

ACT II

Scene 1

The Wal at the World's End a week later. A well with a raised circle of stone. Nearby, a large stone, bracken leaves and a rowan tree with berries. Princess Nanse enters wearily, carrying a stoppered crystal flask and a bag containing a sandwich.

Nanse: *(To herself)* Im Ah no pugguilt? Ah im fair forfochen, sae Ah im!
But this maun be the Magic Wal at lest.

(She sits down on the large stone and sighs)

(Examining her feet) Ir ma feet no sair?

(She takes out a sandwich and munches it enthusiastically. When she is finished she rises and moves towards the well to fill her flask. A 'puddok' in a green costume suddenly appears on all fours from behind the bracken and blocks her path.)

Puddok: Haud on nou, ma bonnie princess!

(Nanse looks about her at eye level, but does not see the frog)

Puddok: Ho! Ho! Ho! Luik down at yeir feet, ma bonnie ane, an ye sal see
whit ye sal see!

Nanse: *(Seeing the puddok)* Mercie on us! A mukkil puddok ----!
Wes that you Ah heard speak the-nou?

Puddok: Ay, me! Wha ither? Weill, did ye never hear tell o a speakin puddok?
Did ye ever hear tell o glaumerie, ma lassie?

Nanse: 'Glaumerie---!' Mebbe Ah hae, an syne mebbe Ah haena. An mebbe
Ah dinna aye believe aw Ah hear. But never heed! Ah haena cum aw
this road for ti crak wi a puddok, ti be shuir. An siccan an ugsum ane,
tae—Oot ma road wi ye, beiss, whyle Ah draw sum wattir for ma
flesk!

(The puddok deliberately squats between the princess and the well)

Puddok: Na, Na! Ye canna draw wattir. No you---! Ah gaird the Wal o True
Wattir, an naebodie but me can fill yeir flesk.

Nanse: *(Indignantly)* Dae ye ken wha Ah im?

Puddok: Ay, fyne--- Ye ir the Princess Nanse, hirsell.

Nanse: Weill, ye'd better ken this anaw! Naebodie speaks ti me lyke that. Ah'm no uised wi fowk sayin 'Na' ti me.

Puddok: Ye coud be the Queen o Sheba for aw Ah care. We aw hae ti growe up suiner or later.

Nanse: Yer impiddent thing---! Ah hae a guid mynd ti crak yeir lugs for ye.
(She raises her hand to strike the puddok)

Puddok: Ah wadna try that! Whan it cums ti dirdin, twa can play at that game. Oniewey, ye'd hae a gey job ti finnd ma lugs. Ah haena got stickin-oot lugs lyke you. *(Nanse feels her ears)*

(Pointing to his feet) Ah can kick wi thir feet.
(He gives a demonstration kick)

Ah coud gie ye a richt sair kick wi thae legs. Ma legs is unco strang wi aw the lowpin Ah dae.

Nanse: *(Lowering her hand)* Ah'm thinkin ye'r owre forritsum for a puddok awthegither. An juist hou did ye ken Ah wes the Princess Nanse, Ah wad lyke ti ken?

Puddok: Glaumerie again---! Ah hae the saicont sicht. Ma mither wes frae Skye. Ah even ken a pikkil Gaelic. Listen---!
Tha e uabhasach fuar an diugh. Thoir a-staigh an cu!

Nanse: Whit dis that mean?

Puddok: It means: 'It's gey cauld the-day. Bring in the cou!'

Nanse: Cous in the houss, is it? That soonds Hieland aneuch!
Weill Puddok, gin ye hae the saicont sicht, ye wul ken that the Queen ma mither, is at Daith's door wi Greigorie's Complaint an that she haes a norie that a drap wattir frae this wal wul pit hir ti richts.

Puddok: It's nae norie. This wattir wul sort onie ill frae plouks ti the Blek Daith.

Nanse: Wul it sort Greigorie's Complaint?

Puddok: It's the verra thing for Greigorie's Complaint. Ae sowp wad be aneuch for that.

Nanse: It's ill ti credit. Ir ye shuir it'l sort oniething?

Puddok: Hairse thrappils, clocherin hoasts, brounkaities, shachilt feet, hingin painches, lowpin ill (Ah aince suffert frae that masell), yeukie oxters, the blek byle, the green byle, sair heids, rinnin nebs, greitie gruntils, gallopin skitters, --- oniething that ails ye, this wattir wul pit richt in a glisk. Oniething ava---

Nanse: Ai, Ah div wush Ah coud believe ye!

Puddok: Ah aince saw a deif man thraw awa his trumpet eftir swallaen ae moothfu o this wattir. For the first tyme in his lyfe he coud hear the birds liltin an the gress souchin i the wund. Ah saw a lame man – Hirpil Dick they cawed him – Ah saw a lame man lowp owre a drystane dyke eftir daein nae mair nor weit his mou.

It wul sort oniething, Ah tell ye

Nanse: That's whit ma mither seems ti think. Ah raither think it's auld wyfe's haivers masell. Houanever, *she* thinks it wul dae hir guid, sae ye wul shuirlye obleige me bi fillin ma flesk for me, gin ye winna lat me fill it masell. (*She holds out the flask*)

Puddok: Ai, but the'r mair til't nor that! A sicht mair--- In this warld the'r aye a fee ti be payed for awthing. Shuirlye ye ken that?

Nanse: Ah ken that that's the wey that sum fowk thinks. That road gangs strecht ti Hell, whaur Ah dout ye belang.

Puddok: If Ah belang thare, Ah'l never want for guid companie. Shuirlye ye didna for a meinit think ye war gaun ti help yeirsell ti this byordnar wattir for naething. If Ah wes ti lat awbodie help thairsells, aw the doctors in Scotland wad hae ti pit up the shutters.

Nanse: A smaw loss that wad be.

(*Sobbing*) Ye soud think shame o yeirsell ti try ti bergain wi me an ma mither lyin deen---

(*She looks at the Puddok to see if she is having any effect, but he pays no attention*)

---but Ah see the'r nae shame in ye.

Ye'r shameless! Ye'r juist a tink!

Puddok: Insults wul git ye naewhaur. Sticks an stanes wul brek ma banes--!

Nanse: If Ah haed a stick Ah'd tak it ti yeir back.

Puddok: Thraets nou---!

Nanse: *(Sighs deeply)* Here Puddok---Ah dinna want ti fecht wi ye.
Wad ye lyke an aipil? Ah hae sum braw aipils here Ah haena etten.

(She offers him an apple)

Puddok: Ah never eat aipils. Ah canna chowe thaim richt.

Nanse: Whit's yeir fee than, for a pikkil wattir?

Puddok: It's a fair fee ma lassie, tho mebbe ye winna think sae whan ye hear it.
An Ah gie ye the wattir, wul ye mairrie me?

Nanse: Mairrie ye--- ME, mairrie YOU?

Puddok: Mairrie me---! Juist that---!

Nanse: Nae fears---! Whaever heard the lyke? A princess disna mairrie wi a
puddok! Whit coud we dae thegither? Ye wad want me ti dae
sumthing rude, verra lyke! Whit dae ye think Ah im?
Ye'r shuirly no verra wyce? It is ill aneuch that ye ir ugsum,
but ti be a gomeril forby..... Ah'm rael vext for ye!

Puddok: Spare me yeir peitie! Ye dinna fancie me?

Nanse: Fancie ye---? Ah dinna want ti hurt yeir feelins, but Ah canna say Ah
even fancie ye as a puddok, lat alane ma guidman

Puddok: Sae ye winna mairrie me?

Nanse: Ah daursay 'No!' No lykelie---! Ah wadna even touch ye.

Puddok: Than ye git nae wattir frae me ma prood lassie.
Tak yeirsell hame again as quick as ever ye lyke!

Nanse: Bletheration---! Ir YOU gaun ti git oot ma road?
(The puddok makes no reply but stands his ground)

WUL-YOU-GIT-OOT-MA-ROAD?

*(This has no effect on the puddok. Nanse clenches her fists, screams
and beats her feet on the ground in a tantrum of rage.
She then tries to scare him off.)*

Boo! *(No effect)*.....Scoot! *(No effect)*
Hap it! *(No effect)*Awa back ti yeir midden---!

Puddok: It's taid that bydes in middens. Ah'm a puddok!

Nanse: Whit's the difference? Ye'r a richt skunner, whitever ye ir.

Nance now tries three times to charge past him but he heads her off every time. The first time, she is thwarted she exclaims, 'Ye bruit that ye ir!', the second tume, 'Ai ye bruit!' and the third time, 'Ai ye skoondrel!

Nanse: *(With hands on hips)* Sae ye'l no git oot ma road?

Puddok: Binna ye mairrie me, yeir Hieness, ye'l draw nae wattir here.

Nanse: Hae sum sense! Hou coud Ah ever mairrie the lykes o you?
Hae ye seen yeirsell?

Puddok: Huh---! Nae mairriage, nae wattir---!

Nanse: Ye'r a cankert bruit, sae ye ir. Whit ails ye at lassie puddoks? The'r shuirlye plentie o thaim about?

Puddok: Plentie---! Plentie o thaim, richt aneuch---!

Nanse: Shuirlye ane o thaim wad tak ti ye! Whit ails ye that ye dinna want ti mairrie wi yeir ain kynd? Ye'r no naitral, naither ye ir.
Whaur did ye ever git sic uppitie ideas?

Puddok: A lassie puddok wadna dae for whit Ah hae in mynd.

Nanse: *(Horriified)* Ooooh! Ah'm shuir Ah dinna lyke the soond o that at aw.
Ah dinna richt ken whit ye mean.

 Here Puddok, A-A canna mairrie ye, b-but wad ye gie me a pikkil wattir if Ah wes ti dae sumthing rude wi ye?

Puddok: Juist whit did ye hae in mynd, Princess?

Nanse: Ah-Ah coud latAh coud lat ye see ma breiks!

Puddok: Ah'm gaun ti pretend Ah never heard that! Ah wunner at ye, Princess.
Dinna affront me! Nae mairriage, nae wattir---!

Nanse: *(Bitterly)* Ah'l waste nae mair tyme wi you an yeir haivers.
Ah dinna suppose the wattir wad dae ma mither onie guid oniewey.
This haill ploy is juist anither o hir daftlyke nories.
Ah wes a fuil ever ti listen til hir.

Puddok: Ye ir a fuil no ti listen ti me. This is a mishanter ye'l rue aw yeir days.
Whan ye ir an auld wumman noddin awa yeir lane at the inglil neuk,
ye'l luik back on this day an ye'l be vext ye turnt me down.

Nanse: *(Contemptuously)* Huh! Whan Ah'm an auld wumman, Ah can juist see masell greitin kis Ah didna mairrie a puddok!
The suiner Ah win hame oot o this the better.

Puddok: Mynd weill whit Ah say! Ye'l be vext eftir!

Nanse: Awa ye skunner---!

(Nanse turns for home and a curtain falls behind her)

Puddok: *(From behind curtain)* Ye'l be vext ae day!

Nanse: *(To herself)* Whitna waste o tyme this haes been---ti cum aw this road on a fuil's eirant! Whyles Ah think ma mither is a richt stuipit wumman. Ah'm gled Ah dinna tak eftir hir. Mercie me! Mairrie a puddok---! Ah never heard the lyke. It wad be lauchabil an it wesna sae pathetic.

Ma mither wul hae ti think o sum ither thing for ti help hir, for shuirly she wadna want a puddok for hir auldest guidson. Ae day Ah sal be Queen masell an Ah coudna thole a puddok sittin cockin up asyde me on the throne. Ah coudna byde that at aw. Ma mither wul shuirly see that that wad be owre hie a charge for a sowp o cauld watter.

Whitever wad fowk thuink? Mebbe Morag wul can bring hirsell ti mairrie the craitur---she's aye been fond o animals---but no me!
Deil a fears!

Mercie me! Mairrie a puddok--! Mairrie a puddok for a drap watter---!
Ah never heard the lyke!

(Nanse leaves)

CURTAIN