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Sunset Song

By Terence Davies

1

Say...

"Oo, oo, oo, butin."

Oo, oo, oo, butin.

No.

Put your mouths

as if you were about to whistle.

But don't do it.

Say...

"Oo, oo, oo, butin."

Oo, oo, oo, butin.

Mrs Hemans, is there one pupil who is in
any way proficient in the French language?

Chris Guthrie is one of my best...

especially in Latin.

Let her stand up.

Say...

"Oo, oo, oo, butin."

Oo, oo, oo, butin.

Oh.

I hope your Latin is as good.

Is your father really a socialist?

Yeah.

Chae says that all should be equal...

rich and poor, men and women.

He wants me to learn

so I'll be ready for the revolution.

And if it doesn't come?

Well, I'll train to be a doctor

and cut the bodies of the paupers.

You better take care

you don't die a pauper, Chris.

I'd hate to be standing there

with the scalpel in my hand

and looking into your queer dead face

and crying,

"But this is Chris Guthrie!"

Marget Strachan!

Oh, but Aberdeen?

Well, it's the best place for a scholar

and I'll be trained all the sooner.

Oh, Chrissie, Chrissie,

only fools love being alive!

Men, women... what fools

they are below their clothes.
There are lovely things in the world...
lovely that don't endure,
and the lovelier for that.
Wait till you find yourself in the arms
of your lad at the harvest time.
He'll stop joking,
and he'll take you like this.
There's not a body to see us! And hold you
like this, with his hands held so,
and kiss you like this.
Mwah!
"And when the First Reformation came,
some folk cried, 'Whiggam, '
and some cried, 'Rome, '
and some cried, 'The King.'
Then Dutch William came and
the Kinraddies were all for the Covenant.
But then it was an ill time
for the Scottish gentry,
for the poison of the French Revolution
came over the seas
and the new Laird of Kinraddie
became a Jacobin
and joined the Jacobin Club in Aberdeen."
Oh, there's no land like Aberdeen.
Or folks so fine that bide there.
Oh, Chris, my lass, there's more to life
than your books or studies.
There's the countryside your own...
you, its.
In the days when you're neither
bairn nor woman.
Peace, Jean, peace.
She'll do us credit.
Go on, Chris, read us more.
"And there at Aberdeen, he was
nearly killed in rioting for liberty,
and equality and fraternity."
Equality should begin at home.
Yes, she sat for her bursary...
and got it.
But two Chrisses there were...
that fought for her heart.

She hated the land
and the coarse speak of the folk.
And learning was brave and fine one day,
and the next she'd waken,
with the peewits crying
across the hills...
deep and deep,
crying in the heart of her.
And the smell of the earth in her face
almost made her cry...
for the beauty of it and the sweetness
of the Scottish land and skies.
And the next minute that passed from her
and she was English,
back to the English words,
so sharp and clean and true.
For a while, for a while, till they slid
so smoothly from her throat.
She knew that they could never say
anything worth the saying at all.
Amo, amas.
I love a lass.
Clever enough to be a teacher.
Aye.
Clever enough.
Move over...
Jehovah.
If I ever hear you take the name
of the Lord thy God in vain again,
I'll libb you.
I'll libb you like a lamb.
I hate him.
Oh, Will.
I hate him.
Jean.
Four in a family's fine.
Fine?
There'll be no more.
We'll have what God in his mercy
sends to us, woman.
See you to that!
I hate him.
It was her hair.
Her bonny, bonny hair.

Man, it's a fair tough case!
I'll need your help!
You, get the doctor
an egg for his breakfast now.
Guthrie, man, do you hear me?
I'm not deaf!
She's far too old for that.
She shouldnae be having another baby.
It's him.
It's the beast.
But don't worry.
His friend Jehovah will see to it all.
Hot water, jugs of it.
Pour me a basin of water, Chris,
and put plenty of soap nearby it.
- Do you hear me?
- Aye, Doctor! Only, she's feared.
She'll have a damned sight more to fear
when she's having a bairn of her own!
Pour out that water, quick!
It's twins.
We'll need more rooms.
More rooms?
Are we joining the gentry, Jean?
Well...
we're to bide here, then?
Content yourself.
I'll find a place.
I am a poor wayfaring stranger
A-wandering through this world of woe
And there's no sickness, toil or danger
In that great world to which I go
- I'm going home to see my father
- John, stop!
Halt!
Get down, you brat!
We'd better loosen up at Portlethen
and not try the slug this night.
Damn it to hell, woman,
you think I'm made of silver?
I know we're not made of silver,
but we might all die of the night.
I'm only going over home
So that was how she came to Blawearie...

Oh, Kinraddie.
I'm going home to meet my mother
She said she'd meet me when I come
I'm only going over Jordan
I'm only going over home
God, you've stripped!
You'd make a fine lad, Chris.
Get out of there at once,
you shameful limmer!
Get your clothes on!
What can folks say if they see her
out here near naked?
If your neighbours haven't seen
a naked lass,
they must have fathered their own bairns
with their breeks on.
What's this I'm hearing about you
and some bitch from Drumlithie?
Aye, she's not a virgin either!
Right.
I'm off to the mart at Laurencekirk.
No other soul must handle the gun
but Father.
Aye.
You and your guns.
What harm was in Will that he used it?
You'll come out to the barn with me.
- Father, you can't.
- Hold your tongue.
Or I'll be taking you out as well.
There are lovely things in the world.
Lovely that do not endure...
and are lovelier for that.
Well, you'll be my neighbour,
Guthrie, man.
Aye.
And you'll be the new minister, Mr Gibbon.
You've a fine-kept farm, Mr Guthrie.
Trig and trim,
though I hear you've sat down
a bare six months.
Oh.
- My daughter, Chris.
- Ah.

I hear you're right clever, Chrissie,
and go to Duncairn College.
How do you like it?
Fine, sir.
And what are you to be?
A teacher, sir.
There's no profession more honourable.
How do you find the land to work,
Mr Guthrie?
Oh, Mother.
Have I vexed you?
Oh, not you, Chris.
Just... life.
I cannot tell you a thing or advise.
You'll need to face men for yourself.
When the time comes,
there's no one can stand and help you.
Mind that for me sometime...
if I cannot suffer it longer.
Chrissie!
Chrissie!
The doctor's come, Chrissie!
Now go and play outside.
What's wrong?
It's Mother.
She's poisoned herself...
and the two bairns.
Why?
Why did she do it?
She was pregnant again
and it unbalanced her.
You'd better send for Mistress Munro.
No.
I'll write to my sister Janet
in Auchterless.
She'll come.
Come on, Chris.
She's ready for you.
You can go up and see her now.
Jean...
Jean...
Something died in her heart...
and went down with Mother
to lie in Kinraddie Kirkyard.

The child in her heart had died then...
and Chris of the books and dreams
died with it.
And the dark quiet corpse
that was her childhood
was folded in the tissue paper
and was laid away forever.
You're to come to Auchterless
with your uncle and me.
So you would steal my own flesh from me?
Aye, John, just as you asked
when you wrote.
We've never a bairn of our own.
God knows it's not for want of trying.
Ill blood breeds ill.
Aye, but it'll be long
ere I'll have to kill myself
because my man
beds me like a breeding sow!
You dirty bitch!
They won't go back to school!
Why won't you go back to school?
Why should they go back? I wouldn't!
Oh, aye?
And where do you wander off to
every night, hm?

They say:

Daftie
Daftie, they say.
Well, that's all past now.
You're to come and live at Auchterless
with your uncle and me.
Chris, dinnae let Father make
a damn slave of you as he'd like to.
We've our own lives to lead.
Well, what else can I do
but bide at home now?
If I saved long enough...
I could go to Canada.
A man is his own master there.
Oh, Will, would you send for me
as your housekeeper?
Aye, maybe.

But maybe it would hardly suit you.
I got it at Echt.
We can cut the crop quicker now.
I'd be the fool of Kinraddie
driving a thing like that.
If Kinraddie's laughter can make
as big a fool of you as nature has,
it'll be a miracle.
Don't worry, lad. I'll do the driving.
The Lord's my shepherd
I'll not want
He lays me down to lie
In pastures green, he leadeth me
To quiet waters by
He leadeth me
He leadeth me
To quiet waters by
Is there work?
Aye, maybe.
Let's see the work you have in you first.
Aye.
Fine, that.
I'll take you on for a day or so
if the weather holds.
Chris?
Go up to the house and see to the supper...
no idling, mind.
I won't have him in the kitchen.
He's full of lice.
He can have a shake-down in the barn.
You know, I'd have you eat in the house,
if it hadn't have been for Father.
I'm as little anxious for his company
as he is for mine.
Oh, that's such a sore waste...
of hot blood like yours.
A sore...
waste.
They'd started burning the whins
up Drumtochty way.
Then it was time for the threshing dinner.
And the whole of Kinraddie came.
Ay, Chris.
Be careful, it's hot.

Losh, man, she's fair the expert getting,
the daughter.
The kitchen's more her style
than the college, eh?
Education... most of it's a coarse thing.
Learning!
Just teaches your children
a lot of damned nonsense
that puts them above themselves
and they'd give you their lip
soon as look at you.
Damn it, man,
you're clear wrong to think that.
Education's the thing if a working man
wants to put him up level with the rich.
I thought a bit of balance in the bank
would do that.
The more education, the more sense.
Less kirks and ministers.
Well, well, we'll hear nothing coarse
of religion.
Well, Munro, we'll turn to
the mentally afflicted in general,
not just in particular.
How is that foreman of yours getting on?
Still keeping up his shorthand?
Hello, Chris. How have you gotten on?
Fine. How have you?
God, my back would feel a damned sight
easier if I'd spent the day in my bed.
Eh, Tavendale?
This is Ewan Tavendale, Chris.
The wind's up and a fine frost.
I'm away to do the milking.
Hello.
Is Will about?
No.
Drumlithie, I think.
I was hoping I could see him,
in case he should leave us sudden, like.
Leave?
Who said Will was leaving?
I heard he was off trying for a job
in Aberdeen.

Will you tell him I called?

Well, ta-ta.

Ta-ta.

I'm off to Aberdeen today.

The old fool thinks

he can frighten me still.

Chris...

Lord, I wish you could come as well.

What? Up to Aberdeen?

I'd like it fine but I can't.

Hurry and dress,

else you'll miss your train.

Are you having a sleep before you set out?

All right. I'll soon be down.

Well?

Will I do?

You look fair brave.

Oh, hell.

Why did she leave us?

Why did Jean leave us?

Happy New Year.

Am I the first?

Aye, you're fairly that.

Happy New Year.

God Almighty, Chae,

you cannae be sleeping there.

You big old lump.

I thought I was the first foot.

Farewell and adieu to you

fair Spanish ladies

Farewell and adieu to you ladies of Spain

For we've received orders

to come back to where we lay

From The Broch to Peterhead and back again

We'll rant and we'll roar

like true Scottish sailors

We'll rant and we'll roar

across the North Sea

For we've received orders

to come back to Blawearie

From The Broch to Peterhead and back again

Farewell and adieu

to you fair Spanish ladies

Farewell and adieu to you ladies of Spain

For we've received orders
to come back to Blawearie
From The Broch to Peterhead and back again
Ah, Jean.
All right, Jean, lass.
Get in the house, you white-faced bitch!
Get away!
What's wrong with you now?
Nothing.
For you to find out.
What the hell...
are you getting... paid for?
Help me strip him, Chris.
It's a stroke, Chris.
Yes, Doctor.
He'll need a lot of looking after.
Will's married Mollie Douglas.
They've sailed from Southampton
to the Argentine.
Just blow the whistle if you need me.
You're my flesh and blood.
And I can do with you what I will.
Chris!
Chris!
Chris?
Chris, lass.
What's wrong?
Chae, my father's dead.
She was no longer afraid...
only sad for the father she never helped
and forgot to love.
Will you have a dram, Reverend?
Spirits?
Och, aye.
It's the custom, isn't it?
Yes, thank you, I'll have a drop.
Do you want to see him
before he's screwed down?
Now, kiss your father.
Goodbye, Father.
"I, John Guthrie of Blawearie,
being of sound mind and body,
do hereby leave and bequeath to my
daughter Christine all my possessions,

in silver and belongings, to
be hers without let or condition.
I also appoint Peter Semple
as my daughter's guardian
in such law matters as needs one.
But she is to control the goods and gear
as she may please.
The monies amounting to 300
I also bequeath to her.
Given under my hand etc, etc."
So, think it well over, Miss Guthrie.
Not a word for Will
or his two motherless boys?
Oh, for shame, Tam.
How can they be motherless
now that I've got them?
And you'll come up to live with us when
you've sold Blawearie's furnishings.
Aye, maybe.
Where are you going?
Oh, I'm away to Stonehaven
to see Mr Semple.
Can I bring you anything?
What are you jaunting there for?
I'll transact any business you have.
I'll transact my own business fine.
Ta-ta.
Come in.
Sit you down.
Well, well, it's Miss Guthrie come up.
You've been thinking about the will,
no doubt.
Yes, just that.
I'm going to live on at Blawearie a while
and not roup the gear at once.
Could you see to that with the factor?
But you cannae live there alone.
Oh, no, I've no such intention.
Could you get me some woman
to come live with me,
some old body who'd be glad of the work?
Oh, God, there are plenty of them.
Oh, it'll just be for a month or two,
just till I'm settled.

There's Mistress Melon.
I'll send her down in the morn.
Thank you.
Goodbye.
Goodbye, Miss Guthrie.
Are you up for the day?
Aye. Och, aye, just that.
I'm up to the inn for dinner.
Aye.
Maybe... Maybe we could eat together?
Aye.
So you're in no hurry to be back?
Not unless you should be, no.
Tired, Chrissie?
Losh, no.
And my name's Chris, Ewan.
Are you all right, Chrissie?
Yes, fine!
Chris!
Chris, where are you?
- Chris!
- Chrissie?
- Chris!
- Chrissie?
I'll see to the horses.
Take her back to my house.
In you come. God, Chris.
Get out of your coat,
you must be fair soaked.
Ewan, I've nothing on below.
- What, nothing at all?
- Not very much, Chae.
- You can slip into that.
- But Mistress Strachan?
The old wife's in bed.
She'd sleep through a hundred storms.
Through there, get off your things.
Bring them to dry. I'll have something
warm for you both to drink.
You'll get your death of cold.
Sit closer.
God, Chris. Was that all you had on?
Aye.
I'll see you back to Blawearie.

Are you warm enough?
Fine.
Oh, don't.
Wait, Ewan.
Come up to see me tomorrow evening.
Chris...
will you marry me?
You're in fine tune this morning.
Aye, Uncle. I am that.
How did the horses fare in the storm?
I took them into the barn.
Ewan Tavendale helped me.
Ach, it's plain you've nae need
for relatives here.
I only pray you don't come to disaster.
No need to cry about it yet, Auntie Janet.
Ewan and I haven't lain together.
We'll wait... till we're married.
He's to marry you, then?
I hope so.
But you never know.
Morning.
I'll drive you both to the station.
I'll bring back Mistress Melon.
Walk on. Walk on.
Go on.
Now Blawearie was hers...
and she Blawearie's.
And in all of the days to come,
her heart would beat in this land.
And she would be content.
- Where'll I put my box, mem?
- Oh, inside.
Maybe you'll stay to dinner, Chae?
Oh, aye, fine that.
God.
That was right fine, Chris.
Is there any more on the go?
Good Lord, Chris.
They'll right soon be after you,
the lads, with your eyes like that.
How will we partition the work, mem?
Oh, um, you do the cooking and
the cleaning, and I'll see to the rest.

- Aye, mem.
- And my name's Chris.
We're no gentry.
We'll have to wait to get married.
I've got no more than 100 saved.
I have 300.
No credit to me.
It was Father's saving.
You know, if we marry fair soon, you
can take over the Blawearie lease.
That would be fine.
We'll have the whole of Kinraddie
here when we wed.
Aye.
Most folk will be free to come
on New Year's Eve.
I had a letter from Auntie Janet
and Uncle Tam.
They say it's too soon after Father's
death to wed... so they won't come.
Damn it, you're only married
once as a general rule.
It'll no hurt the old man
in Kinraddie Kirkyard.
Is this a list for the food?
Aye.
Oh, such extravagance!
You've ordered enough food
to feed the French.
You'll have nae silver left.
So I'll... I'll put the banns up tomorrow.
You know Reverend Gibbon will say,
"It seems strange to hold a display
so close to Mr Guthrie's death."
Aye, and I'll say, "The service that
I want is a wedding, not a sermon."
Better be off.
Take care of yourself.
Aye.
Oh, thank you!
Oh, the barn!
It isn't half spruce for the dance.
Ach, just leave it to us, Chris.
Tell us what you want.

Oh... thank you.
Oh, it... it's like a picture book.
Aye.
This time the morn,
you'll be a married woman, Chris.
Sleep well the night.
Oh, fine that.
You know, if...
if I ever thought of getting married...
I'd think it fine to sleep
with a lass like yourself.
Get away, Rob.
Much sleep you'd give her. Come on.
Strange and eerie it was standing there.
That this marriage of hers was nothing...
that it would pass on and forward into
the days that had long forgotten it.
And the face of the land change
and change again
till the last light sank away from it.
And all of her love and tears for Ewan,
not even a ripple on that flood
of water remain in the time to be.
Strange to think that tomorrow
and all the tomorrows...
Ewan would share her room
and her bed with her.
How d'you feel
on your marriage morn, Chris?
Fine.
Och, I hope you'll be awful happy
and soon have three bairns.
You never know.
If only Mother could be here.
Oh, don't be a fool.
Are you ready, Chris?
Let us pray.
Dear God, bless this union.
Give them strength and courage
for the difficulties that the years
might bring to them.
Make fruitful their marriage...
and make their love as pure and enduring
in its fulfilment as in its conception.

Here's to you, Chris.
Raise your glasses, folks,
the best man has a toast.
I've never seen a sweeter bride, or
known a better friend than the groom.
I wish them long and lovely days...
from the summer to the winter
of their lives.
The bride!
Best of luck to her!
Right! Who's game
for a dance at Chris's wedding?
Hey up, what about a song?
Ladies Of Spain.
What about
The Lass That Made The Bed For Me?
A song from the bride.
I've heard them lilting
At our ewe-milking
Lassies a-lilting
Before dawn o' day
Sighing and moaning
On ilka green loaning
The flowers of the forest
Are a' wede away
It's New Year.
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot
For the sake of auld lang syne?
For auld lang syne, my dear
For auld lang syne
We'll tak' a cup of kindness yet
For the sake of auld lang syne
Long Rob was right.
You're the bonniest thing
ever seen in Kinraddie.
Ewan. Put out the light.
So that was her marriage.
Not like waking from a dream
but like going into one.
And she wasn't sure, not for days,
what things she had dreamt
and what actually done.

I'm back to Stonehaven today.
Oh.
I'll miss you.
Aye.
Fine.
Fare thee well.
- Your hand's freezing.
- Och, away, you're still asleep!
You've got to be up in the morning,
that's the thing.
Look at my hands, red with the scrubbing.
Oh, you're daft! The place is fine.
What more d'you want?
Less dirt.
Maybe you like it but I don't.
Well, maybe I do.
I like you right well.
Folks blithe and young as themselves
had once walked, talked
and taken their pleasure here.
And she tried to tell Ewan
of her daft fancy.
But all he said was, "Aye."
And once she had thought
there wouldn't be a thing
they wouldn't understand together.
I missed you! I missed you!
Oh, I missed you.
I forgot to unyoke Clyde.
I missed you.
We might well have more sense.
I missed you.
Damn Blawearie.
Let's have a holiday the day, Chris.
I can't. I'm cleaning.
Are you to spend all your days cleaning?
You'll be old and wizened.
Now, off on a holiday we'll go today.
You are a shameless limmer.
For sure.
And you're not yet 19.
And then the old Chris crept out
from below the trees
where the new Chris lay,

and went into the quiet of the afternoon.
The new Chris heard her go and she
came back to Blawearie never again.
But she would not tell Ewan,
not then, not just then...
for it was she, and only she,
that felt and knew the wonder of God.
And the fruit ripened while
the source slept all unaware.
Now, what's this you've been doing,
Chris Guthrie?
Well, well, that's fine.
Now let's see a bit more of you,
Mistress Tavendale.
You're gonna be a father, Blawearie man.
Now, what do you think of that?
Away and make me a cup of tea while
Chris and I go into more intimate details.
Well, you needn't abide.
She's safe enough with an old man...
bonny though she be.
When my wee lass made the bed to me
My bonny lass made the bed to me
When my wee lass made the bed to me
I'll ne'er forget till the day I die
That my wee lass made the bed for me
Thank you for the flowers, Rob.
Oh, they'll be for the son, eh, Chris?
And er... when you having him born, eh?
Oh, er... late September, early October.
Aye, there'll soon be a family
Blawearie way.
Aye.
It's the reckoning for the corn, Rob.
Aye, they're aye daft devils
fighting a' something or other.
It's a lot of damned nonsense.
Well, they can fight themselves
black and blue for all I care.
Hey, for all we care.
Aye.
- Don't run.
- Don't blether.
Things are changing for the better...

all around.
There's a war on!
Britain is to war with Germany!
Oh! Oh!
Chris. Lie still.
Go downstairs, Ewan.
I can't. I can't. I can't. I can't.
It's all right.
He'll be good like his mother.
He'll be quick of temper like you.
God, maybe you're right.
You could hardly be wrong in a thing after
bringing a bairn like that into the world.
But you helped a little.
We'll call him Ewan, after his father.
Maybe there was war and bloodshed...
and that was awful.
But far off also you'd hear it
like the North Sea cry in the morning.
A crying and a thunder
that became unending,
as the weeks went by, part of life's plan.
But Chris didn't care,
sitting there at Blawearie,
with her baim and her man by her side.
Aye-aye, folks, are thee in?
God, Chris, I'm nae a ghost yet.
You're havering, man. You don't mean it.
But I am.
I've enlisted in the North Highlanders
and I'm off to Perth tonight.
Oh, Chae. No.
Well, have yourself a dram then.
Who'll win?
Well, if the Germans do,
there'd be an end to peace forever.
Och, to hell with them.
Hey.
I mind the day he was born.
Just like yesterday it was.
A spring of life, eh, Chris?
Sing it.
Cherish it.
'Twill never come again.

Aye.
You've brought out
a fine bairn between youse.
Every man may have to fight for wife
and bairn ere this war is over.
So you don't think I should join up, Chae?
Nah.
There's fools enough
in the fight as it is.
What a blether about a war.
Och...
Like I was asking, only.
Aye, man.
Aye, man.
Huh.
Chae Strachan. You're an exception.
Oh, man. You know, I'd come back
with you in the morning if only...
If only what, man?
Well, if only I wanted to be easy...
easy and a liar.
But I'm damned
if I'm gonna begin for a bit of war.
Have you seen the casualty list, Chae?
Have you?
50,000 poor bastards blown to hell
for a couple of yards of Belgian mud.
Men gassed.
- Men mutilated and blinded...
- These were brave men.
Or stupid.
They're saying you're cowards.
Better a coward than a corpse.
Look, lads, I believe in the war.
I believe it'll bring good to the world.
It'll bring the days of Socialism
to the common folk.
Oh, the common folk. Yeah.
When they're no' sheep, they're swine.
Well...
I'd better be off then.
All in the April evening
April airs were abroad
The sheep with their little lambs

Passed me by on the road
The sheep with their little lambs
The sheep with their lambs
Passed me by on the road
All in the April evening
I thought on the Lamb of God
The lambs were weary and crying
With a weak human cry
I thought on the Lamb of God
Going meekly to die
Up in the blue, blue mountains
Dewy pastures are sweet
Rest for the little bodies
Rest for the little feet
But for the Lamb
The Lamb of God
Up on the hilltop green
Only a cross, a cross of shame
Two stark crosses between
All in the April evening
April airs were abroad
I saw the sheep
With their lambs
And thought
On the Lamb of God
As you know,
we are now at war with Germany.
This new Babylon...
has as many corruptions as the old one.
How long it will rage only God
in His wisdom and anger will know.
But it's a chastisement,
by blood and fire...
that the nations must arise
and prevail against this enemy.
And Scotland, not least of these,
in its ancient health and humility
to tread again
the path of peace and courage...
that will ultimately lead to our victory.
Their king...
which they call Kaiser...
is the Antichrist.
A foul evil upon this earth

which must be swept away by the righteous.
And those who will not fight
to defend their country...
must be exposed for that they truly are.
Cowards.
And pro-German cowards at that.
Leave 'em. Let them be. Let them be.
What does it mean, Rob?
They send white feathers to the cowards.
I've already had mine.
They're all Government men ready to die
for the King any day of the week.
Oh, and twice on Sundays.
They say Parliament's
to pass a Conscription Act.
That means if...
if we don't volunteer,
they'll make us go anyway.
Well, it will...
it will be a bit of a jaunt.
- Huh?
- But will you both be taken?
Aye.
But you've been excused before.
They don't take folk
who farm their own land.
I'm to report to Aberdeen.
- Oh, Ewan.
- It's only for assessment.
I'm going too.
We'll go together.
Now don't worry, lass,
they'll have to carry us to the front.
Where are you going?
To Aberdeen.
He's enlisted.
He's gone to fight.
It'll soon be over.
You've not to worry.
Ewan'll be fine.
Oh, but that spring was long.
But the hills flowed up and down,
day after day...
and Chris saw the harvest near.

A good harvest, in spite of all things.
And the grain a fine price,
so farming folk did well.
Soon maybe the war would end
and they'd all be back in Kinraddie
as once they had been...
Long Rob and Chae... and her Ewan.
This is hardly the place for me
with your man come home.
I'll away to Bervie for the night, then.
Aye.
Hell, Chris, what a bloody place!
Ewan, who's this?
It's Father.
Well, we hope so. Eh, Chris?
Go through to the parlour.
Good lad. Go.
Any supper left?
Unless you're too bloody stand-offish
to even have that.
Oh, Christ's sake, let a man sit down.
Well, give me some tea.
Well, damn it, don't you have anything to
say to me now that I've come home?
I'd have done better to spend
the night with a tart in the town!
God Almighty, what are you
snivelling about now?
You're always snivelling!
Ewan.
Well, you be stand-offish now if you can!
Get off me!
What I get regular in Lanark,
I now want from you.
What d'you think I came home for?
Now that you know that... get!
Mummy!
For God's sake, hurry up!
- Ewan, put out the light.
- I'll do that.
- Put out the light.
- I'll do that!
Put out the light, Ewan!
Put out the light!

God, what a damned glower!
Eyes like your mother
and a nature the same.
Will you wear a suit, Ewan?
What, me, look like a bloody conchy?
I need some money.
I'm off to Drumlithie.
I'm entitled to what's my own.
When the hell
are you bringing some breakfast?
If you're in need of some breakfast,
get it!
- Have you gone clean...
- I'll not be treated like a Lanark tart!
You bitch!
I am not frightened of you!
No! No, you can afford to be brave.
You're no' the one
that's gotta go to France!
Why... Then why did you enlist?
Cos I was sick of folk laughing at me,
jeering at me for a coward!
And you, you're blethering
that your man's no longer polite!
Oh, Ewan.
Everything was changing.
And as the land changed, so did Chris.
She looked for the days gone by.
She looked to see the faces of her
mother and father in the firelight
before the lamps were lit.
Faces dear and close to her.
She wanted to hear the words
they'd known and used
in the far-off youngness of their lives.
Scots words,
to tell to your heart
how they wrung it and held it
through all of the toil of their days.
And the unending fight with the land.
And a queer thought came to her.
Nothing endured but the land.
Sea, sky and the folk
who live there were but a breath.

But the land endured.
And, at that moment,
she felt in the gloaming...
that she was the land.
I'll put Ewan to bed.
Aye.
Thank you.
What do I do?
Oh, what do I do?
What do I do?
Did you cry me, Chris?
What do I do, John?
Do I have to go to France?
It's sore news.
But he died out there like a man...
your Ewan.
It's a lie.
They're lying.
He's not dead.
My Ewan's not dead!
It's a lie! It's a lie!
It's a lie!
It's a lie!
It's a lie!
It's a lie!
"Country and King".
What have they to do with my Ewan?
Blawearie's his land.
Those English generals in London,
they're lying.
They're cowards!
They're lying. They, they...
They're just tormenting me.
It's a lie! It's a lie!
It's a lie!
And when she'd finished,
she went quiet and cold.
Mornings came up...
noons with their suns.
Rains came, soft and grey and quiet
across the land.
But they brought her neither
terror nor hope...
now that her man had been

murdered for nothing.
Oh, Ewan...
Ewan?
Chae.
Chae... he's not living?
Ewan's dead.
Don't vex yourself hoping else.
They can't hurt him any more.
Even this can't hurt him.
But I know right well
you should know it, Chris.
Ewan was shot...
as a coward and a deserter
out there in France.
You're better always to know
what's truth in a thing.
For lies come creeping home
to roost, Chris.
You're young yet.
You've hardly begun to live.
And I swore to mysel' I'd tell you all
so you'd never be vexed with me.
I'll never be vexed with you
for telling me this.
It was best.
It was best.
Left, left, left, left, left, left, left!
At the double!
Left, left, left, left, left...
- Firing party.
- Left, left, left...
Take aim...
Fire!
Why did you do it, Ewan?
You might well have known
you'd never get free.
I did it for Chris, Chae.
For Blawearie.
It's bare a quarter of an hour now, Chae.
Take aim... fire!
She didn't even come to kiss me goodbye.
Chae...
never said goodbye.
Oh, man!

Mind me when you're back at Blawearie.
And will you look at my lass for me...
when you see her again?
And you give her that kiss...
the kiss that I'll never give her.
And she'll think
I died like the rest of them.
Don't tell her.
Please, Chae...
you're no' to tell my dear Chris.
Mind that night of the storm, Chae...
wi' you on horses?
Right?
That was the night...
the night that I knew Chris liked me well.
And the song that she sung, when we wed...
Och...
What was that song that she sung?
I've heard the liltin'
At the ewe-milkin'
Lassies a-liltin'
Before dawn o' day
Now there's a moanin'
On ilka green loanin'
The floo'ers o' the forest
Are a' wede away
At buchts, in the mornin'
Nae blythe lads are scornin'
Lassies are lonely
And dowie and wae
Nae daffin', nae gabbin'
But sighin' and sobbin'
Ilk ane lifts her leglin
And hies her away
There'll be nae mair liltin'
At the ewe-milkin'
Women and bairns
Are heartless and wae
Sighin' and moanin'
On ilka green loanin'
The floo'ers o' the forest
Are a' wede away
The floo'ers o' the forest
Are a' wede away

Oh, Ewan.
Sleep quiet and sound now, lad.
I understand.
You did it for me...
and I am proud.
You did it for me and Blawearie.
My dear, my dear...
Sleep quiet and brave...
for I've understood.
I've come home, Chris.
I've come home.
He could fair play, that piper.
He tore at your heart with the tune
echoing across the loch.
It rose and rose and wept.
He played for all those who died:
Long Rob...
Chae Strachan...
and Ewan.
All of them.
We had the last of the light up there.
And maybe we did not need it or heed it...
but you can do without day if you have
a lamp quiet lighted and kind in your heart.