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Jock o'Bennachie

by Jackie Ross

It had been raining for wiks. It was dull and dreich, just like Jock the Giant o'Bennachie's humour for you see he'd heard a rumour, and the rumour wis that his ain true love, Lady Anne, wis walkin oot wi his rival Jock the Giant fae the Tap o' North. Now this couldnae be right, nae his ain lovely Lady Anne, her wi' the gowden hair and the blue een that would min ye on a summer day, nae her that he wanted tae marry and tak hame to bile his porridge and wash his sark and hing it oot alow the bonnie Craig Shannoch. It couldnae be true, surely no. Well, the only way to fin oot was tae climb up tae the tap o' Bennachie and hae a teet ower tae the Tap o' Noth and that's jist fit Jock the Giant did. And fin he looked ower at that hill, far, far awa, there he saw them, the twa o' them, entwined thegither, airm twined roon airm, lookin in tae een anither's een, as though there wis nivver anither body in the hale universe. Well, somethin come ower Jock o' Bennachie, something strange, something unnameable. The rage filled his body and afore he could think fit he was deein, he booted doon, n he picked up a huge, enormous steen, a great big boulder and he flung it right at the Tap o' Noth. Well, the second that it had gone oot o' his han, he regretted it. He wished he could tak it back but there wis naething he could dee but stand and watch as that big boulder landed right there on tap o' his lovely Lady Anne and his sometimes foe but maistly freen, Jock o' Noth. It was unmentionable foo he felt. Jock o' Bennachie stumpit across the hill, day efter day for wiks, neither eating nor sleepin and afore lang he gid in tae a dwam. Until ae morning, he opened his een and he wis sure that stanin there abeen him wis the bonnie Lady Anne, it was surely her blue een and her bonnie gowden hair touchin his chiks. Ahhhhh, and he reached up tae kiss her but of course it wisnae the Lady Anne, it was some magical creature and fin their lips touched, aething wint black and Jock gid doon and doon and doon unneith the grun, richt intae a cave alow Bennachie and there he bides tae this very day for it's said that only a one eyed woman or a one eyed woman's son will be able to find the key to set him free. So we're aye hopin.

Based on two ballads - one called 'The Rival Giants' and another called 'The Key O' Bennachie' (found in 'Bennachie' by Alex Inkson McConnochie)

This is the transcript of the audio file available at
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