

Tríd an stoirm

By

Fred Burdy

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Fred Burdy

fred@errances.net

00353 8 51 16 79 91

SCENE 1. THE MEETING.

A pier, at night. The wind is blowing, rain is pouring, a storm is unleashing its power over the sea. A young woman, let's call her ALICE, is looking at the sea, waiting, still. Without even noticing, she touches nervously her wedding ring. She can't look away from the sea, searching through the waves. There's nothing much to see except dark clouds, rain and huge waves. Alice can't help muttering repeatedly -

ALICE

Come back... Come back...

Though the mist, behind Alice, a necklace appears out of nowhere, sliding in the air. Around it appear an old woman (the BANSHEE) with dark clothes, white-haired and black eyed, that slides towards Alice. She suddenly screams a high-pitched, terrifying scream. Alice freezes, not daring to move.

The Banshee appears at Alice's side. Looking forward, without blinking despite the rain and wind, she moves her mouth to Alice's ear, waits a second, and whispers in old Irish --

BANSHEE

Ní bheidh sé ag filleadh.

[He's not coming back.]

In a flash, Alice sees a wrecked ship, broken into pieces against rocks emerging from the sea. She sees a body in the water, floating. She sees his dead face, pale and still.

After a second, Alice falls to her knees. The old woman turns and fades away in the darkness.

The old woman keeps moving slowly, touching a necklace that starts slightly to glow. She slowly fades, but -

Alice's hand grasps the old woman shoulder and turns her roughly the other way. Panting, red eyed, Alice's face is close to the old lady.

ALICE

I know what you are, Banshee.
Bring him back. Please. Let him
come back home.

BANSHEE

*Níl im scréach ach tuar deireadh
saoil. Ní thógaim thar nais ón*

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BANSHEE (cont'd)
bhás iad. [With my scream, I
 forewarn the end of lives. I do
 not restore them.]

ALICE
 Then take me to him. I can't... I
 have to bring him back!

BANSHEE
*Ní bhaineann na beo le tír na
 marbh.*

[The living do not belong in the
 land of the dead.]

The Banshee starts to turn away, but Alice suddenly grasps the Banshee's necklace. The necklace was slightly shining until then, but its central stone turns dead and grey.

The Banshee touches her neck. Then, slowly, looks back to Alice.

ALICE
 I need your help, and you will
 give it to me. Take me to my
 husband.

The Banshee slightly smiles for a second.

BANSHEE
*Bí curamach leis na nithe len a
 mbíonn tú ag súgra, a mharfach.
 Ní haon ghnáth muince í sin. Tá a
 cumhachtaí níos sine ná mise,
 fiú.*

[Careful what you play with,
 mortal - that is no mere
 necklace. Its powers are older
 even than I.]

The Banshee looks at the sea and lifts a hand. From the mist, a small, old boat slowly emerges and comes close to the pier, waiting for its passengers.

SCENE 2. THROUGH THE STORM.

Alice is on the small wooden ship, with the Banshee sitting silently behind her. The ship has no sails, and moves smoothly through the raging storm, surrounded by waves and rain. The waves are so huge that they seem like walls surrounding the frail ship, cutting out so much light that they move in almost pure black.

In the middle of the humongous waves stand two huge and old stone columns, where Celtic motives can barely be

seen, eaten through the centuries by wind, salt and water. On the boat, the necklace held by Alice starts to shine. Alice turns to the Banshee, when...

Black. The sea is gone, as well as the boat and the Banshee. Only the enormous columns remain. The Celtic knot motives carved on the stone begin to come to life, and move slowly in a serpentine way towards the base of the column. They slither around Alice, who still holds the shiny necklace. Whispers in old Irish come from the creatures. What seem to be their heads look at Alice, turning around her, trying to figure her out. Frightened, Alice lifts the necklace which shines strongly, and makes the slithering entities move back to their stone columns.

Alice looks all around her, strongly holding the quarterdeck, still shocked by the passage through the storm. In the distance, a few islands appear, some surrounded by mist, but the ship moves forward and leaves them in the distance. The sea is almost flat now. Some sun rays are passing through huge clouds, in a chiaroscuro mood - as if day and night were simultaneous. Under the boat, what seems to be the ruins of a huge city is clearly visible, with sea creatures following the boat before moving away from it.

The ship is moving towards a big island, where green hills emerge from a light fog. A stone quay is the only trace of civilization, as no life is visible to Alice's eyes.

SCENE 3. THE DEAD.

Alice sets foot on the quay, then turns to the Banshee.

ALICE

Where is he?

The Banshee turns her face to a rocky road going further inland. Alice starts walking, followed by the Banshee. Coming from the shadows, the shape of several four-legged creatures slowly emerge, moving in a feline, predatory way. While Alice is focused on the road, searching, the Banshee notices the presence of these KEEPERS, but she just smiles faintly.

After a voyage through a way traced between old and broken stones, Alice and the Banshee arrive in front of a cromlech of black stones. Behind them, the light seems to be powerless - a black mist hides everything. Alice moves forward, then comes to a stop.

Through the mist, a pale shape emerges, slowly walking towards Alice. It's EOGHAN, Alice's husband, that we recognize from the Alice's earlier vision. But his eyes are white, dead, and he doesn't seem to be really there. He stops walking, just a few meters from Alice.

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She walks to him, but Eoghan stands still, his eyes still dead, not looking straight at Alice. She looks at him, and after a moment, touches his face. Bits of him seem to fly in the air like dust, attracted back to the black mist. But Eoghan remains still, like a lifeless shadow of what he was.

SCENE 4. KEEPERS.

A deep, fleshy growling sound suddenly catches Alice's attention. A Keeper appears, followed by several others, moving closer and closer, growling and moving aggressively. Behind them, the Banshee stands still, a smile of revenge on her face.

She looks at the necklace and lifts her hand imperiously towards it, asking silently for Alice to give it back.

Alice tightens her hand on the necklace, but one of the Keepers suddenly moves forward and bites her arm. Alice screams, falls to her knees, and drops the necklace. Another Keeper takes it on the ground, and brings it back to the Banshee. She seizes it, then looks back to Alice.

BANSHEE

*Anois lig dom an ní a bhí uait a
tabhairt duit.*

[Now let me give you what you
asked for.]

Alice looks at her husband. The magical power of the necklace goes in the air and surrounds Alice and Eoghan. The Keepers are moving back, away from the magic of the necklace. Within seconds, the couple is in a vortex of magical and abstract Celtic motives, getting brighter and louder... We just barely see the Banshee making strange gestures before disappearing.

SCENE 5. THE SHORE.

Alice is on the shore of a small beach, washed up by the sea, surrounded by rocks - much like the place where her husband's boat was wrecked. It's almost night. Around her, the waves come crashing. She slowly wakes up.

Eoghan is on a shore too, surrounded by rocks. Tiny distorted bits of his boat are surrounding him. He wakes up, rises, and starts following a path that leads away from the shore, through the cliffs.

Alice rises with some difficulty, and starts walking away from the beach, towards a path in the land. Eoghan is now coming out of the cliffs. He can see lights in the distance, and the silhouettes of his village's houses.

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Alice is walking too, but the path seems a bit different. As she goes further inland, there are no houses to be seen.

She doesn't notice the menhirs with Celtic knots emerging from the soil.

She doesn't notice that the Celtic knots are slowly *moving*.

She doesn't notice the Banshee, in the distance, looking at her.

Black.

We hear the scream of the Banshee.

The End.