**My Sorrow, Donncha**

**translated by Thomas Kinsella**

**from Ochón! A Dhonncha**

**by Pádraig Ó hÉigeartaigh**

My sorrow, Donncha, my thousand-cherished under this sod stretched,

this mean sod lying on your little body – my utter fright…

If this sleep were on you in Cill na Dromad or some grave in the West

it would ease my sorrow, though great the affliction and I’d not complain.

Spent and withered are the flowers scattered on your narrow bed.

They were fair a while but their brightness faded, they’ve no gloss or life.

And my brightest flower that in soil grew ever or will ever grow

rots in the ground, and will come no more to lift my heart.

Alas, beloved, is it not great pity how the water rocked you,

your pulses powerless and no one near you to bring relief?

No news was brought me of my child in peril or his cruel hardship

– O I’d go, and eager, to Hell’s deep flag-stones if I could save you.

The moon is dark and I cannot sleep. All ease has left me.

The candid Gaelic seems harsh and gloomy – an evil omen.

I hate the time that I pass with friends, their wit torments me.

Since the day I saw you on the sands so lifeless no sun has shone.

Alas my sorrow, what can I do now? The world grinds me

– your slight white hand, like a tree-breeze, gone from my frowning brows,

and your little honeymouth, like angels’ music sweet in my ears

saying to me softly: ‘Dear heart, poor father, do not be troubled.’

And O, my dear one! I little thought in my time of hope

this child would never be a brave swift hero in the midst of glory

with deeds of daring and lively thoughts for the sake of Fódla

– but the one who framed us of clay on earth not so has ordered.