

THE SCREAMIN LUM

By *Sanners Gow*

Michael wiz a gye illtricket laddie and liked tae mak fowk laach. That wiz aaricht as far as that goes but fyles he overstepped the mark and did silly things. One case in point wiz durin the war. Michael wiz ayee on the raik aboot the hairbour lookin for reels wi the fishermen faa liked a gweed laach themsels. Of course Michael played up tae this and in nae time hid them rollin aboot at his antics.

There wiz big aal sheds aside the hairbour and Michael loved tae raik up in the rafters searchin for doo's eggs. He eased tae collect poochfaes o them then tak them tae the back o the slip faar he'd licht a wee fire and fry the eggs ontae a lump o sheet iron. Bonny and clatty I'm tellin ye! But Michael wolfed them doon packin his mooth wi the eggs and nae one bit o hairm come tae him. Oh god-ova-jezuz but he wiz a clatty chavie!

His aal mither bade in a vennel doon at the fit o Brae street yonder. The hoosie hid at ae time been a bakehoose so there wiz only the one room wi a wee lobby that let oot intae the backie faar there wiz a steen biggit shed and a dry lavie. The sheddie wiz packit full o driftwid he'd collected and a dose o coal that he'd stolen fae the drifters. That wiz een o Michael's specialties he stole massive lumps o coal in the middle o the nicht fae the boats and trailed them hame throwe aa the lanes. The driftwid wiz nae problem though because durin the day he could use his ould barra for that athoot bein speired at fit he wiz deein. He daurna use his barra for the coal though because fowk wid've heard the squeak o the barra gyan up the lanes at nicht drawin unwanted attention tae his ongyans. Na the massive lumps o coal hid tae be cairriet on his hump in a saik. Onyweye Michael hid it doon tae a fine art. The big lumps o coal were broken up wi an ould mell intae the sheddie and secreted ahin the piles o driftwid for his aal mither.

His aal mither jist sat at the moo o the hole faar the baker's oven hid eence been. Michael hid teen a puckle bars o iron fae the slip for tae mak a grate an jist haived a barrafae o coal an sticks ontae the fire fin nott.

The one room wiz fair smeeKit wi the reek fae the fire an jist hingin wi seet an wobbs. The room must've at ae time been pinted but ye widna think that noo for aa a body kent they micht've been sittin inside a lum? It wid've teen a squad o navies a week tae clean the clatty room. Funnily though the place wiz bowfin o clatt an seet the aal uman keepit her braiss paraffin lamps fair shining an they steed oot like gown against the backdrop o seet.

The truth o't though Michael and his mither were squatters so they couldna veryweel complain tae the landlord aboot the state o the placie. But sayin that they wid nivver complain onyweye for the aal bakehoose wiz pure luxury tae them aifter bidin in the back o ayont up the Cabrach wye in a bow camp wi the sparks fleein fae their yaks wi the hunger.

Stories in the Doric from the Monastery of Fable

The fishermen were affa gweed tae Michael an he nivver yet left the hairbour ahoot getting a fry o fish fae them. As like as nae he'd get a puckle tatties ana. He'd fyles get wee jobbies helpin oot the lads wi their gear an sic like. For this he'd get a fyowe coppers an maybe a bittie tabacca for his mither's pipe. The fishermen kent fine he chored coal but decided tae dee a Nelson on it by turin a blin ee. The funny thing about Michael even though he couldna help himself fin he seen coal ye could leave siller or the best o mait lyin aboot and he widna touch ony o't. But a lump o coal wiz a completely different maitter aathegither.

The man that echt the hoose they bade in kent fine they were there but jist left them till't an even wint as far as turn the water back on for them.

Michael widve been aboot twal years aal at the time I'm spikkin aboot. He wint tae skweel but nae for affa lang because he jist couldna manage the lessons for he'd nae the wit for that ava. So for that reason he wiz awa fae skweel at the age o twal. He wis nae scholar but by God he could mak ye laach wi some o his ongyans. Onyweye I digress a bittie.

Ae day Michael wiz haein a raik aboot the beach pickin up driftwid an haivin it intae a pile fin he saw something stickin oot o the saan. He saw the glint o braiss so wi a 'shannish shannish' tae himself he pulled it oot fae the saan. It wiz a shell o some kind so geein it a dicht he saw it wiz a RN twa pounder wi the date 1942 ontae it. It must've been lost aff een o the RN ships in the bey? He dug doon wi his fammils tae see if there wiz ony mair o them but na there wiz only the een. There wiz signs up sayin nae tae ficher wi onything on the beach in case o unexploded munitions, but Michael peyed nae heeds tae that for aa that wiz in his mind wiz tae get the lump o braiss for tae sell. Noo this shell wiz mair nor twa fit lang an aboot as thick as a rollin pin taperin tae a pint wi a big rounded lump o lead at the business eyne. Wi a quick glance aboot him he put it allo his jaicket an leavin the pile o driftwid for later he made his wye hame tae the sheddie wi his treasure. He fichered aboot chappin the shell wi the mell he used tae braak up the coal an a caalcut chisel tae see if he could get it apairt. But aifter millin his fammils a puckle times he gave up an threw the shell wi a clatter intae the corner o the sheddie 'god-ova-jezuz'! The shell wi be worth a couple o hogg tae him if he could get it separated.

Fair cursin an rubbin his sair fammils he teen his wee barra an made his wye back tae the beach tae fetch the driftwid he'd left. Aye but this time he wisna tae get ontae the beach for the squad o sojers turnin fowk back fae gyan near. Michael tellt een o them he wanted tae pick up his pile o driftwid but the sojer tellt him tae rin tae hell for they were lookin for an unexploded twa pounder pom pom shell that hid been reported by a man earlier that day. Michael thocht tae himself 'Oh shannish shannish that must've been the shell he'd teen hame wi him?' He didna say that tae the sojer though for they'd pit him intae the jile for stealin it an as like nae gee him a dose o the birch rod ana. Oh shannish! So he ran back hame an said nithing aboot the shell ava. Onyweye he wanted the siller for the braiss and lead for himsel if only he could figure oot how tae get the shell apairt?

In nae time he wiz back at it an liftin lumps oot o't wi the haimmer but nae matter

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fit he did it jist widna separate ava. Fair pechin an sweerin like a trooper he gave it up eence mair in disgust. A good while later he mind on fowk spikkin about heatin aal stuff tae get the braiss tae expand so it wid come aff easy.

Noo an idea formed so he teen the shell intae the hoose. His aal mither wiz sittin in her usual place aside the fire haein a forty winks and she wiz even snoring a wee bit. Michael quietly sneaked past her an put the shell intae the hert o the bleazin fire. By gweed luck he stood it up on its eyne an shoved some lowin coals aroon it wi the poker. This kindo woke his mither up and her wee yakies did a blink blink as she sleepily askit Michael "Fit are ye dee-----?" as the shell exploded. The fire grate itsell come oot intae the middle o the room an the hot burnin coals gid stottin aawye, the heed o the shell wint up the lum screamin like a bainshee takin the lum an haaf the reef wi it and scattered the lot intae the middle o the street. Bricks,steens, aish, cinders soot, clatt an paraffin lampies aawye. Michael's aal mither come staggerin oot fae the wreckage blinkin its eenies an covered in soot sayin

"Oh God a God fit's that laddie done now?"

Clouds o aish, soot an pure clattyness hung ower the building like a volcano. It gid roon the toon in nae time that a Jerry bomber hid deen a hit an run raid an that dizens o dismembered bodies lay scattered about Brae street! Michael----he wisna there tae hear ony o this for he'd ran awa afore the last bricks hut the grun tae the Cabrach wi the hump o terror on his back in case the authorities put him in the stardy an gave him the birch rod. Oh shannish shannish!