

The Hether Yill

The day Saunt Columba set fuit on Iona wes a sair day for the Picts, for eftir him cam monie Gaelic freins wi shields an lang claymores strecht frae Homeric days. An in the hinner end, the war but twa Picts left: a faither an his lad. The fek o the lave war streik't out deid on Strathmore's grund. Thir twa war huntit down an hauden bi the Scots, for nane but thaim still kent the wey ti mak the drink men cawed the 'hether yill' – a byuss brie that in thae days wes mukkil socht.

“Blaw up the fyre! Set out the nippers an the cleiks! Haet up the airns!” rairs out the Hie Keing o the Scots. Ah'm geyan weill shuir that aince we stert ti birsil thaim, it winna be lang afore we ken the wey ti mak this unco yill oursells.”

“Haud on! Haud on! Yeir Grace!” the auld Pict said. “Ah'd lyke ti whusper in yeir lug.” An syne, the Keing louts down ti hear the auld ane fleitch, “Raither nor thole tormentin, Ah'l gledlie tell ye aw Ah ken anent the gait we mak the hether yill. But first ye maun pit down ma bairn, for Man, Ah wadna lyke for him ti ken about his faither's shame!”

“Gin that is aw ye want, ye irna ill ti pleise,” reponed the Keing o Scots, an gart a kern at aince ding aff the laddie's heid, whilk rowed at his faither's feet. But syne the auld ane leuch, “Our hether yill is ferr owre guid for teuchtars, lyke! Nou that ma puir laddie's deid, ye'l never ken the wey ti brie the hether yill. Ah wesna richt shuir he haed the smeddum for ti haud his tung unner tormentin wi yeir airns. But o masell, Ah'm shuir. Ye'l lairn naething frae me anent the hether yill, nae maitter whit ye dae!”

An sae thay never did.