

Morag: Dae ye ken richt whit ye ir askin? The Queen, ma mither, said mebbe ye didna ken mukkil about mairriage.

Puddok: Ah ken aw that Ah need ti ken.

(Morag looks straight at the Puddok for several seconds)

Morag: Ir the nae ither wey? Nae ither wey ava---?

Puddok: Na, nae ither wey---

Morag: Wad a kiss no dae?

Puddok: Na, Deil a fears! Ye canna fleitch me.
Did yeir sister, Nanse, no tell ye?

(Morag looks again at the puddok for several seconds)

Puddok: *(Encouragingly)* Ah'm in guid health.

Watch this lowp! *(He gives a demonstration leap)*

Morag: *(Sighing)* Weill, that is whit Ah maun dae. Ah maun mairrie ye, Puddok, whuther ye can lowp or no, for Ah loue the Queen ma mither weill.
An gin she disna git a sowp o this wattir suin, she wul shuirle dee.
Gin Ah canna git it for hir athoot mairriein ye, weill Ah maun mairrie ye.
Whit ither---?

Puddok: Weill said, ma lassie! *(He gives another great leap)*
Lat it be! An kis this is a magic place, ye maunna gang back on yeir words. The'r nae turnin back nou!

Morag: Dae ye want ti git mairrit richt awa this verra meinit---?
The'r nae priest here.

Puddok: Whitfor wad we be wantin a priest? In Scotland ye can hae a common law mairriage. It spares ye the fash o buyin in meat an drink for a hantil fowk ye never see frae ae year's end til anither. It's a sicht cheaper, tae.

Morag: *(Looking down dubiously at her clothes)* But Ah'm no buskit for a waddin. Ma claes is a richt mess wi me be-in on the road aw week.
Ah im aw cuivert wi stour.

(She brushes her clothes with her hands)

Puddok: Mercie, lassie, ye'l dae fyne as ye ir. Ye wadna want ti be owre grund for an ootsyde waddin. The'l be naebodie here ti see ye but masell, an frae nou on, it wul be me ti please. We nicht as weill stert the wey we mean ti gae on, an Ah say, ye'l dae fyne.

Morag: Whit div we hae ti dae than?

Puddok: The'r naething til't. Pit you yeir richt haund in mynes an yeir ither haund on ma heid!

(*Morag obeys*)

Morag: Yeir heid's awfu cauld.

Puddok: Ye'l git uised wi that.

Morag: Ah howp sae.

Puddok: Quaet nou---! Staun still i the bit!.....
(*Intones*)
Div ye, Princess Morag, promise ti tak this puddok ti be yeir guidman foraye, ti fesh an cirrie for him, an feed, cleid, redd up eftir him an luik eftir him aw yeir leevin days?

Morag: Ay, Ah div!

Puddok: Dae ye promise no ti conter him in oniething he nicht want ti dae, whitever it nicht be?

Morag: Ah div!

Puddok: Wul ye nurse me whan Ah'm no weill an whan Ah'm auld an dottilt, athoot girnin an makkin onie complaint?

Morag: Ah wul!

Puddok: An wul ye aye dae whit ye ir telt wi a guid grace, an no speak back ti me whan ye ir checkit?

Morag: Ah wul!

Puddok: An wul ye not tak the dorts an gang intil a huff whan Ah hae ti leather ye?

Morag: O Dear---! Awricht, Ah winna!

Puddok: An wul ye buirie me in a wycelyke mainner in halie grund whan Ah'm deid?

Morag: Ah wul!

Puddok: Nou, wat thoums!

(The puddok and Morag lick their thumbs and hook them together firmly but briefly)

Puddok: *(Intones)* Gin thare be oniebodie here that objekts ti this puddok an this lassie be-in yokit thegither in halie matrimony aw thair leevin days, lat him speak oot nou or haud his tung foraye!

Morag: But the'r naebodie here that coud objek!

Puddok: Naither the ir! Weill that's that! That's us yokit!

(They disengage and Morag steps back)

Ah canna say Ah feel mukkil different, be-in mairrit lyke.

Morag: *(Plaintively)* Is that aw? Is that ma waddin feinisht?
Is that ae there is?

Puddok: That's aw that Ah can mynd. That wes the important bit, oniewey.

Morag: That's us mairrit than?

Puddok: Ay, mairrit ye ir frae this verra meinit on a puddok, an a lang an blythsum lyfe ti the perr o us, ma bonnie lassie. Ye can clap me nou whanever ye lyke. Wad ye lyke ti try?

(Morag looks doubtful)

C'mon, gie's a bit clap, Wyfe!

(Morag hold out her hand uncertainly, but withdraws it again)

C'mon, dinna be blate!

Morag: O, awricht--- *(She pats him gingerly, and he responds by expanding himself)*
Ah'm no shuir Ah mukkil lyke the feel o ye.
(Sobbing) Yeir skin feels kynd o claggie. It brings me in mynd o a wultit lettuce leaf.

Puddok: Nounae, nounae, ye needna fash yeirsell. Juist dae ae thing at a tyme! The'r nae hurry – naething soud be duin in haste but grippin flaes. Ye hae yeir haill lyfe aheid ti git uised ti me. Ah'l suin keep ye richt if Ah see ye gang wrang. Ye can aye depend on me for that.

Morag: Ah dinna feel verra weill. Ma heid's fair birlin. Ah think Ah'l sit doun for a meinit.

(Morag sits down at the edge of the well)

Puddok: It's littil wunner ye'r wurkit up on yeir waddin day. It's a big day for a lassie. Juist you hae a wee rest or ye gether yeirsell!

Morag: Ah dinna feel richt at aw. Is this luiv, dae ye think?

Puddok: That wul cum later. For a hantil couples the luiv cums later.

Morag: Hou lang wul Ah hae ti wait?

Puddok: It micht cum the-morn's morn—it micht tak fortie year.

Morag: The truibil is, Ah'm no shuir Ah want it ti cum.....

Whit else dae Ah hae ti dae, G-Guidman?

Puddok: Ah'l think o sumthing eftir. Nou, Ah wad lyke ti sing ye a wee sang for ti divert ye, an ti hansil oor mairriage.

(Sings)

O gie ti me an oor at ein,
ma airms aboot ma dearie, O
an wardlie cares an wardlie men
can aw gang tapsalteirie, O

Green growe the rashes, O
Green growe the rashes, O
The sweetest oors that eir Ah spent
war spent amang the lassies, O

Morag: Whit guid words---! Did ye mak thaim up yeirsell oot yeir ain heid?

Puddok: No awthegither! Ah gat the notion o thaim frae a plouman that wantit a drink at the Wal ae day. The war mair words nor thae, but Ah canna mynd the lave.

Morag: Nou that we'r mairrit, Guidman, whaur we gaun ti byde?

Puddok: Weill, Ah dout Ah haena a houss for ye, an we canna verra weill byde in the Wal. That wadna suit you at aw. Ferr owre damp--!
The'r snails an mukkil slugs an speiders an slaiters an hairie oubats doun thare.

Morag: Hou dae ye ken?

Puddok: *(Hopping up to the well)* Hou dae Ah ken?

(Looking down into the well) That's been ma hame thir lest fowr year. Ah haed ti eat thae things for want o onieething mair haesum

Morag: Ye puir thing, wes that aw ye haed ti eat.

Puddok: Whyles Ah'd finnd a bit wurm on the gress eftir a shour o rain. Ah haed a mukkil blek slug for ma denner yestrein.

Morag: *(Makes a face)* Yugh!

Puddok: Ah wes gled for ti git it, Ah can tell ye – it wes aither that or naething at aw. Monie's the day Ah haed ti pit in wi a tuim kyte. If Ah'd been owre parteiklar, Ah'd been awa ti skin an bane bi nou.
(He examines his forearm)
(Turning away) Oniewey, ye canna byde in thare for shuir, sae we'l juist hae ti set up houss thegither in yir mither's pailace. That wey, Ah'd aye be shuiir o raiglar meat. Ah daursay she disna want for room thare, an Ah hae aye haed a notion ti try the lyfe at the Coort. Nou that Ah'm yeir Guidman, Ah expek Ah'l be made Prince Consort or the Duke o Forfar, or sumthing o the kynd.

It wul be guid ti git inti sum smert claes. Ah've aye fancied a reid velvet jauiket wi lace cuffsan mebbe green silk hosen for ma legs, an siller bickles on ma shuin. That wad luik rael smertyke, Ah think.

Morag: Mercie me---!

Puddok: Ah'l be gled o the divert. The chynge wul dae me a warld o guid. Whan aw said an duin Ah've been here lang aneuch.

(Reflectively) Eftir a whyle ye git awfu seik o plowterin amang the dubs aw bi yeirsell. At first, lowpin is fyne – it gies ye a bit lift – but whyles ye say ti yeirsell: 'Whit else ir the ti dae?' Ye say: 'Is this aw thare is? Whit hae Ah duin wi ma lyfe?'

Morag: *(Rises to her feet)* Guidman, Ah'l hae ti hurrie hame nou wi the wattir. Ma mither is gey hard up an she canna wait that lang. Dae ye want ti cum hame wi me nou?

Puddok: Na, no yit! Yeir faimlie wul no be expekkin me alang wi ye. Ye'd better gang hame first bi yeirsell an lat thaim ken ye'r mairrit an that Ah'm cummin on ahint. They'l want tyme ti prepare a richt walcum for me. Ah daursay they'l want ti thraw a bit pairtie – a reception lyke, wi wyne an mebbe a bit Selkirk bannie an a pikkil shortbreid – for the perr o us.

That wul be sumthing ti luik forrit til. Ah aye lyke ti hae sumthing ti luik forrit til. Dae ye ken, whyles Ah hae suttin here on ma hunkers in the dreipin rain for oors on end, raxin ma hairns tryin ti think whit Ah haed ti luik forrit til, an Ah haena been able ti think o a singil thing.

Morag: Puddok, that's waesum. Ah im rael vext ti hear that.

Puddok: *(Pathetically)* That's awricht ma lassie, we aw hae oor crosses ti beir. Whyles Ah hae thocht ti masell: whitna dreich lyfe--! Ah nicht as weill never hae been born at aw as pit in ma days this gait. Day eftir day, eftir day at Ardnamurchan – aw ma lane wi a sair hertat the End o the Warld.

Morag: Puddok, ye'r brekkin ma hert!

Puddok: Gin ye haedna cum alang, Princess. Ah dinna ken whit Ah'd hae duin.

(Sobbing) Ah dinna think Ah coud hae tholed it onie langir.

(She puts her arm round the Puddok's shoulder)

Morag: Puddok, ir the oneithing Ah can dae for ti help? Ye dinna need ti byde here onie langir, Puddok. Whit can Ah dae? Wad ye lyke anither clap?

Puddok: *(Pathetically, moving away)* It's awricht, Princess. It's awricht!
(She moves to follow him)
(Sobbing) Juist leave iz alane, wul ye? Leave iz alane!

Morag: If that's whit ye want, Puddok---

Puddok: Ah'l gether masell in a meinit.

Morag: Born---! Did Ah hear ye say ye war born?

Puddok: *(Recovering his composure)* Ay, Ah did say that!

Morag: But Puddok, shuirlye ye warna born! Did ye no cum oot an egg as a wee podil? Ah hae seen thaim whyles soumin aboot at the wattirsyde, afore they war ready ti chynge inti tottie littil puddoks.

Puddok: Na, it wesna lyke that wi me! Ma, Ah wes never a podil at aw, afore Ah turnt intil a puddok. Ye'l mebbe hae noticed, in sum respeks, Ah'm no the same as ither puddoks. Ah'm bigger, for a stert. Ye'l hae noticed that!

Morag: Ye'r a maist byordnar puddok richt aneuch!

Puddok: Guidwyfe, this is no sumthing it pleases me ti speak aboot at this ty
(Looking up) But Ah see the rain's lyke ti stert again. It's never verra
ferr awa here in the Hielands. Ah dout we'r in for anither richt blatter!
The'r nae beild here at aw.
(Morag looks up at the sky)

Puddok: Ye'd better luik sherp richt aneuch. Ah wadna want ye ti git droukit.
It disna maitter that mukkil for me – Ah'm no weirin onie claes.
The wattir juist skails aff ma skin.
Here gie's yeir flesk!

(The Puddok jumps onto the side of the well, takes the flask from the Princess, fills it up with water and hands it back to her)

Puddok: Hyuh! *(Hands the flask to her)* Gang hame nou, Wyfe!
Gie the Queen, yeir mither, juist ae sowp o the watter that is in this
flesk an aw wul be weill. At aince, she'l be richt as rain. She'l never
ken she haed Greigorie's Complaint. But you mak siccar she disna
drink owre mukkil at the ae tyme, or she'l stert rinnin eftir oniething
she sees wi breiks on! It haes that effek whyles.

Morag: Thank ye verra kyndlie, Guidman!

Puddok: Aff wi ye nou---! Loss nae tyme! On yeir road--! Ah'l be lowpin eftir
ye suin, an Ah'l no be ferr ahint ye, for Ah im a fest travlar.
Ai ay, an mynd an tell yeir mither Ah dinna lyke tattie soup!
Ah'm no ill ti please, but Ah canna thole tattie soup at aw.
She'l be gled ti hear Ah'm no fykie wi ma meat.

Morag: Ir ye shuir ye can manage aw that road bi yeirsell?
It's a gey lang wey frae here.

Puddok: Dinna you bather yeir bonnie heid aboot me! Aince Ah git richt
soupilt up Ah can fairlie lowp. Ah'l dae fyne.
Gie's anither clap afore ye gang! Ah lyke it best on the powe.
*(Morag pats him gingerly on the head and he shows sign of pleasure.
She then leaves with the flask)*

Puddok: *(Cries after her)* Dinna daidil on the road nou!
Ah'l no be lang eftir ye.

*(The puddok does a joyous dance to music in reel time in a crouching
position. He then hops slowly round the well)*

CAN A NO LOWP!

(He gives a vigorous leap and exit)

CURTAIN