Tuathal

Astray

Lyrics and melody by Alasdair Whyte.
Arranged by Raymond Bremner.
Soloists - Joy Dunlop, Audrey Paterson, Katie Crossan.

Tuathal, translated as ‘astray’ here, literally means contrary to the course of the sun. Turning tuathal was, and still is, regarded as unlucky, unprosperous, or even fatal, and is said to have its origins in druidic beliefs.

The song tells of a girl who has been unfaithful. The wronged protagonist describes her as his sun, and that his world plunged into darkness after her choice proved fatal for the relationship.

Rann 1
M’ annas as àillidh snuadh
don tug mi ’n geall ’bha buan;
an t-slighe deas nar tùr-ghabhail
a-nìos chun iar.
Bu tu mo ghrian-ròs
fo bhlàth ann am mion(a)-chòs,
an ial mun do dh’iadh mo shaoghal,
gun neul nar rian.

Sèist
Ach chaidh thusa tuathal, a ghràidh,
thug thu cuairt don taobh cheàrr;
chaidh thusa tuathal, chaidh thusa
tuathal, a ghràidh.

Rann 2
Nuair thàinig timheal dòbhaidh,
goimh mhòr na h-oidhche geamhraidh,
is thug thu d’ chonn ’s do bheul dha,
do lùb, mo dhùl.
Sùil mhear an dearrais bhàin
a chuir lasadh ’an gruaidh mo bhànaig;
le sùgair dh’aom mo ghrian gheal,
do dhrùis, mo thnùth.

Verse 1
The girl of most exquisite beauty
to whom I gave my lasting promise;
the south path of our course
up towards the west.
You were my rock rose,
the kind which would blossom in the
tiniest crevice,
the light around which my world revolved,
nothing in our orbit to stop us.

CHORUS
But you went astray, my girl,
you took the wrong path;
you strayed, you strayed, my love

Rann 2
When the awful darkness descended that
night,
the brutal winter storm,
you gave yourself to him;
your deceit, my everything.
The lustful eyes of the fair-haired one
who brought a blush to my girl’s cheek;
my bright sun, seduced by the libertine;
your lechery, my indignation.

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Drochaid
Chaidh thu bhuam le car-tuathal
’s an cearcall air do chlì;
fo nuadh-Luan, chan fhacadh guas,
gu cruaidh a bhuain thu mi;
duibh-neòil ’cur sgàil air reul
san earradhubh gun leus
fo dhubharachd mo ghrèin’.

BRIDGE
You disregarded me, turned contrary to
the sun’s course,
the (stone) circle on your left-hand side;
under the new moon, the danger was
unseen;
there you cut me down,
dark clouds eradicating the star,
on the wane without a glimmer of light
under the eclipse of my sun.

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