

"AN BEAN SIDHE"

A screenplay by

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FADE IN:

INT. GARAGE - NIGHT

A hand fumbles in the dimness, lands on a light switch and flips it up and down. The BULB that dangles from the ceiling refuses to light. A shrill MOAN freezes LORRAINE KELLY (20's) on the spot.

LORRAINE

Who's there?

A FIGURE rises up from the floor as the cry grows louder. Lorraine inches back towards the wall. A flashlight snaps on and illuminates the face of CHRISTIAN MCCARTHY (20's).

Lorraine's shoulders drop as she heaves out a sigh.

LORRAINE

Oh you prick Christian. I've a good mind to lamp you with a can of paint.

CHRISTIAN

That'd be a frightful waste of paint.

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

An OLD WOMAN blesses herself as a church BELL rings out over a small village square. A BROADCAST VAN is parked beside a graveyard. A CAMERAMAN removes equipment.

DR. MICHAEL O' CONNELL (50's) rotund, tweed clad and bespeckled speaks to a logo emblazoned microphone held by MIKE WINDLE (30's). Dr O' Connell holds up a digital voice recorder.

DR. O' CONNELL

Every Friday for the past month,  
this is what we've been hearing.

He hits the PLAY button. A high pitched SCREAM causes the group to wince and cover their ears. He hits STOP.

CAMERAMAN

It sounds like Katy Perry  
without the auto tuning.

Mike flashes a look of disapproval. The Cameraman shrugs.

MIKE

How long does this go on for?

DR. O' CONNELL

It varies, could be ten minutes,  
sometimes up to an hour.

MIKE

And you're certain it's the  
Banshee?

DR. O' CONNELL

I'm not saying that's what it  
is, but it's certainly the  
popular local opinion.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

With a knapsack slung over his shoulder, Christian walks  
beside Lorraine. She pulls her windbreaker tight around her.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

An assortment of HEADSTONES and CELTIC CROSSES protrude from  
the low ground fog.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

LORRAINE

Just give me a clue?

CHRISTIAN

It wouldn't be much of a  
surprise then, now would it?

TADHG MURPHY (60's) weather beaten, salutes as he approaches.

TADHG

In anam Dia, where are ye going  
at this hour of night?

LORRAINE

It's a surprise.

TADHG

Well, young McCarthy, up to no  
good as usual I suppose.

CHRISTIAN

Tadhg, it's after six, the  
pharmacy is closed, you'll have  
to get your tablets tomorrow.

Christian walks off.

TADHG

A born comedian. I'm off to the  
village to see what the TV crew  
is up to. Why are you hanging

around with that eejit?

LORRAINE

He's not that bad. Besides, what else is there to do.

TADHG

Whatever you do, be careful. You should use protection.

Tadhg searches around in his coat pocket.

LORRAINE

Excuse me, Mister Murphy, but I don't think that's any of your . . .

TADHG

The medal of Saint Christopher. Wear it. It will keep you from harm's way.

Tadhg places the medal around her neck. She sheepishly squeezes out a smile and claps her hand on her chest.

LORRAINE

Thanks. I better go, enjoy the TV thing.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

The HUM of a portable generator powers a cluster of outdoor lights around the van.

A CAMERAMAN mounts a video camera on his shoulder.

ON CAMERA SCREEN

Mike adjusts his tie and sifts his finger through his hair.

CAMERAMAN(V.O.)

In three, two, one . . .

MIKE

I'm here in Derryflynn, where residents claim that the wailing sound of a Bean Sidhe has disturbed the once sleepy hamlet.

BACK TO SCENE

MIKE

How was that?

EXT. VILLAGE - NIGHT

A thick blanket of fog drifts over the sprawling countryside.

EXT. ROAD - 50KMS LIMIT - NIGHT

CHRISTIAN

We'll be there soon.

LORRAINE

I can't wait, yippee.

A shrill CRY roots them both in their tracks. Lorraine grabs Christian's arm.

LORRAINE

The Banshee.

CHRISTIAN

Relax, that's no banshee. It's a fox out hunting. Contact call, checking for nearby foxes or dogs.

LORRAINE

Check out David fucking Attenborough.

INSERT

A pair of feral eyes.

BACK TO SCENE

Christian removes his knapsack and whips out a flagon of cider. He unscrews the cork and draws in a long mouthful, passing it to Lorraine.

She takes a deep swig.

A flash of blue near a stone wall catches Christian's eye.

CHRISTIAN

Did you see that?

Lorraine's eyes narrow as she purses her lips.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

Nevermind, was probably nothing.

INSERT

A silver hair brush.

BACK TO SCENE

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Along a snaking length of stone wall, a YOUNG WOMAN (20's) mesmerisingly attractive. A blue chiffon dress clings to her lithe frame. She runs a silver brush through her hair.

EXT. ROAD - HILLTOP - NIGHT

A section of road sheltered by mature trees. An old telephone line meanders drunkenly by the roadside.

CHRISTIAN

Tada. Here we are, by that tree.

Lorraine rolls her eyes. Christian, unfazed, removes his knapsack and unzips it. He fishes out a Violin bow.

LORRAINE

I'm almost afraid to ask.

Christian assails the tree and climbs to where a branch and telephone line cross paths.

CHRISTIAN

And now, for this evening's performance, a concerto in C sharp by none other than the esteemed, Christian McCarthy.

Christian raises his elbow, places the bow on the telephone line.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

A shrill SOUND stirs slowly from the graveyard.

DR. O' CONNELL

It begins.

The Reporter and Cameraman stand transfixed.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

A TERMINATION POST on the telephone line vibrates.

EXT. ROAD - HILLTOP - NIGHT

Christian closes his eyes and drags the bow across the wire. Lorraine shakes her head and folds her arms.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

The sound swells into a sharp ear piercing CRY. Mike winces.

MIKE

Good God.

Dogs BARK and HOWL.

EXT. ROAD - HILLTOP - NIGHT

Christian ends his performance with a wave of his hand.

LORRAINE

You're the Banshee? This is what  
you brought me up here for, to  
impress me, with this?

CHRISTIAN

It's just a bit of craic.

The shrill cry starts again.

LORRAINE

Enough Christian.

Christian holds up the violin bow as the sound echoes around  
them from the haze of fog.

LORRAINE (CONT'D)

A fox, right?

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, a fox.

LORRAINE

The reviews are in and they're  
not looking good. Walk me home.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

The Young Woman brushes her hair as she drifts with the fog.

EXT. ROAD - 50KMS LIMIT - NIGHT

Christian and Lorraine quick march, glancing intermittently  
over their shoulders.

YOUNG WOMAN (V.O)

CHRISTIAN.

CHRISTIAN

What was that? Was that you?

LORRAINE

I didn't hear or say anything.

EXT. ROAD - HILLTOP - NIGH

The Young Woman sits on the branch of the old tree and  
strokes the telephone line with her hands.

YOUNG WOMAN

You dare mock me son of

Carthaigh, your lineage who would  
not pay a keening woman and had  
me starve. Mock me more.

She grips the line taut and runs her nails across it.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

The PORCELAIN INSULATORS on the telephone line crack.

EXT. ROAD - HILLTOP - NIGHT

The Young Woman plucks the line and opens her mouth producing  
a haunting melody.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

Mike spins round to see the GLASS on a wing mirror crack.

EXT. GRAVEYARD - NIGHT

A number of headstones marked MCCARTHY flip over like  
dominos.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

Mike falls to his knees, his hands clasped over his ears.  
Blood trickles between his fingers.

A BULB from the outdoor light pops in a rain of SPARKS.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

Lorraine and Christian look at one another, their faces lined  
with fear. Christian swallows hard.

Lorraine clutches the medal.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

The young woman floats down the road on a carpet of fog  
backlit by the now burning tree. Her hair swirls in the wind  
as she tosses her head about.

EXT. VILLAGE SQUARE - NIGHT

Dr. O'Connell holds a handkerchief to Mike's ear. The  
Cameraman hastily packs the van.

EXT. ROAD - NIGHT

A wall of dense fog closes in around Lorraine and Christian.  
They circle around back to back until the fog recedes to  
reveal the young woman sitting on the stone wall.

CHRISTIAN

Who are you?

YOUNG WOMAN

Christoir MacCarthaigh,  
thabhairt dom d'anam, mo croi.

SUBTITLE

Christian McCarthy,  
Give me your soul, my love.

She smiles seductively, beckoning him towards her. Christian drops his knapsack.

LORRAINE

No Christian!

She caresses her body, traces the outline of her lips with her tongue and strokes her bare neck.

Lorraine grabs Christian's arm. She stares blankly back at her and pushes her to the ground.

Christian and the young woman embrace, gazing into each other's eyes. She touches his lips and smiles then kisses them softly. They engage in a vigorous exchange of affection.

Her face becomes hollow and the skin takes on a dark hue. Her hair changes into wispy white locks. She spews a thick viscous black liquid from her mouth breaking the union.

Christian recoils in horror, wiping his mouth.

An ugly hag stands before him, foul, no more than a reheated corpse clad in a soiled and torn blue dress.

She CACKLES wildly.

CHRISTIAN'S POV

The image before him starts to blur.

He extends his hands.

BACK TO SCENE

LORRAINE

Christian, run!

Lorraine gets up and drags him to the stone wall. She pushes him over it. The ugly hag hisses at Lorraine.

Lorraine fumbles for the medal and holds it in front of her. The ugly hag blows white power in her face.

UGLY HAG

Sleep.

EXT. FIELD - NIGHT

Christian staggers about aimlessly.

He loses his footing and falls over, scrambles to get to his feet on the wet grass.

He crawls around on all fours, his hand searches the ground and lands on a ROTTING FOOT.

CHRISTIAN

Lorraine! Is that you Lorraine,  
help me up, quick!

The old hag cackles.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

For the love of God, leave me  
alone, it was only a joke.

Christian gets to his feet and sprints across the field. The old hag brushes her patches of white hair with a silver brush.

She sings a haunting air.

EXT. BOG - NIGHT

Christian wanders about in the thick gorse and heather.

He plods through a patch of soft muddy ground and sinks up to his knees.

The singing rises in volume and swells to an ear piercing scream.

Christian cries out in agony, hands clasped in vain over his ears.

EXT. ROAD - 50KMS LIMIT - NIGHT

Lorraine rouses groggy from her sleep. She pulls out her phone and presses the buttons.

ON PHONE SCREEN: NO SERVICE

She lurches to her feet and heads in the direction of the distant noise.

EXT. BOG - NIGHT

CHRISTIAN

Make it stop.

Blood trickles down his neck and from his eyes.

He scratches in desperation at his face tearing through the skin.

Deep finger marks expose bloodied flesh.

Christian's eyes explode and he slumps into the muddy bog hole.

A Young Woman in a blue dress tosses a wild flower on his body.

YOUNG WOMAN

No headstone will mark your  
grave.

Lorraine emerges from the fog and stamps the medal on the  
Young Woman's head.

She vanishes in puff of screaming smoke.

Lorraine wades into the bog hole and brings Christian's torso  
upright.

A dim beam of light scans through the fog.

TADHG (V.O.)

Lorraine, Christian!

LORRAINE

Over here Tadhg!

Tadhg stops at the edge of the bog, lowers his flashlight on  
Christian's body and blesses himself.

Lorraine sobs quietly.

Tadhg pulls out his phone and dials. He brings it to his ear  
and speaks (MOS).

INT. CHRISTIAN'S ROOM - NIGHT

A hand feels around and snaps on a light switch.

Lorraine pushes Christian in a wheelchair, his face bandaged  
and patches over his eyes.

Lorraine helps him onto the edge of the bed. He jerks forward  
and reaches underneath himself for the offending item.

CHRISTIAN

What is that?

He produces a silver hair brush.

The colour drains from Lorraine's face.

From outside, a distant WAILING.

FADE OUT:

END