

An Bean Sidhe

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 (cont'd)

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 (cont'd)
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 (cont'd)
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.

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 an old 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 mastero, 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.

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 - NIGHT

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.

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. He 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 (cont'd)
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 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 (O.S.)
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.

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: