad in my new hornpipe shoes, at the Leprechaun’s dance and music festival in Ballyconniger.

I out stepped the whole lot of them. Sure, I was the pride of Coolrainy.” answered King Brian proudly.

“My wish then,” said Nanny, “is for you to teach me the Darby O’Gill two step.”

“That’s a fine choice of a dance, Lass. Stand back there now and give me some room.” King Brian gave Nanny a demonstration.

“Stand up tall with your shoulders back and your chin up. Look straight ahead of yourself.

Right foot, left foot. One, two ... one, two, three. One, two ... one, two, three. Are you following me?”

He glanced at Nanny. “This is a serious matter Nanny Reilly. After all, I have my dancing reputation to think of.”

He straightened out his cloak and gently placed his hands on both sides of his crown making sure it sat perfectly on his head. He inhaled and looked straight ahead.

“One, two ... one, two, three. Get your feet well up off the ground and move forward. Dance, dance ... one, two, three. Dance, dance ... one, two, three.”

"Go deimhin is Muire mise. Cinnte, sin í an chéim is fearr in Éirinn ar fad, nár chruthaigh mé féin é? Rinne mé rince air don chéad uair nuair a bhí mé i mo ghasúr óg i mo bhróga cornphíopa nua, ag féile rince agus ceoil na Leipreachán i mBaile an Chonnaidh.

Sheas mé amach a lán acu. Cinnte, bhí mé bródúil as Cúil Raithin." d'fhreagair an Rí Brian go bródúil.

"Is é mo mhian, mar sin," arsa Nanaí, "go dteagascfá an Darby O'Gill dhá chéim dom."

"Sin rogha breá damhsa, a Chaoin. Seas siar ansin anois agus tabhair spás dom." Thug an Rí Brian léiriú do Nanny.

"Seas suas ard le do ghuailí ar ais agus do smig in airde. Féach díreach romhat féin.

An chos dheas, an chos chlé. A haon, a dó a haon, a dó, a trí. A haon, a dó a haon, a dó, a trí. An leanann tú mé?"

Spléach sé ar Nanny. "Is ábhar tromchúiseach é seo do Nanny Reilly. Tar éis an tsaoil, tá mo cháil rince le smaoineamh air."

Dhírigh sé amach a chlóca agus chuir sé a lámha go réidh ar an dá thaobh dá choróin ag cinntiú go shuigh sé go foirfe ar a cheann. ionanálú sé agus d'fhéach sé díreach ar aghaidh.

"A haon, a dó a haon, a dó, a trí. Faigh do chosa suas go maith as an talamh agus bogadh ar aghaidh. Rince, rince a haon, a dó, a trí. Rince, rince a haon, a dó, a trí."

King Brian laid the sack on the ground. He pulled a tin whistle out from under his cloak.

He started playing the tin whistle and tapping his foot. Then he took off dancing a jig all around Magandy's Pond.

"I think I know how to do it now," said Nanny. "Follow me and see if I'm doing it right."

Nanny started lifting her knees up "One, two ... one, two, three. One, two ... one, two, three, Dance, dance ... one, two, three. Dance, dance ... one, two, three."

Nanny imitated the King, as she danced around the Magandy's Pond.

King Brian followed her, playing his tin whistle and doing the Darby O'Gill two-step.

Henry Daly was trotting close behind keeping both Nanny and King Brian in his sights.

While Nanny and King Brian were dancing around Magandy's Pond, Princess Tara slipped out of the sack. She was just pretending to be asleep. She hid behind a mushroom and watched the dancing.

"Hold it there, Lass," said King Brian. "Sure, you're not doing it right.

Never let it be said that King Brian, king of all the leprechauns in Coolrainy, couldn't teach a young lady the Darby O'Gill two-step.

Leag an Rí Brian an sac ar an talamh. Tharraing sé feadóóg stáin amach óna chlóca.

Thosaigh sé ag seinm an fheadóg stáin agus ag cnagadh a chos. Ansin thosaigh sé ag damhsa port timpeall Lochán Magandy.

"Sílim go bhfuil a fhios agam conas é a dhéanamh anois," a dúirt Nanny. "Lean mé agus féach an bhfuil mé ag déanamh i gceart."

Thosaigh Nanny ar a glúin a ardú "A haon, a dó a haon, a dó, a trí. A haon, a dó a haon, a dó, a trí, Rince, rince a haon, a dó, a trí. Rince, rince a haon, a dó, a trí."

Rinne Nanny aithris ar an Rí, agus í ag damhsa thart ar Lochán na Magandy.

Lean an Rí Brian í, ag seinm a fheadóg stáin agus ag déanamh dhá chois Darby O'Gill.

Bhí Henry Daly ag trot gar taobh thiar ag coinneáil Nanny agus an Rí Brian ina radharc.

Agus Nanny agus an Rí Brian ag damhsa thart ar Lochán Magandy, shleamhnaigh an Bhanphrionsa Tara amach as an mála. Ní raibh sí ach ag ligean uirthi go raibh sí ina codladh. Chuaigh sí i bhfolach taobh thiar de muisiriún agus d'fhéach sé ar an damhsa.

"Coinnigh ann sin é, a Mhuire," arsa an Rí Brian. "Cinnté, níl tú ag déanamh i gceart.

Ní abradh go bráth nach bhféadfadh an Rí Brian, rí na lepreachán uile i gCúil Raithin, Dárbaidh Uí Ghill a mhúineadh do mhnaoi óig.

We leprechauns take pride in our dancing.” King Brian put his tin whistle back in his cloak pocket and took out his small shillelagh.

“Take a hold of the other end of this shillelagh and stay close to me,” he said. “Now on the count of three, start off with your right foot and then do what I do.”

“All right,” said Nanny, holding the other end of the shillelagh, “but can we dance around the field instead of the pond?”

I don’t want to slip and fall into Magandy’s Pond. My brother told me it could take weeks to get back from Australia, it’s that far down.”

King Brian laughed. “It’s a strange lass you are, Nanny Reilly, but it’s your wish. C’mon over here, and I’ll turn you into the second best dancer in the whole of Ireland,” he said.

Nanny and King Brian took off dancing around the field. The King was laughing and thoroughly enjoying himself.

Now his sullen green eyes sparkled and he began singing in his lovely tenor voice.

*“Dance, dance, wherever you may be,  
I am the Lord of the dance said he,  
And I lead you all wherever you may be,  
And I lead you all to the dance said he.”*

Tá na leipreacháin bródúil as ár gcuid damhsa." Chuir an Rí Brian a fheadóg stáin ar ais ina phóca clóca agus thug sé amach a scilling bheag.

"Gabh greim ar an taobh eile den scilling seo agus fan gar dom," ar seisean. "Anois, tar éis triúr, tosaigh le do chos dheas agus ansin déan mar a dhéanaim."

"Ceart go leor," a dúirt Nanaí agus í ag coinneáil taobh eile an tsfleáil, "ach an féidir linn rince timpeall an raoin in ionad an locháin?"

Níl mé ag iarraidh sleamhnú agus titim isteach i Lochán Magandy. Dúirt mo dheartháir liom go bhféadfadh sé seachtainí a thógáil chun teacht ar ais ón Astráil, tá sé chomh fada sin síos."

Rinne an Rí Brian gáire. "Is aisteach an cailín thú, Nanny Reilly, ach sin é do mhian. Tar anseo, agus casfaidh mé thú ar an dara rinceoir is fearr in Éirinn ar fad," a dúirt sé.

D'éirigh Nanny agus an Rí Brian amach ag damhsa thart ar an pháirc. Bhí an Rí ag gáire agus ag baint an taitneamh as.

Anois las a shúile glasa sullen agus thosaigh sé ag canadh ina ghlór tenor álainn.

*"Damhsa, damhsa, pé áit a bhfuil tú.  
Is mise Tiarna an rince a dúirt sé.  
Agus treoraím thú go léir cibé áit a bhfuil tú,  
Agus treoraím sibh go léir go dtí an rince ar seisean."*



“Now, follow me again and see if I’m doing it right,” laughed Nanny. She was having fun dancing the Darby O’Gill two-step in the cool almost dawn.

King Brian followed Nanny Reilly around the field and down the bog road.

Nanny knew he would be so involved in the intricate steps, he wouldn’t be paying attention to where they were headed.

Princess Tara jumped up on Henry Daly’s back, and they followed Nanny and King Brian.

"Anois, lean mé arís agus féach an bhfuil mé ag déanamh i gceart," a dúirt Nanaí. Bhí an spraoi aici ag damhsa dhá chéim an Darby O’Gill faoin bhfionnuar beagnach.

Lean an Rí Brian Nanny Reilly timpeall an mhachaire agus síos bóthar an phortaigh.

Bhí a fhios ag Nanny go mbeadh baint aige chomh mór sin leis na céimeanna casta, nach mbeadh sé ag tabhairt aird ar an áit a raibh siad i gceannas.

Léim an Bhanphrionsa Tara suas ar dhroim Henry Daly, agus lean siad Nanaí agus an Rí Brian.



## CHAPTER FIVE

They danced across Clancy's footbridge. Tom the plough horse was back at his resting spot behind the leafy oak tree.

He raised his head and pricked his ears. This time he didn't run in fright.

King Brian and Nanny came dancing through in high gear. Nanny looked at Tom and again put her finger to her lips reminding him not to tell anyone. Tom twitched his ears back and forth and nickered.

They danced their way up the ferny trail on Sarah's hill. Nanny was beginning to get tired as she made their way down to O'Brien's Half-acre.

After all, she'd already had a hike that very night. She glanced behind her. Henry Daly was panting a little but still going strong.

Princess Tara gave Nanny a thumbs up sign. She was as fresh as a daisy and well rested.

Small beads of sweat began trickling down King Brian's forehead. His crown had tilted on his head.

Nanny's headache came back. This was not a good time for King Brian to get tired and to stop dancing. Nanny had to think quickly.

King Brian was down to his last note.

## CAIBIDIL A CÚIG

Rinne siad rince trasna droichead coise Clancy. Bhí Tom an capall céachta ar ais ag a áit scíthe taobh thiar den chrann darach duilleach.

D'ardaigh sé a cheann agus pricked a chluasa. An uair seo ní raibh eagla air.

Tháinig an Rí Brian agus Nanaí ag damhsa tríd i bhfearas ard. D'fhéach Nanny ar Tom agus chuir sí a méar ar a liopaí arís ag meabhrú dó gan insint do dhuine ar bith. Tom twitched a chluasa ar ais agus amach agus nickered.

Dhamhsa siad a mbealach suas an chonair raitheach ar chnoc Sarah. Bhí Nanny ag éirí tuirseach agus iad ag déanamh a mbealach síos go dtí leath-acra

Uí Bhriain. Tar éis an tsaoil, bhí fánaíocht déanta aici an oíche sin cheana féin. spléach sí taobh thiar di. Bhí Henry Daly ag brúchtadh beagán ach fós ag dul go láidir.

Thug an Banphrionsa Tara comhartha ordóg do Nanny. Bhí sí chomh úr le nóinín agus í go maith ar a suaimhneas.

Thosaigh coirníní beaga allais ag tuirlingt anuas ar mhullach Rí Brian. Bhí tilted a choróin ar a cheann.

Tháinig tinneas cinn Nanny ar ais. Ní raibh sé seo tamall maith ag an Rí Brian a bheith tuirseach agus stop a rince. Bhí ar Nanny smaoineamh go tapa.

Bhí an Rí Brian síos go dtí an nóta deiridh aige.

She began singing her own song hoping it would last long enough. If not, she would repeat the chorus.

They always do that in school, every time the class sang songs for the Christmas Holidays and nobody could remember the words.

*“Toor a looh, one-two-three  
Toor a lay, one-two-three.  
Singing toor a lie, toor a lie, toor a lie eh.  
We’ll dance through the streams,  
We’ll dance through the meadows.  
We’ll dance o’er the mountains  
We’re good dancing fellows  
We’ll dance through the evening,  
We’ll dance all night long.  
We’ll dance ’til tomorrow,  
If nothing goes wrong.  
Toor a loo, one-two-three,  
Toor a lay, one-two-three,  
Singing toor a lie, toor a lie, toor a lie eh.”*

And there they were, at Katie’s Field in Ballineskar.

“You’re a grand singer, Nanny Reilly,” said King Brian as he huffed and puffed and mopped his forehead with a green handkerchief.

“And I’d never think that to look at you. Sure, you’re full of surprises.”

Nanny thought how right he was.

Thosaigh sí ag canadh a hamhrán féin le súil go mairfeadh sé fada go leor. Mura bhfuil, dhéanfadh sí an curfá arís.

Déanann siad é sin i gcónaí ar scoil, gach uair a chanadh an rang amhráin do laethanta saoire na Nollag agus ní raibh aon duine in ann cuimhneamh ar na focail.

*“Toor a looh, aon a dó a trí  
Toor a tuata, a haon a dó a trí.  
Canadh bréag, bréag, bréag a chanadh eh.  
Beidh muid ag rince tríd na sruthanna,  
Beimid ag rince tríd na móinéir.  
Beimid ag rince ar na sléibhte  
Is daoine maith sinn ag damhsa  
Beidh muid ag damhsa tríd an tráthnóna,  
Beimid ag damhsa ar feadh na hoíche.  
Beidh muid ag rince go dtí amárach,  
Mura dtéann aon rud mícheart.  
Toor a loo, a haon a dó a trí,  
Toor a tuata, a haon a dó a trí,  
Ag canadh bréag, bréag, nó bréag eh.”*

Agus bhí siad, ag Katie’s Field i mBéal Átha na gCearr.

“Is amhránaí mór thú, a Nanny Reilly,” a dúirt an Rí Brian agus é ag magadh agus ag crúpaí agus ag mapáil a chliabháin le ciarsúr glas.

“Agus ní cheapfainn é sin chun breathnú ort. Cinnte, tá tú lán d’iontas.”

Shíl Nanny cé chomh ceart agus a bhí sé.

“This is the most dancing I’ve done since St. Patrick’s Day,” laughed King Brian. “You’ve got it now, Lass. I’ll give you credit for being a good dancer.

Sure you’re as good as any leprechaun I know. Now you’ll be able to teach anyone the Darby O’Gill two-step and be ready for St. Patrick’s Day next year.

Remember to tell everybody that King Brian, king of all the leprechauns of Coolrainy, gave you the dancing lessons.”

He brushed the lapel of his checkered waistcoat with the tips of his fingers, then held his waistcoat at the waist and tugged on it.

He bowed low and when he stood up straight, Nanny laughed out loud.

“I’ll be sure to tell them all about you, King Brian,” said Nanny Reilly, still giggling.

“You’re the leprechaun with ears like a rabbit.” Nanny moved her hands up above her head as if she had tall, slim rabbit ears.

“Ears like a rabbit?” said King Brian. He grabbed his ears.

“Saints preserve me, my ears are long and furry. Look at my hands! They look like rabbit paws, and I can feel whiskers on my face.

“Seo é an rince is mó atá déanta agam ó Lá Fhéile Pádraig,” adeir an Rí Brian. “Tá sé agat anois, a Mhuire. Tabharfaidh mé creidiúint duit as a bheith i do dhamhsóir maith.

Cinnté go bhfuil tú chomh maith le leipreachán ar bith atá ar eolas agam. Anois beidh tú in ann an Darby O’Gill dhá chéim a mhúineadh do dhuine ar bith agus a bheith réidh do Lá Fhéile Pádraig an bhliain seo chugainn.

Cuimhnigh a rá le cách gur thug an Rí Brian, rí uile leipreacháin Chúil Raithin, na ceachtanna rince duit.”

Scuab sé cliathbhoscaí a bhrat seiceála le leideanna a mhéar, ansin choinnigh sé a choim ag a choim agus thug sé air.

Chrom sé go híseal agus nuair a sheas sé suas díreach, rinne Nanny gáire os ard.

“Beidh mé cinnte go n-inseoidh mé dóibh go léir fút, a Rí Brian,” arsa Nanny Reilly agus í fós ag gáire.

"Is tú an leipreachán le cluasa cosúil le coinín." Bhog Nanny a lámha suas os cionn a cinn amhail is dá mbeadh cluasa coinín arda caol aici.

"Cluasa mar choinín?" arsa an Rí Brian. Rug sé ar a chluasa.

“Caomhnaíonn na naoimh mé, tá mo chluasa fada agus fionn. Féach ar mo lámha! Breathnaíonn siad cosúil le lapaí coinín, agus is féidir liom guairí a

What's after happening to me? You tricked me."

"Yes I did," said Nanny with her hands on her hips, "because you tricked me."

"How did you know I love to dance, and how did you know I would turn into a rabbit if I stepped foot in Ballineskar?" cried King Brian.

With that, Henry Daly walked up with Princess Tara on his back, stood beside Nanny, and sniffed in a patronizing way.

"I told her," Princess Tara said, sitting up straight on Henry Daly's back.

"You tricked Nanny Reilly into kidnapping me so you could ransom me for the crock of gold. Then you would be King of Ballineskar and play mean tricks on the people and leprechauns of Ballineskar again.

You're a mean leprechaun, Uncle Brian," the Princess said, shaking her finger at her rabbit-eared uncle.

"You're supposed to be nice to people and grant them three wishes." She held up three fingers and shook her hand for emphasis

"Three wishes?" Nanny said, crossing her arms over her chest. "I only got one wish." She took a step toward King Brian. "You owe me two more wishes."

"Indeed I do," answered King Brian, "but I have no power now.

Cad atá tar éis tarlú dom? Rinne tú feall orm."

"Sea rinne mé," arsa Nanaí lena lámha ar a cromáin, "mar rinne tú feall orm."

"Cén chaoi a raibh a fhios agat gur breá liom a bheith ag damhsa, agus conas a bhí a fhios agat go n-iompódh mé icoínín dá gcuirfinn cos i mBéal Átha na gCearr?" adeir an Rí Brian.

Leis sin, shiúil Henry Daly suas agus an Bhanphrionsa Tara ar a dhroim, sheas sé in aice le Nanny, agus sniffed ar bhealach patronizing.

"Dúirt mé léi," a dúirt an Banphrionsa Tara, agus í ina suí díreach ar dhroim Henry Daly.

"Thug tú feall ar Nanny Reilly mé a fhuadach ionas go bhféadfá mé a fhuadach as an crogall óir. Ansin bheadh tú i do Rí ar Bhéal Átha na gCearr agus imreofá cleasa móra ar mhuintir agus ar leipreacháin Bhéal Átha na gCearr arís.

Is leipreachán meánach thú, a Uncail Brian," a dúirt an Banphrionsa, agus í ag croitheadh a méar ar a uncail cluas choinín.

"Tá tú ceaptha a bheith go deas le daoine agus trí mhianta a dheonú dóibh." Sheas sí trí mhéar agus chroith sí a lámh le haghaidh béime

"Trí mhianta?" A dúirt Nanny, ag trasnú a airm thar a cófra. "Ní bhfuair mé ach mian amháin." Thug sí céim i dtreo an Rí Brian. "Tá dhá mhian eile i gcomaoin agat orm."

"Déanaim go deimhin," d'fhreagair an Rí Brian, "ach níl aon chumhacht agam anois.

I'm a rabbit. You could try wishing me back to Magandy's Pond, then I might be able to come up with another wish for you."

"Don't listen to a word he says, Nanny Reilly," the little Princess said. "He's only trying to trick you again.

If you wish him back to Magandy's Pond, he'll find another way to kidnap me, and he might make a mushroom grow out of your head."

Princess Tara swung her leg over Henry's back and dismounted. She tossed her long red braid over her shoulder and marched towards King Brian swinging her arms with each stride.

She stopped inches away from him placed her hands on her hips, glared at him and said,

"The only way anyone is safe from Uncle Brian is to leave him as a rabbit until he swears by all the saints and scholars of Ireland that he'll never play a mean trick on anybody ever again."

Then she about turned and marched back to Henry Daly. Henry gave a quick bark and a growl at King Brian telling him to stay right there.

"Why don't you swear on all the saints and scholars of Ireland?" asked Nanny. "Then you won't be a rabbit anymore."

"Because I have a lot of fun playing tricks on everybody," King Brian said.

Is coinín mé. D'fhéadfá iarracht a dhéanamh mé a ghuí ar ais go Loch Magandy, b'fhéidir go mbeinn in ann teacht ar mhian eile duit."

"Ná éist le focal a deir sé, a Nanny Reilly," a dúirt an banphrionsa beag. "Níl sé ag iarraidh ach feall a chur ort arís.

Más mian leat é a thabhairt ar ais go Lochán Magandy, gheobhaidh sé bealach eile chun mé a fhuadach, agus b'fhéidir go gcuirfeadh sé air muisiriún fás as do cheann."

Chas an Bhanphrionsa Tara a cos thar dhroim Anraí agus tháinig sé as a chéile. Chaith sí a braid fhada dhearg thar a gualainn agus mháirseáil i dtreo an Rí Brian ag luascadh a lámha le gach achar.

Stad sí orlach uaidh agus chuir sí a lámha ar a chromáin, glórtha air agus dúirt,

"Is é an t-aon bhealach amháin atá slán ó Uncail Brian é a fhágáil mar choinín go dtí go dtugann sé mionn ar naoimh agus ar scoláirí na hÉireann go léir. ní imreoidh sé cleas ar aon duine go deo arís."

Ansin chas sí thart agus mháirseáil ar ais go Henry Daly. Thug Anraí coirt gasta agus crónán don Rí Brian á rá leis fanacht ceart ansin.

"Cén fáth nach bhfuil tú ag mionnú ar naoimh agus scoláirí na hÉireann go léir?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny. "Ansin ní bheidh tú i do choinín níos mó."

"Toisc go mbíonn an-spraoi agam ag imirt cleasa ar chách," a dúirt an Rí Brian.

“I don’t think they’re mean. They’re fun.” He blushed slightly and Nanny didn’t know if it was embarrassment or just all that dancing.

The King continued, “if I break my promise to all the saints and scholars of Ireland, I’ll never be able to dance again, and I’ll have to live on my own down at Ravens Point. I’ll never see another leprechaun or human being for ever, and ever.”

“That’s a long time,” agreed Nanny. “Well, then you should make a promise and keep it. You don’t have to play mean tricks on anybody.

You can play fun tricks on them instead. And I know you know the difference between mean tricks and fun tricks, King Brian.”

Nanny smiled remembering her brother Frank’s trick.

“My brother played a fun trick on me on Christmas Day. He pretended he was Santa Claus and gave me a cowboy hat like Annie Oakley’s and new collar for Henry Daly.”

“I think you have me there, Lass,” answered King Brian. “I never thought of playing fun tricks on anyone.” King Brian’s face softened and he bowed his head.

He sighed, realizing perhaps his sense of humor could use a little adjusting.

“Ní dóigh liom go bhfuil siad meáite. Tá siad spraoi.” Bhí blushed sé beagán agus ní raibh a fhios Nanny an raibh sé náire nó díreach go léir go damhsa.

Lean an Rí air, “Má bhrisim mo ghealladh do naoimh is scoláirí na hÉireann go léir, ní bheidh mé in ann rince go deo arís, is beidh orm cónaí liom féin síos i Rinn na bhFiach. Ní fheicfidh mé leipreachán nó duine daonna eile go deo, agus go brách.”

“Is fada é sin,” a d’aontaigh Nanny. “Bhuel, ba cheart duit gealltanais a thabhairt agus é a choinneáil. Ní gá duit cleasanna meánacha a imirt ar aon duine.

Is féidir leat cleasanna spraoi a imirt orthu ina ionad sin. Agus tá a fhios agam go bhfuil a fhios agat an difríocht idir cleasanna meánacha agus cleasanna spráíúla, a Rí Brian.”

Bhí aoibh ar Nanny ag cuimhneamh ar chleas a dearthár Frank.

“D’imir mo dheartháir cleas spráíúil orm Lá Nollag. Chlaon sé air gurbh é Daidí na Nollag é agus thug sé hata bó mar a bheadh hata Annie Oakley orm agus coiléar nua Henry Daly.”

“Is dóigh liom go bhfuil mise ann, a Mhuire,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian. “Níor smaoinigh mé riamh ar chleasanna spráíúla a imirt ar éinne.” Bogadh aghaidh Rí Brian agus chrom sé a cheann.

Chlaon sé, ag tuiscint b’fhéidir go bhféadfadh a chiall greann úsáid a bhaint as coigeartú beag.

“I’m going to make a promise, this very moment, on all the saints and scholars of Ireland that I will never play a mean trick on anyone ever again.”

He put his left hand on his heart and raised his right hand in the air.

At that very moment, there was a gust of wind, and the rabbit ears and whiskers disappeared. King Brian looked just like himself again.

Except this time his face was not sinister, it was a kind face. His green eyes were not sullen or cloudy, they were smiling and bright. His body was not cock-of-the-walk, it was relaxed and friendly.

Princess Tara was very happy, and so was Nanny. Now she knew for sure King Brian wasn’t going to make a mushroom grow out of her head.

King Brian lifted Princess Tara up in the air and said “I know you’re only eight inches tall, and it’s a bit of a stretch for me to bend down and pick you up, but you’re worth the stretch.

You may be small on the outside but you’re as big as a mountain on the inside. You are grand lass. Your parents will be very proud of you.”

Then King Brian turned to Nanny and said, “I think you have two more wishes, Nanny Reilly. What is your second wish?”

Nanny thought hard for a moment.

“Táim chun gealltanais a thabhairt, an tráth seo, ar naoimh agus scoláirí na hÉireann go léir nach ndéanfaidh mé cleas meabhrach ar éinne go deo arís.”

Chuir sé a lámh chlé ar a chroí agus d'ardaigh sé a lámh dheas san aer.

Ag an nóiméad sin, bhí séideán gaoithe ann, agus na cluasa coinín agus na guairí imithe. Bhreathnaigh an Rí Brian díreach cosúil leis féin arís.

Ach amháin an uair seo ní raibh a aghaidh sinister, bhí sé ina aghaidh cineálta. Ní raibh a shúile glasa sullen nó scamallach, bhí siad miongháire agus geal. Ní raibh a chorp coileach-ar-an-siúlóid, bhí sé suaimhneach agus cairdiúil.

Bhí an Banphrionsa Tara an-sásta, agus bhí Nanny an-sásta. Anois bhí a fhios aici go cinnte nach raibh an Rí Brian chun beacán fás as a ceann.

Thóg an Rí Brian an Bhanphrionsa Teamhrach suas san aer agus dúirt “Tá a fhios agam nach bhfuil tú ach ocht n-orlach ar airde, agus is píosa stráice dom é a chromadh síos agus tú a phiocadh suas, ach is fiú an síneadh thú.

Seans go bhfuil tú beag ar an taobh amuigh ach tá tú chomh mór le sliabh ar an taobh istigh. Is mórchaile thú. Beidh do thuismitheoirí an-bhródúil asaibh.”

Ansin chas an Rí Brian chuig Nanny agus dúirt, “Sílim go bhfuil dhá mhian eile agat, Nanny Reilly. Cad é do dhara mian?”

Shíl Nanny go crua ar feadh nóiméad.



She didn't know what else to wish for once Ned Franey was going to leave her alone. She looked at Henry Daly.

She loved her dog. He was her very best friend in the whole, wide world.

"I know what to wish for," said Nanny. She knelt beside Henry Daly, patted him on the head, hugged him and said, "I wish Henry Daly could talk"

"Done," said King Brian.

"Can Henry Daly really talk, King Brian?" asked Nanny.

"Of course he can!" replied King Brian. "Ask him anything you like."

Nanny looked her best friend squarely in the eye. "How old are you, Henry Daly?" Nanny held her breath and waited.

Henry Daly looked right back at her with his ears pricked forward. "I'm six and a half years old," answered Henry Daly in a barky-sounding voice.

"Holy, moley!" said Henry, his doggy mouth curled into a smile. "I can talk!"

"You surely can!" said Nanny in astonishment. "Say something else!"

"What will I say?" asked Henry Daly. He turned

Ní raibh a fhios aici cad eile ba mhian léi nuair a bhí Ned Franey chun í a fhágáil ina aonar. Bhreathnaigh sí ar Henry Daly.

Bhí grá aici dá madra. Ba é a cara is fearr ar fud an domhain ar fad.

"Tá a fhios agam cad ba mhaith liom a bheith ag iarraidh," arsa Nanaí. Chuaigh sí ar a glún in aice le Henry Daly, chuir sí ar a cheann é, barróg léi agus dúirt, "Ba mhaith liom go mbeadh Henry Daly in ann labhairt"

"Déanta," arsa an Rí Brian.

"An féidir le Henry Daly labhairt i ndáiríre, a Rí Brian?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny.

"Ar ndóigh is féidir leis!" d'fhreagair an Rí Brian. "Fiafraigh de rud ar bith is mian leat."

D'fhéach Nanny a cara is fearr sa tsúil. "Cén aois thú, Henry Daly?" Choinnigh Nanny a anáil agus d'fhan sí.

Bhreathnaigh Henry Daly ar ais uirthi agus a chluasa pricked chun tosaigh. "Tá mé sé bliana go leith d'aois," a d'fhreagair Henry Daly le glór binn.

"Naofa, moley!" arsa Anraí, a bhéal doggy cuachta isteach aoibh ghéire. "Is féidir liom labhairt!"

"Is féidir leat go cinnte!" arsa Nanny le hiontas. "Abair rud eile!"

"Cad a déarfadh mé?" a d'fhiafraigh Henry Daly.

He turned around in a circle, like he was chasing his tail. Then he stopped and said, "I do that when I'm happy, Nanny Reilly."

"I thought you turned in a circle when you're happy, Henry Daly, but now I know for sure."

Nanny Reilly laughed into the cool morning air. She wrapped her arms around Henry Daly and hugged him tightly. "Jeepers, I never heard a dog talk before."

"Well, you better get used to it Lass," laughed King Brian.

"But you don't want him talking to everybody. Keep it to yourself or the whole village will follow you everywhere you go, and they won't leave Henry Daly alone.

Off home with you now, Nanny Reilly, it's almost dawn. And don't forget," King Brian put his finger to his lips, "it's a secret about Henry Daly."

Chas sé timpeall i gciorca, mar a bhí sé ar thóir a eireaball. Ansin stop sé agus dúirt, "Déanaim é sin nuair a bhíonn áthas orm, Nanny Reilly."

"Shíl mé gur iompaigh tú i gciorca agus tú sásta, Henry Daly, ach anois tá a fhios agam go cinnte."

Rinne Nanny Reilly gáire isteach in aer fionnuar na maidine. Fillte sí a lámha thart ar Henry Daly agus barróg go docht air. "Jeepers, níor chuala mé caint madra riamh roimhe seo."

"Bhuel, is fearr duit dul i dtaithí air, a Mhuire," a dúirt an Rí Brian.

"Ach ní theastaíonn uait go labhródh sé le gach éinne. Coinnigh leat féin é nó leanfaidh an sráidbhaile ar fad tú i ngach áit a théann tú, agus ní fhágfaidh siad Henry Daly ina n-aonar.

As baile leat anois, a Nanny Reilly, tá sé beagnach breacadh an lae. Agus ná déan dearmad," a chuir an Rí Brian a mhéar ar a bheola, "is rún é faoi Henry Daly."

## CHAPTER SIX

King Brian and Princess Tara invited Nanny and Henry Daly back on midsummer's eve. It was going to be the biggest leprechaun dance in the whole country.

All the leprechauns from two provinces would be there, and they would all be dancing until dawn.

Nanny said goodbye to King Brian and Princess Tara. She told them herself and Henry Daly would love to come back on midsummer's eve.

She and Henry Daly ran off home with their new secret chatting all the way.

“Get yourself cleaned up Nanny,” said her mother, “we’re going into town. We need to do some shopping. I promised Mrs. Franey we would take her and Ned with us today because Ned needs to get new shoes.

Henry will have to stay at home, there’s no room in the car for him today.”

“But Henry Daly always comes to town with us. Why can’t Ned Franey stay at home?” cried Nanny.

“Saints preserve you, Nanny Reilly. I’ll have to wash your mouth out with soap,” said Nanny’s mother. “It’s only right to give people a helping hand when they need it.”

## CAIBIDIL A SÉ

Thug an Rí Brian agus an Bhanphrionsa Tara cuireadh do Nanny agus Henry Daly ar ais ar oíche lár an tsamhraidh. Bhí sé chun a bheith ar an rince leipreachán is mó sa tír ar fad.

Bheadh na leipreacháin go léir ón dá chúige ann, agus bheadh siad go léir ag damhsa go breacadh an lae.

Dúirt Nanny slán le Rí Brian agus le Banphrionsa na Teamhrach. Dúirt sí leo féin agus gur bhreá le Henry Daly teacht ar ais ar oíche lár an tsamhraidh.

Rith sí féin agus Henry Daly abhaile lena rún nua ag comhrá an bealach ar fad.

“Bígí glan suas a Mhanáí,” arsa a máthair, “tá muid ag dul isteach sa bhaile mór. Caithfidimid roinnt siopadóireachta a dhéanamh. Gheall mé do Bhean Uí Fhraoich go dtabharfaimis í agus Ned linn inniu mar ní mór do Ned bróga nua a fháil.

Beidh ar Henry fanacht sa bhaile, níl aon spás sa charr dó inniu.”

“Ach tagann Henry Daly go dtí an baile linn i gcónaí. Cén fáth nach féidir le Ned Franey fanacht sa bhaile?” adeir Nanny.

“Caomhnaíonn Naofa tú, a Nanny Reilly. Beidh orm do bhéal a ní le gallúnach,” a dúirt máthair Nanny. “Níl sé ceart ach lámh chúnta a thabhairt do dhaoine nuair a bhíonn sé de dhíth orthu.”

Nanny felt a little ashamed and didn't say another word.

She remembered her brother telling her that one time, Tommy Riordan's mother washed his mouth out with soap and Tommy was blowing bubbles from his ears for two weeks.

"Ned Franey is coming to town with us today, Henry Daly," said Nanny sadly. "There's no room for you so you'll have to stay at home."

"But what about me?" whimpered Henry Daly. "I always go to town with you to get my bone from Kelly's butcher shop."

Now Nanny Reilly felt twice as unhappy. She had to sacrifice a day with her devoted pal for a day with her archenemy Ned Franey.

"I'll get your bone from Mr. Kelly for you," Nanny told Henry Daly.

"But that doesn't make me feel any better," answered Henry. He dropped his head and tail and walked away from Nanny.

"Please don't be sad, Henry Daly," said Nanny. "You know if I could bring you, I would."

"But you can take me with you!" answered Henry. "You can hide me in the back seat of the car and cover me with a blanket. No one will see me."

Mhóthaigh Nanaí rud beag náire agus ní dúirt sí focal eile.

Chuimhnigh sí ar a deartháir ag rá léi gur nigh máthair Tommy Riordan a bhéal amach le gallúnach agus go raibh Tommy ag séideadh boilgeoga óna chluasa ar feadh coicíse.

"Tá Ned Franey ag teacht go dtí an baile linn inniu, Henry Daly," a dúirt Nanny go brónach. "Níl áit ar bith agat mar sin beidh ort fanacht sa bhaile."

"Ach cad mar gheall ormsa?" whimpered Henry Daly. "Téim go dtí an baile leat i gcónaí chun mo chnámh a fháil ó Shiopa an Bhúistéara Kelly."

Anois bhraith Nanny Reilly dhá uair chomh míshásta. B'éigean di lá a íobairt lena cara dílis ar feadh lae lena seandúine, Ned Franey.

"Gheobhaidh mé do chnámh ón Uasal Kelly duit," a dúirt Nanny le Henry Daly.

"Ach ní bhraitheann sé sin níos fearr dom," d'fhreagair Henry. Thit sé a cheann agus eireaball agus shiúil amach ó Nanny.

"Ná brón ort, Henry Daly," arsa Nanny. "Tá a fhios agat dá bhféadfainn tú a thabhairt leat, a thabharfainn."

"Ach is féidir leat mé a thabhairt duit!" d'fhreagair Henry. "Is féidir leat a chur i súile i suíochán cúil an chairr agus mo scáthanna le brat. Ní fheicfidh éinne mé."

Nanny Reilly thought for a moment.

“OK, but you have to be as quiet as a mouse,” Nanny said. “If Ned Franey hears you, he will surely tell on me.

He told the teacher on Joey Howlin when he hid the chalk, and Joey had to write out, *I will never hide teacher’s chalk again*, in his best handwriting.”

Nanny took the top blanket from her bed, then went to her bedroom door and peeked out. First one way, then the other.

Her curls tossed themselves from side to side, as she looked both ways. Nanny’s mother was double-checking her shopping list and going through her kitchen cabinets, she didn’t want to forget anything.

Town was a long way away and she only did this trip once a week. Nanny was watching her mother to make sure she couldn’t see her.

Then Nanny went out to the car with the blanket in her arms, followed closely by Henry Daly. She opened the back door of their ten-year-old gray ford, and Henry Daly jumped in.

“Keep your head down Henry Daly,” said Nanny as she covered him up with her blanket, “and whatever you do don’t let Ned Franey find you.”

“Don’t worry Nanny,” said Henry, I’ll keep quiet, no one will ever know I’m here.”

Shíl Nanny Reilly ar feadh nóiméad.

"Ceart go leor, ach caithfidh tú a bheith chomh ciúin le luch," a dúirt Nanny. "Má chloiseann Ned Franey tú, tá cinnte go ndéarfadh sé liom.

Dúirt sé leis an múinteoir ar Joey Howlin nuair a chuir sé an cailc i fola, agus bhí ar Joey scríobh amach, ní cheilteoidh mé cailc an mhúinteora go deo arís, ina pheannaireacht is fearr.”

Thóg Nanny an brat barr as a leaba, ansin chuaigh go dtí an doras sa seomra leapa agus peeked amach. Ar dtús bealach amháin, ansin ar an taobh eile.

Chaith a gcuaicha iad féin ó'n taobh go taobh, agus í ag breathnú ar an dá bhealach. Bhí máthair Nanny ag reáchtáil a liosta siopadóireachta faoi dhó agus ag dul trína caibinéid cistin, níor theastaigh uaithe dearmad a dhéanamh ar rud ar bith.

Bhí an baile i bhfad ar shiúl agus ní dhearna sí an turas seo ach uair sa tseachtain. Bhí Nanny ag faire ar a máthair féachaint chuige nach bhfeicfeadh sí í.

Ansin chuaigh Nanny amach go dtí an carr agus an brat ina lámh, agus Henry Daly go dlúth ina dhiaidh sin. D’oscail sí an doras cúil dá áth liath deich mbliana d’aois, agus léim Henry Daly isteach.

“Coinnigh do cheann síos Henry Daly,” arsa Nanaí agus í ag clúdach a bhrat, “agus pé rud a dhéanann tú ná lig do Ned Franey tú a aimsiú.”

“Ná bí buartha a Mhamaí,” arsa Anraí, fanfaidh mé ciúin, ní bheidh a fhios ag aon duine go bhfuil mé anseo.”

## CHAPTER SEVEN

## CAIBIDIL SEACHT

Nanny's mother drove up outside the Franey's house and honked the horn.

Ned came running out. His red hair was damp with a sharp crease and neatly combed. He wore a nice blue sweater and blue jeans. He looked tidier and happier than Nanny had ever seen him.

"Hello, Nanny Reilly," he said with the brightest smile on his face. "Where's Henry Daly?"

Nanny was stunned. "Ned Franey has a smile on his face, and he's being nice to me," thought Nanny. "My second wish came true, too!"

"Eh, Henry Daly had to stay at home. There wasn't enough room," answered Nanny. "But I promised him I would get him a bone from Mr. Kelly, the butcher."

"Is he waiting at home for his bone?" asked Ned.

"Yes he is waiting at home, he's guarding the house while we shop," answered Nanny. She looked down at the blanket. Henry was as quiet as he had promised to be. He never moved a muscle.

"May I play with you and Henry Daly tomorrow?" asked Ned as he climbed into the back of the car beside Nanny. Henry Daly was well hidden to Nanny's left, and Ned sat to her right.

Thiomáin máthair Nanny suas taobh amuigh de theach Franey agus thug sí onóir don adharc.

Tháinig Ned ag rith amach. Bhí a chuid gruaige rua tais le faobhar géar agus cíortha go néata. Chaith sé geansaí deas gorm agus jeans gorm. Bhí cuma níos slachtmhara agus níos sona air ná mar a chonaic Nanny riamh é.

"Dia duit, a Nanny Reilly," a dúirt sé leis an aoibh gháire is gile ar a aghaidh. "Cá bhfuil Henry Daly?"

Bhí stunned Nanny. "Tá aoibh gháire ar a aghaidh ag Ned Franey, agus tá sé go deas liom," a cheap Nanny. "Tháinig mo dhara mian fíor freisin!"

"Eh, bhí ar Henry Daly fanacht sa bhaile. Ní raibh go leor spáis ann," a d'fhreagair Nanny. "Ach gheall mé dó go bhfaighfinn cnámh dó ón Uasal Kelly, an búistéir."

"An bhfuil sé ag fanacht sa bhaile lena chnámh? a d'fhiafraigh Ned.

"Tá, tá sé ag fanacht sa bhaile, tá sé ag cosaint an tí agus muid ag siopadóireacht," d'fhreagair Nanny. Bhreathnaigh sí síos ar an brat. Bhí Anraí chomh ciúin agus a gheall sé a bheith. Níor bhog sé muscle riamh.

"An bhféadfainn imirt leatsa agus le Henry Daly amárach?" a d'fhiafraigh Ned agus é ag dreapadh isteach i gcúl an chairr in aice le Nanny. Bhí Henry Daly i bhfolach go maith ar chlé Nanny, agus shuigh Ned ar dheis.

“If you like,” said Nanny. “We’ll be picking blackberries tomorrow. I know where the biggest blackberries in Coolrainy are.

My brother told me you need buckets as big as elephant’s feet to fit all the blackberries in, there so big.”

Nanny and Ned chatted the whole way into town. Though she’d have never believed it, Ned became her friend.

When they got to town, their mothers told them to wait in the car while they went to the bank. Nanny Reilly was a little on edge. She wanted to let Henry Daly out of the car.

Nanny looked at the blanket and patted it, and then she looked back at Ned. “Can you keep a secret?” she asked Ned.

“Sure I can,” answered Ned. “What is it?”

“Henry Daly is hiding under this blanket. My mother told me to leave him at home because there was no room, but Henry Daly wanted to come with us.

It was his idea to hide under a blanket.” Nanny wished she hadn’t said that.

“It was his idea? quizzed Ned, “What do you mean?”

“Eh, I mean he ran to the car with a blanket when I told him he had to stay at home,” answered Nanny.

“Más maith leat,” arsa Nanaí. “Beidh sméara dubha á piocadh againn amárach. Tá a fhios agam cá bhfuil na sméara dubha is mó i gCúil Raithin.

Dúirt mo dheartháir liom go dteastaíonn buicéid chomh mór le cosa an eilifint uait chun na sméara dubha go léir a chur isteach, chomh mór sin.”

Chas Nanny agus Ned an bealach ar fad isteach sa bhaile mór. Cé nár chreid sí riamh é, rinneadh cara de Ned di.

Nuair a shroich siad an baile, dúirt a máithreacha leo fanacht sa charr agus iad ag dul go dtí an banc. Bhí Nanny Reilly beagán ar an imeall. Bhí sí ag iarraidh Henry Daly a ligean amach as an gcarr.

D’fhéach Nanny ar an brat agus patted sé, agus ansin d’fhéach sí ar ais ar Ned. “An féidir leat rún a choinneáil?” d’iarr sí Ned.

“Is féidir liom go cinnte,” a d’fhreagair Ned. “Cad é sin?”

“Tá Henry Daly i bhfolach faoin brat seo. Dúirt mo mháthair liom é a fhágáil sa bhaile mar ní raibh aon seomra ann, ach bhí Henry Daly ag iarraidh teacht linn.

Ba é an smaoineamh a bhí aige dul i bhfolach faoi bhratéad.” Ba mhian le Nanny nach ndúirt sí é sin.

“An smaoineamh a bhí aige? chuir sé ceist ar Ned, “Cad atá i gceist agat?”

“Eh, is éard atá i gceist agam gur rith sé go dtí an carr le blaincéad nuair a dúirt mé leis go raibh air fanacht sa bhaile,” d’fhreagair Nanny.

“I didn’t know Henry Daly was so clever,” said Ned,  
“how did he know to hide under a blanket?”

“Jeepers,” said Nanny Reilly. “Can you keep another  
secret?”

“I surely can. What secret do you have? I love  
secrets!” answered Ned excitedly. Ned looked over  
both his shoulders and rolled up the car window. His  
blue eyes widened and a broad smile crossed his  
freckled face.

“First I have to let Henry Daly out of the car. Then  
he’ll show you,” replied Nanny.

She opened the car door. Henry tossed off the  
blanket, jumped out, and shook himself off. Nanny  
could tell by Henry Daly’s doggie smile that he was  
happy to get out and stretch his legs.

“Henry Daly, tell Ned how old you are.” Nanny  
asked.

“I’m six and a half years old,” answered Henry.

“Wow!” Said Ned. “How did Henry Daly learn to  
talk?”

Nanny told Ned all about her three wishes from King  
Brian at Magandy’s Pond. She told him how she was  
tricked into kidnapping Princess Tara. Now King  
Brian and Princess Tara were her friends, and she had  
been invited to the leprechauns’ dance at midnight on  
midsummer’s eve.

“Ní raibh a fhios agam go raibh Henry Daly chomh  
cliste sin,” arsa Ned, “conas a bhí a fhios aige dul i  
bhfolach faoi phluid?”

“Jeepers,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly. “An féidir leat rún  
eile a choinneáil?”

“Is cinnte gur féidir liom. Cén rún atá agat? Is breá  
liom rún!” d’fhreagair Ned go spreagúil. D’fhéach  
Ned thar a dhá ghualainn agus rolladh suas fuinneog  
an chairr. Leathnaigh a shúile gorma agus aoibh  
gháire leathan thrasnaigh a aghaidh bréige.

“Ar dtús caithfidh mé Henry Daly a ligean amach as  
an gcarr. Taispeánfaidh sé duit ansin,” a d’fhreagair  
Nanny.

D’oscail sí doras an chairr. Henry tossed as an  
blaincéad, léim amach, agus chroith é féin as.  
D’fhéadfadh Nanny a rá le meangadh madra Henry  
Daly go raibh sé sásta dul amach agus a chosa a  
shíneadh.

“Henry Daly, inis do Ned cén aois thú.” D’iarr  
Nanny.

“Tá mé sé bliana go leith d’aois,” d’fhreagair Anraí.

“Wow!” arsa Ned. “Conas a d’fhoghlaim Henry  
Daly conas labhairt?”

D’inis Nanny do Ned faoi na trí mhianta a bhí aici  
ón Rí Brian ag Lochán Magandy. D’inis sí dó mar a  
bhí í trucear chun an Banphrionsa Tara a fhuadach.  
Anois b’iad an Rí Brian agus an Bhanphrionsa  
Teamhrach a cairde, agus tugadh cuireadh chun  
rinne na leipreachán í ar mheán oíche oíche mheán  
lae.



“May I go to the dance with you?” asked Ned, “I’ve never seen a leprechaun before. I promise to keep your secret. I won’t tell anybody.”

“Sure you can,” Nanny replied, “I can teach you the Darby O’Gill two-step.”

“Thank you, Nanny Reilly,” said Ned. “I was so mean to you many times, but I promise you I will never be mean to you or anyone else again. I will be your friend from now on.”

Nanny was so pleased to hear Ned say that. She was happy to have Ned as her friend.

Before Nanny and Ned’s mothers came back, Henry Daly jumped into the car under the blanket to hide out again.

Ned went shopping with his mother to pick out his new shoes, and Nanny Reilly and her mother did their weekly grocery shopping, not forgetting Henry Daly’s bone from Mr. Kelly’s butcher shop.

"An féidir liom dul go dtí an rince leat?" a d'fhiafraigh Ned, "Ní fhaca mé leipreachán riamh roimhe seo. Geallaim do rún a choinneáil. ní inseoidh mé d'éinne."

“Cinnté is féidir leat,” d'fhreagair Nanaí, “is féidir liom dhá chéim an Darby O’Gill a mhúineadh duit.”

“Go raibh maith agat, a Nanny Reilly,” a dúirt Ned. “Bhí mé chomh cráite libh go minic, ach geallaim daoibh nach mbeidh mé meabhrach duitse ná d’aon duine eile go deo. Beidh mé i do chara as seo amach.”

Bhí Nanny an-sásta Ned a chloisteáil á rá sin. Bhí sí sásta Ned a bheith mar chara aici.

Sular tháinig máithreacha Nanny agus Ned ar ais, léim Henry Daly isteach sa charr faoin brat le dul i bhfolach arís.

Chuaigh Ned ag siopadóireacht lena mháthair chun a bhróga nua a phiocadh amach, agus rinne Nanny Reilly agus a máthair a gcuid siopadóireachta grósaeireachta seachtainiúil, gan dearmad a dhéanamh ar chnámh Henry Daly ó shiopa búistéara an Uasail Kelly.

## CHAPTER EIGHT

## CAIBIDIL A HOCHT

On midsummer's eve, Nanny and Ned went to bed at their regular bedtime. Once everybody was asleep, they got out of bed and dressed up in their Sunday best for the dance.

Nanny Reilly wore her cowgirl hat, Henry Daly wore his nice collar, and Ned wore his new shoes.

Nanny arranged to meet Ned at the cross at ten minutes to midnight. Then they would make their way to Magandy's Pond with Henry Daly on guard at their side.

"This is where I met King Brian the last time," Nanny told Ned as they approached the mushroom King Brian had sat on to trick Nanny.

Before Nanny could say another word, she heard that familiar voice.

"Well Nanny Reilly, it is a pleasure to have a fine dancer like yourself attend our midsummer's eve dance. We welcome you and your new friend, Ned, to our shindig.

This is a night of celebration for leprechauns all over Ireland. We're celebrating all our good fortune. Yourself, Henry Daly and Ned are our guests of honor."

King Brian's regalia, was the insignia of kingship. His cloak was a dark rich and royal green.

Oíche lár an tsamhraidh, chuaigh Nanny agus Ned a chodladh ag a ngnáth-am codlata. Nuair a bhí gach éinne ina chodladh, d'éirigh siad as an leaba agus ghléas siad suas ina gcuid is fearr Dé Domhnaigh don rince.

Chaith Nanny Reilly a hata bó, chaith Henry Daly a bhóna deas, agus chaith Ned a bhróga nua.

Shocraigh Nanny bualadh le Ned ag an chros ag deich nóiméad go meán oíche. Ansin dhéanfaidís a mbealach go Lochán Magandy agus Henry Daly ar a thaobh.

"Seo an áit ar bhuail mé leis an Rí Brian an uair dheireanach," a dúirt Nanny le Ned agus iad ag druidim leis an muisiriún a raibh an Rí Brian ina shuí ag feall ar Nanny.

Sula bhféadfadh Nanny focal eile a rá, chuala sí an guth coitianta sin.

"Bhuel, Nanny Reilly, is mór an pléisiúr é damhsóir breá cosúil leat féin a bheith i láthair ag ár rince oíche lár an tsamhraidh. Cuirimid fáilte romhat agus do chara nua, Ned, chuig ár shindig.

Oíche cheiliúrtha í seo do leipreacháin ar fud na hÉireann. Táimid ag ceiliúradh ár ndea-ádh ar fad. Is iad tú féin, Henry Daly agus Ned ár n-aíonna onórach."

Rí Brian, suaitheantas na ríoghachta. Glas dorcha saibhir agus ríoga a bhí ar a chlóca.

The borders were lined with emeralds and solid gold studs.

He clapped his hands three times. Music filled the air, and out of a rabbit's burrow beside Magandy's Pond came one thousand leprechauns wearing splendid green and gold clothing, dancing the Darby O'Gill two-step.

King Brian clapped his hands three more times, and fifty leprechauns wearing aprons over their splendid attire came dancing out of the burrow with all kinds of food on big silver platters.

They even had a platter full of big, juicy bones for Henry Daly.

Then one more time King Brian clapped his hands three times, and fifty more leprechauns came dancing out with jugs full of all kinds of drinks.

What a feast it was. Nanny and Ned looked at each other in awe. They were mesmerized by the thousand tiny leprechauns dancing, and never before had they seen so much food.

"Wow!" said Ned excitedly. "This is better than the Coolrainy fair. Thank you, Nanny Reilly, for allowing me come to the dance with you."

"You and Henry Daly are my very best friends," replied Nanny. "Come on Ned, let me teach you the Darby O'Gill two-step. This is the best dance in the whole of Ireland."

Líníodh na teorainneacha le emeralds agus studs soladach óir.

Bhuail sé a lámha trí huaire. Do líon an ceol an t-aer, agus amach as poll coinín in aice le Lochán Magandy tháinig míle leipreacháin ag caitheamh éadaigh iontacha glasa agus óir, ag damhsa dhá chois an Darby Uí Ghill.

Bhuail an Rí Brian a lámha trí huaire eile, agus tháinig caoga leipreacháin ag caitheamh naprúin ar a n-fheistias iontach ag damhsa as an poll le gach cineál bia ar phlátaí móra airgid.

Bhí platter acu fiú lán de chnámha móra súmhara do Henry Daly.

Uair amháin eile bhuail an Rí Brian a lámha trí huaire, agus tháinig caoga leipreacháin eile ag damhsa le crúiscíní lán de gach cineál deochanna.

Cén féasta a bhí ann. D'fhéach Nanny agus Ned ar a chéile le hiontas. Bhí na míle leipreacháin bídeach ag damhsa leo, agus ní fhaca siad an oiread sin bia riamh roimhe seo.

"Wow!" a dúirt Ned excitedly. "Is fearr é seo ná aonach Chúil Raithin. Go raibh maith agat, Nanny Reilly, as cead a thabhairt dom teacht chuig an rince leat."

"Is tú féin agus Henry Daly na cairde is fearr atá agam," a d'fhreagair Nanny. "Imigh leat a Ned, lig dom Darby O'Gill dhá chéim a mhúineadh duit. Seo an rince is fearr in Éirinn ar fad."

Nanny and Ned went two-stepping among the leprechauns, and Henry Daly feasted on his silver platter of juicy bones.

What a great time they were having. After a half hour of dancing, Nanny and Ned felt hungry and thirsty, so they decided to join Henry Daly feasting.

King Brian was not dancing. Nanny noticed him standing on top of a large mushroom, looking out over the fields.

“Where’s Princess Tara?” asked Nanny “I thought she was going to be here.”

“I’m wondering that myself, Lass.” answered King Brian. “Never before has a leprechaun been late for the midsummer’s eve dance, especially a leprechaun King from one of the provinces.

I’ve sent one of my best leprechaun scouts over to Ballineskar to find out what the delay is and if there is anything I can do? I’m a little bit concerned.”

“What’s that noise I hear in the distance?” asked Ned.

“Stop the music” yelled King Brian. “Stop the music.” The music suddenly stopped. The only sound that could be heard was the faraway sound of a horn.

“That noise you hear in the distance,” said King Brian, “is the leprechaun’s distress horn. Something is terribly wrong.”

Chuaigh Nanny agus Ned dhá chéim i measc na leipreachán, agus Henry Daly féasta ar a platter airgid de chnámha juicy.

Am iontach a bhí acu. Tar éis leath uair an chloig de rince, bhraith Nanny agus Ned ocras agus tart, agus mar sin shocraigh siad a bheith páirteach féasta Henry Daly.

Ní raibh an Rí Brian ag damhsa. Thug Nanny faoi deara é ina sheasamh ar bharr muisiriún mór, ag breathnú amach thar na páirceanna.

"Cá bhfuil an Bhanphrionsa Tara?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny "Shíl mé go raibh sí le bheith anseo."

“Tá mé ag déanamh iontais sin dom féin, a Mhuire.” d'fhreagair an Rí Brian. “Ní raibh leipreachán déanach riamh roimhe seo do dhamhsa oíche lár an tsamhraidh, go háirithe Rí leipreachán ó cheann de na cúigí.

Tá ceann de na gasóga leipreacháin is fearr seolta agam go Béal Átha na gCearr le fáil amach cad é an mhoill atá ann agus an bhfuil aon rud is féidir liom a dhéanamh? Tá beagán inní orm.”

"Cad é an torann sin a chloisim i gcéin?" a d'fhiafraigh Ned.

“Stop an ceol” adeir an Rí Brian. “Stop an ceol.” Stopadh an ceol go tobann. An t-aon fhuaim a bhí le cloisteáil ná fuaim adharca i bhfad uainn.

“An torann sin a chluinfeá i gcéin,” arsa an Rí Brian, “is é adharc anacair an leipreacháin. Tá rud éigin thar a bheith mícheart.”

King Brian reached into his cloak and pulled out a bugle. He blew the bugle once and yelled out, "All leprechaun soldiers report for duty"

More than six hundred leprechauns ran back into the burrow they had come dancing out of. Two minutes later they came charging out on miniature horses.

The lead leprechaun soldier was leading a white horse for King Brian. The King mounted his horse.

He then turned to Nanny and Ned and said, "You two should go home and stay there. We don't know what trouble is out there, and you need to be safe. Stay close to Nanny Reilly and Ned on their way home Henry Daly. Guard them well."

"But maybe we can help," said Nanny.

"Yeah," said Ned. "We're strong."

"I know you are both strong, and I thank you for your offer of help, but you must be off home now. Henry Daly will take good care of you both," replied King Brian.

With that, King Brian blew his bugle one more time and shouted, "Onward leprechaun soldiers."

King Brian and his leprechaun army charged off into the night on their miniature horses. They were ready to answer the call of distress.

Shín an Rí Brian isteach ina chlóca agus tharraing sé bugle amach. Shéid sé an fabht uair amháin agus d'éiligh sé, "Tuairiscíonn na saighdiúir leipreacháin go léir ar dualgas"

Rith breis agus sé chéad leipreachán ar ais isteach sa pholl a raibh siad tagtha ag damhsa as. Dhá nóiméad ina dhiaidh sin tháinig siad ag luchtú amach ar chapail bheaga.

Bhí an saighdiúir leipreachán luaidhe i gceannas ar chapall bán don Rí Brian. Chuir an Rí suas a chapall.

Thiontaigh sé ansin chuig Nanaí agus Ned agus dúirt, "Ba cheart duit beirt dul abhaile agus fanacht ann. Níl a fhios againn cén trioblóid atá ann, agus ní mór duit a bheith sábháilte. Fan in aice le Nanny Reilly agus Ned ar a mbealach abhaile Henry Daly. Coiméad go maith iad."

"Ach b'fhéidir gur féidir linn cabhrú leat," a dúirt Nanny.

"Tá," arsa Ned. "Táimid láidir."

"Tá a fhios agam go bhfuil an bheirt agaibh láidir, agus gabhaim buíochas libh as ucht do thairiscint cabhrach, ach caithfidh tú a bheith as baile anois. Tabharfaidh Henry Daly aire mhaith duit araon," a d'fhreagair an Rí Brian.

Leis sin, shéid an Rí Brian a fhabht arís eile agus scairt sé, "Ar aghaidh saighdiúirí leipreacháin."

Chuir an Rí Brian agus a arm leipreachán aníos isteach san oíche ar a gcuid capail bheaga. Bhí siad réidh chun glooch an anacair a fhreagairt.



## CHAPTER NINE

“What will we do, Nanny Reilly?” asked Ned, as he watched the army of leprechauns gallop away on their horses.

He scratched his head vigorously and in frustration, making a mess of his red hair “Do you think we should follow them or go home?”

Nanny tightened the stampede cord on her cowboy hat. The leprechaun army was almost out of sight.

“If Annie Oakley and the Lone Ranger were here, they would follow them. They always save people. I think we should follow them,” answered Nanny. “Princess Tara is in trouble, and she’s my friend!”

“She’s my friend too,” said Henry Daly tilting his head to one side with his ears pricked, and blinking his big brown eyes as he looked up at Nanny. “Let’s follow them. I can sniff them out.”

“When King Brian sees us he’ll be mad at us for not going home,” said Ned.

“We can stay out of sight hiding behind blackberry bushes, ditches and trees,” replied Nanny Reilly.

“Yeah you’re right Nanny, let’s follow them,” agreed Ned.

## CAIBIDIL A NAOI

"Cad a dhéanfaimid, a Nanny Reilly?" a d'fhiafraigh Ned, agus é ag faire ar arm na leipreachán ag imeacht ar a gcuid capall.

Scríob sé a cheann go bríomhar agus go frustrachas, ag déanamh praiseach dá ghruaig rua “An dóigh leat gur cheart dúinn iad a leanúint nó dul abhaile?”

Rinne Nanny an corda stampede níos doichte ar a hata bó. Bhí arm na leipreachán beagnach imithe as radharc.

“Dá mbeadh Annie Oakley agus an Aonair Ranger anseo, leanfaidís iad. Sábhálaí siad daoine i gcónaí. Sílim gur cheart dúinn iad a leanúint,” d’fhreagair Nanny. “Tá an Bhanphrionsa Tara i dtrioblóid, agus is cara liom í!”

“Is í mo chara í freisin,” a dúirt Henry Daly agus é ag claonadh a chinn go dtí taobh amháin agus a chluasa pioctha, agus ag caochadh a shúile móra donn agus é ag breathnú suas ar Nanny. “Leanaimid iad. Is féidir liom iad a sniff amach.”

“Nuair a fheiceann an Rí Brian sinn beidh sé ar buile fúinn gan dul abhaile,” arsa Ned.

“Is féidir linn fanacht as radharc agus muid i bhfolach taobh thiar de toir sméar dubh, díoga agus crainn,” a d’fhreagair Nanny Reilly.

“Sea tá an ceart agat Nanny, leanfaimid iad,” a d’aontaigh Ned.

“Alright then, let’s go,” said Henry Daly, sniffing the ground and picking up the scent of the leprechaun soldiers.

Nanny and Ned bravely marched behind Henry, swinging their arms and looking straight ahead. Left, left, left right left.

They marched over Clancy’s footbridge. Tom the plough horse was standing under the oak tree at the other side.

“It’s only me Tom, Nanny Reilly,” said Nanny, “Henry Daly and Ned Franey are with me, don’t be afraid.”

Tom nickered back at Nanny. He wasn’t afraid. He was well used to Nanny Reilly and her entourage going back and forth during the night. It wasn’t long before they caught up with King Brian and his army.

“Stay down as low as you can,” whispered Henry Daly, “and stay as quiet as a mouse. Listen to what King Brian is saying.” Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly skulked behind a sycamore tree.

The leprechaun soldiers were gathered around the trunk of an oak tree in the middle of Katie’s field.

Beside the rabbit burrow, where Nanny had captured Princess Tara, King Brian was sitting on his white horse, facing his soldiers.

“Ceart go leor, mar sin, déanaimis dul,” a dúirt Henry Daly, ag sniffing an talaimh agus ag tógáil boladh na saighdiúirí leipreacháin.

Mháirseáil Nanny agus Ned go cróga taobh thiar de Henry, ag luascadh a n-arm agus ag féachaint díreach ar aghaidh. Ar chlé, ar chlé, ar chlé ar dheis ar chlé.

Mháirseáil siad thar droichead coise Clancy. Bhí Tom an capall céachta ina sheasamh faoin gcrann darach ar an taobh eile.

“Níl ann ach mise Tom, Nanny Reilly,” arsa Nanaí, “tá Henry Daly agus Ned Franey liom, ná bíodh eagla ort.”

Tom nickered ar ais ag Nanny. Ní raibh eagla air. Bhí an-chleachtadh aige ar Nanny Reilly agus a comhluadar ag dul siar agus amach i rith na hoíche. Níorbh fhada gur ghabhadar suas le Rí Brian agus a arm.

“Fan síos chomh híseal agus is féidir leat,” a dúirt Henry Daly, “agus fan chomh ciúin le luch. Éist lena bhfuil á rá ag an Rí Brian.” Shiúil Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly taobh thiar de chrann seiceamar.

Bailíodh na saighdiúirí leipreacháin thart ar stoc crann darach i lár pháirc Cháit.

In aice leis an bpoll coinín, áit a raibh Nanny tar éis an Bhanphrionsa Teamhrach a ghabháil, bhí an Rí Brian ina shuí ar a chapall bán, os comhair a shaighdiúirí.



“Leprechaun soldiers of Coolrainy,” he shouted. “We don’t have much time. We have just found out by our scout that King Rory and Princess Tara were kidnapped by a big burly man.

He carried them off in a burlap sack, and we don’t know where they are. The identity of the captor is at this time is unknown. I believe he will use Princess Tara to demand the crock of gold from King Rory.

They must be found before dawn, or they will be traded to the wicked Banshee of Raven’s Point, and disappear forever.

My poor brother and lovely niece will join all the other poor leprechaun souls in the Banshee’s Cradle. We will never lay eyes on them again. Spread out the whole lot of you.”

King Brian cantered his white horse in a small circle holding his shillelagh high in the air.

“We’ll have to search every nook and cranny in all the surrounding villages, and we’ve only five hours to do it. We need to spread out as far as we can and track them down.”

His imperial cloak flowed behind him showing the gold satin lining. Miscellaneous pockets had various items, such as, his tin whistle, his bugle, a green notebook with a gold ribbon marking his most recent entry, and his favorite hornpipe shoes.

He wondered if he would get to dance in them tonight, or for that matter, ever again.

“Saighdiúirí leipreacháin Chúil Raithin,” adeir sé. “Níl mórán ama againn. Tá sé díreach tar éis a fháil amach ag ár scout go raibh an Rí Ruairí agus an Bhanphrionsa Tara fuadach ag fear mór burly.

D’iompair sé amach i sáspan iad, agus níl fhios againn cá bhfuil siad. Ní fios cé hé an captor ag an am seo. Creidim go n-úsáidfídh sé an Bhanphrionsa Tara chun an crogall óir a éileamh ón Rí Ruairí.

Ní mór iad a fháil roimh breacadh an lae, nó déanfar iad a thrádáil go Banshee olc Rinn na bhFiach, agus imíonn siad go deo.

Rachaidh mo dheartháir bocht agus mo neacht álainn in éineacht leis na hanamacha bochta leipreacháin eile go léir i gCradal na Banshee. Ní leagfaimid súile orthu go deo arís. Scaipigí sibh go léir.”

Chuir an Rí Brian a chapall bán ar lár i gciorca beag agus é ag coinneáil a scille go hard san aer.

“Beidh orainn cuardach a dhéanamh ar gach cúil agus crann sna sráidbhailte máguaird ar fad, agus níl againn ach cúig huaire chun é a dhéanamh. Caithfimid leathnú amach chomh fada agus is féidir linn agus iad a rianú.”

Bhí a chlóca impiriúil ag sreabhadh ar a chúl ag taispeáint an líneáil satin óir. Bhí rudaí éagsúla i bpócaí ilghnéitheacha, mar shampla, a fheadóg stáin, a bhugle, leabhar nótaí glas le ribín óir mar chomhartha ar an iontráil is déanaí a bhí aige, agus na bróga cornphíopa is fearr leis.

D’fhiafraigh sé an dtiocfadh sé chun rince iontu anocht, nó ar an ábhar sin, go deo arís.

The leprechaun soldiers rode away in all directions at a gallop. King Brian held his horse back. He put his shillelagh back in his cloak.

He removed his crown, held it against his heart and looked up to the heavens.

“I have to find my brother and my niece before dawn or that’s surely the end of them,” he said softly.

He knew the Banshee was a mean old witch, and she was out every night until dawn searching for victims to work in her Dreary Castle, in the Banshee’s Cradle.

If a soul didn’t escape her grasp by dawn, they were never seen again. He bowed his head. His white horse stood perfectly still and shined in the full moonlight of midsummer’s eve.

“I would sacrifice myself and all I possess to save them from the Banshee’s Cradle.” His tears fell to the loamy earth, and they too shined in the moonlight.

Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly were still hiding behind the sycamore tree. They heard every word King Brian said. They stood quietly just watching him until he rode away. They now knew what a scared King Brian looked like.

“The Banshee’s Cradle,” said Ned, breaking the silence.

“Now what do we do?” said Nanny. “I’m afraid of the Banshee.”

D'imigh na saighdiúirí leipreachán ar shiúl i ngach treo ag gallop. Choinnigh an Rí Brian a chapall ar ais. Chuir sé a shillelagh ar ais ina chlóca.

Bhain sé a choróin de, choinnigh sé i gcoinne a chroí í agus d'fhéach sé suas chun na bhflaitheas.

“Caithfidh mé mo dheartháir agus mo neacht a aimsiú roimh breacadh an lae nó is cinnte go bhfuil deireadh leo,” a dúirt sé go bog.

Bhí a fhios aige gur cailleach meánach a bhí sa Bhanshee, agus bhí sí amuigh gach oíche go breacadh an lae ar thóir íospartaigh le dul ag obair ina Chaisleán Drary, i gCradal na Banshee.

Mura n-éalódh anam óna greim le breacadh an lae, ní fhacathas arís iad. Chrom sé a cheann. Sheas a chapall bán go breá socair agus é ag lonrú faoi sholas gealaí lán oíche shamhraidh.

“Dhéanfainn mé féin a íobairt agus gach a bhfuil agam chun iad a shábháil ó chliabhán na Banshee.” Thit a deora ar an talamh loamy, agus iad ag lonrú freisin i solas na gealaí.

Bhí Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly fós i bhfolach taobh thiar den chrann seiceamar. Chuala siad gach focal a dúirt an Rí Brian. Sheas siad go ciúin ag faire air go dtí go marcaigh sé ar shiúl. Bhí a fhios acu anois cén chuma a bhí ar Rí scanraithe Brian.

“Cliabhán na Banshee,” arsa Ned, ag briseadh an tost.

"Anois, cad a dhéanaimid?" arsa Nanny. "Tá eagla orm roimh an mBánshee."

“I have an idea,” exclaimed Henry Daly. “I can go down into Princess Tara’s burrow, take something that belongs to her and get her scent. Once I have her scent, I can track her down and find her and King Rory before dawn.”

Nanny and Ned were excited about Henry’s idea. Henry Daly crawled down into the burrow.

Less than a minute later, he crawled back out carrying Princess Tara’s pink pajamas with the tiny shamrocks on them in his mouth. He zigzagged around Katie’s field sniffing out the scent.

“I got it,” yelled Henry Daly. “The scent is over here.”

“Find them, Henry Daly, find them.” Nanny Reilly cried.

“Good boy, Henry Daly. You’re a great dog. Lead us to them,” Ned shouted.

Henry took off running to the end of the field. The scent took him through a gate and into a lane. He followed the lane to the end. He came to another gate.

On the other side of the gate was a small cottage with a couple of old sheds surrounded by large sycamore trees. There was a light on in the house, and they could see a figure passing the window.

“They’re in there,” whispered Henry Daly. “We’ll have to find a way to get them out.”

“Tá smaoineamh agam,” a dúirt Henry Daly. “Is féidir liom dul síos i bpoll an Bhanphrionsa Tara, rud a bhaineann léi a ghlacadh agus a boladh a fháil. Nuair a bheidh a boladh agam, is féidir liom í a aimsiú agus í féin agus an Rí Ruairí a aimsiú roimh breacadh an lae.”

Bhí Nanny agus Ned ar bís faoi smaoineamh Henry. Chuaigh Henry Daly isteach sa pholl.

Níos lú ná nóiméad ina dhiaidh sin, chuaigh sé ar ais ag iompar pitseámaí bándearga an Bhanphrionsa Tara agus na seamróa beaga bídeacha orthu ina bhéal. Chuaigh sé ag dul timpeall ar pháirc Katie ag sní amach an boladh.

“Fuair mé é,” adeir Henry Daly. “Tá an boladh thart anseo.”

“Faigh iad, Henry Daly, faigh iad.” Adeir Nanny Reilly.

“Buachaill maith, Henry Daly. Is madra iontach thú. Treoraigh chucu sinn,” a scairt Ned.

Thosaigh Henry ag rith go dtí deireadh an raoin. Thug an boladh tríd geata agus isteach i lána é. Lean sé an lána go dtí an deireadh. Tháinig sé go dtí geata eile.

Ar an taobh eile den gheata bhí teachín beag le cúpla sean sheid agus crainn seiceamara móra timpeall air. Bhí solas ar siúl sa teach, agus chonaic siad figiúir ag dul thar an bhfuinneog.

“Tá siad ann,” a dúirt Henry Daly. “Beidh orainn bealach a aimsiú chun iad a fháil amach.”

“That’s Bull Cullen’s house,” said Nanny.

“Everybody calls him Bull because he’s mean. He’s always chasing us out of Katie’s Field. My brother told me to be careful of that fellah. He said Bull Cullen waits for children to go into Katie’s Field and throws a fishing net over them to catch them.”

“We have to be very quiet,” Nanny whispered. “You go first, Henry Daly.”

With careful steps on the soft ground, Henry Daly led Nanny and Ned to the window of the cottage. They were careful not to make a sound. All three of them peeked in the window.

They could see Bull Cullen opening a sack. They were sure King Rory and Princess Tara were in it, but there was no movement from the sack at all.

Nanny remembered how Princess Tara had kicked with all her might when she had her in the sack.

Bull Cullen just looked into the sack, smiled, and closed it up again. He left the sack sitting on the table while he stoked the fire and poured himself a cup of steaming hot tea.

He kicked his big old heavy shoes off and sat in a rocking chair beside the fire, keeping a watchful eye on his burlap sack.

“Sin teach Bull Cullen,” arsa Nanaí.

“Tugann gach duine Tarbh air mar tá sé meabhrach. Bíonn sé i gcónaí sa tóir orainn amach as Katie’s Field. Dúirt mo dheartháir liom a bheith cúramach leis an fellah sin. Dúirt sé go bhfuil Bull Cullen ag fanacht ar pháistí dul isteach i bPáirc Katie agus go gcaitheann sé líontán iascaigh anuas orthu chun iad a ghabháil.”

“Caithfidh muid a bheith an-chiúin,” a dúirt Nanny. “Téann tú ar dtús, Henry Daly.”

Le céimeanna cúramacha ar an talamh bog, threoraigh Henry Daly Nanny agus Ned go dtí fuinneog an tí. Bhí siad cúramach gan fuaime a dhéanamh. Phéic an triúr acu san fhuinneog.

Chonaic siad Bull Cullen ag oscailt saic. Bhí siad cinnte go raibh an Rí Ruairí agus an Bhanphrionsa Tara istigh ann, ach níor tháinig aon aistriú ón mála ar chor ar bith.

Chuimhnigh Nanny ar an gcaoi ar chiceáil an Bhanphrionsa Tara lena neart nuair a bhí sí sa mhála.

D’fhéach Bull Cullen isteach sa phoca, rinne sé aoibh, agus dhún sé suas arís. D’fhág sé an sac ina shuí ar an mbord agus é ag sméideadh an tine agus ag stealladh cupán tae te gaile dó féin.

Chiceáil sé a sheanbhróga móra troma agus shuigh sé i gcathaoir roctha in aice leis an tine, ag faire go faireach ar a mhála burlap.

“Why isn’t Princess Tara kicking the sack?” whispered Nanny. “Henry Daly, do you remember when I captured her, she kicked so hard she bruised my back?”

“I do,” said Henry, “and she was doing a lot of shouting at you, too.”

“Do you think they are already gone to the Banshee’s Cradle?” asked Ned.

“I hope not,” replied Nanny. “We need to get that sack.”

Nanny turned from the window and scanned Bull Cullen’s yard. She glanced up at the mighty sycamore tree shading his cottage. She tightened the stampede cord on her cowboy hat.

“I have an idea, follow me,” she said.

Henry Daly and Ned followed Nanny Reilly to one of the old sheds.

Nanny whispered, “Look around for Bull Cullen’s fishing nets and some rope. He must keep them somewhere around here. We’ll climb the tree and get him to come out of the house. Then we’ll throw the net over him and tie him up.”

“But he’s too big for us, Nanny Reilly,” said Ned  
“We need to knock him to the ground first, and we have to be quick about it or he’ll catch us and we’ll end up as his Sunday dinner.”

“Cén fáth nach bhfuil an Bhanphrionsa Tara ag ciceáil an mhála?” whispered Nanny. “Henry Daly, an cuimhin leat nuair a ghabh mé í, gur chiceáil sí chomh crua is gur bhrúigh sí mo dhroim?”

“Déanaim,” arsa Anraí, “agus bhí sí ag béicíl oraibhse freisin.”

“An dóigh leat go bhfuil siad imithe go Cliabhán na Banshee cheana féin?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Tá súil agam nach bhfuil,” a d’fhreagair Nanny.  
“Caithfidh muid an sac sin a fháil.”

Chas Nanny ón bhfuinneog agus scanraigh sí clós Bull Cullen. Bhreathnaigh sí ar an gcrann seiceamair a bhí ag scáthú a theachín. Cheangail sí an corda stampáilte ar a hata buachaill bó.

“Tá smaoineamh agam, lean mé,” a dúirt sí.

Lean Henry Daly agus Ned Nanny Reilly chuig ceann de na sean-seideanna.

Dúirt Nanny, “Féach thart fá choinne líonta iascaireachta Bull Cullen agus rópa éigin. Caithfidh sé iad a choinneáil áit éigin anseo. Dreapfaimid an crann agus cuirfimid air teacht amach as an teach. Ansin caithfidh an líon anuas air agus ceangailfimid suas é.”

“Ach tá sé ró-mhór dúinn, a Nanny Reilly,” a dúirt Ned  
“Caithfidh muid é a bhualadh go talamh ar dtús, agus caithfidh a bheith sciobtha faoi sin nó glacfaidh sé sinn agus críochnóimid mar dhinnéar an Domhnaigh.”

“You’re right,” said Nanny. “We need to think of something fast.”

“I know,” said Henry Daly. “We need a trip rope, too!”

“A trip rope! Why?” asked Ned.

“We can tie it across his footpath to trip him up,” said Henry. “Then you’ll be able to get the net over him.”

“I’ll knock the door and run,” said Nanny. “Bull Cullen will run after me and trip over the rope!”

“You’re so clever, Henry Daly!” continued Nanny Reilly as she put her arms around her pal.

“You’re smarter than any other dog I know,” added Ned, “and you can talk too!”

Nanny could feel her tummy fill with butterflies. This was scary. But the image of her little leprechaun princess friend gave her courage.

Nanny and Ned quietly arranged the trip rope about ten yards from the front door while Henry Daly kept a watchful eye on Bull Cullen through the window.

Then they both climbed the big sycamore tree that leaned over the footpath.

They placed the fishing net on two large limbs a couple of feet apart, directly above where Bull Cullen was going to fall.

“Tá an ceart agat,” arsa Nanaí. “Ní mór dúinn smaoineamh ar rud éigin go tapa.”

“Tá a fhios agam,” arsa Henry Daly. “Tá rópa turais ag teastáil uainn freisin!”

“Téad turas! Cén fáth?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Is féidir linn é a cheangal trasna a chosáin chun é a thurais,” a dúirt Henry. “Ansin beidh tú in ann an líon a fháil thar é.”

“Cnagfaidh mé an doras agus rithim,” arsa Nanaí. “Rithfidh Bull Cullen i mo dhiaidh agus turas thar an rópa!”

“Tá tú chomh cliste, Henry Daly!” ar lean Nanny Reilly agus í ag cur a lámha thart ar a cara.

“Tá tú níos cliste ná aon mhadra eile atá ar eolas agam,” a dúirt Ned, “agus is féidir leat labhairt freisin!”

D’fhéadfadh Nanny a bolg a mhothú ag líonadh féileacáin. Bhí sé seo scanrúil. Ach thug íomhá a cara banphrionsa leipreachán beag misneach di.

D’eagraigh Nanny agus Ned an rópa turais go ciúin tuairim is deich slat ón doras tosaigh agus choinnigh Henry Daly súil ghéar ar Bull Cullen tríd an bhfuinneog.

Ansin dhreap siad beirt an crann seiceamar mór a lean thar an gcosán.

Chuir siad an líon iascaigh ar dhá ghéag mhóra cúpla troigh óna chéile, díreach os cionn an áit a raibh Bull Cullen le titim.

After the net was placed in position, Nanny jumped down from the tree and Ned remained in the tree.

Nanny signaled to Henry Daly that they were ready to carry out their plan.

“OK, Henry Daly,” whispered Nanny. “We’re ready.”

Tar éis an líon a chur ina áit, léim Nanny anuas ón gcrann agus d'fhan Ned sa chrann.

Thug Nanny le fios do Henry Daly go raibh siad réidh lena bplean a chur i gcrích.

“Ceart go leor, Henry Daly,” a dúirt Nanny.  
"Táimid réidh."

## CHAPTER TEN

Nanny slipped up to the front door of Bull Cullen's house. She turned and looked up in the tree at Ned and gave him a thumbs up.

Knock! Knock! Knock! Nanny pounded on the door. She dashed to the other side of the trip rope. Nothing happened. The door didn't open. "He's not coming out," Nanny whispered, her voice concerned.

Ned was squatting in the tree waiting to drop the net on Bull Cullen.

"Maybe he didn't hear you. Knock again," Ned whispered. "Can you see him, Henry Daly? What's he doing?"

Henry was still watching Bull Cullen through the window. "He's hiding the sack behind his rocking chair. Here he comes," whispered Henry Daly. "Get Ready!"

Nanny and Ned were scared. This was worse than any scary movie, and it was too late to change their minds. The cottage door swung open wide. Bull Cullen filled the whole doorway.

"Who's out there at this unholy hour?" he shouted, his voice rumbling into the night. He took a step forward and saw Nanny.

"I'll catch you Nanny Reilly!" he roared. "Then I'll eat you for supper!" He took off running after Nanny.

## CAIBIDIL A DEICH

Shleamhnaigh Nanny suas go doras tosaigh teach Bull Cullen. Chuaidh sí agus d'fhéach sí suas sa chrann ag Ned agus thug ordóg suas dó.

Cnag! Cnag! Cnag! Phunt Nanny ar an doras. Chrom sí go dtí an taobh eile den rópa turais. Níor tharla tada. Níor oscail an doras. "Níl sé ag teacht amach," a dúirt Nanny, lena glór buartha.

Bhí Ned ag scata sa chrann ag fanacht leis an líon a scaoileadh ar Bull Cullen.

"B'fhéidir nár chuala sé thú. Cnag arís," a dúirt Ned. "An bhfeiceann tú é, Henry Daly? Cad atá á dhéanamh aige?"

Bhí Henry fós ag breathnú ar Bull Cullen tríd an bhfuinneog. "Tá an mála i bhfolach aige taobh thiar dá chathaoir rocaireachta. Anseo a thagann sé," a dúirt Henry Daly. "Uillmhaigh!"

Bhí eagla ar Nanny agus ar Ned. Bhí sé seo níos measa ná aon scannán scanrúil, agus bhí sé ró dhéanach a n intinn a athrú. D'oscail doras an teachín go leathan. Líon Bull Cullen an doras ar fad.

"Cé tá amuigh ansin ag an uair ana naomha seo?" a scairt sé, a ghuth rumbling isteach san oíche. Thóg sé céim ar aghaidh agus chonaic Nanny.

Rugfaidh mé Nanny Reilly ort!" roar sé. "Ansin íosfaidh mé don suipéar thú!" Thóg sé amach ag rith i ndiaidh Nanny.



Nanny bolted toward the gate. Bull Cullen took long strides and covered a lot of ground. Ned was ready with the net. Henry Daly darted into the house to grab the sack.

“Come back here!” Bull shouted at Nanny. He didn’t see the trip rope. His right foot got caught and pulled Bull Cullen’s big bulky body to a screeching halt.

Both his arms stretched out in front of him. His mouth and eyes were wide open as he crashed to the concrete footpath face down.

“Ouch what happened?” He yelled.

Ned let the net go and it landed perfectly over Bull Cullen.

“Come on, quickly, Nanny,” shouted Ned as he jumped out of the tree and landed on Bull. “Grab the rope!”

Nanny snatched the rope and tried with all her might to tie up Bull Cullen. But the big man twisted and turned, and he was very strong. He was making brave attempts to stand and remove the fishing net.

“I’ll tear the hides off the two of you!” roared Bull. He put his big hands on one rope and pulled hard.

“He’s getting loose!” Nanny cried out to Ned, as the angry man’s grimace changed to an evil grin. He grabbed Nanny Reilly by the ankle and pulled her down.

Bhuail Nanny i dtreo an gheata. Rinne Bull Cullen dul chun cinn fada agus chlúdaigh sé go leor talún. Bhí Ned réidh leis an líontán. Chuaigh Henry Daly isteach sa teach chun greim a fháil ar an mála.

"Tar ar ais anseo!" Scairt Tarbh ar Nanny. Ní fhaca sé rópa an turais. Rug a chos dheas agus stop sé corp mór toirtiúil Bull Cullen.

Shín a dhá lámh amach os a chomhair. Bhí a bhéal agus a shúile oscailte go leathan agus é ag tuairteáil go dtí an cosán coincreíte aghaidh síos.

"Ach cad a tharla?" yelled sé.

Scaoil Ned an líontán agus thuirling sé go foirfe thar Bull Cullen.

"Imigh leat, go gasta, a Nanny," a scairt Ned agus é ag léim amach as an gcrann agus ag tuirlingt ar Tarbh. "Bain an rópa!"

Sciob Nanny an rópa agus rinne sí iarracht Bull Cullen a cheangal lena neart. Ach casadh an fear mór agus casadh, agus bhí sé an láidir. Bhí iarrachtaí cróga á ndéanamh aige seasamh agus an líon iascaireachta a bhaint de.

"Stróicfidh mé na seithí den bheirt agaibh!" roared Bull. Chuir sé a lámha móra ar rópa amháin agus tharraing go crua.

"Tá sé ag dul scaoilte!" Ghlaigh Nanny ar Ned, mar a d'athraigh brón an fhir fhearg go drochghrá. Rug sé ar Nanny Reilly ag an rúitín agus tharraing anuas í.

“I’ll tear the hide off you!” growled an angry voice.

“Let them go or I’ll have you for supper!” Nanny and Ned looked up in shock. That was the angriest voice they had ever heard. Who could it be?

Henry Daly was standing nose-to-nose with Bull Cullen snarling, his sharp, wolf-like teeth gleamed in the moonlight.

His eyes were fierce; saliva dripped from his mouth, and the hackles on his neck and back stood up like spikes.

“Stay where you are and let them go!” growled Henry Daly.

With a flick of his wrist, Bull let Nanny and Ned go. “I’m not going to hurt them,” he told Henry Daly in a soft, shaky voice. “Look, I’m letting them go. Sure, there’s no harm done.”

Bull turned his head and lay face down on the foot-path with the fishing net over his head, neck, and shoulders. He didn’t want to see Henry Daly’s dripping saliva.

He was praying that fierce mad dog would go away. Henry’s face was one inch from Bull’s face. Nanny and Ned quickly stood and backed toward the gate, keeping their attention on the defeated Bull Cullen.

"Stróicfidh mé an ceilt díot!" chrom guth feargach.

"Lig dóibh dul nó beidh mé agat don suipéar!"  
D'fhéach Nanny agus Ned suas i turraing. Ba é sin an guth feargach a chuala siad riamh. Cé a d'fhéadfadh a bheith?

Bhí Henry Daly ina sheasamh srón le srón le Bull Cullen snarling a fhiacla géara, mac tíre cosúil le spléach i solas na gealaí.

Bhí a shúile go fíochmhar seile dripped as a bhéal, agus an hackles ar a mhúineál agus ar ais sheas suas mar spící.

"Fan áit a bhfuil tú agus lig dóibh dul!" Henry Daly ag caoineadh.

Le spléachadh a láimhe, lig Bull do Nanny agus Ned imeacht. "Níl mé chun iad a ghortú," a dúirt sé le Henry Daly i nguth bog crosta. "Féach, tá mé ag ligean dóibh imeacht. Cinnte, níl aon dochar déanta."

Chas Tarbh a cheann agus luigh aghaidh síos ar an gcosán agus an líon iascaireachta thar a cheann, a mhúineál agus a ghuaillí. Ní raibh sé ag iarraidh seile sileadh Henry Daly a fheiceáil.

Bhí sé ag guí go n imeodh madra fíochmhar buile. Bhí aghaidh Henry orlach ó aghaidh Tarbh. Sheas Nanny agus Ned go tapa agus chúlaigh siad i dtreo an gheata, ag coinneáil a n aird ar an Bull Cullen a bhí buailte.

When they got to the gate, they turned and high tailed it back down the lane as fast as their legs would carry them.

Nanny's stampede cord was down on her neck, her cowboy hat blew in the wind, and her auburn curls bounced off her head every stride she took.

Ned's red hair was straight up off his forehead and blowing back in the wind. His new shoes took him down the lane ten strides ahead of Nanny.

"Did you hear Henry Daly?" said Nanny gasping for breath, when they had secured a safe distance between themselves and Bull Cullen.

"I surely did!" exclaimed Ned huffing and puffing as he rested bent over with both hands on his knees "Did you see Henry's teeth? I was afraid of him myself. Just the look of him scared me."

"I never knew he could look so angry," replied Nanny placing her hat back on her head and tightening her stampede cord. "He sure scared Bull Cullen. I thought we were doomed."

"Yeah, me too!" answered Ned. "I was sure we were going to be Bull Cullen's Sunday supper."

"Look!" cried Nanny, pointing up the lane. "Here comes Henry Daly, and he has the sack." Henry bounded toward them.

"What a dog!" said Ned. "He's the greatest."

Nuair a shroich siad an geata, chas siad agus eireaball ard ar ais síos an lána chomh tapa agus a bheadh a chosa iad a iompar.

Bhí corda stampála Nanny síos ar a muiníl, a hata bó ag séideadh sa ghaoth, agus a gcuacha auburn ag preabadh as a ceann gach céim a thóg sí.

Bhí gruaig rua Ned díreach suas as a mhullach agus séideadh ar ais sa ghaoth. Thóg a bhróga nua síos an lána é deich gcéim chun tosaigh ar Nanny.

"Ar chuala tú Henry Daly?" arsa Nanny agus í ag iarraidh anáil, nuair a bhí achar sábháilte faighte acu idir iad féin agus Bull Cullen.

"Is cinnte go ndearna mé!" a dúirt Ned ag magadh agus ag puffing agus é ag luí siar agus a dhá lámh ar a ghlúine "An bhfaca tú fiacla Henry? Bhí eagla orm roimhe féin. Chuir an cuma air go raibh faitíos orm."

"Ní raibh a fhios agam go raibh cuma chomh feargach air," a d'fhreagair Nanny ag cur a hata ar ais ar a ceann agus ag teannadh a corda stampáilte. "Is cinnte go raibh eagla air roimh Bull Cullen. Shíl mé go raibh muid doomed."

"Sea, mise freisin!" d'fhreagair Ned. "Bhí mé cinnte go mbeimis ag suipéar Domhnaigh Bull Cullen."

"Féach!" adeir Nanny, ag cur in iúl suas an lána. "Seo chugainn Henry Daly, agus tá an sac aige." Theorainn Henry i dtreo iad.

"Cad madra!" arsa Ned. "Is é an duine is mó é."

Henry laid the sack at Nanny Reilly's feet.

"There's still no sign of life," said Henry quietly.

Nanny pulled open the drawstring of the sack and looked inside.

King Rory and Princess Tara appeared to be sleeping.

Princess Tara had both her hands joined together under her left cheek and she had her knees curled up to her chest.

Her head was tucked in to one corner of the sack and the little Princess was breathing softly.

King Rory was sitting in the other corner of the sack with his head tilted to one side and his crown down on his nose.

He was snoring quietly.

Leag Anraí an mála ag cosa Nanny Reilly.

"Níl comhartha ar bith den saol go fóill," a dúirt Anraí go ciúin.

Tharraing Nanny oscail an sreang tharraingt ar an mála agus d'fhéach sé taobh istigh.

Bhí an chuma ar an scéal go raibh an Rí Ruairí agus an Bhanphrionsa Tara ina gcodladh.

Bhí a dhá lámh ceangailte le Banphrionsa Tara faoina leic chlé agus bhí a glúine cuachta suas go dtí a cófra.

Bhí a ceann greamaithe isteach i gcúinne amháin den mhála agus bhí an Banphrionsa beag ag anáilú go bog.

Bhí an Rí Ruairí ina shuí sa chúinne eile den mhála agus a cheann claonta go taobh amháin agus a choróin síos ar a shrón.

Bhí sé ag snoring go ciúin.

## CHAPTER ELEVEN

## CAIBIDIL A HAON DÉAG

The tiny Princess looked so peaceful. Nanny put her finger in the sack and touched the Princess Tara's small cheek.

"Wake up, Princess Tara. It's me, Nanny Reilly." Nanny said quietly.

Princess Tara opened her eyes and looked up at Nanny Reilly. She stretched her arms wide just as if she were waking up from a good night's sleep.

King Rory then opened his eyes. "Saints preserve the lot of us," he said. "Are we safe?"

"Yes, Father, we're safe," answered Princess Tara. "My friend Nanny Reilly saved us."

"I didn't do it alone," said Nanny. "Henry Daly and my best friend Ned Franey helped me."

"Sure you are the two bravest young children in the whole of Ireland," said King Rory.

"When that mean man knocked us unconscious, I thought that was the end of everything for us. I was dreaming of the Banshee's Cradle."

"We heard King Brian talking about the Banshee's Cradle." Ned said. "He said you both had to be found before dawn. He and all his leprechaun soldiers are searching the whole of Ballineskar and Coolrainy for You."

Bhí cuma chomh suaimhneach ar an mBanphrionsa beag bídeach. Chuir Nanny a méar sa mhála agus bhain sí le leiceann beag an Bhanphrionsa Tara.

"Dúisigh, a Bhanphrionsa Tara. Sin mise, Nanny Reilly." A dúirt Nanny go ciúin.

D'oscail an Banphrionsa Tara a súile agus d'fhéach sí suas ar Nanny Reilly. Shín sí a lámha ar leithead díreach mar a bheadh sí ag éirí as codladh na hoíche.

Ansin d'oscail an Rí Ruairí a shúile. "Caomhnaíonn na naoimh an méid againn," a dúirt sé. "An bhfuil muid sábháilte?"

"Tá, a Athair, tá muid slán," d'fhreagair an Bhanphrionsa Tara. "Shábháil mo chara Nanny Reilly sinn."

"Ní i m'aonar a rinne mé é," arsa Nanaí. "Chabhraigh Henry Daly agus mo chara is fearr Ned Franey liom."

"Cinnté is tusa an bheirt pháistí óga is cróga in Éirinn ar fad," arsa an Rí Ruairí.

"Nuair a bhuail an fear meánach sin gan aithne orainn, shíl mé gurbh é sin deireadh gach rud dúinn. Bhí mé ag brionglóid ar Chliabhán na Banshee."

"Chuala muid an Rí Brian ag caint ar Chliabhán na Banshee." A dúirt Ned. "Dúirt sé go gcaithfí an bheirt agaibh a fháil roimh breacadh an lae. Tá sé féin agus a shaighdiúirí leipreacháin go léir ag cuardach Bhéal Átha na gCearr agus Cúil Raithin ar do shon."

I thought you were goners!"

"Goners is a good word for it," said King Rory.

"Let's find King Brian and let him know we're safe.

Your bravery was a blessing for us. I thank you all from the bottom of my heart. You will be rewarded for what you have done for us."

Princess Tara jumped on Henry Daly's back and hugged him tightly, "you too Henry Daly, you're so brave."

Nanny and Ned blushed and got a little bashful. They looked to the ground and twisted their bodies a little.

Then they looked at each other smiling. At the time, they didn't realize they were being brave.

But when they got over their bashful moment, they realized how brave they were.

King Rory took a horn from his cloak pocket and blew it. It was like the horn King Brian used to blow the distress signal.

Except this time the sound was a joyous one. Another horn rang out in the distance, answering the call for celebration.

"Let's go to Coolrainy and continue the midsummer's eve dance. We surely must celebrate our good fortune now," said King Rory.

Shíl mé go raibh tú goners!"

"Is maith an focal é goners," arsa an Rí Ruairí.

"Téimid ar an Rí Brian agus cuirimis in iúl dó go bhfuil muid slán.

Ba bheannacht dúinn é do chrógacht. Gabhaim buíochas libh go léir ó bhun mo chroí. Gheobhaidh tú luach saothair as a bhfuil déanta agat dúinn."

Léim an Bhanphrionsa Tara ar dhroim Henry Daly agus barróg go docht air, "tá tusa chomh cróga Henry Daly."

Blushed Nanny agus Ned agus fuair beagán bashful. D'fhéach siad go talamh agus casadh a gcorp beagán.

Ansin d'fhéach siad ar a chéile miongháire. Ag an am, níor thuig siad go raibh siad cróga.

Ach nuair a fuair siad an lámh in uachtar orthu, thuig siad cé chomh cróga agus a bhí siad.

Thóg an Rí Ruairí adharc as a phóca clóca agus shéid sé é. Bhí sé mar an adharc a bhíodh ag an Rí Brian chun comhartha anacair a shéideadh.

Ach amháin an uair seo bhí an fhuaim áthasach. Ghlaodh adharc eile amach i gcéin, ag freagairt an ghlaio ceiliúrtha.

"Rachaimid go Cúil Raithin agus leanfaimid ar aghaidh le damhsa oíche lár an tsamhraidh. Is cinnte go gcaithfidh muid ár ndea-ádh a cheiliúradh anois," a dúirt an Rí Ruairí.

King Rory joined Princess Tara on Henry Daly's back and the five of them headed back to Magandy's Pond to join all the other leprechauns.

When they got there, King Brian and all the leprechauns were waiting for them. They heard all about the bravery of Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey, and Henry Daly.

King Brian stood on a toadstool and then called for silence.

"May I please have everyone's attention? I have a very proud presentation to make to our newfound friends here.

He took three tiny gold whistles from his cloak. "Take these whistles and keep them with you at all times.

Wherever you go in Ireland you can blow on these whistles, and the leprechaun king of that province will appear and help you with your wishes. From this very moment, you are all as magic as any leprechaun in Ireland."

Nanny's face lit up. "We're magic like leprechauns!" she said looking at Ned.

"That's like being your own genie!" replied Ned

"It sure is!" answered Nanny. "Sure, I don't know what to wish for. May I think for a minute?"

Chuaigh an Rí Ruairí isteach sa Bhanphrionsa Teamhrach ar dhroim Henry Daly agus chuaigh an cúigear acu ar ais go Loch Magandy le dul i dteannta leis na leipreacháin eile.

Nuair a fuair siad ann bhí an Rí Brian agus na leipreacháin go léir ag fanacht leo. Chuala siad go léir faoi chrógacht Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey, agus Henry Daly.

Sheas an Rí Brian ar stól buaf agus ghlaigh sé ina thost ansin.

"An féidir liom aird gach duine a tharraingt le do thoil? Tá cur i láthair an-bhródúil agam le tabhairt dár gcairde nua anseo.

Thóg sé trí feadaíl óir as a chlóca. "Tóg na feadóga seo agus coinnigh leat i gcónaí iad.

Cibé áit a dtéann tú i nÉirinn is féidir leat na feadóga seo a shéideadh, agus beidh leprechaun rí na cúige sin le feiceáil agus cabhrú leat le do mhianta. Ón nóiméad seo, tá tú ar fad chomh draíochtúil le haon leipreachán in Éirinn."

Aghaidh Nanny lasadh suas. "Tá muid draíochtúil cosúil le leipreacháin!" a dúirt sí ag féachaint ar Ned.

"Sin cosúil le bheith i do genius féin!" d'fhreagair Ned

"Is cinnte!" d'fhreagair Nanny. "Cinnte, níl a fhios agam cad ba mhaith liom. An féidir liom smaoiniamh ar feadh nóiméid?"

“Take as long as you like,” said King Brian. “Your wishes will always be there.”

“I wish for another platter of those juicy bones,” said Henry Daly, licking his lips.

“Done,” said King Brian laughing. A big silver platter of juicy bones appeared in front of Henry Daly.

“Holy moley!” said Henry Daly. “I like this wishing stuff.”

“I wish for a cowboy hat like Nanny Reilly’s!” wished Ned.

“Done,” said King Brian. A cowboy hat exactly like Nanny’s appeared on Ned’s head.

“I like this wishing stuff, too, Henry Daly.” Ned said, removing his new hat to admire it.

“What about yourself, Lass?” King Brian asked Nanny Reilly.

“There’s only one wish I want tonight,” said Nanny.

“What is the one wish you would like tonight, Nanny Reilly?” asked King Brian.

“I wish Bull Cullen would forget what happened and not be mean anymore,” said Nanny. She surely didn’t want to run into Bull Cullen again after the events of tonight.

“Tóg chomh fada agus is mian leat,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Beidh do mhianta ann i gcónaí.”

“Is mian liom platter eile de na cnámha súiteacha sin,” a dúirt Henry Daly, ag lí a bheola.

“Déanta,” arsa an Rí Brian ag gáire. Tháinig platter mór airgid de chnámha súmhara os comhair Henry Daly.

“Moley naofa!” arsa Henry Daly. “Is maith liom an stuif mianta seo.”

“Is mian liom hata bó mar hata Nanny Reilly!” mhian Ned.

“Déanta,” arsa an Rí Brian. Bhí hata bó bó díreach cosúil le hata Nanny le feiceáil ar cheann Ned.

“Is maith liom an stuif mianta seo freisin, Henry Daly.” A dúirt Ned, ag baint a hata nua a admire é.

“Cad fút féin, a Mhuire?” D’iarr an Rí Brian ar Nanny Reilly.

“Níl ach mian amháin uaim anocht,” arsa Nanaí.

“Cad é an ceann ba mhaith leat anocht, Nanny Reilly?” d’fhiafraigh an Rí Brian.

“Ba mhian liom go ndéanfadh Bull Cullen dearmad ar a tharla agus nach mbeadh sé i gceist a thuilleadh,” a dúirt Nanny. Is cinnte nach raibh sí ag iarraidh dul i ngleic le Bull Cullen arís tar éis imeachtaí na hoíche anocht.



“Done,” said King Brian, “and a wise wish it is too.”

“Let’s dance and celebrate!” said Princess Tara.

“Before we dance, there is one more thing I would like to do,” said King Brian

“What’s that?” asked Princess Tara.

“A fine young cowgirl and a fine young cowboy, with two fine hats like that, deserve something to go with them,” answered King Brian.

He clapped his hands three times, and before Nanny and Ned’s eyes appeared two ponies.

One black, and one white. Nanny chose the white pony, whose name was Frosty. The black pony, Bertie, was Ned’s.

“Déanta,” arsa an Rí Brian, “agus toil chríonna é freisin.”

"Déanaimis rince agus ceiliúradh!" arsa an Bhanphrionsa Teamhrach.

“Sula ndéanaimid rince, tá rud amháin eile ba mhaith liom a dhéanamh,” arsa an Rí Brian

"Cad é sin?" a d'fhiafraigh Banphrionsa Tara.

“Tá rud éigin tuillte ag cailín bó breá óg agus buachaill bó óg breá, le dhá hata mar sin,” a d’fhreagair an Rí Brian.

Bhuail sé a lámha trí huair, agus roimh shúile Nanny agus Ned bhí dhá chapailíní le feiceáil.

Ceann dubh, agus ceann bán. Roghnaigh Nanny an chapailíní bán, arbh ainm Frosty di. Ba le Ned an capall dubh, Bertie.



## CHAPTER TWELVE

It had rained all day and night the day before, and in a seaside village, that was the best time to go beachcombing.

And that was just what Nanny and Ned wanted to do on this particular day.

Now they had their new ponies to ride, and their cowboy hats to wear, they could finally go to Raven's Point, where all the treasures from all the shipwrecks were.

"My brother told me that Long John Silver is buried at Raven's Point, and his wooden leg is still floating in the Atlantic Ocean with his parrot sitting on it," said Nanny Reilly as she and Ned rode Bertie and Frosty down the Bog Road to the beach. Henry Daly trotted along behind them.

"Maybe the treasure is buried with him," said Ned.

"My mother said old Mrs. Boyle asked that all her treasures get buried with her."

"We can dig up the buried treasure!" said Nanny excitedly.

"Yeah," said Ned "Then we can bury it again in a different place!"

"We can bury it behind the coal shed!" said Nanny. "Nobody but Henry Daly ever goes there."

## CAIBIDIL A DÓ DÉAG

Bhí sé ag cur báistí ar feadh an lae agus na hoíche an lá roimh ré, agus i sráidbhaile cois farraige, b'in é an t-am ab fhearr le dul ag cíoradh na trá.

Agus sin díreach a bhí Nanny agus Ned ag iarraidh a dhéanamh ar an lá áirithe seo.

Anois bhí a gcuid capaillíní nua le marcaíocht acu, agus a hataí bó le caitheamh, d'fhéadfaidís dul faoi dheireadh go Pointe na bhFiach, áit a raibh seoda na longbhriste go léir.

"Dúirt mo dheartháir liom go bhfuil Long John Silver curtha ag Raven's Point, agus go bhfuil a chos adhmaid fós ar snámh san Aigéan Atlantach agus a parrot ina suí air," a dúirt Nanny Reilly agus í féin agus Ned ag marcaíocht Bertie agus Frosty síos Bóthar an Phortaigh go dtí an trá. Throt Henry Daly taobh thiar díobh.

"B'fhéidir go bhfuil an taisce curtha leis," arsa Ned.

"Dúirt mo mháthair d'iarr sean-Bhean Uasal Boyle go gcuirfí a seoda go léir léi."

"Is féidir linn an taisce adhlactha a thochailt!" a dúirt Nanny ar bís.

"Sea," a dúirt Ned "Ansin is féidir linn é a adhlacadh arís in áit eile!"

"Is féidir linn é a adhlacadh taobh thiar den tseid guail!" arsa Nanny. "Ní théann aon duine ach Henry Daly ann go deo."

“Then Henry Daly will be able to guard it for us so no one will steal it from us!” added Ned as Bertie moved from a walk to a trot.

Nanny squeezed Frosty to catch up. Both ponies were trotting side by side at the water’s edge. Henry Daly picked up the pace too and bounded his way into the ocean.

He wanted to swim a little. Nanny directed Frosty into the ocean behind Henry. The water came up to Frosty’s knees as she raised her legs higher with her tail in the air.

“Wait for me Nanny Reilly,” said Ned, he asked Bertie to follow. “This is so much fun. I’m really happy to have my pony.”

Ned looked at Nanny with a broad grin on his face. “I’ll race you to the sand dunes. You can go first because you and Frosty are girls.”

Nanny didn’t answer Ned, she just grinned back at him. In an instant she tightened the stampede cord on her hat, leaned forward, held on to Frosty’s mane and the reins at the same time.

“Yeah! yelled Nanny. Frosty was on her toes and ready to oblige. She sprang forward, leaping her way out of the ocean with her tail still in the air.

This was a lot of fun for Frosty. She sprayed Ned and Bertie with the ocean water on her way.

“Ansin beidh Henry Daly in ann é a chosaint dúinn mar sin ní ghoidfidh aon duine uainn é!” Chuir Ned leis agus Bertie ag bogadh ó shiúlóid go trot.

Chuir Nanny brú ar Frosty chun teacht suas. Bhí an dá chapailíní ag breacadh taobh le taobh ar imeall an uisce. Phioc Henry Daly an luas freisin agus theorainn a bhealach isteach san aigéan.

Bhí sé ag iarraidh snámh beag. Threoraigh Nanny Frosty isteach san aigéan taobh thiar de Anraí. Tháinig an t-uisce suas go dtí glúine Frosty agus í ag ardú a cosa níos airde lena heireaball san aer.

“Fan liom Nanny Reilly,” a dúirt Ned, d’iarr sé ar Bertie é a leanúint. “Is mór an spraoi é seo. Tá an-áthas orm mo chapailíní a bheith agam.”

D’fhéach Ned ar Nanny le gréin leathan ar a aghaidh. “Rachaidh mé go dtí na dumhcha thú. Is féidir leat dul ar dtús mar is cailíní tú féin agus Frosty.”

Níor fhreagair Nanny Ned, rinne sí gáire ar ais air. Ar an toirt theann sí an corda stampede ar a hata, chlaon sí ar aghaidh, greim ar mane Frosty agus an t-aisrian ag an am céanna.

“Sea! yelled Nanny. Frosty a bhí ar a bharraicíní agus réidh chun iallach. Sprang sí ar aghaidh, ag léim a bealach amach as an aigéan agus a heireaball fós san aer. Bhí sé seo go leor spraoi do Frosty Bhí sé seo go leor spraoi do Frosty.

Spraeáil sí Ned agus Bertie le huisce na farraige ar a bealach.

Ned wasn't quite as ready as Bertie for Nanny's quick departure.

He lost his seat a little and found himself grabbing the mane and pulling himself forward to avoid slipping from Bertie's back.

He didn't have any time to tighten the stampede cord on his hat, so he had to hold his hat down with one hand and hold the reins with the other.

That's the last time he suggests that girls go first he thought to himself.

Nanny and Frosty reached the sand dunes seconds before Ned and Bertie. Nanny was still wearing her grin.

"OK," said Ned, as he dismounted to give his pony a breather, "you win, but next time we start together." Nanny agreed nodding, as she loosened her stampede cord.

She leaned forward and hugged Frosty's neck. Then she slid off her pony's back, took the reins over her head and let her rest a while.

Henry quickly swam his way back to the water's edge. He shook himself off and rolled in the dry sand. He loved the beach.

He could see Nanny and Ned sitting in the sand at the foot of the dunes. Bertie and Frosty stood close by grazing on tall reeds.

Ní raibh Ned chomh réidh céanna le Bertie d'imeacht sciobtha Nanny.

Chaill sé beagán a shuíochán agus fuair sé é féin ag breith ar an mane agus ag tarraingt air féin chun sleamhnú ó chúl Bhertie a sheachaint.

Ní raibh am ar bith aige an corda stam-pede a bhí ar a hata a dhéanamh níos doichte, agus mar sin b'éigean dó a hata a choinneáil síos le lámh amháin, agus an t-aisrian a choinneáil leis an lámh eile.

Sin an uair dheireanach a mholann sé do chailíní dul ar dtús dar leis féin.

Shroich Nanny agus Frosty na dumhcha soicind roimh Ned agus Bertie. Bhí Nanny fós ag caitheamh a grin.

"Ceart go leor," arsa Ned, agus é ag teacht anuas chun análoir a thabhairt dá chapaillíní, "buann tú, ach an chéad uair eile tosnóimid le chéile." D'aontaigh Nanny go raibh sí ag déanamh srón, agus í ag scaoileadh a corda stampede.

Chlaon sí ar aghaidh agus barróg ar mhúineál Frosty. Ansin shleamhnaigh sí de dhroim a chapaillíní, thóg sí an t-aiseanna thar a ceann agus lig sí a scíth a ligean tamall.

Shnámh Anraí a bhealach ar ais go dtí imeall an uisce go tapa. Chroith sé é féin agus rolladh sa ghaineamh tirim. Ba bhreá leis an trá.

Chonaic sé Nanaí agus Ned ina suí sa ghaineamh ag bun na ndumhcha.

Henry sniffed his way to Nanny and Ned. "Not too many rabbits on the beach," he said, as he shook the sand from his damp body.

He dug himself an area in the sand where he could curl up and relax after his swim.

For several minutes, the friends sat and talked about the buried treasure they were going to find. The excitement of it all was almost too much to bear.

"Let's go Nanny Reilly," said Ned, before somebody gets there before us." They both mounted their ponies and headed off trotting towards Ravens Point. Henry Daly led the way.

"Look at the footprints in the sand," said Ned. "Are they coming out of the water?"

"I think they are!" said Nanny. "Maybe it's somebody from a shipwreck."

"Maybe it's a pirate!" said Ned "Let's follow them and see where they go."

"I'll go first," said Henry Daly.

Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey, and their ponies followed Henry up the beach to the dunes. The prints went over the dunes and into the forest. Henry followed the scent.

Nanny, Ned and their ponies were close behind and feeling a little nervous.

Sniffed Henry a bhealach chuig Nanny agus Ned. "Níl an iomarca coiníní ar an trá," a dúirt sé, agus é ag crith an gaineamh óna chorp tais.

Thochail sé áit sa ghaineamh dó féin áit a bhféadfadh sé curl suas agus a scíth a ligean tar éis dó a bheith ag snámh.

Ar feadh roinnt nóiméad, shuigh na cairde agus labhair siad faoin taisce adhlactha a bhí siad chun a fháil. Bhí an sceitimíní ar fad beagnach i bhfad ró-mhór le tabhairt faoi.

"Rachaimid Nanny Reilly," a dúirt Ned, sula dtagann duine éigin os ár gcomhair." Ghluais siad beirt ar a gcuid capaillíní agus chuaigh siad ag triall i dtreo Rinn na bhFiach. Henry Daly a bhí i gceannas ar an mbealach.

"Féach ar na lorga sa ghaineamh," a dúirt Ned. "An bhfuil siad ag teacht amach as an uisce?"

"Sílim go bhfuil siad!" arsa Nanny. "B'fhéidir gur duine éigin as longbhriseadh é."

"B'fhéidir gur bradach é!" arsa Ned "Leanaimís iad agus feicimís cá dtéann siad."

"Rachaidh mé i dtosach," arsa Henry Daly.

Lean Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey, agus a gcuid capaillíní Anraí suas an trá go dtí na dumbcha. Chuaigh na priontaí thar na dumbcha agus isteach sa fhoraois. Lean Henry an boladh.

Bhí Nanny, Ned agus a gcuid capaillíní gar taobh thiar agus ag mothú beagán neirbhíseach.

The rolling sand dunes leveled out, and small pine trees lined a wide sandy trail.

As they rode further down the sandy trail it narrowed and became a grass trail. The trees got taller.

Bertie and Frosty snorted. They noticed the change of scenery and felt tension in Nanny and Ned. Soon they made their way a little deeper into the forest.

Tall pines surrounded them. Dried twigs littered the trail, and when the ponies trod on them, they snapped loudly and the sound carried.

“Do you hear the echo?” asked Ned.

“I do,” Nanny said. “It sounds empty in here. I can’t hear anything but the twigs breaking.

My brother says that when you can hear an echo, it’s really the Banshee. Her footsteps make no sound as she floats around and she repeats whatever you say into your ear.”

“The Banshee! I heard she only comes out at night,” Ned said.

“If she comes after us, Bertie and Frosty will carry us away as fast as lightning, and she’ll never catch us!”

Henry Daly came running back. “I found a man behind the trees over there,” he said. “I think he’s asleep.”

Leathnaigh na dumhcha rollacha amach, agus bhí rian leathan gainimh ar na crainn ghiúise beaga.

Agus iad ag marcaíocht níos faide síos an rian ghainmheach caolaigh sé agus rinneadh cosán féir. D'éirigh na crainn níos airde.

Rinne Bertie agus Frosty snort. Thug siad faoi deara an t-athrú radharcra agus bhraith siad teannas i Nanny agus Ned. Go gairid rinne siad a mbealach beagán níos doimhne isteach san fhoraois.

Bhí péine arda timpeallaithe orthu. Chuir craobhóga triomaithe bruscar ar an rian, agus nuair a bhí na capaillíní ag siúl orthu léim siad go glórach agus d'iompair an fhuaim.

“An gcloiseann tú an macalla?” a d'fhiafraigh Ned.

“Déanaim,” a dúirt Nanaí. “Fuaimeann sé folamh anseo. Ní féidir liom aon rud a chloisteáil ach na craobhóga ag briseadh.

Deir mo dheartháir nuair is féidir leat macalla a chloisteáil, is é an Banshee i ndáiríre. Níl aon fhuaim ag a coiscéimeanna agus í ag snámh thart agus cuireann sí an méid a déarfá isteach i do chluas arís.”

“An Bhanshí! Chuala mé nach dtagann sí amach ach san oíche,” a dúirt Ned.

“Má thagann sí inár ndiaidh, tabharfaidh Bertie agus Frosty ar shiúl muid chomh tapa leis an tintreach, agus ní ghlacfaidh sí go deo sinn!”

Tháinig Henry Daly ag rith ar ais. “Fuair mé fear taobh thiar de na crainn thall ansin,” a dúirt sé. “Sílím go bhfuil sé ina chodladh.”

“Show us where he is, Henry Daly!” Nanny said. Nanny and Ned rode behind Henry Daly.

When they got near to where the man lay, they dismounted, tied Bertie and Frosty to a branch of a fallen tree and slowly crept to him.

The stranger was sleeping soundly with his head resting against the trunk of a pine tree. He wore a brown cap, a thick white woolen sweater, gray trousers and rubber boots.

“Do you think he’s a pirate?” whispered Ned.

“No I don’t think so.” answered Ned. “Sure pirates wear a patch over one eye. Maybe he’s a robber and he came this far into the forest to bury the money he robbed.”

“Should we wake him up and ask who he is?” Ned asked.

“No,” said Nanny, “what if he wakes up and grabs us and we can’t get away.”

“I’ll growl at him,” said Henry Daly. “If he grabs me he’ll be a sorry man.”

Henry took a step toward the sleeping man; he lowered his head and growled. The strange man didn’t move.

“Growl again, Henry Daly, he didn’t hear you,” Nanny said.

“Taispeáin dúinn cá bhfuil sé, Henry Daly!” A dúirt Nanny. Chuaigh Nanny agus Ned ar chúl Henry Daly.

Nuair a tháinig siad i ngar don áit ina raibh an fear ina luí, tháinig siad as a chéile, cheangail siad Bertie agus Frosty le brainse de chrann tite agus chuaigh siad go mall chuige.

Bhí an strainséir ina chodladh go suaimhneach agus a cheann ina luí i gcoinne stoc crann giúise. Chaith sé caipín donn, geansaí tiubh olla bán, bríste liath agus buataisí rubair.

"An dóigh leat gur bradach é?" dúirt Ned.

“Ní dóigh liom.” d'fhreagair Ned. “Cinnté caitheann foghlaithe mara paiste thar aon tsúil amháin. B’fhéidir gur robálaí é agus gur tháinig sé chomh fada seo isteach san fhóraois chun an t-airgead a ghoid sé a adhlacadh.”

“Ar cheart dúinn é a dhúiseacht agus a fhiafraí cé hé féin?” D'iarr Ned.

“Ní hea,” arsa Nanaí, “cad má dhúisíonn sé agus go mbuaileann sé sinn agus nach dtig linn imeacht.”

“Beidh mé ag gol leis,” arsa Henry Daly. “Má rug sé orm beidh sé ina fhear brón.”

Henry ghlac céim i dtreo an fear codlata; d’ísligh sé a cheann agus chrom sé. Níor bhog an fear aisteach.

“Fás arís, Henry Daly, níor chuala sé thú,” a dúirt Nanny.



Henry took another step forward. His nose was now six inches from the stranger's nose. He growled again. This time his growls were deeper and longer.

The stranger opened his eyes. He saw Henry's stern eyes, long nose and sharp teeth, "I knew it," he mumbled, and then he passed out again.

"I think you scared the life out of him Henry Daly," said Ned.

Henry realized his growling was too severe. He took a few steps back and began barking at the stranger and wagging his tail.

Once again, the stranger opened his eyes. Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly stood rigid and stared at him in silence.

The stranger stared back. His eyes shifted from Henry, to Ned, and then to Nanny. "Who are you?" he asked.

"My name is Nanny Reilly," replied Nanny, as she and Ned took a single step back.

"Thank God," the man said relieved. "My name is Fran O'Toole. If I'm here talking to Nanny Reilly, that means I'm still alive, and she didn't get me."

"Who didn't get you?" asked Nanny.

"The Banshee!" said Fran.

Thóg Henry céim eile chun tosaigh. Bhí a shrón sé orlach anois ó shrón an strainséir. D'fhás sé arís. An uair seo bhí a fhásann níos doimhne agus níos faide.

D'oscail an strainséir a shúile. Chonaic sé súile géara Henry, srón fada agus fiacla géara, "Bhí a fhios agam é," ar sé mumbled, agus ansin rith sé amach arís.

"Sílim go raibh eagla ort ar an saol uaidh Henry Daly," a dúirt Ned.

Thuig Anraí go raibh a ghortú ró-dhian. Thóg sé cúpla céim ar ais agus thosaigh sé ag tafann ar an strainséir agus wagging a eireaball.

Arís eile, d'oscail an strainséir a shúile. Sheas Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly docht agus d'fhéach siad air ina dtost.

Stán an strainséir siar. D'aistrigh a shúile ó Henry, go Ned, agus ansin go Nanny. "Cé hé tusa?" d'iarr sé.

"Nanny Reilly is ainm dom," a d'fhreagair Nanny, mar ghlac sí féin agus Ned céim amháin siar.

"Buíochas le Dia," a dúirt an fear le faoiseamh. "Fran O'Toole is ainm dom. Má tá mé anseo ag caint le Nanny Reilly, ciallaíonn sé sin go bhfuil mé fós beo, agus ní bhfuair sí mé."

"Cé nach bhfuair tú?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny.

"An Bhansí!" arsa Fran.

“The Banshee!” exclaimed Ned. “Is the Banshee here in the forest? If she is, I want to go home.”

“I don’t know if she’s here. All I know is we were out fishing when a storm came up, and a mighty wave turned our fishing boat over.

Mike and I were trying to keep our heads above water when I heard a howl like I’d never heard before.”

“Let’s get out of here,” said Nanny tightening her stampede cord on her cowboy hat.

She quickly turned and made her way towards Frosty who was gorging on the fresh green grass around the fallen pine tree she and Bertie were tethered to.

Ned tightened the stampede cord on his hat too. This meant they were planning to ride like the wind.

“You can ride my pony, and I’ll ride with Ned,” A frightened Nanny told Fran O’Toole.

“We can’t go yet,” said Fran. “We have to look for my friend Mike Donovan. I saw the Banshee lift him up out of the water, and she was laughing like mad at me.

She said, “don’t go anywhere, I’ll be back for you!” Then, she took him off in this direction.”

“I’m scared,” said Ned. “Can we go?”

“If you two want to go, don’t let me stop you.” Fran said.

"An Bhansí!" exclaimed Ned. "An bhfuil an Banshee anseo san fhoraois? Má tá, ba mhaith liom dul abhaile."

“Níl a fhios agam an bhfuil sí anseo. Níl a fhios agam go raibh muid amuigh ag iascach nuair a tháinig stoirm aníos, agus gur iompaigh tonn iontach ár mbád iascaigh.

Bhí Mike agus mé féin ag iarraidh ár gcinn a choinneáil os cionn an uisce nuair a chuala mé caoineadh mar nár chuala mé riamh cheana.”

“Rachaimid amach as seo,” arsa Nanaí agus í ag teannadh a corda stampáilte ar a hata buachaill bó.

Chas sí go tapa agus rinne sí a bealach i dtreo Frosty a bhí ag gorging ar an bhféar glas úr thart ar an gcrann giúise tite a raibh sí féin agus Bertie ceangailte leis.

Theann Ned an corda stampede ar a hata freisin. Chiollaigh sé seo go raibh siad ag beartú marcaíocht ar nós na gaoithe.

“Is féidir leat mo chapailíní a mharcaíocht, agus marcóidh mé le Ned,” a dúirt Nanny scanraithe le Fran O’Toole.

“Ní féidir linn dul go fóill,” arsa Fran. “Caithfidh muid mo chara Mike Donovan a chuardach. Chonaic mé an Banshee ag tógáil aníos as an uisce é, agus bhí sí ag gáire ar mire orm.

Dúirt sí. ‘Ná téigh áit ar bith, beidh mé ar ais chugat!’ Ansin thóg sí amach sa treo seo é.”

“Tá faitíos orm,” arsa Ned. "An féidir linn dul?"

“Más mian leat beirt dul, ná bac liom thú.” arsa Fran.

“I have to find Mike before I go anywhere. There’s no time to go looking for help. It could take hours for anyone to get here.”

“I know who can help!” exclaimed Nanny. “King Brian!”

“Yeah!” cried Ned. “King Brian can help!”

“King Brian, who’s that?” Fran asked.

“He’s the king of all the leprechauns of all Coolrainy,” said Nanny. “If I blow my whistle, he’ll show up and give me a wish.” Nanny pulled her new gold whistle from the pocket of her blue jeans.

“I don’t have time for your jokes right now,” Fran said angrily. “Go home, the pair of you, and leave me alone. I’ll find Mike without you.”

Fran got to his feet and dusted the pine needles off his trousers. “Whoever heard of such a ridiculous thing? King Brian my eye,” he added.

“It’s true!” Ned said in Nanny’s defense. “He gave me this cowboy hat, and he gave Henry Daly some juicy bones.”

“He gave us our ponies, and then he made Henry Daly talk,” added Nanny, hoping she sounded convincing to poor Fran.

She could imagine how her story sounded to anyone, and especially to someone who’d been attacked by the Banshee.

“Caithfidh mé Mike a aimsiú sula rachainn áit ar bith. Níl aon am le dul ag lorg cabhrach. D’fhéadfadh go dtógfadh sé uaireanta ar aon duine teacht anseo.”

“Tá a fhios agam cé atá in ann cabhrú!” exclaimed Nanny. “Rí Brian!”

“Sea!” adeir Ned. “Is féidir leis an Rí Brian cabhrú leat!”

“A Rí Brian, cé hé sin?” D’iarr Fran.

“Tá sé ina rí ar na leipreacháin go léir i gCúil Raithin,” arsa Nanaí. “Má shéidim mo fheadóg, taispeánfaidh sé suas agus tabharfaidh sé mian dom.” Tharraing Nanny a fheadóg nua óir as póca a jeans gorm.

“Níl am agam do chuid scéalta grinn faoi láthair,” a dúirt Fran go feargach. “Imigh leat abhaile, a bheirt, agus fág mé i m’aonar. Gheobhaidh mé Mike gan tú.”

Tháinig Fran ar a chosa agus dhírigh sé na snáthaidí péine as a bríste. “Cé hé a chuala trácht ar rud chomh ridiciúil? A Rí Brian mo shúil,” ar sé.

“Tá sé fíor!” Dúirt Ned i gcosaint Nanny. “Thug sé an hata bó seo dom, agus thug sé cnámha súiteacha do Henry Daly.”

“Thug sé ár gcapaillíní dúinn, agus ansin thug sé ar Henry Daly labhairt,” a dúirt Nanny, agus é ag súil go raibh sí diongbháilte do Fran bocht.

D’fhéadfadh sí a shamhlú conas a d’fhuascail a scéal do dhuine ar bith, agus go háirithe do dhuine ar d’ionsaigh an Banshee.

“Who’s Henry Daly?” Fran asked.

“My dog,” said Nanny.

“That’s it. I’ve heard enough!” Fran said angrily as he straightened his hat. “The two of you get up on your magic ponies and take your talking dog with you.”

He shook his fist at them and said, “Get out of here, the pair of you, and don’t say another word.” Fran O’Toole marched off, leaving Nanny and Ned speechless.

“He doesn’t believe us!” Ned said, his freckles were standing out on his pale face, so Nanny knew he was as shocked as she was. “Why doesn’t he believe us?”

“I don’t know,” answered Nanny. “I’m going to blow my whistle for King Brian.”

With that, Nanny blew hard on her whistle, but no noise came from it. “What’s wrong with this thing?” asked Nanny “It didn’t make any noise.”

“I’ll blow my whistle,” said Ned “Maybe yours is broken.” Ned pulled his from his pocket and blew it as hard as he could. No noise came from it. “What’s wrong with mine?” pouted Ned. “It doesn’t work!”

“I’ll blow mine,” said Henry Daly. He lowered his head to grab the whistle hanging from his collar and blew as hard as he could. Not a sound came from his whistle either.

"Cé hé Henry Daly?" D'iarr Fran.

“Mo mhadra,” arsa Nanaí.

“Sin é. Tá mo dhóthain cloiste agam!" Dúirt Fran go feargach agus é ag díriú a hata. “Éiríonn an bheirt agaibh ar do chapailíní draíochta agus tógann siad do mhadra cainte leat.”

Chroith sé a dhorn orthu agus dúirt, "Imigh amach as seo, a bheirt, agus ná habair focal eile." D'éirigh Fran O'Toole amach, ag fágáil Nanny agus Ned gan chaint.

"Ní chreideann sé sinn!" A dúirt Ned, bhí a freckles seasamh amach ar a aghaidh pale, mar sin bhí a fhios Nanny go raibh sé chomh ionadh mar a bhí sí. “Cén fáth nach greideann sé sinn?”

“Níl a fhios agam,” a d’fhreagair Nanaí. "Tá mé chun mo fheadóg a shéideadh ar son Rí Brian."

Leis sin, shéid Nanny go dian ar a fheadóg, ach níor tháinig aon torann uaidh. “Cad atá cearr leis an rud seo?” a d’fhiafraigh Nanny “Ní dhearna sé aon torann.”

"Séidfidh mé mo fheadóg," arsa Ned, "b'fhéidir go bhfuil do cheann-sa briste." Tharraing Ned a phóca as a phóca agus shéid sé chomh crua agus a d'fhéadfadh sé. Níor tháinig aon torann uaidh. “Cad atá cearr liomsa?” pouted Ned. “Ní oibríonn sé!”

“Séidfidh mé mo cheann,” arsa Henry Daly. D’ísligh sé a cheann chun greim a fháil ar an bhfeadóg a bhí ar crochadh óna choiléar agus shéid sé chomh crua agus a d’fhéadfadh sé. Níor tháinig fuaim óna fheadóg ach an oiread.

## CHAPTER THIRTEEN

“What’s wrong with our whistles?” asked Nanny with her hand on her hip, “I hope King Brian didn’t trick us again.”

“Indeed I didn’t trick you,” a voice said. “My ears are still ringing out of my skull you blew those whistles so hard.”

It was King Brian. He was sitting on the branch of the tree above their heads with his hands over his ears. “Your pipes are working loud and clear,” he said.

“King Brian!” yelled Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly together. They were delighted to see him.

Bertie and Frosty neighed in unison, they tossed their heads and pawed the ground. They too were happy to see King Brian.

“Sure we thought the whistles were broken because we couldn’t hear the sound of them,” said Ned.

“The Leprechaun Kings are the only ones who can hear them,” answered King Brian, “and I wouldn’t be a bit surprised if every leprechaun King in Ireland showed up.

I’m sure their ears are in the same state as mine, but I’ll forgive you this time,” he laughed. “What can I do for Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey and Henry Daly today?”

## CAIBIDIL A TRÍ DÉAG

"Cad atá cearr lenár bhfeadóga?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny agus a lámh ar a cromán, "Tá súil agam nach ndearna an Rí Brian feall orainn arís."

“Go deimhin ní dhearna mé feall ort,” adeir guth. "Tá mo chluasa fós ag bualadh as mo cloigeann a shéid tú na feadóga sin chomh crua."

Rí Brian a bhí ann. Bhí sé ina shuí ar bhrairse an chrainn os cionn a gceann agus a lámha thar a chluasa. “Tá do phíopaí ag obair go hard agus go soiléir,” a dúirt sé.

“Rí Brian!” yelled Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly le chéile. Bhí áthas an domhain orthu é a fheiceáil.

Chuaigh Bertie agus Frosty i gcomharbacht ar a chéile, chaith siad a gcinn agus pháigh siad an talamh. Bhí áthas orthu freisin an Rí Brian a fheiceáil.

“Cinnte cheapamar go raibh na feadóga briste mar ní raibh muid in ann an fhuaim a chloisteáil,” a dúirt Ned.

“Is iad Ríthe na Leipreachán amháin a chloisfidh siad,” d'fhreagair an Rí Brian, “agus ní chuirfeadh sé aon iongnadh orm dá dtaispeánfadh gach Rí leipreacháin i nÉirinn iad.

Tá mé cinnte go bhfuil a gcluasa sa riocht céanna liomsa, ach maithfidh mé duit an uair seo,” a dúirt sé ag gáire. “Cad is féidir liom a dhéanamh do Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey agus Henry Daly inniu?”

“King Brian,” said Nanny, “We told Fran O’Toole you gave us Bertie and Frosty and he told us to go home because he had no time for jokes, he had to save Mike Donovan from the Banshee.

“The Banshee?” replied King Brian. “Save Mike Donovan?”

King Brian jumped from the branch to the ground, looking as if he were flying.

“It sounds to me like someone is in trouble,” he said as he landed. Maybe even on the way to the Banshee’s Cradle. Tell me what happened from the very beginning.”

Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly told King Brian all about the footprints in the sand. How they and followed them deep into the forest and found an exhausted Fran O’Toole.

“We told Fran O’Toole you could help him find his friend Mike Donovan,” said Ned removing his cowboy hat and scratching his head in confusion.

“Then he asked us who King Brian was,” interrupted Nanny, “and we said you were king of the leprechauns of Coolrainy.”

Nanny was so disappointed. She was finding it hard to believe that Fran O’Toole was mad at them and had rejected their offer of King Brian’s help when he really needed it.

“A Rí Brian,” arsa Nanaí, “Dúirt muid le Fran O’Toole gur thug tú Bertie agus Frosty dúinn agus dúirt sé linn dul abhaile mar nach raibh am aige le haghaidh magadh, bhí air Mike Donovan a shábháil ón mBanshee.

"An Bhansí?" d'fhreagair an Rí Brian. "Sábháil Mike Donovan?"

Léim an Rí Brian ón gcraobh go talamh, ag féachaint amhail is dá mbeadh sé ag eitilt.

“Is cosúil go bhfuil duine éigin i dtrioblóid,” a dúirt sé agus é ag teacht i dtír. B’fhéidir fiú ar an mbealach go Cradle na Banshee. Inis dom cad a tharla ón tús.”

D’inis Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly gach rud don Rí Brian faoi na lorga sa ghaineamh. Mar a lean siad go domhain isteach san fhoraois iad agus fuair siad Fran O’Toole traochta.

“Dúirt muid le Fran O’Toole go bhféadfá cabhrú leis a chara Mike Donovan a aimsiú,” a dúirt Ned ag baint a hata bó agus ag scríobadh a chinn le mearbhall.

“Ansan d’fhiafraigh sé dinn cérbh é an Rí Brian,” arsa Nanaí, “agus dúirt muid go raibh tú i do rí ar leipreacháin Chúil Raithin.”

Bhí díomá ar Nanny. Ba dheacair di a chreidiúint go raibh Fran O’Toole ar buile leo, agus dhiúltaigh sí dá dtairiscint cúnamh Rí Brian nuair a bhí sé ag teastáil go géar.

“Well now lass,” said King Brian shrugging his soldiers in the same disbelief as Nanny and Ned.

“Not everybody believes in leprechauns.”

“What will we do about Fran O’Toole?” asked Ned.

“We may forget about Fran O’Toole for now,” said King Brian. “We need to find the Banshee’s Cradle and save Mike Donovan, and we don’t have much time.”

“We need to find the Banshee’s Cradle!” said Nanny, her voice beginning to tremble.

Ned’s face turned white, even his freckles paled, he tried to speak but he couldn’t.

“Aye lass, I’m sorry to say this,” answered King Brian, “but we’re the only ones who can save Mike Donovan now.”

Nanny and Ned reluctantly agreed. Henry Daly was anxious to get started.

“I’m ready to go,” said Henry Daly.

“I suppose we are too then,” answered Nanny. She acknowledged a simple Nod from Ned as he took a deep breath.

“I suppose we are,” he said.

“King Brian, Fran O’Toole told us to get up on our magic ponies. Are our pony’s magic?” Nanny asked.

“Bhuel anois, a chailín,” arsa an Rí Brian agus é ag sileadh a shaighdiúirí sa mhíchreideamh céanna le hAiní agus Ned.

"Ní chreideann gach duine i leipreacháin."

“Cad a dhéanfaimid faoi Fran O’Toole?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“B’fhéidir go ndéanfaimid dearmad ar Fhran O’Toole faoi láthair,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Ní mór dúinn Cradle na Banshee a aimsiú agus Mike Donovan a shábháil, agus níl mórán ama againn.”

“Caithfidh muid Cliabhán na Banshee a aimsiú!” arsa Nanny, a guth ag tosú ar chrith.

D’iompaigh aghaidh Ned bán, fiú a chuid freckles pail, rinne sé iarracht labhairt ach ní raibh sé in ann.

“A Shéamais, a Chailín, is oth liom é seo a rá,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian, “ach is sinne amháin atá in ann Mike Donovan a shábháil anois.”

D’aontaigh Nanny agus Ned go drogallach. Bhí fonn ar Henry Daly tosú.

“Tá mé réidh le dul,” a dúirt Henry Daly.

“Is dócha go bhfuilimidne freisin,” d’fhreagair Nanny. D’admhaigh sí Nod simplí ó Ned mar thóg sé anáil dhomhain.

“Is dócha go bhfuilimid,” ar seisean.

“D’inis an Rí Brian, Fran O’Toole dúinn éirí ar ár gcapaillíní draíochta. An bhfuil ár gcapaillíní draíochta?” D’iarr Nanny.

“Only if you want them to be magic ponies,” replied King Brian with a twinkle in his eye.

He reached into his cloak and took out a little green notebook. He flicked through the pages and stopped at one.

“Let me see now, in my book, Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey and Henry Daly each have a gold whistle, and anyone who has a leprechaun’s gold whistle is as magic as a leprechaun himself.”

He looked up from the notebook. “Or herself, as the case may be.”

“May I wish for Frosty to be a magic pony then?” Nanny asked.

“And may I wish for Bertie to be a magic pony too?” added Ned.

“You may,” King Brian said, he knew both Nanny and Ned were not aware of the magic power they really had. It was going to take a little getting used to.

He put his little green notebook back in his cloak pocket, folded his arms giving them the opportunity to realize their newfound powers.

“You may wish for whatever you like, and you don’t need me to grant your wishes. You can grant them to yourselves with a snap of your fingers.”

“Dá mba mhaith leat gur capaillíní draíochta iad,” a d’fhreagair an Rí Brian agus é ina shúil.

Shín sé isteach ina chlóca agus thóg amach leabhar nótaí beag glas. Chas sé trí na leathanaigh agus stad sé ag ceann amháin.

“Lig dom a fheiceáil anois, i mo leabhar, tá feadóg óir ag Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey agus Henry Daly an duine, agus tá feadóg óir aon duine a bhfuil feadóg óir leipreachán aige chomh draíochtúil leis an leipreachán féin.”

D’fhéach sé suas as an leabhar nótaí. “Nó í féin, de réir mar a bheidh.”

“An bhfuil fonn orm go mbeadh Frosty ina chapailíní draíochta mar sin?” D’iarr Nanny.

“Agus an bhfuil fonn orm go mbeadh Bertie ina chapailíní draíochta freisin? chuir Ned.

“Is féidir leat,” a dúirt an Rí Brian, bhí a fhios aige nach raibh Nanny agus Ned ar an eolas faoin chumhacht draíochta a bhí acu i ndáiríre. Bhí sé ag dul a ghlacadh beagán dul i dtaithe ar.

Chuir sé a leabhar nótaí beag glas ar ais ina phóca clóca, fillte a lámha a thabhairt deis dóibh a chumhachtaí nua a bhaint amach.

“B’fhéidir gur mhaith leat pé rud is mian leat, agus ní gá duit mise chun do mhianta a thabhairt. Is féidir leat iad a dheonú duit féin le léim de do mhéara”



Nanny and Ned glanced at each other. Nanny made sure her stampede cord was tight. Ned put his cowboy hat back on and tightened his stampede cord.

“Wish with me Ned,” Nanny said as she reached for Ned’s hand. “Let’s say our wish together.”

Nanny Reilly and Ned Franey shut their eyes as tight as they could and said in unison, “I wish Bertie and Frosty were magic ponies.”

For a moment after their wish, they continued to keep their eyes closed. They both had a firm grip on each other’s hand.

“It’s alright,” chuckled King Brian, you can open your eyes now.

They opened their eyes and looked over at Bertie and Frosty. Both ponies had returned to grazing the long grass again.

“They don’t look any different,” said Nanny doubting both her and Ned’s magic powers.

“Is Bertie a magic pony now?” asked Ned when he opened his eyes.

“He surely is,” answered King Brian smiling.

“And is Frosty a magic pony too?” asked Nanny.

“Indeed she is Lass,” said King Brian. “Now Bertie and Frosty are magic ponies just like the leprechaun ponies.

Bhreathnaigh Nanny agus Ned ar a chéile. Chinn Nanny go raibh a corda stampáilte daingean. Chuir Ned a hata bó ar ais air agus theann sé a chorda stampáilte.

“Is mian liom Ned,” a dúirt Nanny agus í ag gabháil do lámh Ned. “Deirimís ár mian le chéile.”

Dhún Nanny Reilly agus Ned Franey a súile chomh teann agus a d’fhéadfaidís agus dúirt in Unison, “Is mian liom gur capaillíní draíochta iad Bertie agus Frosty.”

Ar feadh nóiméad tar éis a mian, lean siad ar a súile a choinneáil dúnta. Bhí greim daingean ag an mbeirt ar lámh a chéile.

“Tá go leor,” arsa an Rí Brian, is féidir leat do shúile a oscailt anois.

D’oscail siad a súile agus d’fhéach siad anonn ar Bertie agus Frosty. Bhí an dá capaillíní tar éis filleadh ar féarach fada arís.

“Ní cuma difriúil ar bith orthu,” a dúirt Nanny agus í in amhras faoi chumhachtaí draíochta Ned agus í féin.

“An capall draíochta é Bertie anois?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned nuair a d’oscail sé a shúile.

“Is cinnte,” a d’fhreagair an Rí Brian ag gáire.

“Agus an capall draíochta é Frosty freisin?” a d’fhiafraigh Nanny.

“Go deimhin is Lass í,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Anois is capaillíní draíochta iad Bertie agus Frosty díreach cosúil leis na capaillíní leipreachán.

They can jump over anything and run faster than the wind.”

“Can Bertie and Frosty fly?” asked Ned.

“They surely can,” answered King Brian. “They can fly over the moon if you ask them to.”

“I want to be magic, too!” said Henry Daly. “I wish I was a magic dog who can fly.”

“And indeed you shall fly Henry Daly,” answered King Brian.

Even though Henry had just given himself flying powers by his words, King Brian wanted to show off and demonstrate the grandiose way of granting wishes.

He reached into his cloak one more time and took out his shillelagh. He placed it in front of Henry Daly’s nose and waved it like a magic wand. Henry stood to attention as King Brian said the words,

“May Henry Daly’s wish come true,  
May he fly o’er the ocean blue.  
May his good nose be keen and able,  
To fly us to the Banshee’s Cradle.”

Henry felt magical. He stood himself taller and stuck his chest out. At that very moment he knew he could fly.

Is féidir leo léim thar rud ar bith agus rith níos tapúla ná an ghaoth.”

“An féidir le Bertie agus Frosty eitilt?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Is cinnte go bhféadfaidís,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian. “Is féidir leo eitilt os cionn na gealaí má iarrann tú orthu.”

“Ba mhaith liom a bheith draíochta freisin!” arsa Henry Daly. “Ba mhaith liom a bheith i mo mhadra draíochta atá in ann eitilt.”

“Agus go deimhin eitleoidh tú Henry Daly,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian.

Cé go raibh Anraí díreach tar éis cumhachtaí eitilte a thabhairt dó féin trína chuid focal, bhí an Rí Brian ag iarraidh an bealach iontach le mianta a dheonú a thaispeáint agus a léiriú.

Shín sé isteach ina chlóca arís eile agus thóg amach a scilling. Chuir sé os comhair shrón Henry Daly é agus chrom sé mar shlat draíochta. Sheas Anraí faoi mar a dúirt an Rí Brian na focail,

“Go bhfíorófar mian Henry Daly,  
Go n-eitilt sé thar an aigéan gorm.  
Go mbeadh a shrón maith fonnmhar cumasach,  
Chun sinn a eitilt go Cliabhán na Banshee.”

Bhraith Henry draíochta. Sheas sé é féin níos airde agus bhfostú a cófra amach. Ag an nóiméad sin bhí a fhios aige go bhféadfadh sé eitilt.

“Are we all magic now King Brian?” asked Nanny Reilly.

“Every last one of us Lass,” answered King Brian, “but we must hurry, we haven’t a moment to loose.

“Up on your ponies now, Nanny Reilly and Ned Franey, and hold on tight,”

King Brian put his shillelagh back in his cloak. He bent his legs at the knees and sprang himself up on Henry’ back. “This is where the real magic begins.”

Nanny and Ned quickly untied Bertie and Frosty and jumped on their backs.

“Are you scared Nanny?” asked Ned.

“Yes, I am Ned,” replied Nanny, “but who’s going to save Mike Donovan if we don’t.” They both checked their stampede cords and took a deep breath.

King Brian yelled out, “Up up, and away, Henry Daly! Take me to the Banshee’s Cradle!”

Nanny shouted, “Up up, and away, Frosty! Take me to the Banshee’s Cradle!”

“Up up, and away, Bertie!” Yelled Ned. “Take me to the Banshee’s Cradle!”

“An bhfuil draíocht againn go léir anois a Rí Brian?” a d’fhiafraigh Nanny Reilly.

“Gach fear deiridh againn, a Mhuire,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian, “ach caithfidh deifir a dhéanamh, níl nóiméad le scaoileadh againn.

“Suas ar do chapaillíní anois, a Nanny Reilly agus Ned Franey, agus fan go docht,”

Chuir an Rí Brian a scilling ar ais ina bhrat. Chrom sé a chosa ar a ghlúine agus chrom sé é féin suas ar dhroim Anraí. "Is é seo an áit a dtosaíonn an draíocht fíor."

Cheangail Nanny agus Ned Bertie agus Frosty go tapa agus léim siad ar a ndroim.

"An bhfuil eagla ort Nanny?" a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Sea, is mise Ned,” a d’fhreagair Nanny, “ach cé atá chun Mike Donovan a shábháil mura ndéanaimid é.” Sheiceáil an bheirt acu a gcuid cordaí stampede agus ghlac siad anáil dhomhain.

Arsa an Rí Brian amach, “Suas suas, agus as, Henry Daly! Tóg go Cliabhán na Banshee mé!”

Scairt Nanny, "Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Frosty! Tóg go Cliabhán na Banshee mé!"

"Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Bertie!" Yelled Ned. "Tóg go Cliabhán na Banshee mé!"

## CHAPTER FOURTEEN

Henry Daly with King Brian on his back led the way to the Banshee's Cradle. Nanny and Ned held on to Bertie and Frosty for dear life as they left the forest behind them.

Their ponies leaped forward and cantered up in the air. The tall pines below got smaller and smaller.

They soared high in the sky and they could see the entire coastline, the forestry, and their village, Coolrainy.

Nanny and Ned's eyes and mouth were wide open with delight. This was more exhilarating than the chair-o-plane ride at the carnival.

Bertie and Frosty's manes and tails blew in the wind, as did King Brian's cloak. Henry Daly's mouth was slightly open with a big bright smile on his face.

Soon the coastline and their village faded in the background as they made their descent into the heart of the forest.

Henry and the ponies landed near the entrance of the Banshee's Cradle. They took in the scene before them.

Nanny trembled her eyes widening and her knees weakening. Heavy gray clouds darkened the sky.

## CAIBIDIL A CEATHAIR DÉAG

Threoraigh Henry Daly agus an Rí Brian ar a dhroim an bealach go Cradle na Banshee. Lean Nanny agus Ned ar Bertie agus Frosty ar feadh a saoil daor agus iad ag fágáil na foraoise ina ndiaidh.

Léim a gcuid capaillíní ar aghaidh agus chuaigh siad suas san aer. D'éirigh na péine arda thíos níos lú agus níos lú.

D'éirigh siad go hard sa spéir agus chonaic siad an cósta ar fad, an fhoraoiseacht, agus a sráidbhaile, Cúil Raithin.

Bhí súile agus béal Nanny agus Ned oscailte go leathan le háthas. Bhí sé seo níos exhilarating ná an turas cathaoir-o-eitleán ag an charnabhail.

Shéid manaí agus eireabail Bertie is Frosty sa ghaoth, mar a rinne clóca Rí Brian. Bhí béal Henry Daly beagáinín oscailte le meangadh mór geal ar a aghaidh.

Go gairid tháinig laghdú ar an gcósta agus ar a sráidbhaile sa chúlra agus iad ag teacht isteach i gcroílár na foraoise.

Thuirling Anraí agus na capaillíní in aice leis an mbealach isteach go Cradle na Banshee. Thug siad isteach an radharc os a gcomhair.

Chrith Nanny a súile ag leathnú agus a glúine ag lagú. Dorchaigh scamail liatha an spéir.

A tall wall made of skulls draped in cobwebs stared back at them. The main gates were made of thighbones.

Through the gates, they could see a path that wound its way through dead trees. Cobwebs were everywhere.

At the gate sat two skeletons playing cards. They were dressed in old torn uniforms and referring to each other as ‘skeleguard.’ They argued about who had won the pot, which was a jumble of old teeth.

At the skeleguards’ feet, two angry looking black dogs wearing spiked collars gnawed on large, blood-covered bones.

Nanny was frightened, and she bet Ned was, too. She and Ned had a daunting task ahead of them, rescuing Mike Donovan from the Banshee’s Cradle.

She wasn’t sure that even they, the bravest children in Ireland, were equal to it. They needed to get past the skeleguards at the gate and Nanny Reilly knew just how to do that.

She didn’t have a shillelagh, but she could snap her fingers.

“May the attention be on the bones and cards, and may we walk past these skeleguards. May the gates swing open and let us through, and may we find our very next clue.”

Stán balla arda déanta de skulls agus iad in eangacha na ndreacha siar orthu. Rinneadh na príomh-gheata de chnámha ceathar.

Tríd na geataí, d'fhéadfaidís cosán a fheiceáil a chuaigh trí chrainn marbha. Bhí cobwebs i ngach áit.

Ag an ngeata shuigh beirt chnámharlach ag imirt cártaí. Bhí siad gléasta i sean-éide stróicthe agus ag tagairt dá chéile mar ‘skeleguard.’ Bhí siad ag argóint faoi cé a bhuaigh an pota, a bhí ina smután de sheanfhiaccla.

Ag cosa na gcnámharlach, bhí dhá mhadra dhubha feargacha agus iad ag caitheamh coiléar spiked gnawed ar chnámha móra fola-clúdaithe.

Bhí eagla ar Nanny, agus chuir sí geall go raibh Ned, freisin. Bhí tasc scanrúil aici féin agus ag Ned, ag tarrtháil Mike Donovan ó Chliabhán na Banshee.

Ní raibh sí cinnte go raibh siad féin, na leanaí is cróga in Éirinn, ar chomhchéim leis. B’éigean dóibh dul thar na cnámharlaigh ag an ngeata agus bhí a fhios ag Nanny Reilly conas é sin a dhéanamh.

Ní raibh scilling aici, ach thiocthadh léi a méar a bhualadh.

“Bíodh an aird ar na cnámha agus ar na cártaí, agus go siúilfidimid thar na cnámharlaigh seo. Go n-osclódh na geataí agus go ligigí isteach sinn, agus go bhfaighidh muid ár gcéad leid eile.”

Nanny snapped her fingers, and sure enough the bony gates slowly squeaked their way open.

“Good Lass Nanny Reilly,” smiled King Brian, “you have it now.

Nanny and Ned looked at each other. They didn’t say anything. But their facial expressions said it all. They really were magic.

“Let’s go, my friends,” chuckled King Brian, The Banshee’s Cradle awaits.”

They walked through the main gates without the skeleguards even looking in their direction.

The skeleguards continued to play their card game and argue. The dogs never took their eyes or their teeth off their bones.

The winding pathway took them to a crossroads where a signpost made of bones stood.

The sign pointing to the east said, “New Arrivals,” the sign to the west said, “Departures,” and the sign to the north said, “Dreary Castle.”

“Which way will we go?” Nanny asked. At that, the New Arrivals sign fell off the signpost and pointed to the east.

“It seems to me,” said King Brian laughing, “that sign is our very next clue and surely telling us which direction Mike Donovan is. This is the way, my friends. We’re getting closer.”

Ghearr Nanny a méar, agus cinnte go leor d'oscail na geataí cnámhacha go mall a mbealach oscailte.

“Maith A Mhuire Mhic Reilly,” adeir an Rí Brian, “tá sé agat anois.

D’fhéach Nanny agus Ned ar a chéile. Ní dúirt siad faic. Ach dúirt a gcuid gothaí gnúise go léir. Bhí draíocht acu i ndáiríre.

“Rachaigí, a chairde,” arsa an Rí Brian, tá Cliabhán na Banshee ag fanacht.”

Shiúil siad trí na príomh-gheata gan na cnámharlaigh fiú breathnú ina dtreo.

Lean na cnámharlaigh ar aghaidh ag imirt a gcluiche cártaí agus ag argóint. Níor bhain na madraí a súile ná a bhfiacra as a gcnámha riamh.

Thug an cosán foirceannadh go dtí crosaire iad, áit a raibh comhartha déanta de chnámha.

Dubhairt an comhartha soir, “Teacht Nua,” adeir an comhartha soir, “Imigh,” agus dubhairt an comhartha lastuaidh, “Caisleán Dhreary.”

“Cén bealach a rachaimid?” D'iarr Nanny. Ag sin, thit an comhartha Teachta Nua den chomhartha agus dhírigh sé ar an taobh thoir.

“Feictear domsa,” arsa an Rí Brian ag gáire, “is é an comhartha sin an chéad leid eile atá againn agus is cinnte go n-insíonn sé dúinn cén treo ina bhfuil Mike Donovan. Seo an bealach, a chairde. Táimid ag druidim níos gaire.”

“Look!” Ned said, pointing at the sky. Overhead, the biggest crows any of them had ever seen held ropes made from braided hair in their beaks.

Dangling at the end of the ropes, was a big wooden cage with someone inside it.

“That’s Fran O’Toole in the cage!” cried Nanny. “The Banshee caught him too.”

“Saints preserve us,” said King Brian. “We’ll have to follow that crow before he gets out of sight. If not, it could be too late for Fran O’Toole as well as Mike Donovan.

Hold on tight everybody, we’re going up again. “Up up, and away Henry Daly,” cried King Brian.

“Up up, and away Frosty,” yelled Nanny.

“Up up, and away Bertie,” Ned shouted.

They flew into the dark cloudy sky and followed the crows that were taking Fran O’Toole to New Arrivals. As they flew, they saw more crows carrying wooden cages by braided hair ropes.

“There’s people in those cages!” cried Ned.

“What are we going to do, King Brian?” asked Nanny.

“Saints preserve the lot of us,” King Brian said. “What have we let ourselves in for? Hold on now the pair of you, the crows are about to land.”

“Féach!” A dúirt Ned, dírithe ar an spéir. Os a gcionn, bhí rópaí déanta as gruaig braidithe ina ngob ar na préacháin is mó a chonaic aon duine acu riamh.

Ag druidim le deireadh na rópaí, bhí caighean mór adhmaid le duine éigin istigh ann.

“Sin é Fran O’Toole sa chliabhán!” adeir Nanny. “Rug an Banshee air freisin.”

“Caomhnaíonn na naoimh sinn,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Caithfidh muid an préachán sin a leanúint sula n-éireoidh sé as radharc. Mura bhfuil, d’fhéadfadh sé a bheith ró-dhéanach do Fran O’Toole agus Mike Donovan.

Coinnígí oraibh uilig, táimid ag dul suas arís. “Suas suas, agus uaidh Henry Daly,” adeir an Rí Brian

“Suas suas, agus ar shiúl Frosty,” adeir Nanny.

“Suas suas, agus shiúl Bertie,” a scairt Ned.

D’eitil siad isteach sa spéir dorcha scamallach, agus lean siad na préacháin a bhí ag tabhairt Fran O’Toole go Teach Nua. Agus iad ag eitilt, chonaic siad níos mó préacháin ag iompar cages adhmaid le rópaí braid gruaige.

“Tá daoine sna cácaí sin!” adeir Ned.

“Cad a dhéanfaimid, a Rí Brian?” a d’fhiafraigh Nanny.

“Caomhnuigheann na naoimh sinne,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Cad chuige atáimid ligthe isteach? Coinnigh ort anois a bheirt, tá na préacháin ar tí tuirlingt.”

The crows hovered over an aged steam train with weathered wooden carriages. Each flock of crows dropped their cage into one of the carriages.

Henry Daly and the posse landed behind an old wooden shed. Large letters on the front of the train spelled out SkelOrientation Express.

It had a skeleton at the controls dressed in an old torn engineer's uniform.

"All aboard," shouted the skelegineer, as he blew a whistle that was attached to a chain made of teeth which hung from his neck.

"Next stop, Skele Resources."

He blew the whistle one more time and the old train slowly started to move. Black smoke puffed its way out of the smokestack.

The engines wheels grinded their way along the tracks. Thick clouds of steam emerged from the belly of the train.

The whistle blows screeched their way from the trains pipe as the skelegineer pulled down on a cord.

"Hurry, hurry!" said King Brian. "We'll have to catch that train. Get ready to jump on board as it rolls by." The train reached the shed they were hiding behind.

"Now," shouted King Brian. "Jump".

Ghluais na préacháin thar traen ghaile d'aois le carráistí adhmaid síonchaite. Thit gach tréad préachán a gliabhán isteach i gceann de na carráistí.

Thuirling Henry Daly agus an posse taobh thiar de sheansheid adhmaid. Scríobhadh litreacha móra ar aghaidh na traenach SkelOrientation Express.

Bhí cnámharlach air ag na rialtáin agus é cóirithe i seanéide innealtóra stróicthe.

"Gach ar bord," a scairt an creatlach, agus é ag séideadh fheadóg a bhí ceangailte de shlabhra fiacla a bhí ar crochadh óna mhuiníl.

"An chéad stad eile, Skele Resources."

Shéid sé an fheadóg uair amháin eile agus thosaigh an sean-traein ag bogadh go mall. Shroich deatach dubh a bhealach amach as an stoc deataigh.

Rinne rothaí an innill a mbealach a mheilt feadh na rianta. Tháinig scamail tiubh gaile as bolg na traenach.

Shéid an fheadóg a mbealach ó phíobán na traenach agus an creatlach ag tarraingt anuas ar chorda.

"Déan deifir, déan deifir!" arsa an Rí Brian. "Beidh orainn an traen sin a ghabháil. Bí réidh le léim ar bord agus é ag dul ar aghaidh." Shroich an traen an seid a raibh siad i bhfolach taobh thiar de.

"Anois," adeir an Rí Brian. "Léim".



Nanny and Ned held on to their ponies as tight as they could and asked Bertie and Frosty to jump into the empty stock carriage at the end of the old steam train.

The ponies in their best flying pose, lifted themselves from the ground, glided through the open doors and gracefully landed inside the carriage.

Henry Daly liked what he saw, so he imitated the efforts of Bertie and Frosty, and made a graceful entrance.

They were all on their way to Skele Resources on the SkelOrientation Express.

Choinnigh Nanny agus Ned ar a gcuid capaillíní chomh teann agus a d'fhéadfaidís agus d'iarr siad ar Bertie agus Frosty léim isteach sa charráiste stoic fholamh ag deireadh na sean-traein ghaile.

Na capaillíní ina suaití eitilte ab fhearr, d'ardaigh siad iad féin ón talamh, shleamhnaigh siad trí na doirse oscailte agus thuirling siad go galánta laistigh den charráiste.

Thaitin an méid a chonaic sé le Henry Daly, mar sin rinne sé aithris ar iarrachtaí Bertie agus Frosty, agus rinne sé bealach isteach galánta.

Bhí siad ar fad ar a mbealach go Skele Resources ar an SkelOrientation Express.



## CHAPTER FIFTEEN

## CAIBIDIL A CÚIG DÉAG

“Fran O’Toole is going to get a big shock when they see us on our magic ponies with our talking dog and King of the leprechauns of Coolrainy,” said Ned.

“Indeed he is,” chuckled King Brian, “and Mike Donovan too.”

“Next time I won’t scare the living daylights out of him,” said Henry Daly, remembering his first encounter with Fran O’Toole. “I won’t growl at him again, I’ll just smile and wag my tail.

“He’ll surely be happy to see us this time,” said Nanny Reilly. “Hold on Fran O’Toole, hold on Mike Donovan. The bravest children in Ireland are on their way to help you.”

“And the bravest dog in Ireland,” added Henry Daly, with his newfound smile.

“This is the first time I’ve been on a train,” said Ned. Then he paused for a moment. He thought this was a good opportunity for him to practice a little with his magic powers. “Watch what I can do,” he said with a grin.

“May the wind be behind us,  
May our hearts be filled with laughter,  
May the hand of the skelegineer,  
Make this train go faster!”

“Cuirfidh Fran O’Toole turraing mhór nuair a fheiceann siad sinn ar ár gcapaillíní draíochta lenár madra cainte agus Rí leipreacháin Chúil Raithin,” a dúirt Ned.

“Tá go deimhin,” arsa an Rí Brian, “agus Mike Donovan freisin.”

“An chéad uair eile ní bheidh faitíos orm faoi na soilse beo an lae uaidh,” a dúirt Henry Daly, agus é ag cuimhneamh ar a chéad teagmháil le Fran O’Toole. “Ní bheidh mé ag gol air arís, ní dhéanfaidh mé ach aoibh gháire agus mo eireaball a shníomh.

“Is cinnte go mbeidh sé sásta sinn a fheiceáil an uair seo,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly. “Coinnigh siar ar Fran O’Toole, fan ar Mike Donovan. Tá na leanaí is cróga in Éirinn ar an mbealach chun cabhrú leat.”

“Agus an madra is cróga in Éirinn,” a dúirt Henry Daly agus a aoibh gháire nua.

“Seo é an chéad uair a bhí mé ar thraein,” a dúirt Ned. Ansin sos sé ar feadh nóiméad. Cheap sé gur deis mhaith a bhí anseo dó cleachtadh beag a dhéanamh lena chumhachtaí draíochta. “Féach cad is féidir liom a dhéanamh,” a dúirt sé le gáire.

“Go mbéadh an ghaoth taobh thiar dinn,  
Go mbeidh ár gcroíthe líonta le gáire,  
Go dtuga lámh an scailpéir,  
Déan an traein seo dul níos tapúla!”

Ned snapped his fingers and the train suddenly picked up speed.

“Let’s see if we can stand like statues and not fall over when the train goes around a bend,” said Nanny.

“Yeah!” replied Ned, “that’ll be fun.”

The two jumped down from their ponies and stood firmly on the floor of the carriage with their feet together and their arms tightly tucked into their sides.

As the train picked up speed, Nanny and Ned began to lose their footing and bump off each other.

The train got faster and faster and they both found it harder to even stand. They finally sat on the floor of the carriage laughing at each other’s silly attempts to get up.

Bertie and Frosty were a little wide eyed. They both moved their legs a little wider apart to find balance.

Henry Daly wanted to play the game and fall over, but it wasn’t so easy for him to fall while he was standing on four legs like Bertie and Frosty.

King Brian had a solemn look on his face. His lips were pressed tightly together and the lines on his forehead showed.

He sat quietly on Henry’s back and watched the antics of Nanny and Ned.

The skelegineer tried everything he could to slow the train down.

Ghearr Ned a mhéara agus d’éirigh an traein go tobann.

“Féachfaimid an féidir linn seasamh mar dhealbha agus gan titim anuas nuair a théann an traein thart ar lúb,” a dúirt Nanny.

"Sea!" a d'fhreagair Ned, "beidh sin spraoi."

Léim an bheirt anuas óna gcapaillíní agus sheas siad go daingean ar urlár an charbaid agus a gcosa le chéile agus a lámha go docht ceangailte lena thaobh.

Agus an traein ag luasghéarú, thosaigh Nanny agus Ned ag scaoileadh a gcuid bonn agus ag bualadh ar a chéile.

D'éirigh an traein níos tapúla agus níos tapúla agus bhí sé níos deacra dóibh araon seasamh fiú. Ar deireadh shuigh siad ar urlár an charbaid ag gáire faoi iarrachtaí amaideach a chéile éirí.

Bhí Bertie agus Frosty beagán súl leathan. Bhog an bheirt acu a gcos beagán níos leithne óna chéile chun cothromaíocht a fháil.

Theastaigh ó Henry Daly an cluiche a imirt agus titim amach, ach ní raibh sé chomh héasca dó titim agus é ina sheasamh ar cheithre chos mar Bertie agus Frosty.

Bhí cuma sollúnta ar a aghaidh ag an Rí Brian. Bhí a liopaí brúite go docht le chéile agus léirigh na línte ar a forehead.

Shuigh sé go ciúin ar dhroim Anraí agus d’amharc sé ar sheanchas Nanny agus Ned.

Rinne an creatlach iarracht gach a raibh sé in ann chun an traein a mhoilliú.

He pulled on the emergency brake cord over and over again. He tried his best to put the steam train's furnace out by throwing bucket after bucket of water onto the fire.

But the train wouldn't slow down. The carriages were almost coming off the tracks.

The skelegineer shouted, "Help! Help! Runaway train! Runaway train! Stay out of the way!"

The train entered a tunnel dimly lit by torches, which were held by bats that hung from the ceiling of the tunnel.

The wind produced by the speeding train blew out the torches, and the bats dug their claws into the tunnel walls to avoid being swept along with the train.

When the train finally emerged from the tunnel Nanny, Ned and King Brian heard a clanging sound. It was a railway crossing. The skelegineer had his skelehands over his eyes.

"I don't think the train is going to stop!" said Nanny.

"There's a carriage on the tracks!" added Ned nervously. "We might crash into it."

King Brian had a feeling it would come to this. He raised himself from Henry Daly's back and hovered in mid air. He once again reached into his cloak and retrieved his shillelagh. He held it high in the air and said the words.

Tharraing sé ar an gcorda coscáin éigeandála arís agus arís eile. Rinne sé a dhícheall foirméis na traenach gaile a chur amach trí bhuicéad i ndiaidh buicéad uisce a chaitheamh ar an tine.

Ach ní mhoilligh an traein. Bhí na carráistí beagnach ag teacht as na rianta.

Scairt an creatlach, "Cabhair! Cabhrú! traein runaway! traein runaway! Fan amach as an mbealach!"

Chuaigh an traein isteach i dtollán a raibh tóirsí air nach raibh mórán soilsithe air, a bhí i seilbh ialtóga a bhí ar crochadh ó uasteorainn an tolláin.

Shéid an ghaoth a tháinig ón traein luais na tóirsí amach, agus thochail na sciatháin leathair a gcuid crúba isteach i mballaí an tolláin ionas nach gcuirfí isteach ar an traein iad.

Nuair a tháinig an traein amach as an tollán faoi dheireadh Nanny, chuala Ned agus an Rí Brian fuaim clinging. Crosaire iarnróid a bhí ann. Bhí a chnámharlach ar a shúile ag an gcnámharlach.

"Ní dóigh liom go stopfaidh an traein!" arsa Nanny.

"Tá carráiste ar na rianta!" chuir Ned go neirbhíseach. "Féadfaimid tuairteáil isteach ann."

Bhí tuairim ag an Rí Brian go dtiocfadh sé chuige sin. D'ardaigh sé é féin ó chúl Henry Daly agus d'fhostaigh sé faoin aer. Shín sé isteach ina chlóca arís agus fuair sé a scilling. Thionóil sé go hard san aer é agus dúirt sé na focail.

“May the wheels stop rolling,  
And may the brakes find their lock,  
May the SkelOrientation Express  
Come to a mighty stop”

The train suddenly came to a stop. The skelegineer’s bones rattled in fright.

“That was fun going fast!” said Nanny excitedly.  
“I’ve never gone that fast before.”

“Me neither!” said Ned, secretly hoping not to go as fast as that again.

King Brian landed gently on the floor of the carriage still wearing his frown. Nanny Reilly sensed he wasn’t too happy with herself and Ned for some reason.

“Is everything alright King Brian? Quizzed Nanny,  
“wasn’t that fun?” she added.

“Indeed it wasn’t fun,” replied King Brian. “Ned used his magic powers in the wrong way and put us all in danger.

Answer me this, the pair of you. If I didn’t stop the train at the very last moment like I did, when did either one of you plan to stop it?”

Nanny looked at Ned for the answer, and Ned returned Nanny’s look.

“Go stopfadh na rothaí ag rolladh,  
Agus go bhfaighidh na coscáin a nglas,  
Bealtaine an SkelOrientation Express  
Tar chuig stad iontach”

Tháinig stad tobann ar an traein. Tháinig eagla ar chnámha an chnámharlaigh.

"Bhí sé sin spraoi ag dul go tapa!" a dúirt Nanny ar bís. "Níor imigh mé chomh tapaidh sin roimhe seo."

"Mise ach an oiread!" arsa Ned, agus é ag súil go rúnda gan dul chomh gasta leis sin arís.

Thuirling an Rí Brian go réidh ar urlár an charbaid agus é fós ag caitheamh a ghreim. Mhothaigh Nanny Reilly nach raibh sé ró-shásta léi féin agus Ned ar chúis éigin.

“An bhfuil gach rud ceart go leor, a Rí Brian? Chuir sé ceist ar Nanny, “nach raibh sé sin spraoi?” ar sí.

“Ní raibh sé spráúil go deimhin,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian. “D’úsáid Ned a chumhachtaí draíochta ar an mbealach mícheart agus chuir sé go léir muid i mbaol.

Freagair seo dom, an péire agat. Murar stop mé an traein ag an nóiméad deiridh mar a rinne mé, cathain a bhí sé ar intinn ag ceachtar agaibh í a stopadh?”

D’fhéach Nanny ar Ned le haghaidh an fhreagra, agus thug Ned cuma Nanny ar ais.

“If you continue using your magic like that you’ll both end up at Ravens Point for playing mean tricks on people with not a friend in the world.”

“I’m sorry King Brian,” said Ned as he and Nanny bowed their heads in shame. “I just forgot myself. I don’t ever want to be mean again.”

“Or me either King Brian,” added Nanny, “will you help us to be good and use our wishes well?”

“It’s all my fault,” sighed King Brian. I didn’t prepare any of you for the magic powers that you have.

We don’t have time for a lesson in wishes right now. All I can say is this. Every wish you make has to be for the good of human kind and animal kind.

We are not here for fun and games, there will be plenty of time for that. Our mission here is to rescue Fran O’Toole and Mike Donovan from the Banshee’s Cradle.

If any of us become a victim of the Banshee we will become powerless. So it is vital that we don’t get caught,” continued King Brian.

“Now tighten up your stampede cords and let me see the two bravest children in Ireland put their best foot forward.”

Nanny and Ned liked the fact that they were on a mission. They straightened up their shoulders, stood tall and tightened their stampede cords.

“Má leanann tú ar aghaidh ag baint úsáide as do chuid draíocht mar sin beidh tú ag an deireadh ag Ravens Point chun cleasanna meánacha a imirt ar dhaoine nach bhfuil cara ar domhan acu.”

“Tá brón orm a Rí Brian,” arsa Ned agus é féin agus Nanaí ag cromadh a gcinn le náire. “Rinne mé dearmad orm féin. Ní theastaíonn uaim a bheith cráite arís.”

“Nó mise ceachtar den Rí Brian,” arsa Nanaí, “an gcuideoidh tú linn bheith go maith agus ár mianta a úsáid go maith?”

“Is é mo choir go léir é,” adeir an Rí Brian. Níor ullmhaigh mé aon duine agaibh do na cumhachtaí draíochta atá agat.

Níl am againn le haghaidh ceacht mianta faoi láthair. Ní féidir liom a rá ach é seo. Caithfidh gach mian a dhéanann tú a bheith chun leasa an chine dhaonna agus na hainmhí.

Níl muid anseo le haghaidh spraoi agus cluichí, beidh go leor ama ann chuige sin. Is é an misean atá againn anseo Fran O’Toole agus Mike Donovan a tharrtháil ó Chliabhán na Banshee.

Má éiríonn aon duine againn mar íospartach de chuid na Banshee beidh muid gan chumhacht. Mar sin tá sé ríthábhachtach nach mbeimid gafa,” a lean an Rí Brian.

“Déan do chorda stampála níos doichte anois agus lig dom an bheirt leanaí is cróga in Éirinn a fheiceáil ag cur a gcos is fearr chun cinn.”

Thaitin Nanny agus Ned go raibh siad ar mhisean. Dhírigh siad suas a ngualainn, sheas siad ard agus theann siad a gcordaí stampáilte.

Nanny, Ned, King Brian, and Henry Daly all peeked over the side of the carriage and saw two skeleguards on horses riding over the tracks.

Long black capes covered the horses from head to hoof. Behind them, two more horses in the same black capes pulled a black carriage.

Each carriage door bore a skull with the words 'Dreary Castle Guest Shuttle.'

Nanny, Ned, King Brian and Henry Daly, could see the train station surrounded by old, broken-down wooden buildings.

It looked like a ghost town. Two horses dressed in the same long black attire were tied to a hitching post.

The skelegineer was still shook up after his out of control train ride. His bones clattered and his teeth rattled together.

Shaking, he blew his whistle again and shouted, "We are now approaching Skele Resources, and all passengers prepare for pick up."

He then noisily chattered his way off the train scratching his head with one hand and holding his box of tools with the other.

"Prepare for pick up. What does that mean?" asked Ned.

Bhreathnaigh Nanny, Ned, an Rí Brian, agus Henry Daly ar thaobh an ghluaisteáin agus chonaic siad dhá chnámharlach ar chapail ag marcaíocht thar na rianta.

Chlúdaigh cábaí fada dubha na capail ó cheann go crúba. Taobh thiar díobh, tharraing dhá chapall eile sna caiple dubha céanna carráiste dubh.

Bhí cloigeann ar gach doras carráiste leis na focail 'Dreary Castle Guest Shuttle'.

D'fhéadfadh Nanny, Ned, an Rí Brian agus Henry Daly an stáisiún traenach a fheiceáil timpeallaithe ag seanfhoirgnimh adhmaid briste.

Bhí cuma baile taibhse air. Bhí dhá chapall gléasta leis an bhfeisteas fada dubh céanna ceangailte le cuaille buailte.

Bhí an skelegineer fós ar crith tar éis a thiomána traenach as rialú. Chlaon a chnámha agus chrom a fhiacla le chéile.

Ag crith, shéid sé a fheadóg arís agus scairt sé, "Táimid ag druidim le hAcmhainní Skele anois, agus ullmhaíonn na paisinéirí go léir le haghaidh piocadh suas."

Ansin labhair sé go fonnmhar as an traein ag scríobadh a chinn le lámh amháin agus ag coinneáil a bhosca uirlisí leis an lámh eile.

"A ullmhú le haghaidh piocadh suas. Cad is brí le sin?" a d'fhiafraigh Ned.



“We’re going to find out right now,” King Brian said, as he looked up and saw an oversized crow with a six-foot wingspan hovering above their heads.

“What happened to your cage?” cawed the crow.

King Brian stood up on Henry Daly’s head.

He looked up at the enormous crow, placed both hands on his hips and said, “I think we got on the wrong train.”

“Do you have your tickets?” cawed the crow again.

“We were in such a hurry to catch the train, we were too late to get tickets,” King Brian said. “Do you think we could get tickets now?”

“Only guests of the Banshee get tickets. Are you guests of the Banshee?” asked the crow.

“We surely are,” said King Brian. “On midsummer’s eve the Banshee invited us here, so here we are.”

King Brian casually turned to Nanny and Ned and winked at them. Nanny and Ned didn’t speak. They nodded profusely.

“What are your names?” cawed the crow suspiciously. “I need to check the guest list.”

“We’re called The Rescueteers,” answered King Brian as he stuck his chest out and held the lapels of his waistcoat. “I’m sure we’re on the guest list.”

“Táimid chun a fháil amach faoi láthair,” a dúirt an Rí Brian, agus é ag breathnú suas agus chonaic sé préachán ró-mhór agus réise sciatháin sé through ar foluain os cionn a gceann.

"Cad a tharla do do chliabhán?" cawed an préachán.

Sheas an Rí Brian suas ar chloigeann Henry Daly.

D'fhéach sé suas ar an préachán ollmhór, chuir sé a dhá lámh ar a chromáin agus dúirt, "Sílím go bhfuair muid ar an traein mícheart."

“An bhfuil do thicéid agat?” cawed an préachán arís.

“Bhí an oiread sin deifir orainn an traein a ghabháil, bhí muid ró-dhéanach chun ticéid a fháil,” a dúirt an Rí Brian.

“Ní fhaigheann ach aíonna na Banshee ticéid. An aíonna na Banshee sibh?” a d'fhiafraigh an préachán.

“Is cinnte go bhfuil,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Oíche lár an tsamhraidh thug an Banshee cuireadh dúinn anseo, mar sin táimid anseo.”

D'iompaigh an Rí Brian go casaideach ar Nanaí agus ar Ned agus d'fhéach sé orthu. Níor labhair Nanny agus Ned. Chlaon siad profusely.

“Cad iad na hainmneacha atá ort?” cawed an préachán go amhrasach. “Caithfidh mé an liosta aíonna a sheiceáil.”

“Na Tarrthóirí a thugtar orainn,” a d'fhreagair an Rí Brian agus é ag baint a bhrollach amach agus ag coinneáil lapels a chóta. “Tá mé cinnte go bhfuil muid ar an liosta aíonna.”

“Wait here and don’t move until I come back,” said the crow pointing at The Rescueteers with one wing.

He then flew away.

“Let’s get out of here as quickly as we can,” said King Brian. ‘We only have minute or two.’”

Nanny and Ned made sure their stampede cords were tight and they jumped up on their ponies.

Frosty began pawing the floor of the carriage. She felt the anxiety and was just as anxious to get off the train as Nanny and Ned were.

Bertie was also getting restless. Henry Daly knew he had to step up to the plate and get everyone to safety.

“Fan anseo agus ná bog go dtí go dtiocfaidh mé ar ais,” a dúirt an beanna agus í ag díriú ar The Rescueteers le sciathán amháin.

D’eitil sé uaidh ansin.

“Téimid amach as seo chomh tapaidh agus is féidir linn,” arsa an Rí Brian. ‘Níl ach nóiméad nó dhó againn.’”

Chinntigh Nanny agus Ned go raibh a gcordaí stampáilte daingean agus léim siad suas ar a gcuid capaillíní.

Thosaigh Frosty ag sábhadh urlár an charbaid. Mhothaigh sí an imní, agus bhí sí chomh himníoch céanna éirí den traein agus a bhí Nanny agus Ned.

Bhí Bertie ag éirí gan staonadh freisin. Bhí a fhios ag Henry Daly go gcaithfeadh sé céim suas go dtí an pláta agus gach duine a thabhairt slán.

## CHAPTER SIXTEEN

## CAIBIDIL SÉ DÉAG

Henry peered out the carriage door and quickly scanned the old buildings before him.

One old building in particular had a lower profile than the others. It sat further back and at a glance was hard to notice.

“Follow me!” said Henry Daly. “There’s an old wooden building over here.”

Nanny, Ned and King Brian were quietly relieved as Henry quickly and confidently leaped from the train with King Brian still on board.

Bertie and Frosty were only too happy to follow Henry wherever he may lead them. They sprang from the carriage.

Nanny and Ned held on tight. They were remembering King Brian’s words just after the scolding he gave them.

“If any of us become a victim of the Banshee we will become powerless,” he said. “so it is vital we don’t get caught.”

Nanny could feel her heart pound. This was the most afraid she had ever felt, but it was too late to turn back now.

Ned’s thoughts and feelings were exactly like Nanny’s.

Bhreathnaigh Anraí ar dhoras an charráiste agus rinne sé scanadh tapa ar na seanfhoirgnimh a bhí roimhe.

Bhí próifíl ní b’ísle ag seanfhoirgneamh amháin go háirithe ná na cinn eile. Shuigh sé níos faide siar agus ba dheacair a thabhairt faoi deara le sracfhéachaint.

"Tar liom!" arsa Henry Daly. "Tá seanfhoirgneamh adhmaid thall anseo."

Bhí faoiseamh ciúin ar Nanny, Ned agus an Rí Brian nuair a léim Anraí go tapa agus go muiníneach ón traein agus an Rí Brian fós ar bord.

Bhí Bertie agus Frosty ró-shásta Anraí a leanúint cibé áit a bhféadfadh sé iad a threorú. D'imthigheadar as an gcarbad.

Lean Nanny agus Ned go daingean. Bhí siad ag cuimhneamh ar bhriathra Rí Brian díreach tar éis an scold a thug sé dhóibh.

“Má íospartaigh an Banshee aon duine againn beidh muid gan chumhacht,” dúirt sé. “mar sin tá sé ríthábhachtach nach mbeimid gafa.”

D'fhéadfadh Nanny a bhraitheann punt a croí. Ba é seo an eagla is mó a bhraith sí riamh, ach bhí sé ró-dhéanach chun dul ar ais anois.

Bhí smaointe agus mothúcháin Ned díreach cosúil le smaointe Nanny.

But they had to put their fears to one side and remember why they were there. They were the two bravest children in Ireland, on a mission to save Fran O'Toole and Mike Donovan.

The old building covered in cobwebs had two doors. Above one door was written: "Skeletees Only," and above the other door: "Skeledeliveries Only."

The Rescueteers scurried through the Skeletees Only door and shut it behind them.

"That was a close one," said Nanny. "That big old crow sure was scary. What are we going to do now, King Brian?"

"We'll have to stay out of sight," answered King Brian. "As soon as the Banshee hears about The Rescueteers, she's going to be looking for us. We'll have to be very careful."

No sooner had those words come out of King Brian's mouth, when they heard horns going off.

"What's that noise?" asked Ned.

"It sounds like an alarm signal," answered King Brian. "They've discovered we're missing. Now they are going to search everywhere for us."

Inside the old building a corridor led to two doors. "Skeliforms" was printed on the door on the right, and the door on the left said "Skelekitchen."

Ach b'éigean dóibh a n-eagla a chur ar aon taobh agus cuimhneamh cén fáth a raibh siad ann. Ba iad an bheirt pháistí ba chróga in Éirinn, ar mhisean Fran O'Toole agus Mike Donovan a shábháil.

Bhí dhá dhoras ag an seanfhoirgneamh a bhí clúdaithe le gréasaí cuaille. Os cionn doras amháin a scríobhadh: "Cnámharlaigh Amháin," agus os cionn an dorais eile: "Skeledeliveries Only."

Scurried na Rescueteers tríd an doras Snámharlaigh Amháin, agus dhún siad taobh thiar dóibh.

"Ceann gar a bhí ann," arsa Nanaí. "Is cinnte go raibh an tseanphréachán sin scanrúil. Cad atá le déanamh againn anois, a Rí Brian?"

"Caithfidh muid fanacht as radharc," d'fhreagair an Rí Brian. "Chomh luath agus a chloiseann an Banshee faoi The Rescueteers, beidh sí sa tóir orainn. Caithfidh a bheith an-chúramach."

Ní túisge tháinig na briathra sin amach as béal Rí Brian, nuair a chualadar adharca ag imeacht.

"Cad é an torann sin?" a d'fhiafraigh Ned.

"Is comhartha aláirim é," d'fhreagair an Rí Brian. "Tá siad tar éis a fháil amach go bhfuil muid ar iarraidh. Anois tá siad chun cuardach a dhéanamh i ngach áit dúinn."

Laistigh den seanfhoirgneamh bhí conair mar thoradh ar dhá dhoras. Bhí "Skeliforms" clóbhuailte ar an doras ar dheis, agus dúirt an doras ar chlé "Skelekitchen."

They heard the clatter of marching skeleguards outside the Skeletee's Only door. King Brian reached for his shillelagh and waved in small precise circles. He focused on the Skeliforms door and said the words,

“May the Skeliform door open wide,  
May we be on the other side.  
The Rescueteers have been called to rise,  
So may we find a fine disguise.”

The Skeliform door opened wide.

“Quickly, in here,” said King Brian. Henry Daly briskly trotted through the open door with King Brian on his back.

Bertie and Frosty were still close at Henry's heels with Nanny and Ned still clinging tight.

Inside they found uniforms of all different types, and all were old and torn. There were hundreds of them in rows, hanging as they would in a dry cleaner's store.

They wandered among the rows of skeliforms.

“Look!” said Henry Daly. “Here are some of those spiked dog collars.”

“And those look like the skeliform the train driver was wearing,” added Nanny Reilly.

Henry Daly sniffed his way through the rows of skeliforms.

Chuala siad gliondar na gcnámharlach ag máirseáil taobh amuigh de dhoras an Skeletee's Only. Shroich an Rí Brian a scilling agus chrom sé i gciorcail bheaga chruinne. Dhírigh sé ar dhoras na Skeliforms agus dúirt na focail,

“Go bhfosgladh doras na Sceilg go fairsing,  
Go mbeimid ar an taobh eile.  
Glaodh ar na Tarrthóirí éirí,  
Mar sin go bhféadfaimis folús breá a aimsiú.”

D'oscail an doras Sceilg leathan.

“Go mear, isteach anseo,” arsa an Rí Brian. Chuaigh Henry Daly tríd an doras oscailte agus an Rí Brian ar a dhroim.

Bhí Bertie agus Frosty fós gar do shála Henry agus Nanny agus Ned fós ag cloí go teann.

Taobh istigh fuair siad éidí de gach cineál, agus iad go léir sean agus stróicthe. Bhí na céadta acu i sraitheanna, ar crochadh mar a bheadh i stór tirimhglantóirí.

Shiúil siad i measc na sraitheanna de skeliforms.

“Féach!” arsa Henry Daly. “Seo cuid de na coiléar madra spíonta sin.”

“Agus cuma orthu siúd an creatlach a bhí á chaitheamh ag an tiománaí traenach,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly.

Sniff Henry Daly a bhealach tríd na sraitheanna de skeliforms.

“They all smell like the old bones I have buried in the back yard,” he thought to himself. “No wonder they are all torn to shreds.

I bet those two guard dogs got their teeth stuck into them and tore them up.”

King Brian scanned the rows of old torn clothes looking for the perfect disguise. “Hold it right there Henry Daly,” he said. I believe we have found the answer.

He pointed his shillelagh at the hanging skeliforms. He removed two from the rack and floated them towards Nanny and Ned.

“I want the pair of you to put these on,” he said. “From here on you need to be skelecooks.”

Nanny and Ned dismounted from their ponies and put on the old torn cook’s uniform, but they were much too big.

The sleeves hung down to the ground. The pants were so big that Nanny Reilly’s whole body fit in one leg.

If Ned got into the other leg, there would still be plenty of room left for Henry Daly.

“These skeliforms are too big, King Brian,” said Ned disappointedly

“King Brian,” said Nanny, “If I said the magic words to make them fit us, would that be for the good of human kind?”

“Boladh siad go léir cosúil leis na seachnámha atá curtha agam sa chúlchlós,” a cheap sé leis féin. “Ní haon ionadh go bhfuil siad go léir stróicthe ina shreds.

Geall liom go bhfuair an dá mhadra garda sin a gcuid fiacla greamaithe isteach iontu agus stróic siad suas iad.”

Scanadh an Rí Brian na sraitheanna de shean-éadaí stróicthe ag lorg an fhoilseáin fhoirfe. “Coinnigh ansin é Henry Daly,” a dúirt sé. Creidim go bhfuil an freagra faighte againn.

Chuir sé a shillelagh in iúl do na creatlacha crochta. Bhain sé beirt den raca agus shnámh sé i dtreo Nanny agus Ned iad.

“Ba mhaith liom go gcuirfeadh an bheirt agaibh iad seo orm,” a dúirt sé. “As seo amach ní mór duit a bheith ina chnámharlaigh.”

Tháinig Nanaí agus Ned as a gcapaillíní agus chuir siad orthu éide an tseanchócaire stróicthe, ach bhí siad i bhfad ró-mhór.

Crochadh na sleeves síos go talamh. Bhí na pants chomh mór sin gur luigh corp iomlán Nanny Reilly in aon chos amháin.

Dá gcuirfí Ned isteach sa chos eile, bheadh go leor spáis fágtha fós ag Henry Daly.

“Tá na creatlacha seo ró-mhór, a Rí Brian,” arsa Ned go díomách

“A Rí Brian,” arsa Nanaí, “Dá ndéarfainn na focail draíochta chun iad a chur in oiriúint dúinne, an mbeadh sin chun leasa an chine daonna?”

Nanny wanted to be sure she was using her magic powers for all the right reasons. Another scolding from King Brian was not what she wanted to hear.

What if she ended up in Ravens Point with not a friend in the world? Not only that, what if she ended up with rabbit's ears and a pig's nose?

Topped off with a mushroom! Nanny shuddered at the thought.

"It surely would be for the good of human kind Nanny Reilly," answered King Brian. "It would be for the good of Fran O'Toole, Mike Donovan, and ourselves."

The King put his shillelagh back in his cloak pocket. He leaned back and folded his arms giving Nanny the floor.

Nanny glared at the skeliforms and said the words,

"May these skeliforms shrink,  
And fit just right,  
And may they be  
Our disguise tonight!"

Then she snapped her fingers. Suddenly Nanny and Ned's skeliforms began shrinking until they fit perfectly.

"Now we're cooks!" said Nanny with excitement.

Bhí Nanny ag iarraidh a bheith cinnte go raibh sí ag baint úsáide as a cumhachtaí draíochta ar na cúiseanna cearta go léir. Sgéal eile ó'n Rí Brian ní raibh uaithi a chloisint.

Cad a tharlóidh má chríochnaigh sí i Ravens Point gan cara ar domhan? Ní hamháin sin, cad a tharlóidh má chríochnaigh sí le cluasa coinín agus srón muice?

Ar a bharr le muisiriún! Nanny shuddered ag an smaoinimh.

"Is cinnte gur ar mhaithe leis an gcineál daonna Nanny Reilly a bheadh sé," d'fhreagair an Rí Brian. "Bheadh sé ar mhaithe le Fran O'Toole, Mike Donovan, agus sinn féin."

Chuir an Rí a scilling ar ais ina phóca clóca. Chlaon sé ar ais agus fillte a lámha ag tabhairt an urláir do Nanny.

Ghlaoigh Nanny ar na creatlacha agus dúirt na focail,

"Go gcrapadh na creatlacha seo,  
Agus ceart go leor,  
Agus b'fhéidir go bhfuil siad  
Ár gculaith anocht!"

Ansin ghearr sí a méar. Go tobann thosaigh creatlacha Nanny agus Ned ag crapadh go dtí go n-oireann siad go foirfe. "Is cócairí sinn anois!" arsa Nanny le sceitimíní.

"Is cócairí sinn anois!" arsa Nanny le sceitimíní.

“Do cooks wear cowboy hats?” asked Ned not wanting to remove his hat.

“They do indeed,” replied King Brian, “but they wear tall cowboy hats with no lid, so a leprechaun King like myself can stand on top of a Rescueteer’s head and look out over the top.”

“Well then, King Brian,” said Ned understanding his role as a Rescueteer, “may I say the magic words for the good of human kind and make our cowboy hats tall cook’s cowboy hats.”

“Yes you may,” said King Brian.

He knew at that very moment that Nanny and Ned would carry the torch and represent leprechaun magic well at all times, wherever they go.

Ned took a deep breath and said the magic words,

“May our hats grow tall,  
And look just fine,  
May there be plenty of room  
To hide King Brian.”

Then Ned snapped his fingers, and sure enough the crown of their cowboy hats grew to ten inches tall.

Now King Brian could stand on his toes and peep out whenever necessary.

Nanny and Ned smiled at each other as they admired their unusually tall cowboy hats.

“An gcaitheann cócairí hataí bó?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned nach raibh fonn air a hata a bhaint de.

“Déanann siad go deimhin,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian, “ach caitheann siad hataí bó-buachaillí arda gan aon clúdach orthu, mar sin is féidir le Rí leipreacháin cosúil liom féin seasamh ar bharr ceann an Fhirire agus breathnú amach thar barr.”

“Bhuel mar sin, a Rí Brian,” a dúirt Ned agus é ag tuiscint a ról mar Tarrthálaí, “an bhféadfainn na focail draíochta a rá ar mhaithe leis an gcine daonna agus ár hataí bó bó a dhéanamh ar hataí bó an chogánaigh.”

“Is féidir leat,” arsa an Rí Brian.

Bhí a fhios aige an tráth sin go n-íompródh Nanny agus Ned an tóirse agus go seasfadh siad draíocht na leipreachán go maith i gcónaí, cibé áit a dtéann siad.

Ghlac Ned anáil dhomhain agus dúirt sé na focail draíochta,

“Go bhfásfadh ár hataí ard,  
Agus féach go breá,  
B’fhéidir go mbeadh go leor spáis ann  
Rí Brian a cheilt.”

Ansin ghearr Ned a mhéara, agus cinnte go leor d’fhás coróin a hataí bó go deich n-orlach ar airde.

Anois d’fhéadfadh an Rí Brian seasamh ar a bharraicíní agus spléachadh amach nuair ba ghá.

Bhí aoibh ar Nanny agus Ned ar a chéile agus iad ag meas a gcuid hataí bó neamhghnách ard.



“What about me?” asked Henry Daly. “What will I be?”

“You could disguise yourself as a guard dog Henry Daly,” said King Brian. “Wear one of those spiked collars.”

“I’ll put it on you, Henry Daly,” Nanny said reaching for one of the collars.

“What will Bertie and Frosty disguise themselves as?” asked Ned. “None of these skeliforms will fit them.”

“Look around for black capes like the ones the skeleguards horses were wearing,” said King Brian.

“There must be some here somewhere.”

“I found them!” Ned said. “Here they are.” Ned stood beside a large wooden crate with “Skelecarriage Horses” written on it.

He lifted the lid. Inside he found black capes like the Banshee’s horses wore. They put the capes on Bertie and Frosty, but they too were much too big.

Bertie and Frosty looked like clothes hangers for the capes.

“King Brian, what about leprechaun magic for the good of animal kind,” asked Henry Daly as he studied Bertie and Frosty’s oversized garments.

"Céard fúmsa?" a d'fhiafraigh Henry Daly. "Cad a bheidh mé?"

“D’fhéadfá tú féin a cheilt mar mhadra cosanta Henry Daly,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Caith ceann de na coiléar spiked sin.”

“Cuirfidh mé ort é, Henry Daly,” a dúirt Nanny agus í ag lorg ceann de na coiléar.

“Cad é a dhéanfaidh Bertie agus Frosty iad féin a cheilt?” a d'fhiafraigh Ned. “Ní bheidh aon cheann de na creatlaí seo oiriúnach dóibh.”

“Féach thart fá choinne na gcapaill dubha mar na cinn a bhí ar na capaill chnámharlaigh,” arsa an Rí Brian.

“Caithfidh go bhfuil roinnt anseo áit éigin.”

"Fuair mé iad!" A dúirt Ned. “Seo iad.” Sheas Ned in aice le cliathbhosca mór adhmaid a raibh “Skelecarriage Horses” scríofa air.

Thóg sé an clúdach. Istigh fuair sé caipíní dubha ar nós capaill na Banshee. Chuir siad na caipíní ar Bertie agus Frosty, ach bhí siad i bhfad ró-mhór freisin.

Bhí Bertie agus Frosty cosúil le crochairí éadaí do na Rinn.

“A Rí Brian, cad faoin draíocht leipreachán ar mhaithe leis an gcineál ainmhí,” a d'fhiafraigh Henry Daly agus é ag déanamh staidéir ar bhaill éadaigh rómhóra Bertie agus Frosty.

“Leprechaun magic for the good of animal kind is a good thing Henry Daly,” answered King Brian. “Are you going to help Bertie and Frosty out with alterations to their attire.”

“I certainly am,” replied Henry Daly. Henry took a step back and sized up Bertie and Frosty. He raised his right paw and pointed it at the ponies. He spoke the magic words,

“May Bertie and Frosty’s  
Capes size down.  
May they be the best dressed  
Ponies in town.”

And sure enough, the capes started to shrink until they fit Bertie and Frosty perfectly.

“Now they look like real carriage horses,” said Ned. “The skeleguards will never recognize them.”

“I’m the wrong color dog,” said Henry Daly, realizing he needed to change his own appearance before they made their way amongst the Banshee’s skeletees.

“I’m a brindle dog. The skeleguard’s dogs are black. They might recognize me and catch me. I wonder what will they do to me if they catch me?”

“They might take you over to Departures,” said Ned.

“I won’t let them catch you, Henry Daly,” said Nanny Reilly. “Don’t worry. I’ll say the magic words for your disguise.

“Is maith an rud é draíocht na leipreachán ar mhaithe leis an gcineál ainmhithe Henry Daly,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian. “An bhfuil tú chun cabhrú le Bertie agus Frosty a gcuid feisteas a athrú.”

“Is mise gan dabht,” a d’fhreagair Henry Daly. Ghlac Henry céim siar agus chuir sé Bertie agus Frosty suas go mór. D’ardaigh sé a lapa dheis agus chuir sé faoi na capaillíní é. Labhair sé na focail draíochta,

“May Bertie agus Frosty’s  
Capes méid síos.  
Go maire siad an gléas is fearr  
capaillíní sa bhaile mór.”

Agus cinnte go leor, thosaigh na capes ag crapadh go dtí go n-oireann siad go foirfe do Bertie agus Frosty.

“Anois tá cuma fíor-chapaill orthu,” arsa Ned. “Ní aithneoidh na skeleguards iad choíche.”

“Is mise an madra ar an dath mícheart,” a dúirt Henry Daly, agus é ag tuiscint go raibh air a chuma féin a athrú sula n-éireodh leo i measc cnámharlaigh na Banshee.

“Is madra bréige mé. Tá madraí an chnámharlaigh dubh. Seans go n-aithneoidís mé agus go ngabhfaidh siad mé. N’fheadar cad a dhéanfaidh siad dom má ghabhfaidh siad mé?”

“B’fhéidir go dtabharfaidh siad anonn go Imeachta thú,” arsa Ned.

“Ní ligfidh mé dóibh do ghabháil, Henry Daly,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly. “Ná bí buartha. Déarfaidh mé na focail draíochta do do cheilt.

Nanny focused her eyes on Henry Daly, and said the magic words, ”

“May Henry Daly  
Be no longer brindle,  
May he turn black  
So he can mingle.”

Another click of Nanny’s fingers and Henry Daly, the last of The Rescueteers, was now in disguise and ready to aid in the rescue mission of Fran O’Toole and Mike Donovan.

Now all The Rescueteers had their disguises.

King Brian elevated himself from Henry Daly’s back and landed on top of Nanny’s head. Her tall chef’s cowboy hat hid him well.

“It’s time we made ourselves worthy of our name,” said King Brian. “Is everybody ready. He held his shillelagh high in the air.

“Onward leprechaun soldiers, duty calls. Help is on the way Fran O’Toole and Mike Donovan.

Nanny and Ned tightened their stampede cords. The Rescueteers left the old wooden building. Henry Daly led the way.

All around them, skeleguards were combing the area, searching for the intruders.

The skeleguards horses stood at a weathered hitching post, guarded by a large black crow.

Dhírigh Nanny a súile ar Henry Daly, agus dúirt sí na focail draíochta, ”

“May Henry Daly  
Ná bí ag sileadh a thuilleadh,  
Go n-iompódh sé dubh  
Mar sin is féidir leis meascadh.”

Cliceáil eile de mhéara Nanny agus Henry Daly, an ceann deireanach de The Rescueteers, faoi cheilt anois agus réidh le cabhrú le misean tarrthála Fran O’Toole agus Mike Donovan.

Anois, bhí a gcuid disguises ag na Rescueteers.

D’ardaigh an Rí Brian é féin ó dhroim Henry Daly agus thuirling sé ar bharr Nanny. Chuir hata bó a chócaire arda i bhfolach go maith é.

“Tá sé in am againn sinn féin a dhéanamh fiúntach dár n-ainm,” arsa an Rí Brian. “An bhfuil gach éinne réidh. Choinnigh sé a shillelagh go hard san aer.

“Ar aghaidh saighdiúirí leipreachán, glaonna dleachta. Tá cúnamh ar an mbealach Fran O’Toole agus Mike Donovan.

Rinne Nanny agus Ned a gcuid cordaí stampede níos doichte. D’fhág na Rescueteers an seanfhoirgneamh adhmaid. Henry Daly a bhí i gceannas ar an mbealach.

Timpeall orthu, bhí cnámharlaigh ag cíoradh an cheantair, ag cuardach na n-ionróirí.

Sheas capaill na gcnámharlach ag cuaille buaille síonchaite, faoi chumhdach préachán mór dubh.

“We can tie Bertie and Frosty up over there,” said Nanny pointing to the hitching post.

“What about that crow?” asked Ned.

“Don’t worry about the crow,” said King Brian, looking out over the top of Nanny’s cowgirl chef’s hat.

“You’re in disguise now. That crow has no idea who you are.”

“That’s true,” said Ned, suddenly realizing that he was now a skelecook. “We can just walk over there and tie up Bertie and Frosty, and that crow won’t know who we are.”

Nanny and Ned nervously walked the ponies to the hitching post with Henry Daly between them. They began to tie up Bertie and Frosty.

“Hold it right there,” cawed the crow, his wings spread wide.

Nanny and Ned started to shake. The hair on Henry Daly’s back stood upright. King Brian kept himself out of sight as he crouched down in Nanny’s hat.

“There’s no free parking here,” cawed the crow. “If you’re going to tie those ponies up to my hitching post, it’s going to cost you two pairs of teeth. One pair for each pony.”

“Is féidir linn Bertie agus Frosty a cheangal suas ansin,” a dúirt Nanny agus í ag tagairt don chuaille buailte.

“Cad mar gheall ar an bpréachán sin?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Ná bí buartha faoin bpréachán,” arsa an Rí Brian, agus é ag amharc amach ar bharr hata cócaire bó-naínn.

“Tá tú faoi cheilt anois. Níl tuairim ar bith ag an bpréachán sin cé tú féin.”

“Tá sé sin fíor,” a dúirt Ned, agus é ag tabhairt faoi deara go tobann go raibh sé ina chnámharlach anois. “Is féidir linn siúl ansin agus Bertie agus Frosty a cheangal, agus ní bheidh a fhios ag an bpréachán sin cé muid.”

Shiúil Nanny agus Ned na capaillíní go dtí an cuaille buailte le Henry Daly eatarthu. Thosaigh siad a cheangal suas Bertie agus Frosty.

“Coinnigh ansin é,” a dúirt an préachán agus a sciatháin scaipthe ar fud an domhain.

Thosaigh Nanny agus Ned ag crith. Sheas an ghruaig ar dhroim Henry Daly ina seasamh. Choinnigh an Rí Brian é féin as radharc agus é ag crúca síos i hata Nanaí.

“Níl páirceáil in aisce anseo,” a dúirt an préachán. “Má tá tú chun na capaillíní sin a cheangal le mo chuaille buailte, cosnóidh sé dhá phéire fiacla duit. Péire amháin do gach capaillín.”

“I don’t have two pairs of teeth,” said Nanny Reilly disappointedly.

Nanny was afraid to use her magic powers in front of the crow. She didn’t want him to hear her use any magic words.

He would start cawing and screeching for the skel-eguards. Then they’d be brought to the Banshee and lose all their powers.

“How could you not have two pairs of teeth?” snapped the crow. “Today is payday. We just got paid twenty minutes ago. You should have at least two pairs of teeth in your pocket.”

Ned came to Nanny’s rescue. “They fell out through the holes in our skelichef pants. May we owe you two pairs of teeth?” he asked politely.

“Owe me two pairs of teeth!” yelled the crow, as he stood taller on the hitching post and spread his wings as high and wide as he could. This is the Banshee’s Cradle we’re in, nobody gets any favors here!”

The crow squinted. His black beady eyes peered into Ned’s eyes. He side stepped along the hitching post, leaned forward and squinted at Nanny.

“What are your names?” he asked, “I’m going to report the two of you to the skeleguards for vagrancy. You don’t even have two pairs of teeth between the pair of you.”

“Níl dhá phéire fiacla agam,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly le díomá.

Bhí eagla ar Nanny a cumhachtaí draíochta a úsáid os comhair na beanna. Ní raibh sí ag iarraidh go gcloisfeadh sé í ag úsáid aon fhocail draíochta.

Thosódh sé ag screadaíl agus ag screadaíl do na maoir. Ansin thabharfaí chun na Banshee iad agus scaoilfí a gcumhachtaí go léir.

"Conas nach mbeadh dhá phéire fiacla agat?" ghearr an préachán. "Is lá pá é inniu. Fuaireamar pá fiche nóiméad ó shin. Ba cheart go mbeadh ar a laghad dhá phéire fiacla agat i do phóca."

Tháinig Ned chun tarrthála Nanny. "Thit siad amach trí na poill inár pants sceidil. An féidir linn dhá phéire fiacla a chur ort?" d'iarr sé go béasach.

“Comaoin dom dhá phéire fiacla!” yelled an beanna, mar a bhí sé níos airde ar an cuaille hitching agus leathnaigh sé a sciatháin chomh ard agus chomh leathan agus a d'fhéadfadh sé. Seo é Cradle na Banshee ina bhfuilimid, ní fhaigheann éinne fabhair anseo!”

An préachán spíonta. Bhreathnaigh a shúile dubha dubha isteach i súile Ned. Sheas sé taobh ar feadh an chuaille hitching, chlaon sé ar aghaidh agus squinted ag Nanny.

“Cad iad na hainmneacha atá ort?” d'fhiafraigh sé, “Tá mé chun an bheirt agaibh a thuairisciú do na cnámharlaigh mar gheall ar fhollasacht. Níl fiú dhá phéire fiacla idir an bheirt agaibh.”

Nanny trembled, she was close to tears. "I wish I did," she replied with a quiver in her voice.

"Done," whispered King Brian. Two pairs of teeth appeared in Nanny's hands.

"This is no place for comedians," cawed the crow grabbing the teeth from Nanny. "You're lucky to get parking. The Banshee's banquet is tonight. Every hitching post will soon be full.

And don't think I'm going to let you have free parking when your time is up. You have one skelihour, then I want more teeth. Remember that!"

"He's a mean crow, King Brian" Nanny whispered as she, Ned, and Henry Daly walked away. "I wish he wasn't so mean."

As soon as Nanny Reilly said those words, the crow called them back.

"I'm feeling so happy today," he said, "I want to give you your teeth back. Park here as long as you like." Then he cawed as loudly as he could, "Free parking all day and night for everyone!"

Skeleguards who had their horses hitched at another hitching post, untied them and hustled to the free parking spot.

They tied their horses and walked away; laughing and putting the teeth they saved back in their skeliform pockets.

Bhí crith ar Nanny, bhí sí gar do dheora. "Ba mhaith liom go ndéanfainn é," a d'fhreagair sí le crith ina glór.

"Déanta," adeir an Rí Brian. Bhí dhá péire fiacla le feiceáil i lámha Nanny.

"Ní áit ar bith é seo le haghaidh fuirseoirí," a dúirt an préachán agus í ag breith ar na fiacla ó Nanaí. "Tá an t-ádh leat páirceáil a fháil. Tá féasta na Banshee anocht. Beidh gach post hitching lán go luath.

Agus ná bí ag smaoineamh go ligfidh mé duit páirceáil saor in aisce a bheith agat nuair a bheidh do chuid ama istigh. Tá skelihour amháin agat, ansin ba mhaith liom níos mó fiacla. Cuimhnigh air sin!"

"Is préachán meánach é, a Rí Brian" a dúirt Nanny agus í féin, Ned, agus Henry Daly ag siúl uaidh. "Ba mhaith liom nach raibh sé chomh meantach sin."

Chomh luath agus a dúirt Nanny Reilly na focail sin, ghlaoigh an beanna ar ais orthu.

"Táim chomh sásta inniu," ar seisean, "is mian liom do chuid fiacla a thabhairt ar ais duit. Páirceáil anseo chomh fada agus is mian leat." Ansin dúirt sé chomh hard agus a d'fhéadfadh sé, "Páirceáil in aisce ar feadh an lae agus na hoíche do chách!"

Bhuail cnámharlaigh a raibh a gcapall acu ag cuaille buaille eile, scaoil siad iad agus chuaigh siad chuig an láthair pháirceála in aisce.

Cheangail siad a gcapall agus shiúil siad ar shiúl; ag gáire agus ag cur na fiacla a shábháil siad ar ais ina bpócaí cnámharlaigh.

“I’ll stay out here with Bertie and Frosty and keep watch,” said Henry Daly.

“Good idea, Henry Daly,” whispered a voice from inside Nanny’s hat. “We don’t want those two fine magic ponies falling into the wrong hands.”

“Be careful, Henry Daly,” Nanny Reilly said quietly. “Shout as loud as you can if you need our help. We’ll be back as soon as we find Fran O’Toole.”

Ned and Nanny Reilly headed off toward Skele Resources at the other side of the train station.

King Brian balanced himself on Nanny’s head as she walked.

Skeleguards were combing the buildings, looking for two children, one black pony, one white pony, a tiny man wearing a crown and a black and brown dog.

“Fanfaidh mé amuigh anseo le Bertie agus Frosty agus coimeádfaidh mé faire,” a dúirt Henry Daly.

“Smaoineamh maith, Henry Daly,” a dúirt guth ón taobh istigh de hata Nanny. “Ní theastaíonn uainn go dtitfidh an dá chapaillíní breátha sin isteach sna lámha míchearta.”

“Bí cúramach, Henry Daly,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly go ciúin. “Éirigh chomh hard agus is féidir leat má tá ár gcabhair uait. Beimid ar ais chomh luath agus a aimseoidh muid Fran O’Toole.”

Chuaigh Ned agus Nanny Reilly ar aghaidh i dtreo Skele Resources ag an taobh eile den stáisiún traenach.

Chothromaigh an Rí Brian é féin ar cheann Nanaí agus í ag siúl.

Bhí cnámharlaigh ag cíoradh na bhfoirgneamh, ag lorg beirt pháistí, capall dubh amháin, capall bán amháin, fear beag bídeach ag caitheamh coróin agus madra dubh agus donn.

## CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

At Skele Resources, Fran O'Toole was waiting in a long line for his turn. The Rescueteers joined the end of the line.

A skeleguard with a guard dog kept watch over the line of new arrivals. There was a skeleton wearing an old torn two-piece gray suit and was sitting at an old coffin.

She was called a skelesource. In her skelehand she had a finger bone with a long fingernail. It was her pen. She was dipping the fingernail into black ink and writing on dried rabbit hides.

She had a stack of hides on her coffin desk. On her desk, were two trays. One was labeled: "Awaiting Possibilities," and the other read: "Future Possibilities."

"Next," said the skelesource in a loud, scratchy voice. The skeleguard pushed Fran O'Toole forward. "Move along," he told Fran angrily.

Fran turned to the skeleguard and yelled, "I'm tired being pushed around by you. Why don't you just take me to Departures and get it over with?"

"You'll get there soon enough," snarled the skeleguard angrily. "Now move it. You're holding everything up. All new arrivals have to be checked in. Get going." He pushed Fran O'Toole again.

## CAIBIDIL A SEACHT DÉAG

Ag Skele Resources, bhí Fran O'Toole ag fanacht i líne fhada lena sheal. Chuaigh na Rescueteers isteach ag deireadh na líne.

Bhí creatlach le madra cosanta ag faire ar an líne a bhí ag teacht isteach nua. Bhí creatlach ag caitheamh culaith liath dhá pháosa stróicthe agus bhí sé ina shuí ag sean-chiste.

Tugadh cnámharlach uirthi. Ina cnámharlach bhí cnámh méar aici agus méar fhada uirthi. Ba é a peann é. Bhí sí ag tumadh an mhéir i ndúch dubh agus ag scríobh ar sheithí coiníní triomaithe.

Bhí cruach seithí aici ar a deasc cónra. Ar a deasc, bhí dhá thráidire. Cuireadh lipéad ar cheann amháin: "Awaiting Possibilities," agus léigh an ceann eile: "Féidearthachtaí sa Todhchaí."

"Ar aghaidh," a dúirt an chnámharlach le guth ard, scríobach. Bhrúigh an chnámharlach Fran O'Toole ar aghaidh. "Bog leat," a dúirt sé le Fran go feargach.

Chas Fran chuig an genámharlach agus d'éiligh sé, "Tá mé tuirseach traochta ag brú ort. Cén fáth nach dtógann tú díreach chuig Imeachtaí mé agus go n-éireoidh leat é?"

"Rachaidh tú ann gan mhoill," arsa an creatlach go feargach. "Bog anois é. Tá tú ag coinneáil gach rud suas. Ní mór gach iontráil nua a sheiceáil isteach. Imigh leat." Bhrúigh sé Fran O'Toole arís.



“Name?” asked the skelesource. She didn’t even look up.

“Fran O’Toole,” answered Fran. The skelesource dipped her finger pen into the black ink and wrote Fran’s name on a dried out rabbit hide.

“Address?” asked the Skelesource.

“Culleton’s Gap, Ireland,” Fran answered reluctantly.

“Do you have any living relatives?” she asked, still not looking up.

“Yes,” Fran answered.

“Are any of them sick, dying, or in the hospital?” asked the skelesource.

“I’ve a brother in the hospital,” said Fran.

“What’s his name?”

“Why do you want to know?” shouted Fran.

“What’s his name?” snarled the skelesource again. The skeleguard pushed Fran one more time.

“Sean O’Toole,” replied Fran sadly.

“What hospital is he in?” asked the Skelesource.

“That’s none of your business,” Fran yelled.

“Ainm?” a d’fhiafraigh an skelesource. Níor fhéach sí suas fiú.

“Fran O’Toole,” d’fhreagair Fran. Thum an chnámharlach a peann méar isteach sa dúch dubh agus scríobh sí ainm Fran ar sheiche coinín triomaithe.

“Seoladh?” a d’fhiafraigh an Skelesource.

“Bearnna Culleton, Éire,” d’fhreagair Fran go drogallach.

“An bhfuil aon ghaolta beo agat?” d’iarr sí, fós gan breathnú suas.

“Tá,” a d’fhreagair Fran.

“An bhfuil aon duine acu tinn, ag fáil bháis, nó san ospidéal?” a d’fhiafraigh an skelesource.

“Tá deartháir agam san ospidéal,” a dúirt Fran.

“Cad is ainm dó?”

“Cén fáth ar mhaith leat a fháil amach?” a scairt Fran.

“Cad is ainm dó?” snarled an creatlach arís. Bhrúigh an cnámharlach Fran arís eile.

“Sean O’Toole,” d’fhreagair Fran go brónach.

“Cén ospidéal ina bhfuil sé?” a d’fhiafraigh an Skelesource.

“Ní hé sin do ghnó,” adeir Fran.

“Answer her,” the skeleguard growled as he pushed Fran again. “Everybody sick, dying, or in the hospital is our business.”

“What hospital is he in?” the skelesource asked again as though nothing had happened.

“He’s in the County Hospital,” said Fran, “but he’s not dying. He just has a concussion.”

“If he’s in hospital, he’s still a possibility,” the skelesource said. “What ward is he in?”

Fran held his head low. “Ward 101,” he said sadly.

The skelesource wrote the information on another dried out hide. She rolled it up like a scroll. Tied it with a piece of braided hair and put it in the “Awaiting Possibilities” tray.

“How many other living relatives do you have?” she asked.

“Nine,” Fran answered with his head still held low.

“Do they reside at the same address?” asked the skelesource.

“Yes,” answered Fran softly.

The skelesource wrote Frans’ relatives information on another hide and rolled it up into a scroll. She tied it with another piece of braided hair and put it in the “Future Possibilities” tray.

“Freagair í,” d’fhás an chnámharlach agus é ag brú ar Fran arís. “Is é ár ngnó gach duine atá tinn, ag fáil bháis, nó san ospidéal.”

“Cén ospidéal ina bhfuil sé?” d’fhiafraigh an chnámharlach arís an amhlaidh nár tharla aon rud.

“Tá sé in Ospidéal an Chontae,” arsa Fran, “ach níl sé ag fáil bháis. Níl aige ach concussion.”

“Má tá sé san ospidéal, tá seans ann go fóill,” a dúirt an chnámharlach. “Cén barda ina bhfuil sé?”

Choinnigh Fran a cheann íseal. “Ward 101,” a dúirt sé go brónach.

Scríobh an chnámharlach an t-eolas ar sheithí triomaithe eile. rolladh sí suas mar scrollbharra. Cheangail sé le píosa gruaige braidáilte, agus é a chur sa tráidire "Awaiting Possibilities".

“Cé mhéad gaolta beo eile atá agat?” d’iarr sí.

“Naoi,” a d’fhreagair Fran agus a chloigeann fós íseal.

“An bhfuil cónaí orthu ag an seoladh céanna?” a d’fhiafraigh an skelesource.

“Tá,” d’fhreagair Fran go bog.

Scríobh an chnámharlach faisnéis faoi ghaolta Frans ar cheilt eile, agus rolladh suas i scrolla é. Cheangail sí le píosa eile gruaige braidithe é agus chuir sa tráidire “Future Possibilities” tray.

Then she rolled up the hide with Fran's information on it and handed it to him.

"Take this with you through that door and wait to be called," she said pointing to a large wooden door with a skull painted on it. She then shouted, "Next!"

Hanging from the top of the skull painted door holding a box made of big toe bones, was a large bat. He resembled a rat with leather wings.

"Empty your pockets into this," said the bat in a hoarse high-pitched voice. Fran O'Toole emptied his pockets into the big toe bone box and disappeared behind the door.

Nanny, Ned and King Brian had caught up with Fran O'Toole, and were a few 'New Arrivals' behind him in line. They heard every question the Skelesource asked him.

"Did you hear all that?" said Nanny Reilly.

"Indeed I did," answered King Brian.

"Is that skelesource going to ask us the same questions?" asked Ned.

"I wish this line of people would go home," said Nanny Reilly. "Then it would be our turn, and we'd be right behind Fran O'Toole."

Suddenly the line of people disappeared, and The Rescueteers were next in line.

Ansin rolladh sí suas an seithí le faisnéis Fran air agus thug dó é.

"Tabhair leat tríd an doras sin agus fan go nglaofaí ort," a dúirt sí agus í ag cur in iúl go doras mór adhmaid agus cloigeann péinteáilte air. Ghlaoigh sí ansin, "Ar Aghaidh!"

Crochadh ó bharr an doras péinteáilte cloigeann a bhfuil bosca déanta as cnámha ladhar mhóra, bhí ialtóg mhór. Bhí sé cosúil le francach le sciatháin leathair.

"Folmhaigh do phócaí isteach anseo," a dúirt an ialtóg le guth ard-chlaonta. D'fholmhaigh Fran O'Toole a phócaí isteach i mbosca mór cnámh na ladhar agus imithe taobh thiar den doras.

Bhí Nanny, Ned agus an Rí Brian tar éis teacht i dteagmháil le Fran O'Toole, agus cúpla 'Teacht Nua' taobh thiar de. Chuala siad gach ceist a chuir an Skelesource air.

"Ar chuala tú é sin go léir?" arsa Nanny Reilly.

"Go deimhin rinne mé," d'fhreagair an Rí Brian.

"An bhfuil an chnámharlach sin chun na ceisteanna céanna a chur orainn?" a d'fhiafraigh Ned.

"Ba mhaith liom go rachfadh an líon daoine seo abhaile," a dúirt Nanny Reilly. "Is é ár seal a bheadh ann ansin, agus bheimis díreach taobh thiar de Fran O'Toole."

Go tobann imithe an líne daoine, agus The Rescueteers a bhí sa líne eile.

The skeleguard was running up and down, pulling his dog in every direction. He ran in circles, scratching his head.

The guard dog, dizzy from all the running around, fell over. Nanny and Ned stood in front of the skele-source shaking. King Brian kept out of sight.

“Name,” she said not even looking up.

Before anyone could answer, a loud deep voice from nowhere yelled, “What are you two doing here?”

Nanny Reilly and Ned turned around; they saw a tall wide skelechef. He was the head skelechef.

“Do you know this is one of the busiest nights of the year, and we are already short-handed. Don’t give me any excuses.

I don’t want to hear them. Get yourselves into the skelekitchen and start preparing those lizard livers.”

The two new skelecooks high-tailed it to the skelekitchen without saying a word.

“That was a close one,” said Ned.

“I thought we were goners,” Nanny Reilly said. “He was one angry skelechef.”

“King Brian, do you know how to prepare lizard livers?” Ned asked.

Bhí an chnámharlach ag rith suas agus síos, ag tarraingt a mhadra i ngach treo. Rith sé i gciorcail, scratching a cheann.

Thit an madra garda, dizzy as an rith timpeall, thairis. Sheas Nanny agus Ned os comhair an fhoirse cnámharlaigh ar crith. Choimeád an Rí Brian as radharc.

“Ainm,” a dúirt sí gan breathnú suas fiú.

Sula bhféadfadh aon duine freagra a thabhairt, d'éiligh guth ard domhain ó áit ar bith, "Cad é atá tú a dhéanamh anseo?"

Nanny Reilly agus Ned iompú thart; chonaic siad creatlach ard leathan. Bhí sé an skelechef ceann.

“An bhfuil a fhios agat gurb é seo ceann de na hoícheanta is gnóthaí sa bhliain, agus táimid gan mhoill cheana féin.

Ná tabhair leithscéal dom. Níl mé ag iarraidh iad a chloisteáil. Gabhaigí féin isteach sa chnámharlach agus tosaigh ag ullmhú na n-aenna laghairt sin.”

Chuir an dá skelecook nua ard-earráil chuig an gcnámharlach é gan focal a rá.

“Ceann gar a bhí ann,” arsa Ned.

"Shíl mé go raibh muid goners," a dúirt Nanny Reilly. “Scáire feargach amháin a bhí ann.”

“A Rí Brian, an bhfuil a fhios agat conas aenna laghairt a ullmhú?” D'iarr Ned.

“I surely don’t. My specialty is corned beef and cabbage with plenty of new spuds, a good dose of farmers butter and a big mug of buttermilk,”

King Brian said proudly as he patted his well-rounded tummy and smacked his lips together.

The head skelechef marched over to Nanny and Ned with a large tub of lizard livers.

“You’ve one skelihour to get these ready for the Banshee’s Banquet tonight. Get cracking. I’ve other things to do,” the skelechef shouted at Nanny and Ned.

The two looked around and saw the other skelecooks were rushing around the skelekitchen and preparing other things.

One skelecook was tucked into a corner plucking chickens. Feathers were floating all around him but he didn’t seem to notice.

He threw the plucked birds into roasting pans with the heads and feet still attached.

Another skelecook was shaking seasonings over trays of fish heads and yelling at his helper to get them in the oven before the chicken.

Several baskets of seaweed were stacked on top of each other on a butcher’s block. Two skelecooks were chopping the seaweed to smithereens with meat cleavers and then throwing it into a large pot.

“Is cinnte nach bhfuil. Is é mo shainfheidhm ná mairteoil agus cabáiste corned le neart spudanna nua, dáileog maith d’im feirmeoirí agus muga mór bláthach,”

a dúirt an Rí Brian go bródúil agus é ag patáil a bolg cruinn agus ag sméideadh a bheola le chéile.

Mhárseáil an creatlach ceann anonn go dtí Nanny agus Ned le tub mór aenaí laghairt.

“Tá uair an chloig agat chun iad seo a ullmhú d’Fhéile na Banshee anocht. Faigh scoilteadh. Tá rudaí eile le déanamh agam,” a scairt an creatlach ar Nanny agus Ned.

Bhreachnaigh an bheirt thart agus chonaic siad na cnámharlaigh eile ag réabadh thart ar an gcnámharlach agus ag ullmhú rudaí eile.

Cuireadh creatlach amháin isteach i gcúinne ag spíonadh sicíní. Bhí cleití ag snámh timpeall air ach níor thug sé faoi deara.

Chaith sé na héin spíonta isteach i bpanna rósta agus na cinn agus na cosa fós ceangailte.

Bhí creatlach eile ag croitheadh blastán thar thráidirí de chinn éisc agus ag béicíl ar a chúntóir chun iad a thabhairt san oigheann roimh an sicín.

Cuireadh roinnt ciseáin feamainne ar bharr a chéile ar bhloc búistéara. Bhí dhá chnámharlach ag gearradh na feamainne go smior go smior le cleavers feola agus ansin á chaitheamh isteach i bpota mór.

In the heart of the skelekitchen, the head skelechef and three other skelechefs fussed over a four tier, what seemed to be, cake.

It was all black with snails all around the base of it and a figurine of a Banshee on the top tier proudly holding a skull.

Other skelecooks were moving quickly around the kitchen carrying trays of food from the ovens to the worktops, from the worktops to the stoves. Nobody even noticed Nanny and Ned.

“We’ve no one to show us how to make these lizard livers.” Ned said, “Everyone is busy.

“Don’t worry, Ned,” Nanny Reilly said as she rolled her sleeves up. “I think I know how to make them.”

Nanny and Ned were two short to reach the stove, so they placed two pots upside down on the floor in front of the stove and stood on them.

“I think we should boil the lizard livers,” said Nanny. My mother boils everything, except on Sundays when she roasts a chicken. What do you think Ned?”

“I think you’re right Nanny,” answered Ned. He wasn’t sure how his mother prepared anything.

With Ned’s help, Nanny poured the lizard livers into a pot on the stove. She studied the containers of various spices on the shelf in front of her.

“I never heard of any of these,” said Nanny as she held the jar in front of her.

I gcoílár an chnámharlaigh, bhí an creatlach cinn agus trí chnámharlach eile comhleáite thar chiseal ceithre shraith, rud a bhí cosúil le cáca.

Bhí sé ar fad dubh le seilidí timpeall ar a bhun agus figiúr Banshee ar an tsraith uachtarach agus cloigeann go bródúil as.

Bhí creatlacha eile ag gluaiseacht go tapa timpeall na cistine ag iompar tráidirí bia ó na hoighinn go dtí na boird oibre, ó na boird oibre go dtí na soirn. Níor thug aon duine faoi deara fiú Nanny agus Ned.

“Níl aon duine againn chun a thaispeáint dúinn conas na haenacha dearc seo a dhéanamh.” Dúirt Ned, “Tá gach duine gnóthach.

“Ná bí buartha, Ned,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly agus í ag rolladh a muinchille suas. “Sílím go bhfuil a fhios agam conas iad a dhéanamh.”

Bhí Nanny agus Ned dhá ghearr chun an sorn a bhaint amach, agus mar sin chuir siad dhá phota bun os cionn ar an urlár os comhair an sorn, agus sheas siad orthu.

“Sílím gur cheart dúinn na haenacha dearcga a fhiuchadh,” arsa Nanaí. Goilíonn mo mháthair gach rud, ach amháin ar an Domhnach nuair a róstaíonn sí sicín. Cad a cheapann tú a Ned?”

“Sílím go bhfuil an ceart agat Nanny,” d’fhreagair Ned. Ní raibh sé cinnte conas a d’ullmhaigh a mháthair faic.

Le cabhair Ned, dhoirt Nanny na haenacha dearcóg isteach i bpota ar an sorn. Rinne sí staidéar ar na coimeádáin de spíosraí éagsúla ar an seilf os a comhair. “Níor chuala mé trácht ar aon cheann díobh seo,” arsa Nanaí agus í ag coinneáil an phróca os a comhair.

“Ground cartilage. What’s that?”

“I don’t know,” said Ned, “sure can’t we put it in anyway?”

Nanny smelled the powder. “Oh yuck,” she said as she curled up her nose and held it as far away from herself as she could.

“The Banshee is not going to like this.” Nanny shook what she thought was an appropriate amount into the lizard livers.

She put the lid back on it and placed it back on the shelf.

“I wonder what this smells like,” said Ned.

He opened a jar of dried crushed veins. Ned didn’t have to put the jar to his nose; the odor drifted its way into his nasal cavity causing Ned’s eyes to water and his nose to crinkle.

Ned couldn’t talk. He held his nose with one hand and handed Nanny the jar with the other.

Nanny reached for the jar and kept it as far away from herself as she could. Once again, she shook what she thought was an appropriate amount into the lizard livers.

Nanny noticed one container larger than all the rest. “What’s written on that big one in the corner,” she asked Ned. “Can you reach it?”

“Mata cartilage. Cad é sin?”

"Níl a fhios agam," arsa Ned, "cinnte nach féidir linn é a chur isteach ar aon nós?"

boladh Nanny an púdar. “Ó yuck,” a dúirt sí agus í ag cur suas a srón agus é a choinneáil chomh fada uaidh féin agus a d’fhéadfadh sí.

“Ní thaitin sé seo leis an mBanshee.” Chroith Nanny méid cuí a cheap sí isteach sna haenacha dearc.

Chuir sí an clúdach ar ais air agus chuir sí ar ais ar an tseif é.

“N’fheadar cén boladh atá air seo,” arsa Ned.

D’oscail sé próca de veins brúite triomaithe. níor ghá do Ned an próca a chur ar a shrón; chuaigh an boladh isteach ina chuas sróine ag cur uisce ar shúile Ned agus a shrón ag sileadh.

Níorbh fhéidir le Ned labhairt. Choinnigh sé a shrón le lámh amháin agus thug do Nanny an próca leis an lámh eile.

Shroich Nanny an próca agus choinnigh sí é chomh fada uaidh féin agus a d’fhéadfadh sí. Arís eile chroith sí an méid a cheap sí a bhí ina mhéid cuí isteach sna haenacha lizard.

Thug Nanny faoi deara coimeádán amháin níos mó ná an chuid eile go léir. Cad atá scríofa ar an gceann mór sin sa chúinne,” a d’fhiafraigh sí de Ned. "An féidir leat é a bhaint amach?"

Ned leaned forward and reached for the container. He held it in front of him and read what was written in large bold letters: “Warning! Dizzy Dust. For Departures Only!”

King Brian peeped over the top of Nanny’s hat. “I think that’s one ingredient you should put into your concoction,” he said.

Ned passed Nanny the container. She opened it and shook several ounces in.

“Ah sure, put a little bit more in,” smiled King Brian, “don’t be shy.”

“How much more?” Nanny asked.

“Every ounce of it,” answered King Brian. He rubbed his hands together grinning to himself. He felt so triumphant he wanted to kick up his heels, but instead he slapped his leg and wriggled his body.

Nanny emptied the entire container of dizzy dust into the pot. Using a wooden stick with a skeleton’s hand attached to the end of it, she stirred all the ingredients together.

“This is all stuck together,” said Nanny. “I need something to make it stir. Pass me that water over there.”

Ned passed two gallons of water to Nanny Reilly. He poured one in and Nanny poured the other. The ingredients loosened up and the lizard livers began to bubble and cook.

Chlaon Ned ar aghaidh agus shroich sé don choimeádán. Thionóil sé os a chomhair agus léigh sé an méid a bhí scríofa i litreacha móra troma: “Rabhadh! Dust dizzy. Chun Imeachta Amháin!”

Phéic an Rí Brian thar bharr hata Nanny. “Sílim gurb é sin comhábhar amháin ba cheart duit a chur isteach i do chógaslann,” a dúirt sé.

Ned rith Nanny an coimeádán. D’oscail sí é agus chroith sí roinnt unsa isteach.

“Ah cinnte, cuir rud beag eile isteach,” adeir an Rí Brian, “ná bí cúthail.”

“Cé mhéad níos mó?” D’iarr Nanny.

“Gach unsa de,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian. Chuimil sé a lámha le chéile ag gáire leis féin. Mhóthaigh sé chomh buacach go raibh sé ag iarraidh a shála a chiceáil, ach ina ionad sin bhuail sé a chos agus chuimil sé a chorp.

D’fholmhaigh Nanny an coimeádán iomlán de dheannach dizzy isteach sa phota. Ag baint úsáide as maide adhmaid a raibh lámh chnámharlaigh ceangailte dá deireadh, chorraigh sí na comhábhair go léir le chéile.

“Tá sé seo go léir saite le chéile,” arsa Nanaí. “Tá rud éigin ag teastáil uaim chun é a chorraí. Tabhair dom an t-uisce sin thall.”

Chuir Ned dhá ghalún uisce ar aghaidh chuig Nanny Reilly. Doirt sé ceann isteach agus doirt Nanny an ceann eile. Scaoil na comhábhair suas agus thosaigh na haenacha laghairt ag boilgeoga agus ag cócaireacht.



“You’re a grand cook Nanny Reilly,” said King Brian, as he pinched his nostrils shut after inhaling the terrible aroma.

“My mother said the way to a man’s heart is through his stomach,” said Ned.

“If a woman wants a husband, all she has to do is cook a good dinner with plenty of meat and potatoes in it. Then she’ll be walking down the aisle in no time.”

“Not if she cooks him something like this,” said Nanny, “My dad’s greyhounds wouldn’t even eat this.”

“Nor would O’Brien’s pigs,” added Ned as he thought about what other animal wouldn’t eat it, “and they eat whatever you put in front of them,”

The background noises in the skelekitchen got louder.

Skelestewards brought in crockery in preparation for dishing up the various dishes. The Banshee’s Banquet was close to getting underway.

“King Brian, how are we going to save Fran O’Toole?” Nanny Reilly asked.

“We’ll have to go through the same door he went through and find him,” answered King Brian. “When the head skelechef has his back turned, we’ll sneak out. Keep stirring those lizard livers Nanny Reilly.”

“Is mór an cócaire thú, Nanny Reilly,” a dúirt an Rí Brian, agus é ag brú a shrón dúnta tar éis dó an t-uafás uafásach a ionanálú.

“Dúirt mo mháthair gur trína bholg an bealach go croí fir,” a dúirt Ned.

“Má tá fear céile ag teastáil ó bhean, níl le déanamh aici ach dinnéar maith a chócaráil le neart feola agus prátaí ann. Ansin beidh sí ag siúl síos an aisle in am ar bith.”

“Ní má chócarálann sí rud mar seo dó,” arsa Nanaí, “ní fiú go n-íosfadh cúnna m’athar é seo.”

“Ní bheadh muca Uí Bhriain,” a dúirt Ned agus é ag smaoineamh ar an ainmhí eile nach n-íosfadh é, “agus itheann siad pé rud a chuirfeá rompu,”

D’éirigh na fuaimeanna cúlra sa skelekitchen níos airde.

Thug na cnámharlaigh gréithe isteach mar ullmhúchán do na miasa éagsúla a rinsiú. Bhí féasta na Banshee gar do dhul ar aghaidh.

“A Rí Brian, conas atáimid chun Fran O’Toole a shábháil?” D’iarr Nanny Reilly.

“Beidh orainn dul tríd an doras céadna a chuaigh sé agus é a fháil,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian. “Nuair a bheidh a dhroim iompaithe ag an gcnámharlach cinn, sciobfaimid amach. Lean ort ag corraigh na n-ae laghairt sin Nanny Reilly.”

The head skelechef was peering at Nanny and Ned. They took turns stirring the lizard livers until the he turned his back again.

“He’s not looking now,” said Ned.

“Now is the time then,” King Brian said. “Let’s get out of here as quick as we can, before he turns around again.”

Nanny and Ned left the lizard livers cooking on the stove and crept out of the skelekitchen.

They made their way back to Henry Daly and their two magic ponies.

“It’s about time,” said Henry Daly. “The Dreary Castle guest shuttle has been busy all evening, going back and forth from the train station. The skeleguards are all over the place, and I just saw Fran O’Toole.”

“Where is he?” asked Ned.

“He’s over there in that wooden cage,” said Henry Daly, pointing toward the train station.

“It looks like they are getting ready to take him to Departures,” said King Brian.

“Why is he wearing one of those skeliforms?” asked Nanny Reilly. Fran O’Toole was wearing one of the old, torn skeliforms they had seen in the skeliform room.

“Look,” said Ned, “there’s something written on the cage.”

Bhí an creatlach cinn ag breathnú ar Nanny agus Ned. Thóg siad sealanna ag corraigh na n-aenna laghairt go dtí gur chas sé a dhroim arís.

“Níl sé ag féachaint anois,” arsa Ned.

“Seo é an t-am, mar sin,” arsa an Rí Brian. “Téimid amach as seo chomh tapa agus is féidir linn, sula n-iompaíonn sé timpeall arís.”

D’fhág Nanny agus Ned na haenacha laghairt ag cócaireacht ar an sorn agus chuaigh siad amach as an gcnámharlach.

Rinne siad a mbealach ar ais go Henry Daly agus a dhá chapaillíní draíochta.

“Tá sé in am,” arsa Henry Daly. “Bhí an t-eitleán aoi Chaisleán Dreary gnóthach an tráthnóna ar fad, ag dul siar agus amach ón stáisiún traenach. Tá na cnámharlaigh ar fud na háite, agus ní fhaca mé ach Fran O’Toole.”

“Cá bhfuil sé?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Tá sé thall ansin sa chliabhán adhmaid sin,” a dúirt Henry Daly, ag díriú i dtreo an stáisiúin traenach.

“Tá an chuma ar an scéal go bhfuil siad ag déanamh réidh chun é a thabhairt go Imeacht,” arsa an Rí Brian.

“Cén fáth a bhfuil sé ag caitheamh ceann de na cnámharlaigh sin?” a d’fhiafraigh Nanny Reilly. Bhí Fran O’Toole ag caitheamh ceann de na seachnámharlaigh stróicthe a chonaic siad sa seomra creatlach.

“Féach,” arsa Ned, “tá rud éigin scríofa ar an gcliabhán.”

An old piece of wood was haphazardly nailed to the cage. It had a skull painted on it, and the words: "Skeletrustee's Only."

A flock of crows swooped down, took the cage's braided hair ropes in their beaks and hoisted Fran up and over their heads.

The crow headed off in the direction of Dreary Castle.

"Quickly everyone," King Brian said as he jumped out from under Nanny Reilly's chef's hat onto Henry Daly's back.

"We can't let Fran O'Toole out of our sight. Jump on your magic ponies and hold on tight. Let's get going."

Nanny and Ned jumped up on Bertie and Frosty and prepared for takeoff.

"Up up, and away, Henry Daly!" King Brian shouted.

"Up up, and away, Frosty!" Nanny Reilly yelled.

"Up up, and away, Bertie!" Ned yelled.

Still safe in their disguises, The Rescueteers took off after Fran O'Toole.

Cuireadh seanphíosa adhmaid nana go fánach leis an gcaighean. Bhí cloigeann péinteáilte air, agus na focail: "Skeletrustee's Only."

Chuaidh tréad préachán anuas, thógadar rópaí gruaige braidte an chliabháin ina ngoba agus chrom Fran suas agus thar a gceann.

D'imigh an préachán i dtreo Chaisleán an Dreary.

"Go tapa gach duine," a dúirt an Rí Brian agus é ag léim amach faoi hata cócaire Nanny Reilly ar chúl Henry Daly.

"Ní féidir linn Fran O'Toole a ligean amach as ár radharc. Léim ar do chapailíní draíochta agus a shealbhú ar daingean. Go néirí libh."

Léim Nanny agus Ned suas ar Bertie agus Frosty, agus d'ullmhaigh siad le haghaidh éirí de thalamh.

"Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Henry Daly!" a scairt an Rí Brian.

"Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Frosty!" Nanny Reilly yelled.

"Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Bertie!" yelled Ned.

Fós slán ina gcuid folaithe, d'éirigh na Tarrthóirí amach i ndiaidh Fran O'Toole.

## CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

## CAIBIDIL OCHT DÉAG

The Rescueteers followed the crows carrying Fran O'Toole to Dreary Castle. The crows dropped Fran's cage at the skeleguards' hut.

The Rescueteers landed behind the hut. They could see Dreary Castle. The castle walls were made of skulls and covered in cobwebs.

They were just like the walls that surrounded the Banshee's Cradle. Outside the castle's main entrance, awaiting their turn, was a line of horse drawn carriages.

Every carriage had two horses covered from head to toe in black capes. About one hundred skeleguards were lined up and standing to attention.

The chief skeleguard walked up and down in front of them, tapping his leg with an old spine bone.

"Skeleguards," he said, "as you all know, tonight, we have the Banshee's Banquet. Every Banshee in Ireland is here. We must be at our very best.

We have to maintain the high standards we are known for throughout the Banshees' industry.

"Tonight, due to a breach in security, every Banshee will have her own personal skeleguard. A group called 'The Rescueteers' was spotted in the Banshee's Cradle earlier. We are not sure if they are still here because we have had not seen them since.

Lean na Tarrthóirí na préacháin ag iompar Fran O'Toole go Caisleán Dreary. Thit na préacháin cage Fran ag bothán na skeleguards.

Thuirling na Rescueteers taobh thiar den bhothán. D'fhéadfaidís Caisleán Dreary a fheiceáil. Bhí ballaí an chaisleáin déanta de skulls agus folaithe le gréasán.

Bhí siad díreach cosúil leis na ballaí a bhí timpeall ar Chliabhán na Banshee. Lasmuigh de príomhbhealach isteach an chaisleáin, ag fanacht ar a seal, bhí líne de charranna capaill.

Bhí dhá chapall clúdaithe ag gach carráiste ó cheann go ladhar le caipíní dubha. Bhí thart ar céad skeleguard líneáilte suas agus seasamh ar aird.

Shiúil an príomhchnámharlach suas agus síos os a gcomhair, ag cnagadh a chos le sean-chnámh droma.

"Ceamhain," ar seisean, "mar is eol daoibh go léir anocht, tá féasta na Banshee againn. Tá gach Banshee in Éirinn anseo. Ní mór dúinn a bheith ar ár ndícheall.

Ní mór dúinn na caighdeáin arda ar a bhfuil cáil orainn ar fud thionscal na Banshees a choinneáil.

"Anocht, mar gheall ar shárú slándála, beidh a creatlach pearsanta féin ag gach Banshee. Chonacthas grúpa darb ainm 'The Rescueteers' i gcluaisín na Banshee's Cradle. Nílimid cinnte an bhfuil siad fós anseo mar ní fhaca muid iad ó shin.

We must assume that they are still here. Therefore, it is our duty to protect every Banshee who is here in the Cradle attending the Banshees' Banquet tonight."

"Did you hear all that, King Brian?" Nanny Reilly asked. "They were talking about us!

"Indeed I did hear it," King Brian answered.

"If they catch us, we're surely goners!" Ned said.

One of the skeleguards escorted Fran O'Toole to the side of the castle and took him through an old wooden door marked: "Skeletees Only."

King Brian said, "We need to follow Fran O'Toole through that door and get him out of there as quickly as possible."

"I'll stay here on guard with Bertie and Frosty," said Henry Daly. "We'll be ready to take off when you come out."

"That's a very good idea, Henry Daly," said King Brian. "All right then, Nanny Reilly and Ned Franey, are you ready?"

"We're ready," they answered together, straightening their chef's hats. King Brian returned to his hiding place in Nanny's hat, and they followed Fran O'Toole through the 'Skeletees Only' door.

Inside skelewaiters were running about in different directions. Dishes made from skulls were piled up in stacks near an old bathtub.

Ní mór dúinn glacadh leis go bhfuil siad fós anseo. Mar sin, tá sé de dhualgas orainn gach Banshee atá anseo sa Chradle a bheidh ag freastal ar Fhéasta na Banshee anocht a chosaint."

"Ar chuala tú é sin go léir, a Rí Brian?" D'iarr Nanny Reilly. "Bhí siad ag caint fúinn!

"Go deimhin chuala mise é," d'fhreagair an Rí Brian.

"Má ghlacann siad sinn, is cinnte go bhfuil muid imithe!" A dúirt Ned. –

Thug duine de na cnámharlaigh Fran O'Toole go taobh an chaisleáin agus thug sé trí shean-doras adhmaid é a raibh an comhartha "Skeletees Only".

Dúirt an Rí Brian, "Ní mór dúinn Fran O'Toole a leanúint tríd an doras sin agus é a thabhairt amach chomh tapa agus is féidir."

"Fanfaidh mé ar garda anseo le Bertie agus Frosty," a dúirt Henry Daly. "Beidh muid réidh le éirí de thalamh nuair a thagann tú amach."

"Is smaoineamh an-mhaith é sin, Henry Daly," a dúirt an Rí Brian. "Ceart mar sin, Nanny Reilly agus Ned Franey, an bhfuil tú réidh?"

"Táimid réidh," d'fhreagair siad le chéile, ag díriú hataí a gcócaire. D'fhill an Rí Brian ar a fholach i hata Nanny, agus leanadar Fran O'Toole tríd an doras 'Skeletees Only'.

Bhí skelewaiters istigh ag rith timpeall i dtreonna difriúla. Cuireadh miasa déanta as cloigeann i gcruacha in aice le sean-tubán folctha.

“There’s Fran O’Toole!” Ned said. “He’s washing those skull dishes in that old tub.”

“The luck of the Irish is with us tonight,” King Brian said with a big smile. “Let’s grab him and go.”

“There you are!” shouted a familiar voice. “I’ve been looking everywhere for you two!”

Nanny and Ned froze. The head skelechef walked up behind the two of them and ushered them through the skelewaiters, and into the Grand Skeletal Ballroom.

He led them to a platform at the front of the ballroom. Nanny and Ned looked around the room.

Before them stood coffins mounted on skeletal feet, and every coffin was draped with a fine layer of cobwebs.

At the middle of each coffin, sat a bat on a skull holding a flaming torch. Around these coffins, sat one hundred Banshees.

Fifty on each side of the room. They were all dressed in similar black attire.

From what Nanny and Ned could see, all the Banshees had wart infested noses, and none of them had any teeth. Behind each Banshee stood a skeleguard.

“Banshees of Ireland,” said the head skelechef, as he walked out on center stage. “Tonight, I have received great compliments for the lizard livers.

“Tá Fran O’Toole ann!” A dúirt Ned. “Tá na miasa cloigeann sin á nóchán aige sa sean-tubán sin.”

“Tá an t-ádh ar na hÉireannaigh linn anocht,” a dúirt an Rí Brian le gáire mór. “Tugaimid greim air agus rachaimid.”

"Tá tú ann!" a scairt guth eolach. “Tá mé ag lorg gach áit duit beirt!”

Reoite Nanny agus Ned. Shiúil an creatlach cinn suas taobh thiar den bheirt acu agus thug tríd na scáileanna, agus isteach i Seomra Bálseomra an Chnámharlaigh Mhóir.

Thug sé chuig ardán iad ag tosach an tseomra bál. D'fhéach Nanny agus Ned timpeall an tseomra.

Sular sheas siad cónraí gléasta ar chosa cnámharlaigh, agus gach cónra clúdaithe le sraith mhín d'uígí cúinne.

I lár gach cónra, shuigh ialtóg ar cloigeann agus tóirse lasrach air. Timcheall na gcónra sin do shuidh céad Banshee.

Caoga ar gach taobh den seomra. Bhí siad go léir gléasta i bhfeisteas dubh comhchosúil.

Ón méid a d'fheiceadh Nanny agus Ned, bhí srón féitheacha ionfhabhtaithe ag na Banshees go léir, agus ní raibh fiacla ar bith ag aon duine acu. Taobh thiar de gach Banshee sheas creatlach.

“Banshees of Ireland,” a dúirt an creatlach ceann, agus é ag siúl amach ar an stáitse. “Anocht, tá moladh mór faighte agam as na haenna laghairt.

The compliments do not go to the head skelechef this time, they go to the best skelecooks the Banshee's Cradle has ever known. It gives me great pleasure to introduce them to you."

The skelechef took four paces back and left Nanny Reilly and Ned at center stage. The Banshees nodded and howled in approval.

The skelechef stepped down from the platform and walked over to the Banshee sitting in the first skel-chair to the right.

As he pulled out her skelechair, the Banshee rose wobbling a little.

Then she staggered toward Nanny Reilly and Ned Franey on the platform.

"What will we do, King Brian?" Nanny whispered nervously.

Under her hat, King Brian was on his knees clutching rosary beads, his eyes shut tight. "Pray," he whispered, "As hard as you can."

"It gives me great pleasure," the Banshee weaved back and forth, "to have skelecooks like the two of you on the Banshee's Cradle team."

She balanced herself against the trophy table.

"I have been the General Manager here for one hundred years, and in all those years I have never had lizard livers as good as those I had tonight.

Ní théann an moladh go dtí an creatlach cinn an uair seo, téann siad go dtí na cnámharlaigh is fearr a d'aithin an Banshee's Cradle riamh. Cuireann sé an-áthas orm iad a chur in aithne duit."

Thóg an creatlach ceithre luas ar ais agus d'fhág Nanny Reilly agus Ned i lár an aonaigh. Chlaon na Banshees agus chrom siad ar fhaomhadh.

Chuaigh an creatlach síos ón ardán agus shiúil sé anonn go dtí an Bhánshee ina shuí sa chéad chathaoir sceabhach ar dheis.

Mar a tharraing sé amach a creatlach, d'ardaigh an Banshee wobbling beagán.

Ansin chuaigh sí i dtreo Nanny Reilly agus Ned Franey ar an ardán.

"Cad a dhéanfaimid, a Rí Brian?" Nanny whispered nervously.

Faoina hata, bhí an Rí Brian ar a ghlúine ag bearradh coirníní rosary, a shúile dúnta go docht. "Guigh," adeir sé, "Chomh cruaidh agus is féidir leat."

"Cuireann sé an-áthas orm," a d'fháisceadh an Banshee anonn is anall, "scealóga mar an bheirt agaibh ar fhoireann Banshee's Cradle."

Chothromaigh sí í féin i gcoinne an tábla trófaí.

"Tá mé i mo Bhainisteoir Ginearálta anseo le céad bliain, agus sna blianta sin ar fad ní raibh aenna aghairt agam chomh maith leo siúd a bhí agam anocht.

She took a deep breath and paused for a moment. The other Banshees howled again. Nanny Reilly and Ned stood like statues.

The Banshee continued. "I have here," she paused again and turned to the right. Reaching out to pick up the skull trophy, she fell backwards towards the skelechef.

He caught her, handed her the skull trophy and steadied her. "I have here," she said again. "The highest award any skelecook has ever been given."

Slumped in their skelechairs, the other Banshees howled again.

"It is an honor to award this trophy to you both for a job well done,"

The Banshee was working hard on trying to balance herself as she extended the skull to both Nanny and Ned.

The head skelechef gestured to his award winning skelecooks to take the skull trophy.

Nervously, Nanny and Ned took short steps toward the Banshee. Nanny Reilly reached out and took the skull.

"Would you like to say a few words," asked the Banshee swaying to and fro. Nanny and Ned shook their heads. The head skelechef took a step toward them.

Rinne na Banshees eile caoineadh arís. Sheas Nanny Reilly agus Ned cosúil le dealbha.

Lean an Banshee. "Tá anseo agam," shos sí arís agus chas ar dheis. Ag síneadh amach chun an trófaí cloigeann a phiocadh suas, thit sí ar gcúl i dtreo an chraicne.

Rug sé uirthi, thug sé an trófaí cloigeann di agus sheas sé í. "Tá anseo agam," adeir sí arís. "An dámhachtain is airde a bhronnadh creatlach ar bith riamh."

Thit siad ina gcnámharlach, rinne na Banshees eile caoineadh arís.

"Is mór an onóir an corn seo a bhronnadh ar an mbeirt as jab a rinneadh go maith,"

Bhí an Banshee ag obair go dian ag iarraidh í féin a chothromú agus í ag síneadh an cloigeann chuig Nanny agus Ned araon.

Thug an chnámharlach cloigeann go mór dá chnámharlaigh a bhuaigh duaiseanna chun corn an cloigeann a ghlacadh.

Go neirbhíseach, ghlac Nanny agus Ned céimeanna gearra i dtreo na Banshee. Shín Nanny Reilly amach agus thóg sí an cloigeann.

"Ar mhaith leat cúpla focal a rá," a d'fhiafraigh an Banshee ag luascadh anonn is anall. Chroith Nanny agus Ned a gceann. Ghlac an creatlach ceann céim i dtreo iad.



“Are you sure you wouldn’t like to say something?” he asked. “It is a great honor to be awarded the skull trophy.”

Nanny and Ned shook their heads again.

“All right,” said the skelechef. “I understand your nervousness. It is not easy to speak in front of so many honored guests. You may go back to the skelekitchen now and help the other skelechefs clean up.”

Nanny and Ned backed toward the Grand Skeletal Ballroom door, holding the skull trophy. Weaving in their skekechairs, the Banshees howled again.

Ned closed the ballroom doors behind them.

“I tried to say thank you, but the words wouldn’t come out,” said Nanny Reilly, “were you scared, King Brian?” Nanny asked.

No answer came from King Brian.

“King Brian are you all right?” asked Ned.

“Look into my hat and see if he’s still there,” said Nanny as she bowed her head low, so Ned could look down into her hat.

“He’s still there,” said Ned. “He’s on his knees with his eyes shut, holding rosary beads. Are you all right, King Brian?”

“Is that you Ned?” King Brian asked.

“An bhfuil tú cinnte nár mhaith leat rud éigin a rá?” d’iarr sé. “Is mór an onóir é an trófaí cloigeann a bhronnadh orm.”

Chroith Nanny agus Ned a gceann arís.

“Ceart go leor,” a dúirt an creatlach. “Tuigim do néaróg. Níl sé éasca labhairt os comhair an oiread sin aíonna onórach. Is féidir leat dul ar ais go dtí an creatlach anois agus cabhrú leis na creatlaí eile a ghlanadh suas.”

Thacaigh Nanny agus Ned i dtreo doras an Grand Skeletal Ballroom, agus shealbhaigh siad an trófaí cloigeann. Ag fíodóireacht ina gcathaoireacha, rinne na Banshees caoineadh arís.

Dhún Ned na doirse bálseomra taobh thiar díobh.

“Rinne mé iarracht buíochas a ghabháil leat, ach ní thiocfadh na focail amach,” arsa Nanaí Reilly, “an raibh faitíos ort, a Rí Brian?” D’iarr Nanny.

Níor tháinig aon fhreagra ó Rí Brian.

“A Rí Brian, an bhfuil an ceart agat?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Féach isteach i mo hata agus féach an bhfuil sé fós ann,” arsa Nanaí agus í ag cromadh a ceann go híseal, ionas go bhféadfadh Ned breathnú síos isteach ina hata.

“Tá sé fós ann,” arsa Ned. “Tá sé ar a ghlúine agus a shúile dúnta, coirníní rosary air. An bhfuil an ceart agat, a Rí Brian?”

"An é sin tú Ned?" D'iarr an Rí Brian.

“Saints preserve us tonight,” King Brian said relieved. “I’m proud of the two of you. You stood your ground well.”

“That’s because we weren’t able to talk, King Brian,” replied Nanny.

“That Banshee wasn’t able to talk or stand to well either,” said Ned.

“I think that had something to do with your lizard livers,” laughed King Brian.

“Where did Fran O’Toole go?” Nanny asked, looking around.

“All the skull dishes are gone!” said Ned.

“There he is,” said King Brian.

Fran O’Toole was being led by a skeleguard.

“Come on. We’ve got to keep him in our sights,” said Nanny Reilly.

The Rescueteers followed closely. The skeleguard marched Fran up a rickety, narrow spiral staircase illuminated by bat torches.

The stairs led all the way to the roof of Dreary Castle. On the roof of the castle, there was a skeleguard hut with several wooden cages lined up beside it.

Nailed to each cage was an old wooden sign with “Departures” poorly painted on it in black.

“Caomhnaíonn na naoimh sinn anocht,” a dúirt an Rí Brian le faoiseamh. “Tá mé bródúil as an mbeirt agaibh. Sheas tú do thalamh go maith.”

“Is é an fáth nach raibh muid in ann labhairt, a Rí Brian,” a d’fhreagair Nanny.

“Ní raibh Banshee in ann labhairt ná seasamh go maith ach an oiread,” a dúirt Ned.

“Sílim go raibh baint aige sin le d’aenna laghairt,” a dúirt an Rí Brian.

“Cá ndeachaigh Fran O’Toole?” D’iarr Nanny, ag breathnú thart.

“Tá na miasa cloigeann go léir imithe!” arsa Ned.

“Tá,” arsa an Rí Brian.

Bhí Fran O’Toole á stiúradh ag cnámharlach.

“Come on. Ní mór dúinn é a choinneáil inár radharc,” a dúirt Nanny Reilly.

Lean na Rescueteers go dlúth. Mháirseáil an chnámharlach Fran suas staighre caol bíseach rickety agus é soilsithe ag tóirsí ialtóg.

Thug an staighre an bealach ar fad go dtí díon Chaisleán Dhroichid. Ar dhíon an chaisleáin, bhí bothán chnámharlaigh agus roinnt cliabháin adhmaid líneáilte in aice leis.

Nail le gach cage bhí sean-chomhartha adhmaid le “Imeachta” péinteáilte go dona air i dubh.

Nanny, Ned, and King Brian hid behind the skeleguard hut. Fran was pushed into a cage.

“Your taxi awaits,” snarled the laughing skeleguard.

“Fran! Fran!” came a voice from nowhere. Fran turned. There in the wooden cage beside him was his best friend, Mike Donovan!

“Mike!” Fran yelled. “Are you alright?”

“I’ve been better,” answered Mike. “What are we going to do, Fran? We’re goners. We need a miracle! Once the Banshee gets hold of you, that’s it. There is no tomorrow.”

“We’ll have to find a way out of here, Mike,” said Fran. “Do you have any ideas?”

“No, I don’t, Fran,” Mike said sadly. “But I’d love to have a last wish right now.”

“Maybe I should have listened to those two youngsters I met in the forest,” said Fran. “They were talking about getting a wish from a leprechaun.”

“What two youngsters? And a wish from what leprechaun?” Mike asked.

“After the Banshee took you away,” Fran said, “I followed you all the way into the forest, and then I and fell asleep with exhaustion for a few minutes.”

Chuaigh Nanny, Ned, agus an Rí Brian i bhfolach taobh thiar de bhoth an chnámharlaigh. Cuireadh Fran isteach i gliabhán.

“Tá do tacsáí ag fanacht leat,” a dúirt an creatlach gáire.

“Fran! Fran!” tháinig guth ó áit ar bith. Chas Fran. Sa chliabhán adhmaid in aice leis bhí a chara is fearr, Mike Donovan!

"Mike!" adeir Fran. "An bhfuil tú ceart go leor?"

"Tá mé níos fearr," d'fhreagair Mike. “Cad atá le déanamh againn, a Fhran? Táimid gortóirí. Tá míorúilt de dhíth orainn! A luaithe a gheobhaidh an Banshee greim ort, sin é. Níl amárach ann.”

“Beidh orainn bealach a fháil amach as seo, a Mhaidhc,” a dúirt Fran. “An bhfuil aon smaointe agat?”

“Ní hea, a Fhran,” a dúirt Mike go brónach. “Ach ba bhreá liom mian dheireanach a bheith agam faoi láthair.”

“B'fhéidir gur cheart dom a bheith ag éisteacht leis an mbeirt ógánach sin ar bhuail mé leo san fhoraois,” a dúirt Fran. “Bhí siad ag caint faoi mhian a fháil ó leipreachán.”

“Cén bheirt ógánach? Agus mian leipreachán?” D'iarr Mike.

“Tar éis don Bhanshee tú a thabhairt leat,” a dúirt Fran, “lean mé an bealach ar fad isteach san fhoraois thú, agus ansin mé agus thit mé i mo chodladh le traochta ar feadh cúpla nóiméad.”

Fran told Mike about meeting Nanny Reilly and Ned and how he stormed off on them when they were telling him about some leprechaun king and their talking dog.

“Did they have gold whistles?” asked Mike.

They did,” answered Fran. “Even the dog, who they said could talk had a gold whistle. One of the youngsters was about to blow the whistle when I stormed off.”

Mike started to nod his head in sudden realization. He slowly spoke the words,

“Whoever has a leprechaun’s gold whistle is as magic as a leprechaun himself.” He continued nodding his head.

“How do you know that?” asked Fran.

“They were the very words out of my grandfather’s mouth to me when I was a young lad,” Mike said.

“He had a gold whistle. He told his father, my great grandfather, he had gotten it from a leprechaun who called himself, King Brian of Coolrainy because he saved the Kings life.

My great grandfather didn’t believe him and took the whistle from him for telling lies”.

“King Brian of Coolrainy?” said Fran in astonishment. “That’s the leprechaun those two youngsters were talking about.”

D’inis Fran do Mike faoi casadh le Nanny Reilly agus Ned agus mar a chuaigh sé i gcion orthu nuair a bhí siad ag insint dó faoi rí leipreachán éigin agus an madra cainte a bhí acu.

“An raibh feadóga óir acu?” a d’fhiafraigh Mike.

Rinne siad,” d’fhreagair Fran. “Bhí feadóg óir fiú ag an madra, a dúirt siad go bhféadfadh sé labhairt. Bhí duine de na daoine óga ar tí an fheadóg a shéideadh nuair a d’éirigh mé as.”

Thosaigh Mike ag sméideadh a chloigeann agus é réadaithe go tobann. Dúirt sé go mall na focail,

"An té a bhfuil feadóg óir leipreachán tá sé chomh draíochtúil leis an leipreachán féin." Lean sé ag nodding a cheann.

“Conas atá a fhios sin agat?” a d’fhiafraigh Fran.

“Ba iad na focail a tháinig as béal mo sheanathar dom nuair a bhí mé i mo ghasúr óg,” a dúirt Mike.

“Bhí feadóg óir aige. Dúirt sé lena athair, mo shin-seanathair, go bhfuair sé é ó leipreachán darbh ainm dó féin, Rí Brian Cúil Raithin, mar gur shábháil sé beatha na Ríthe.

Níor chreid mo shin-seanathair é, agus thóg sé an fheadóg uaidh chun bréaga a insint”.

“Rí Brian Cúil Raithin?” arsa Fran le hiontas. “Sin é an leipreachán a raibh an bheirt ógánach sin ag caint faoi.”

“You’re joking me!” said Mike.

“I’m surely not joking you,” replied Fran. “They were closer to me than you are now. I heard them as plain as day say King Brian of Coolrainy, and they were from Coolrainy too!”

“I remember my grandfather telling me not to tell a grownup if I ever met a leprechaun, because not too many of them believe in anything magic. Never were truer words spoken,” said Mike.

“If those two youngsters tried to tell me about a leprechaun called King Brian and a talking dog, I wouldn’t have believed them either.”

“Do you think those kids were telling the truth?” Fran asked.

“I would bet my very life, and everything I own on it,” answered Mike. “All we can do now is wish for a miracle.”

"Tá tú ag magadh orm!" arsa Mike.

“Is cinnte nach bhfuil mé ag magadh thú,” a d’fhreagair Fran. “Bhí siad níos gaire domsa ná tusa anois. Chuala mé iad chomh soiléir leis an lá adeir Brian Rí Cúil Raithin, is ó Chúil Raithin iad freisin!”

“Is cuimhin liom mo sheanathair ag rá liom gan insint do dhuine fásta dá mbuailfinn le leipreachán riamh, mar ní chreideann an iomarca acu in aon rud draíochta. Níor labhraíodh focail níos fíre riamh,” a dúirt Mike.

“Dá ndéanfadh an bheirt ógánach iarracht insint dom faoi leipreachán darbh ainm an Rí Brian agus madra cainte, ní chreidfinn iad ach an oiread.”

“An dóigh leat go raibh na páistí sin ag insint na fírinne?” D’iarr Fran.

“Gheallfinn mo shaol féin, agus gach rud atá agam air,” d’fhreagair Mike. “Is é an rud is féidir linn a dhéanamh anois ná mian miracle.”



## CHAPTER NINETEEN

Fran O'Toole sat in the cage holding his knees into his chest and his head resting on his knees. He felt hopeless.

He could do nothing, he could go nowhere, and the worst thing of all was, how sad he felt for not believing Nanny and Ned.

“Mike,” he said, “I wish I had believed those youngsters. I know it’s too late now, but I wish I could turn back the clock to that very moment in the forest.

If I believed in magic I would be home right now, as warm as toast by the fire. Enjoying a good dinner with a bottle of stout and no worries.

Instead, here we are, in the Banshee’s Cradle of all places. We’re locked in wooden cages on the roof of Dreary Castle and about to depart to the place of no return.”

“But sure you can’t blame yourself Fran,” replied Mike, he was trying to console his friend in his final hour. Who’s to say I would have done anything differently if the shoe were on the other foot.”

A miracle was exactly what they needed.

“What will we do now, King Brian?” asked Nanny.

## CAIBIDIL NAOICH DÉAG

Shuigh Fran O'Toole sa chliabhán agus a ghlúine ina chliabhrach agus a cheann ina luí ar a ghlúine.

Mhóthaigh sé gan dóchas. Ní fhéadfadh sé aon rud a dhéanamh, ní fhéadfadh sé dul áit ar bith, agus an rud is measa ar fad ná, cé chomh brónach a bhraith sé as gan a chreidiúint Nanny agus Ned.

“Maidhc,” ar seisean, “b’fhearr liom go gcreidfinn na daoine óga sin. Tá a fhios agam go bhfuil sé ró-dhéanach anois, ach ba mhaith liom go bhféadfainn an clog a chasadh ar ais go dtí an nóiméad sin san fhóraois.

Dá gcreidfinn sa draíocht bheinn abhaile faoi láthair, chomh te le tósta cois na tine. Bain sult as dinnéar maith le buidéal Stout agus gan aon imní.

Ina áit sin, táimid anseo, i gCradle Banshee i ngach áit. Táimid faoi ghlas i gliabháin adhmaid ar dhíon Chaisleán Dreary agus ar tí imeacht go dtí an áit nach bhfilleann muid.”

“Ach cinnte nach féidir leat an milleán a chur ort féin ar Fran,” a d’fhreagair Mike, bhí sé ag iarraidh dul i muinín a chara ina uair dheireanach. Cé a déarfadh go ndéanfainn aon rud difriúil dá mbeadh an bhróg ar an gcos eile.”

Bhí míorúilt go díreach cad a bhí de dhíth orthu.

"Cad a dhéanfaimid anois, a Rí Brian?" a d'fhiafraigh Nanny.

“We’ll have to distract the guard and let Mike Donovan and Fran O’Toole out of those cages,” answered King Brian. “Then we’ll make a run for it.”

“How are we going to distract the guard?” asked Ned.

“We’ll tell him, if he hurries, he can get lizard livers in the skelekitchen! Then we’ll open the cages and let Fran and Mike out,” replied Nanny.

“Are you ready, Rescueteers?” said King Brian. He knelt down out of sight in Nanny’s hat.

He pressed the palms of his hands together under his chin and looked up to the heavens.

“We’re ready, King Brian,” answered Nanny and Ned together as they tightened the stampede cords on their hats.

Nanny and Ned walked up to the skeleguard. Nanny had her skull trophy under her arm.

“Eh, excuse me, Sir!” Nanny said nervously.

“What are you two doing up here?” snarled the skeleguard.

“We came up to tell you there are lizard livers in the skelekitchen for the skeleguards,” answered Ned.

“Lizard livers?” the skeleguard said with surprise. “For the skeleguards? “But I can’t leave my post.

“Beidh orainn aird a tharraingt ar an ngarda agus Mike Donovan agus Fran O’Toole a lígean amach as na cásanna sin,” d’fhreagair an Rí Brian. “Déanfaimid rith ar a shon ansin.”

“Conas atáimid chun aird a tharraingt ar an ngarda?” a d’fhiafraigh Ned.

“Déarfaimid leis, má dhéanann sé deifir, is féidir leis aenna laghairt a fháil sa chnámharlach! Oslóidh muid na cages ansin agus scaoilfidh Fran agus Mike amach,” a d’fhreagair Nanny.

"An bhfuil tú réidh, a Tharrthóirí?" arsa an Rí Brian. Ghluais sé síos as radharc i hata Nanny.

Bhrúigh sé bosa a lámha le chéile faoina smig agus d’fhéach sé suas chun na bhflaitheas.

“Táimid réidh, a Rí Brian,” a d’fhreagair Nanaí agus Ned le chéile agus iad ag teannadh na gcrann stampála ar a gcuid hataí.

Shiúil Nanny agus Ned suas go dtí an creatlach. Bhí trófaí cloigeann ag Nanny faoina lámh.

"Eh, gabh mo leithscéal, a dhuine uasail!" A dúirt Nanny nervously.

“Cad é atá sibh beirt ag déanamh suas anseo?” snarled an skeleguard.

“Tháinig muid aníos a insint duit go bhfuil aenna laghairt sa chnámhcharr do na gardaí,” d’fhreagair Ned.

"Aenna Lizard?" a dúirt an skeleguard le iontas. “Do na skeleguards? “Ach ní féidir liom mo phost a fhágáil.



These skeletrustees will be taking off in fifteen minutes I'll go then."

"But there won't be any lizard livers left if you wait," said Nanny. "We can watch the skeletrustees for you."

"No, that's out of the question," said the skeleguard. "I have a job to do here."

Nanny and Ned nodded and turned to walk away.

"Wait a minute," said the skeleguard.

"It will take only a few minutes to run down to the skelekitchen. I'd love to taste those lizard livers. All right then, I'll take you up on your offer.

"I'll be right back," said the skeleguard and he took off in a hurry, clattering his way along as he hurried down the dusty rickety stairway.

"Now's our chance," said King Brian as he looked over the top of Nanny's hat.

"Open those cages, hurry, we don't have a moment to spare."

Nanny and Ned ran to the cages.

"Fran O'Toole and Mike Donovan," Ned said, as they approached the cages. "We're getting you out of here."

Beidh na cnámharlaigh seo ag éirí as i gceann cúig nóiméad déag, rachaidh mé ansin."

"Ach ní bheidh aon aenna dearc fágtha má fhanann tú," arsa Nanaí. "Is féidir linn féachaint ar na chnámharlaigh duit."

"Ní hea, tá sé sin as an gceist," a dúirt an creatlach. "Tá jab le déanamh agam anseo."

Chlaon Nanny agus Ned agus chas siad chun siúl amach.

"Fan nóiméad," a dúirt an creatlach.

"Ní thógfaidh sé ach cúpla nóiméad rith síos go dtí an skelekitchen. Ba bhreá liom na haenna lizard sin a bhlaiseadh. Ceart go leor, mar sin, glacfaidh mé suas le do thairiscint duit.

Beidh mé ar ais ceart," a dúirt an chnámharlach agus d'imigh sé faoi dheifir, ag cromadh a bhealaigh agus é ag deifir síos an staighre dusty rickety.

"Seo ár seans," arsa an Rí Brian agus é ag amharc thar barr hata Nanaí.

"Oscail na cages sin, déan deifir, níl nóiméad le spáráil againn."

Rith Nanny agus Ned go dtí na cages.

"Fran O'Toole agus Mike Donovan," a dúirt Ned, agus iad ag druim leis na cages. "Táimid ag cur as duit anseo."

Fran and Mike froze. They were looking at two skelecefs with tall cowboy chefs hats, and one of them had his skull under its arm.

“This is it, Fran!” said Mike. “Our moment has come.”

“You were a great friend to me all these years, Mike. I’ll never forget you,” Fran said, as he extended his hand out to Mike through the rails of his cage.

“We had some rare times didn’t we Fran?” Mike said sadly while shaking Fran’s hand.

“We sure did, Mike, we had the very best of times,” Fran replied.

“Fran, it’s me!” said Nanny. “Nanny Reilly!

“And me!” said Ned. “Ned Franey!”

“Don’t forget me,” said King Brian laughing as he jumped up and over Nanny Reilly’s chef’s hat and landed on Fran’s cage. Both Nanny and Ned took their hats off.

Fran O’Toole and Mike Donovan fainted, falling like dead people in a place that welcomed the likes.

“Wake up, wake up!” shouted Nanny. “The skeleguard will be back in a minute”

Nanny patted Mike’s cheeks. Mike was out for the count. “This is for human kind,” said Nanny as she closed her eyes tight,

Reoite Fran agus Mike. Bhí siad ag féachaint ar dhá chnámharlach le hataí arda príomhchócaire bó, agus bhí cloigeann duine acu faoina lámh.

"Seo é, Fran!" arsa Mike. "Tá ár nóiméad tagtha."

“Bhí tú i do chara mór liom ar feadh na mblianta seo caite, Mike. Ní dhéanfaidh mé dearmad go deo ort,” a dúirt Fran, agus é ag síneadh a lámh amach chuig Mike trí ráillí a chliabháin.

“Bhí roinnt uaireanta annamh againn nach raibh Fran againn?” Dúirt Mike go brónach agus é ag croitheadh láimhe Fran.

“Is cinnte go ndearnamar, a Mhaidhc, go raibh an ceann is fearr orainn,” a d’fhreagair Fran

“Fran, mise atá ann!” arsa Nanny. “Nanny Reilly!

"Agus mise!" arsa Ned. "Ned Franey!"

“Ná déan dearmad orm,” a dúirt an Rí Brian agus é ag gáire agus é ag léim suas thar hata cócaire Nanny Reilly agus ag tuirlingt ar chliabhán Fran. Bhain Nanny agus Ned a gcuid hataí amach.

Tháinig lagú ar Fran O’Toole agus Mike Donovan, ag titim cosúil le daoine marbh in áit a chuir fáilte roimh a leithéidí.

"Dúisigh, dúisigh!" a scairt Nanny. "Beidh an creatlach ar ais i gceann nóiméid"

A dúirt Nanny leicne Mike. Bhí Mike amuigh don chomhaireamh. “Tá sé seo ar son an chine daonna,” arsa Nanaí agus í ag druidim lena súile go teann,

“May Fran agus Mike

Múscail go tapa,

Roimh an skeleguard

Tagann ar ais.”

She snapped her fingers and Fran and Mike woke up.

“What are you two doing here?” asked Fran in shock.

“How did you get here? Looking at King Brian he asked, “Are you a leprechaun?”

“Never mind all that now,” interrupted Mike Donovan. “We asked for a miracle, and we got one. Let’s get out of here as fast as we can.”

Nanny and Ned opened the cage doors and let Fran and Mike out. Then they heard skeleguards coming up the spiral stairway in a hurry.

“It’s the skeleguards!” said Ned.

“I knew it was too good to be true,” said Fran O’Toole. “We’re doomed!”

Four skeleguards came through the door. “Leftover lizard livers,” snarled one of them. “You’re about to be leftover bones!” The skeleguards started to run towards the group.

At that very moment, Henry Daly landed on the rooftop with Bertie and Frosty and their reins in his mouth.

“May Fran agus Mike

Múscail go tapa,

Roimh an skeleguard

Tagann ar ais.”

Ghearr sí a méar agus dhúisigh Fran agus Mike.

“Cad é atá tú dhá dhéanamh anseo?” a d’fhiafraigh Fran le turraing.

“Conas a tháinig tú anseo? Ag féachaint ar an Rí Brian d’fhiafraigh sé, “An leipreachán thú?”

“Ní miste liom sin go léir anois,” a chuir isteach ar Mike Donovan. “D’iarramar míorúilt, agus fuaireamar ceann. Rachaimid amach as seo chomh tapa agus is féidir linn.”

D’oscail Nanny agus Ned doirse an chliabháin agus lig Fran agus Mike amach. Ansin chuala siad cnámharlaigh ag teacht suas an staighre bíseach faoi dheifir.

“Is iad na skeleguards é!” arsa Ned.

“Bhí a fhios agam go raibh sé ró-mhaith le bheith fíor,” a dúirt Fran O’Toole. “Tá muid doomed!”

Tháinig ceathrar skeleguards tríd an doras. “Aenna lizard atá fágtha,” arsa duine acu. “Tá tú ar tí a bheith cnámha fágtha!” Thosaigh na skeleguards ag rith i dtreo an ghrúpa.

Ag an bpointe sin, thuirling Henry Daly ar an díon le Bertie agus Frosty agus a n-aiseanna ina bhéal.

Nanny and Ned quickly put their hats back on and tied their stampede cords tight.

Nanny and Fran O'Toole jumped on Frosty's back, Ned and Mike Donovan jumped on Bertie's back and King Brian jumped on Henry Daly's back.

The skeleguards ran towards them. Henry Daly growled at the skeleguards. The hair stood up on his back and drool spilled from his mouth.

"You're about to be left over bones!" he growled as he took a step toward the skeleguards with King Brian on his back.

The skeleguards stopped dead in their tracks! They weren't going to challenge that ferocious dog before them. None of them wanted to be left over bones!

"Fly away now, lads!" yelled King Brian

"Up up, and away, Frosty!" yelled Nanny.

"Up up, and away, Bertie!" yelled Ned.

"Up up, and away, Henry Daly!" yelled King Brian.

Bertie, Frosty, and Henry Daly jumped off the castle roof and flew away.

They flew over Dreary Castle and the skelestation. Then they flew over the grounds of The Banshee's Cradle and the gates.

They flew over the forest and landed back at Raven's Point.

Chuir Nanny agus Ned a hataí ar ais go tapa agus cheangail siad a gcordaí stampáilte go docht.

Léim Nanny agus Fran O'Toole ar chúl Frosty, léim Ned agus Mike Donovan ar dhroim Bertie agus léim an Rí Brian ar chúl Henry Daly.

Rith na skeleguards i dtreo iad. Bhí Henry Daly ag caoineadh faoi na cnámharlaigh. Sheas an ghruaig suas ar a dhroim agus doirteadh drool as a bhéal.

"Tá tú ar tí bheith fágtha thar chnámha!" d'éirigh sé agus é ag gabháil céime i dtreo na gcnámharlach agus an Rí Brian ar a dhroim.

Stop na skeleguards marbh ina rianta! Ní raibh siad chun dúshlán a thabhairt don madra borb sin a bhí rompu. Níor theastaigh ó aon duine acu a bheith fágtha thar chnámha!

"Eitilt anois, a bhuachaillí!" adeir an Rí Brian

"Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Frosty!" yelled Nanny.

"Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Bertie!" yelled Ned.

"Suas suas, agus ar shiúl, Henry Daly!" adeir an Rí Brian.

Léim Bertie, Frosty, agus Henry Daly de dhíon an chaisleáin agus d'eitil siad.

D'eitil siad thar Chaisleán an Dreary agus an creatlach. Ansin d'eitil siad thar thailte Cliabhán na Banshee agus na geataí.

D'eitil siad thar an bhforaois agus thuirling siad ar ais ag Raven's Point.

Fran O'Toole and Mike Donovan were so happy.

They jumped off the backs of Bertie and Frosty knelt on the ground and kissed it.

They picked up several fistfuls of sand and tossed it in the air. They began laughing and hugging each other.

Fran O'Toole did a cartwheel and Mike Donovan made a brave attempt at one. The Rescueteers laughed with them.

Fran and Mike grabbed Nanny and Ned and hoisted them up on their shoulders and danced several steps of a jig. Then they all fell in the sand laughing.

"Sweet Mother," said Fran O'Toole. "We're alive and kicking."

"Thanks to King Brian's leprechaun magic, Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey and their talking dog, Henry Daly," said Mike Donovan patting Nanny and Ned on the back and Henry Daly on the head.

"It's time for us to go," said Fran. "I can't thank you all enough. How in the world did two children like yourselves become so brave?"

"We were brave because we were on a mission for the good of humankind," answered Nanny.

"And animal kind," added Ned. Ned looked at Henry, and Henry Daly smiled back at Ned.

Bhí Fran O'Toole agus Mike Donovan an-sásta.

Léim siad de dhroim Bertie agus chuaigh Frosty ar a ghlúine ar an talamh agus phóg siad é.

Phioc siad roinnt domacha gainimh agus chaith siad san aer é. Thosaigh siad ag gáire agus ag barróg ar a chéile.

Rinne Fran O'Toole roth cart agus rinne Mike Donovan iarracht chróga ar cheann. Rinne na Rescueteers gáire leo.

Rug Fran agus Mike ar Nanny agus Ned agus chroch siad suas ar a ngualainn iad agus rinne siad roinnt céimeanna portaigh. Ansin thit siad go léir sa ghaineamh ag gáire.

"Máthair milis," a dúirt Fran O'Toole. "Táimid beo agus ag ciceáil."

"Buíochas le draíocht lepreachán an Rí Brian, Nanny Reilly, Ned Franey agus a madra cainte, Henry Daly," a dúirt Mike Donovan ag bualadh Nanny agus Ned ar a chúl agus Henry Daly ar an ceann.

"Tá sé in am againn imeacht," arsa Fran. "Ní féidir liom buíochas a ghabháil libh go léir. Conas ar domhan a d'éirigh beirt pháistí cosúil leat féin chomh cróga sin?"

"Bhí muid cróga mar bhí muid ar mhisean ar mhaithe leis an gcineál daonna," d'fhreagair Nanny.

"Agus cineál ainmhithe," a dúirt Ned. D'fhéach Ned ar Henry, agus aoibh Henry Daly ar ais ar Ned.

“That’s two of the finest reasons to be brave,” said Mike Donovan, “we’ll never forget what you have done for us. If ever any of you need our help for any reason, our doors are always open to you.

“King Brian,” said Fran, “If I ran into you under normal circumstances on any other day, I would ask you for three wishes.

But today, I have a million wishes in one. Just standing here on the golden sand at Ravens Point. Thank you so much.”

King Brian smiled at Fran and held the lapels of his waistcoat and said, “On a normal day, under normal circumstances Fran O’Toole, you wouldn’t run into me.”

Fran and Mike laughed and said their farewells; they knew this was very true what King Brian had just said.

The only way someone would come across King Brian, was if he wanted them to. He’s way to crafty to let just anyone run into him.

“I think it’s time for me to say good day to you all,” said King Brian, but before I go I think the two bravest children in Ireland ought to have a couple of nice blackthorn sticks.”

He snapped his fingers and two fine shillelaghs appeared in Nanny and Ned’s hand. King Brian then reached for his own shillelagh and waved it at Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly and said the words,

“Sin dhá cheann de na cúiseanna is fearr le bheith cróga,” a dúirt Mike Donovan, “ní dhéanfaidh muid dearmad go deo ar a bhfuil déanta agat dúinn. Má bhíonn ár gcabhair ag teastáil ó aon duine agaibh ar chúis ar bith, bíonn ár ndoirse oscailte duit i gcónaí.

“A Rí Brian,” arsa Fran, “Dá rithfinn isteach chugat faoi ghnáthchúinsí lá ar bith eile, d’iarrfainn trí mhian ort.

Ach inniu, tá milliún mianta agam i gceann amháin. Seasamh anseo ar an ngaineamh órga ag Ravens Point. Go raibh míle maith agat.”

Rinne an Rí Brian miongháire ar Fhran agus ghlac sé lapels a choim agus dúirt, “Ar ghnáthlá, faoi ghnáththosca Fran O’Toole, ní rithfeadh leat isteach orm.”

Rinne Fran agus Mike gáire agus dúirt siad slán; bhí a fhios acu go raibh sé seo fíor-mhaith cad a dúirt an Rí Brian díreach.

An t-aon tslighe a thiocfadh duine trasna ar Rí Brian, ná dá mba mhian leis iad. Tá sé de nós aige ligean d’aon duine rith isteach ann.

“Sílim go bhfuil an t-am agam lá maith a rádh libh go léir,” arsa an Rí Brian, ach sula n-imeoidh mé sílim gur cheart go mbeadh cúpla maide draighean deas ag an dá leanbh is cróga in Éirinn.”

Ghearr sé a mhéar agus tháinig dhá scilling mhíne i láimh Nanny agus Ned. Shroich an Rí Brian a scilling féin ansin agus chrom sé ar Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly agus dúirt sé na focail,

“May the leprechauns be near you,  
To spread luck along your way,  
And may all the Irish angels  
Smile on you today.”

Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly said goodbye to King Brian, and then he disappeared.

“Holy moley,” said Henry Daly, looking down at himself.

“I’m still a black skeleguards dog! And you’re still skelecooks. I wish we were our old selves again.”

“Done,” laughed King Brian’s voice from afar, and sure enough, Henry Daly was a brindle dog again.

Nanny and Ned’s skeliforms disappeared and they too were back to their old selves wearing their cowboy hats and sitting on their ponies.

Nanny and Ned rode Bertie and Frosty back home along the beach with Henry Daly by their side.

It was almost dawn. They were both very tired and very quiet.

The sudden realization of their rescue mission hit them like a ton of bricks. What would have happened to them if the Banshee knew who they were?

“I don’t want to go back into the Banshee’s Cradle ever again Nanny,” said Ned.

“Go mbeadh na leipreacháin in aice leat,  
Go n-éirí an t-ádh leat ar do bhealach,  
Agus go raibh aingil na hÉireann go léir  
Aoibh gháire ort inniu.”

Slán a fhágáil ag Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly leis an Rí Brian, agus ansin chuaigh sé as a chéile.

“Naofa Moley,” a dúirt Henry Daly, ag féachaint síos air féin.

“Is madra skeleguards dubh mé fós! Agus is cnámharlaigh sibh fós. Ba mhaith liom go raibh muid ár sean féin arís.”

“Déanta,” adeir glór an Rí Brian i gcéin, agus cinnte go leor, bhí Henry Daly ina mhadra sróine arís.

D’imigh cnámharlaigh Nanny agus Ned agus iad féin ar ais chucu féin ag caitheamh a hataí bó agus ina suí ar a gcapaillíní.

Chuaigh Nanny agus Ned ag marcaíocht ar Bertie agus Frosty ar ais abhaile feadh na trá agus Henry Daly taobh leo.

Bhí sé beagnach breacadh an lae. Bhí siad araon an-tuirseach agus an-chiúin.

Bhuail réadú tobann a misean tarrthála iad cosúil le tonna brící. Cad a tharlódh dóibh dá mbeadh a fhios ag na Banshee cé hiad féin?

“Ní theastaíonn uaim dul ar ais isteach i gCliabhán na Banshee arís Nanny,” arsa Ned.

“Me either Ned,” replied Nanny. “I’m glad it’s all behind us, we won’t ever have to worry about the Banshee staring us in the face again.”

Little did Nanny, Ned and Henry Daly know what the future had in store for them. They now have, magical powers and ponies at their disposal for the good of humankind and animal kind. They have been called to rise. They are now, The Rescueteers!

### THE END



“Mise ceachtar Ned,” a d’fhreagair Nanny. “Tá áthas orm go bhfuil sé ar ár gcúl, ní bheidh orainn a bheith buartha go deo go mbeidh an Banshee ag stánadh orainn inár n-aghaidh arís.”

Is beag a bhí a fhios ag Nanny, Ned agus Henry Daly cad a bhí i ndán dóibh. Tá cumhachtaí draíochta agus capaillíní acu anois ar mhaithe le cine daonna agus ainmhí. Glaodh orthu ardú. Sin iad anois, Na Tarrthóirí!

### AN DEIREADH

