

An Béal Bocht

le Myles na gCopaleen

Tá na nithe atá luaite agam sa scríbhinn seo á gcur agam ann de bhrí go bhfuil an saol eile ag druidim liom go sciobtha – i bhfad uainn go léir an drochrud agus nár aithní an t-ainspiorad mar bhráthair mé – agus fós “mar ná beidh ár leithéidí arís ann.”

Is cóir cuí go gcuirfí ar fáil don mhuintir a leanann sinn faisnéis éigin ar na *dibheairseans** agus na *haidbhintiurs*** a bhí ann lenár linn mar nach mbeidh ár samplaí arís ann go brách agus mar nach mbeidh aon saol eile ann in Éirinn choíche inchurtha leis an saol úd againne nach bhfuil anois ann.

Ó Cúnasa mo shloinne Gaelach, Bónapárt m’ainm, agus is í Éire féin an tírín is dúchas dom.

Ní cuimhneach liom go fírinneach an lá a rugadh mé ná aon chuid den chéad leathbhliain a chaitheas abhus ar an saol seo, ach gan amhras bhíos i mo bheatha go cinnte san aimsir sin, cé nach bhfuil aon chuimhne agam uirthi, óir ní bheinn anois ann ach go rabhas an uair sin ann, agus is de réir a chéile a thig ciall don duine ach a oiread le gach créatúr eile.

An oíche roimh an chéad lá breithe dom is amhlaidh a bhí m’athairse agus Máirtín Ó Bánasa ina suí ar mhullach chró na gcearc ag breathnú na spéire dóibh, ag faire ar an uain, agus fós ag caint le chéile go macánta cneasta ar dheacrachtaí an tsaoil.

“Muise, a Mháirtín,” a dúirt m’athair, “tá an ghaoth aduagh agus tá cruth doicheallach ar na Beanna Bána: beidh fearthainn ann roimh mhaidin agus beidh oíche shalach dhoineanta againn a chuirfeas creathadh orainn más sa leaba féin dúinn.

Agus féach gurb olc an tuar é go bhfuil na lachain i measc na neantóg.

Tiocfaidh uafás agus mí-ádh ar an saol anocht agus an Cat Mara ar a bhonnaí le linn an dorchadais, agus más fíor dom ní bheidh aon dea-chinniúint romhainn araon go deo.”

“Muise, a Mhicheálángaló.” arsa Máirtín Ó Bánasa, “ní beag le rá an oiread sin ráite agat, agus más fíor duit ní bréag atá inste agat ach an fhírinne féin.”

* scléip

** eachtraí

<p>An Béal Bocht <i>le Myles na gCopaleen</i></p>	<p>The Poor Mouth <i>by Myles na gCopaleen</i></p>
<p>Tá na nithe atá luaite agam sa scríbhinn seo á gcur agam ann de bhrí go bhfuil an saol eile ag druidim liom go sciobtha – i bhfad uainn go léir an drochrud agus nár aithní an t-ainspiorad mar bhráthair mé – agus fós “mar ná beidh ár leithéidí arís ann.”</p> <p>Is cóir cuí go gcuirfí ar fáil don mhuintir a leanann sinn faisnéis éigin ar na <i>dibheairseans</i>* agus na <i>haidbhintiurs</i>** a bhí ann lenár linn mar nach mbeidh ár samplaí arís ann go brách agus mar nach mbeidh aon saol eile ann in Éirinn choíche inchurtha leis an saol úd againne nach bhfuil anois ann.</p> <p>Ó Cúnasa mo shloinne Gaelach, Bónapárt m’ainm, agus is í Éire féin an tírín is dúchas dom.</p> <p>Ní cuimhneach liom go fírinneach an lá a rugadh mé ná aon chuid den chéad leathbhliain a chaitheas abhus ar an saol seo, ach gan amhras bhíos i mo bheatha go cinnte san aimsir sin, cé nach bhfuil aon chuimhne agam uirthi, óir ní bheinn anois ann ach go rabhas an uair sin ann, agus is de réir a chéile a thig ciall don duine ach a oiread le gach créatúr eile.</p> <p>An oíche roimh an chéad lá breithe dom is amhlaidh a bhí m’athairse agus Máirtín Ó Bánasa ina suí ar mhullach chró na gcearc ag breathnú na spéire dóibh, ag faire ar an uain, agus fós ag caint le chéile go macánta cneasta ar dheacrachtaí an tsaoil.</p> <p>“Muise, a Mháirtín,” a dúirt m’athair, “tá an ghaoth aduagh agus tá cruth doicheallach ar na Beanna Bána: beidh fearthainn ann roimh mhaidin agus beidh oíche shalach dhoineanta againn a chuirfeas creathadh orainn más sa leaba féin dúinn.</p> <p>Agus féach gurb olc an tuar é go bhfuil na lachain i measc na neantóg.</p> <p>Tiocfaidh uafás agus mí-ádh ar an saol anocht agus an Cat Mara ar a bhonnaí le linn an dorchadais, agus más fíor dom ní bheidh aon dea-chinniúint romhainn araon go deo.”</p> <p>“Muise, a Mhicheálangeló.” arsa Máirtín Ó Bánasa, “ní beag le rá an oiread sin ráite agat, agus más fíor duit ní bréag atá inste agat ach an fhírinne féin.”</p> <p>* scléip ** eachtraí</p>	<p>I have put the things that I have referred to in this writing there because the other life is approaching me quickly – may the evil thing be far from us all and may not the evil spirit know me as a brother – and also “there will not be the likes of us again.”</p> <p>It’s fit and proper that some information about the diversions and adventures that were there during our time should be available to the people that follow us, for the likes of us will not ever be again and no other time in Ireland will ever be comparable to our life that is no longer here.</p> <p>Ó Cúnasa is my Gaelic surname, Bonapart is my name, and Ireland itself is my tiny native country.</p> <p>I don’t truly remember the day I was born nor any part of the first half year I spent here in this world, but without doubt I was certainly alive at that time, though I have no memory of it, for I wouldn’t be here now except that I was around at that time, and understanding comes to a person little by little as much as every other creature.</p> <p>The night before my first birthday, it’s the case that my father and Máirtín Ó Bánasa were sitting on top of the hen coup looking at the sky, watching the weather, and also talking together honestly and sincerely about life’s difficulties.</p> <p>“Indeed, Máirtín,” said my father, “the wind is from the North and there’s a bad look on the White Gables: there will be rain before morning and we’ll have a wet and stormy night that will have us trembling even in our own beds.</p> <p>And see that it’s a bad sign that the ducks are amongst the nettles.</p> <p>Horror and ill fortune will come into the world tonight and the Sea Cat will be prowling during the darkness, and if I’m right, there won’t be any good fortune for either of us again.”</p> <p>“Indeed, Michelangelo,” said Máirtín Ó Bánasa, “it’s not a little you’ve said, and if you’re right, it’s no lie you’ve told, but the truth itself.”</p> <p>* fun ** adventures</p>

<p>an – the béal – mouth bocht – poor tá – is bí – be! na – the (plural) nithe – things ní – thing atá – that is, are luaite – referred to luaigh – refer to agam – at me sa – in the scríbhinn – writing seo – this á – at their cur – putting cuir – put! ann – in it, there de bhí go – because saol – world eile – other druidim – moving to druid – move to! liom – with me go sciobtha – quickly i bhfad – far uainn – from us ó – from go léir – all drochrud – bad thing drochud – bad rud – thing agus – and nár – may not aithní – recognize (subj.) aithnigh – recognize! ainspiorad – evil spirit spiorad – spirit mar – as, since bráthair – brother mé – I, me fós – yet ná – won't (dialect) beidh – will be ár – our leithéidí – likes arís – again is – is cóir – proper cuí – fitting go – that cuirfí – should be put ar fáil – available don – for the, to the do – for, to muintir – family a – that leanann – follows lean – follow!</p>	<p>sinn – us faisnéis – information éigin – some ar – on <i>dibheirseans</i> – diversions scléip – fun <i>aidbhintiurs</i> – adventures eachtraí – adventures eachtra – adventure bhí – were lenár – with our linn – time period nach mbeidh – won't be samplaí – sample go brách – ever aon – any saol – time period in Éirinn – in Ireland Éire – Ireland choíche – ever inchurtha – comparable leis an – with the úd – that againne – at us, of ours againn – at us nach bhfuil – that isn't anois – now mo – my sloinne – surname Gaelach – Gaelic ainm – name féin – itself tírín – little country tír – country dúchas – native country dom – for me cuimhneach – reflective cuimhne – memory go fírinneach – truly fírinneach – true fírinne – truth fíor – true lá – day rugadh – was born beir – bear! ná – nor chuid – part den – of the chéad – first leathbhliain – half year leath- – half bliain – year chaitheas – I spent caith – spend! abhus – over here ach – but gan – without amhras – doubt bhíos – I was beatha – life</p>	<p>go cinnte – certainly cinnte – certain aimsir – time sin – that cé – although cuimhne – memory uirthi – on it/her óir – for ní bheinn – I wouldn't be bheinn – I would be rabhas – I was uair – time de réir a chéile – little by little a thig – that comes tig – comes tagann – comes ciall – sense duine – person ach a oiread le – as much as gach – every créatúr – creature oíche – night roimh – before lá breithe – birthday breithe – of birth breith – birth is amhlaidh – it's the case m'athairse – my father (emphatic) m'athair – my father athair – father ina suí – sitting suí – to sit mullach – top cró – pen cearc – hen ag breathnú – watching na spéire – of the sky an spéir – the sky dóibh – for them ag faire – watching over uain – weather ag caint – talking le chéile – together go macánta – honestly macánta – honest cneasta – sincere deacrachtaí – difficulties deacracht – difficulty deacair – difficult an tsaoil – of life muise – indeed dúirt – said abair – say! gaoth – wind aduaigh – from the North cruth – form doicheallach – inhospitable</p>	<p>Beanna Bána – White Gables beann – peak bán – white fearthainn – rain maidin – morning salach – dirty, drizzly doineanta – stormy a chuirfeas – that would put (relative) creathadh – trembling creath – tremble! orainn – on us más – if is sa – in the leaba – bed dúinn – for us féach – look! gurb – that is olc – bad tuar – sign é – it lachain – ducks lacha – duck i measc – among neantóg – nettle tiocfaidh – will come tar – come! uafás – horror mí-ádh – misfortune ádh – luck anocht – tonight Cat Mara – Sea Cat bonnaí – soles of foot boinn – soles bonn – sole dorchadais – of darkness dorchadas – darkness dea-chinniúint – good fortune dea- – good cinniúint – fate romhainn – before us araon – both go deo – forever arsa – said ní – is not beag – small le rá – to say oiread – amount ráite – said agat – at you duit – for you bréag – lie inste – told inis – tell!</p>
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a chaitheas, rabhas – these are *táite* (synthetic) forms of the verb that show who is doing the action.

Chaitheas leathbhliain abhus anseo.	Chaith mé leathbhliain abhus anseo.	I spent half a year over here.
Ní rabhas an uair sin ann.	Ní raibh mé an uair sin ann.	I wasn't around at that time.
Cheannaíos carr nua inné.	Cheannaigh mé carr nua inné.	I bought a new car yesterday.

chuirfí – this is the *saorbhriathar* (autonomous verb) in the *modh coinníolach* (conditional mood). It is used to specify that something might or might not happen without specifying who would do the action.

An gcuirfí ar fáil dúinn é?	Would it be made available to us?
An mbeifí ag fanacht linn?	Would people be waiting for us?
Ní ólfaí é.	People wouldn't drink it.

nár aithní – this is a verb in the *modh foshuiteach láithreach* (present subjunctive), used in modern Irish primarily for blessings, curses and fixed expressions.

ith	eat	go n-ithe an cat thú	may the cat eat you
aithnigh	recognize	nár aithní an diabhal thú	may the devil not recognize you

luaite, ráite, inste, lá breithe – these are all *aidiachtaí briathartha* (verbal adjectives or past participles). Combined with a form of the verb *bí* (be) and the preposition *ag* (at), these are used to indicate that an action has been done.

ith	eat	Tá sé ite agam.	I have eaten it.
ól	drink	An bhfuil sé ólta agat?	Have you drunk it?
ceannaigh	buy	Tá carr nua ceannaithe aici.	She has bought a new car.
luaigh	mention	na nithe atá luaite agam	the things that I have mentioned
abair	say	an oiread sin ráite agat	all that you have said
inis	tell	ní bréag atá inste agat	it's not a lie that you have told
beir	bear	an chéad lá breithe dom	my first birthday (day of birth)

inchurtha le – the prefixes *in-*, *so-* and *do-* can be added to an *aidiacht bhriathartha* (verbal adjective) to make an adjective with a related meaning. With *in-*, the meaning is usually “doable”, with *so-*, the meaning is usually “easily done” and with *do-*, the meaning is “not doable”. The combination of *cuir* (put) and *le* (with) means compared with, consequently *inchurtha le* means “comparable to”.

déan	do	indéanta	doable	sodhéanta	easily done	dodhéanta	impossible
ól	drink	inólta	drinkable	so-ólta	drinkable	do-ólta	undrinkable
bris	break	inbhriste	breakable	sobhriste	fragile	dobhriste	unbreakable

lá breithe dom, srl – Irish often uses a form of the preposition *do* (to, for) to specify who is performing an action or being affected by an action.

lá breithe dom	my birthday (day of birth for me)
ag breathnú na spéire dóibh	as they were watching the sky (at watching of the sky for them)
más sa leaba féin dúinn	even if we are in bed (if is in the bed itself for us)
más fíor dom	if I'm right (if is true for me)
tar éis teacht abhaile dom	after I came home (after coming home for me)

is dúchas dom – several expressions use a combination of the verb *is* (is) and the preposition *do* (to, for).

Cad is ainm duit?	What's your name?
Seán is ainm dom.	My name is John.
Cén áit is dúchas duit?	Where are you originally from?
Is í Éire is dúchas dom.	I'm from Ireland.
Is eol dom go bhfuil sé tinn.	I know that he is sick.

cró na gcearc, srl – there are several examples of words in the *tuiséal ginideach* (genitive case) in this passage.

an cró	na cearca	cró na gcearc	the chicken coop
na deacrachtaí	an saol	deacrachtaí an tsaol	the difficulties of life
i measc	na neantóga	i measc na neantóg	amongst the nettles
le linn	an dorchadas	le linn an dorchadais	during the darkness
lá	breith	lá breithe	birthday
breathnú	an spéir	breathnú na spéire	looking at the sky
le linn	muid	lenár linn	in our time

á gcur agam – when a pronoun is the object of a verbal noun, a special construction is used, consisting of the preposition *do* (to, for) and a possessive pronoun, which sometimes combines with it.

Tá Seáinín ag bualadh Shéamais.	Johnny's hitting Jim.
Tá Seáinín do mo bhualadh.	Johnny's hitting me.
Tá Seáinín do do bhualadh.	Johnny's hitting you.
Tá Seáinín á bhualadh.	Johnny's hitting him.
Tá Seáinín á bualadh.	Johnny's hitting her.
Tá Seáinín dár mbualadh.	Johnny's hitting us.
Tá Seáinín do bhur mbualadh.	Johnny's hitting y'all.
Tá Seáinín á mbualadh.	Johnny's hitting them.

go – many expressions in Irish are followed by *go* (that). For verbs that are preceded by *an* when making a question, *go* eclipses the following verb and *nach* is used in the negative. For verbs that are preceded by *ar* when making a question, *go* becomes *gur* and lenites the following verb, and *nár* is used in the negative. The combination of *go + is* becomes *gur* and *nach* is used in the negative; neither of these affect the following word. The combination of *go + ba* becomes *gur* and *nár* in the negative; both of these lenite the following word.

An bhfuil sé te?	Is it hot?	toisc go bhfuil sé te	because it is hot
Nach raibh sé fuar?	Wasn't it cold?	toisc nach raibh sé fuar	because it wasn't cold
Ar chuala sí é?	Did she hear it?	de bhí gur chuala sí é.	because that she heard it
Nár chuala sí é?	Didn't she hear it?	de bhí nár chuala sí é	because she didn't hear it
An maith leis é?	Does he like it?	Is amhlaidh gur maith leis é.	It's a fact that he likes it.
Nach maith leis é?	Doesn't he like it?	Is amhlaidh nach maith leis é.	It's a fact that he doesn't like it.
Ar mhaith léi uisce?	Would she like water?	ach gur mhaith léi uisce	except that she'd like water
Nár mhaith léi uisce?	Wouldn't she like water?	ach nár mhaith léi uisce	except that she wouldn't like water

cuidhne, srl – there are several related expressions in Irish for talking about things you remember.

An cuimhin leat mo chara?	Do you remember my friend?
Is cuimhin. / Ní cuimhin.	Yes. / No.
An cuimhneach leat mo chara?	Do you remember my friend?
Is cuimhneach. / Ní cuimhneach.	Yes. / No.
An bhfuil cuimhne agat ar mo chara?	Do you remember my friend?
Tá. / Níl.	Yes. / No.

-sa/se, srl – as opposed to English, where emphasis is often made by raising the voice, Irish has emphatic endings.

mé	-sa/se	mise	mo charasa	mo chuidse
tú	-sa/se	tusa	do charasa	do chuidse
sé	-san/sean	seisean	a charasan	a chuidsean
sí	-sa/se	sisé	a carasa	a cuidse
muid	-na/ne	muidne	ár gcarana	ár gcuidne
sibh	-sa/se	sibhse	bhur gcarasa	bhur gcuidse
siad	-san/sean	siadsan	a gcarasan	a gcuidsean