

BLEED, SNOTTERS AN EEBROOS

By *Sanners Gow*

Bella Dirrum wiz jist feenishin her week's washin an teen it oot fae the biler using the big tyangs for the job. She closed doon the fire allo the biler and teen oot the hate coals an put them intae the iron bucket aside the biler an put the lid on as ticht as she could tae smoor them. In that wye she keepit the fuel for neist Tyesday's wash. Aa that wid be nott neist time wiz a bittie o stick for a kennler, a puckle paper an syne athing wid kittle up fine. A scoopy or twa fresh coal on it eence it wiz kennled an that wid gee her enough tae heat that wash. Bella hid five o a family, three loons an twa quines so there wiz ayee washin tae dee. She put the washin throwe the wringer then up tae the bleachin green. A quick look up at the sky assured her nae rain wiz on its wye so up wint the clyse ontae the rope. Bella wisnae ower pleased wi her wash though because soap wiz getting gye scarce tae get a hud o noo wi the war gyan on. Aabody hid said it wid be ower by Christmas. Aye but fit Christmas were they spikkin aboot? Here it wiz nineteen saxteen an still nae signs o't bein 'ower'.

Her man Albert hid been ower there since the very start wi the Gordons. He hidna really needed tae gyang wi him bein nearly fifty an vrochtin on the land as he did. But his sense o duty an wi so mony o the young loons getting yokit intae uniform an gyan aaf tae Frunce wi a kilt abeen their knee he'd tae gyang wi them richt reason or neen. In his wye o't he'd tae look aifter them. So next she'd kent he'd come hame fae Aiberdeen fully riggit playin the pipes at their heed as the Gordons marched throwe the toon on their wye tae war. Ach! She shook her heed at the thocht o aa the causalities that fulled the paper ilka wik "Men bodys an their senseless killin! Nae doot the ither side's papers were jist the same! Raa upon raa o laddies killed leavin faimilies broken herted jist the same as it did here."

She'd said as muckle at a kirk meetin the nicht afore an wiz near bainished fae the place for sayin it. So much for religious feelings o humanity tae aa men. Tae Bella a deed laddie wiz a deed laddie fitivver uniform he wore. The meenister hid teen her tae ae side and made it plain that wi her sayin things like that could be seen as sedition and she could end up in the tower o London on breed an water. Bella realised she shouldna hiv said fit she did and hid overlookit that maybe some o the fowk there hid already lost faimily tae the ivver hungry moo o war. Bella usually a gye quate and unassuming person could've wished the grun tae open up an swally her. She kent she'd deen wrang and tellt the meenister that. He seemed pleased enough at this an tellt her as if she wiz a simple bairn nae tae say sic things again an waakit awa wi its heedy rockin. Later she noticed him spikkin tae a boorach o weemin aboot something. Bella hid nae problem o kennin fit the 'something' wiz for aa een lockit ontae her an some were gye hostile.

On the surface Bella lookit suitably cowed but on the inside she wiz livid. Nae at the hostile weemin for they like their men hid been caught up in a war nae o their

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makkin. It wiz the men like the meenister wi their arrogance faa condoned the slaachter and even teen a direct haan in the feedin o the open maw o war by huddin religious meetings up an doon the county tae recruit even mair laddies tae feed the mull o war. That's the bit she couldna staamach ava. Her ain meenister helpin tae gither cannon fodder fae aa the wee toonies aroon. That fairly stuck in her craw. Bella jist shook her heed at the memory.

Gyan intae the hoose Bella put the kettle on the fire and hearin a chap at the door she gid throwe tae see faa it wiz. At the back o the door on the fleer she saw three fite feathers. Somebody hid shoved them throwe the letterbox. Angert at this sign o coordice she haaled the door open tae be confronted by three o the weemin fae the meetin o the nicht afore. Michty but they aa tore intae her leavin her athoot a name. Bella wiz a bittie wrang fittid tae begin wi an mair or less steed like a gype while they abused her. Eence they'd ran oot o steam an afore they could catch their breath Bella hid found her tongue an gid them 'tammy-come-a-roochtum' Bella Dirrum wiz a gye bit aaler than the three deemies an kent the seed, breed and generation o them. Een wiz the wife o the local coonsilor, the ither the domine's wife an the ither o aa things the postmaister's wife. Noo her oot o the three should be weel aware o the cost o war in lives for she must see the telegrams sent oot tae the bereaved? On tap o that and tae Bella even worse neen o them hid onybody fechtin ower in Frunce. She mind on them fin they were gyan aboot quines wi snotters fae their noses an nae nickers tae haap their modesty. Bella gid them that yin full an bye an by God that struck hame for it wiz the truth that neen o them could deny. Staain there wi their fancy frocks an bliddy stupid hatties covered in silk flooers on their heedies. Aye they'd aa pasts tae hide but nae fae Bella Dirrum she kent them richt weel. Noo if things hid jist been left there Bella wid've slammed the door in their faces. The three deemies hid fairly been pitten in their place and wid've left. Nae one o them wid've said onything about fit Bella hid tellt them about their pasts for they'd aa hid their een opened as regards the ithers. But sadly for aa involved that wisna tae be. It came fae the postmaister's wife wi its haanies on its hippies. She lichted the touch paper that wiz gan tae be the spikkelation for a generation tae come an mair. Even tae this very day the locals threatin ony illdeen wi 'I'll gee ye the Dirrum dicht if ye dinna be quate', athoot really kennin how it came aboot. Well noo this is the wye o't. O the three deemies at Bella's door it wiz the postmaister's wife that wiz the bully and she'd coerced the ither deemies tae post the white feathers. They hid been unwilling at first but hid wint alang wi it fin she said Bella needed tae be taught a lesson. The ither lassies peyed deference tae the postmaister's wife jist like the locals did wi her 'Don't you know who I am? spikk tae onybody that didna show her proper respect. She thocht tae try it noo on Bella. Bella at this point hid nearly closed the door but that words infuriated Bella for she'd heard it coontless times in queues at the shops. Of course the shopkeepers came ower aa deferential and made sure she got the very best fae allo the coonter. Pullin the door open Bella wint richt inaboot tae its face. "Aye fine div I ken faa you are an fine div I ken the seed, breed an generation o ye!" Nae feenished though Bella gave her her real character. Afore she'd jist been angry

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noo though the touchpaper hid been lichted. Bella gave her it full an bye aa aboot her father haein a cairryon wi the school teacher and her haein tae leave the toon an ging sooth tae hae the bairn oot o sicht oot o mind. The postmaister's wife tried tae protest but Bella peyed her nae heed wint on tae tell her her ain man wiz aye ficherin wi een o the teller deemies oot the back o the post office aifter lowsin time. This really got the postmaister's wife's dander up an she made tae slap Bella across the mooth but the slap nivver landed. The rest is history as they say. It wiz said the three deemies wint awa shredded. Bitties o hatties an silk flooers were strewn aboot the place along wi tufts o hair wi the very skin o their scalps still attached. The screams could be heard at the ither side o the brig as they fled for their lives. But even better than that the meenister happened by and got involved even tryin tae gee Bella a sleekit slap or twa tae save the cream o society fae the furrilin dervish that wiz Bella. It wiz said he ran doon the street haaf nyakit wi its hannies tryin tae haap its modesty aifter Bella tore him tae ribbons and him screamin for aa the saints in heaven tae help him as he flew doon the street wi a hump on its back bane like the Bennachie Futtritt wi the bleed, snotters an eebroos fleein fae it!

So there the story ends. But! And I'll say this tae ye. If onybody threatens ye wi 'The Dirrum Dicht' hereaboots jist gyang awa an dinna look back because it micht be some o Bella's fowk that still bide aboot here an believe me ye dinna want tae get them angert!