

An Teachtaire - English Translation

A graphic novel by Colmán Ó Raghallaigh

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Back Cover

"I see great danger coming... the slave shall return."

This is the chilling prediction of Lochrú the Druid, to the High King and his courtiers. But if he does return, will the powers of darkness be able to prevent his mission? Or can he overcome the druids and the old order? The second part of the epic tale of Patrick, full of action and spine-tingling tension

P1

Ten years later...

"I see great danger coming..."

In the court of the High King, Laoghaire, the druid Lochrú, makes a chilling prediction...

P2

"Soon, the slave shall return..."

"...the one your father, Niall, brought into captivity many years ago!"

"The revenge he seeks..."

"...is to destroy the power of his son!"

"What are you saying?"

"This cannot be true."

"Can it?"

P3

"I fear it is..."

Lucat Maol... the other chief druid.

"Hmmm."

"Listen to me! I am the High King and I capitulate to no man."

"And I am sick and tired of your nonsense!"

"Now get to the hill of Slane and prepare the fire for the festival of Bealtaine."

P4

At this time I was still in Gaul...

Tired and exhausted after another day in the scriptorium...

With the coming of night strange thoughts again cloud my dreams...

P5

"Macha?"

"MILCHÚ?!!!"

"What fantasy is this?"

P6

But it is no fantasy...

"Pádraic!"

"Uh? Who's that?"

"Listen to me..."

"Your ship stands ready..."

"So it's true, then. I must return."

"Travel safely, Pádraic."

And...
"Hoist the sails!"
To sea once more...
And ashore again on the soil of Ireland.

P7

The journey begins without delay...
"Keep together."
Then on the road before me... a miracle!
"I don't believe it!"
"MACHA??!!!"
It is she...
"Oh, Pádraic! I knew you'd come back!"
"...so did I."
"Who's that?"
"Don't ask me!"
"The slave!"
Then, unknown to me, I am recognised by someone else...

P8

Macha has so much to tell since last we met...
...but one story is astonishing.
"Milchú survived?!!!"
"Nnnngh!"
"Milchú alive? It's hard to believe. But where is he now?"
"A day's journey north."
"Gasp!"
Meanwhile...
For now I must bid farewell to Macha...
"Follow me..."

P9

"Pádraic!!!"
"He'll be here by midday."
"But what does he want?"
"Of course, revenge!"
"What am I going to do?"
"There's nothing else I can do..."
And so Milchú ended his own life...

P10

Later...
"Milchú! Where are you? Have no fear.
Your old slave has come to visit you!"
But...
"That smell... what is it?"
"Christ!"
A blackened stump is all that remains of my master...
"If only you have could have waited..."

P11

A long and arduous trek awaits us then... to the mountain of Ayle.
"My brothers, I must leave you for a time..."

"...but remain vigilant until I return."
And so my trial begins

P12

Barefoot now on the slopes of Ayle.
"Ouch! My feet!"
The broad bay stretches beneath me...
...speckled with islands.
"Truly, it is beautiful here."
But suddenly, within sight of the summit...
"What's this?"

P13

"My God"
CRASH!!! URRRRRRRRRRRRRR!!!
With half the mountain crashing down around me...
...it's time to take shelter!
Luckily...
...a boulder provides some cover.
THUNK!!!
CRACK!!!
PIC!
"It's over."
Time to press on...
"At last!"
"Praise to you, oh Christ!"

P14

"God!"
A sudden downpour...
I need some shelter...
And to get some sleep.
"Protect me, Lord, from the powers of darkness..."
Peace...
Zzzzzzz!
EEEEEE!!!
"?!!!"

P15

EEEEEE!!!
Rats!!!
EEEEEE!!!
EEEEEE!!!

P16

EEEEEE!!!
"Good God!"
"My staff!"
EEEEEE!!!
"Get back to the abyss, you devils!!!"
EEEEEE!!! EEEEEEE!!!
Finally...

P17

And then...
Forty days...
...and forty nights...
...on the mountaintop

P18

At last...
"Time to return..."
"So... bright..."
But...
"What shadow is this?"
Awwwk!

P19

Awwwk!
"What devils are these?"
Awwwk! Awwwk!
"My ears!"
Awwwk! Awwwk! Awwwk!

P20

"The bell!"
Awwwk!
"Begone, I say!"
Cling! Cling!
"Arrrgh!"
Awwwk! Awwwk!
Cling! Cling!
Awwwk! Awwwk! Awwwk!

P21

At last...
"The mountain is mine!"
"Praised be God!"
"And now..."
"...the druids!!!"

P22

GRRRRR!
Yet another pilgrimage...
But this time our destination is the High King's own stronghold!
Awwwk!
Unseen eyes follow our every step.
Auuuuuu!

P23

On the Hill of Tara the ceremonial fire of Bealtaine is already prepared...
"We have reached our destination, brothers."
Laoghaire is woken suddenly...
"Forgive me, my lord, but you must come quickly! Someone has lit the sacred fire!"
"What nonsense is this?"

But the servant is correct...

"Lit! But who would dare to do such a thing?"

"One thing is certain. Whoever it is, will pay dearly..."

"If I'm not mistaken, they may yet perish in that fire themselves!"

P24

As the horizon burns ever fiercely...

...so too does the High King's anger.

"Go and bring them here..."

"IMMEDIATELY!!!"

"Lumen Christi!"

Nnnnngh!

"Come on!"

The riders set off feverishly...

P25

"Let us pray, brothers"

"Lumen..."

"...Christi."

"Lumen..."

"CHRISTI!!!"

But...

"Enough, you fools! Stop this sacrilege now!"

"What?"

"Uh..."

P26

One of the brothers tries to flee but...

"Not so fast!"

"Please, no!"

"To hell with you!"

But...

"Eh???"

"Ugh?"

"Aaaargh!"

"Nnnnngh!"

"What magic is this?"

"I'm not sure, but we need to be careful."

"Indeed!"

P27

"Identify yourselves! By whose permission have you done this?"

"Answer me!"

"By God's permission, if you must know."

"You can explain that to the King."

"I will."

"We'll see how cheeky you'll be in the presence of Laoghaire!"

At first light we reach the fortress...

P28

And are taken as captives...
before the High King and his druids...
"Who is this raggedy stranger?"
"What has brought you all this way to lose your head?"
"I am Patrick, a sinner most unlearned, the least of all the faithful,
and utterly despised by many..."
"I have come to proclaim the new faith and to save you from damnation."

P29

Hearing this, Lochrú cannot contain himself...
"I'll teach you, you upstart!"
"Aaargh!"
Suddenly, I am in deadly danger...

P30

Now the flames take on a new shape...
"Snakes!"
Ssssssss!!!
"Save me, Lord! I can't breathe!"
A superhuman effort and...

P31

"Aaaargh!"
"FREE!"

P32

Now the demented Lochrú charges towards me...
"ÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁÁ!!!"
"What?"
But...
"Uuugh!"
"Stop, I say."
"Eh?"
"Wait there, a moment."
"Let me down, I command you!"
"As you wish."

P33

"AAAARGH!!!"
Lochrú falls...
THUNCK!!!
And his head is smashed upon a rock.
"Incredible!"
"Is he dead?"
"So it appears."
"What kind of power is this?"
"I shall have to come up with another way of dealing with these people."
And...
"Very well, stranger. Listen to me. What good is there in fighting like this?"
"Come and join us for something to eat."

P34

Later...

"You'll taste a mouthful of wine, won't you?"

"I suppose..."

Then, the treachery...

"Your good health!"

"Thank... you..."

But...

"Just a minute..."

"What is it?"

"I'm afraid I can't drink this."

"Frozen!"

"But how?"

P35

"There's only one way to resolve this crisis... we must set these two great powers against one another..."

"Very well, then! Watch this!"

WHISSH!!!

The whole countryside is suddenly frozen...

But in an instant...

Spring returns!

P36

"I don't believe this."

"Never mind... let us have the second test!"

"Stand back, I say."

In the middle of the fortress... a hut is set alight

P37

Lucat and Beningus, one of our brothers, exchange garments... and enter the inferno!

"Oremus! (Let us pray)"

"Damn these Christians!"

But then...

"Someone's coming out..."

"It's Beningus!"

"This garment is all that remains of the druid, master."

"Deo gratias! (Thanks be to God)"

P38

"Ugh!?"

"We have no choice now. We must submit..."

So...

"I believe, Pádraic... I believe."

Then...

"Praise to you, Lord!"

"And now, Laoghaire... I baptise you."

"Glug!"

P39

A couple of months later. Our first monastery is just completed...
...when the call comes.

"Let us go, my brothers. We still have much to do..."

"And my friends Conn and Macha are expecting us."

And so we set off...

But, of course...

It was only the beginning...

END