

A CORNISH FOLKLORE COMPANION

An Fordh Kelles

The Lost Path



THE JOURNEY OF A NIGHT'S WALK

A Companion to the Album by M C ALCHEMIST

The road home is closest when it has become impossible.

Table of Contents

A Note on the Words	3
A Note on the Folklore	3
The Walk in Brief	3
Path, Light and Borrowing	4
A Listening Map	4
Track-by-Track Companion	5
Track 1 - Golowgell	6
Track 2 - Lloer ha Llowen	8
Track 3 - Pyskis ow Gnaffya	10
Track 4 - Golow an Pyskis	12
Track 5 - An Fordh Kelles	14
Track 6 - Pons Heb Dowr	16
Track 7 - Dans an Kell	18
Track 8 - Koslowi orth an Gwyns	20
Track 9 - Yn-dann an Spenn	22
Track 10 - Myttin ha Mur	24
The Morning Keeps No Account	26

A Note on the Words

The English texts in this booklet are close renderings of the working Cornish lyrics. They are guides to image, structure and performance rather than polished modern poems or a formal linguistic edition.

The songs speak in repeated invitations, warnings and compressed landscape-images. A path may be a lane underfoot, a connection between known places or the traveller's ability to make a choice. Light may reveal, deceive or carry a voice. A borrowed object may be physically missing, temporally displaced or simply made useless.

Some lines therefore retain their strangeness. Courteous address sits beside mockery; "come near" may sound tender and remain a threat. Bracketed glosses clarify an image without smoothing it away. The English uses *piskie* for the Cornish *pyskis*, keeping the creature within its Cornish setting.

A Note on the Folklore

Piskies belong to a broad Cornish family of small otherworldly beings associated with lanes, moorland, household tricks, misleading lights, music, circles and the experience of being piskie-led. Their mischief may be comic at the hearth and dangerous once a familiar path stops behaving as expected.

This album does not retell one canonical piskie story. It gathers recurring motifs into a single night walk: invitation at dusk, petty borrowing, false lights, a shifted landscape, an impossible landmark, dancing outside ordinary time, silence, sleep beneath a hawthorn and an uncertain return at dawn.

The Walk in Brief

The sequence begins with the traveller still able to see home. Each movement removes one form of certainty: first direction, then possession, then landmark, then time, and finally memory. The piskies rarely attack. They alter the relationships between traveller, object and place until the same countryside has become another world.

Path, Light and Borrowing

Three forces organise the album.

Path is more than a strip of ground. It is the agreement that one place leads to another. The piskies do not always erase the lane; they remove that agreement.

Light repeatedly offers help while leading farther from safety. Yellow dusk, silver moon and wandering flame each reveal enough to make the next mistake seem reasonable.

Borrowing begins with keys, watch and staff, then expands. The piskies borrow direction, duration and memory. What is taken may not be destroyed, but it is unavailable when the traveller most needs it.

A Listening Map

- 1. Dusk - the boundary begins to welcome.
- 2. Invitation - moonlight turns danger playful.
- 3. Borrowing - keys, watch and staff disappear.
- 4. Pursuit - false light draws the traveller from firm ground.
- 5. Disorientation - the path and the idea of return are lost.
- 6. Recognition - a familiar bridge has no water or onward road.
- 7. Enchantment - dance converts movement into lost time.
- 8. Vacancy - music and company vanish without departure.
- 9. Sleep - the hawthorn holds the traveller outside duration.
- 10. Morning - visibility returns; certainty does not.

Track-by-Track Companion

Each movement is presented with its narrative role, sound-world, key images, full working Cornish text, close English rendering and an interpretive listener's gloss. Unlike the field-guide structure of *Meyn ha Spryggans*, these ten movements should be read as one continuous passage from village dusk to uncertain morning.

Track 1 - Golowgell

Dusk / The Yellow Light

Narrative role: *The traveller crosses the first boundary. Village light becomes distance, and the first invitation arrives before there is any obvious danger.*

The album begins in the last usable light. Evening birds settle, hearths and cottages are still visible, and the road appears familiar. Yet the yellow light does not merely fade: it gathers along hedge, thorn and crossroads as though the landscape were preparing a second route beneath the ordinary one.

The repeated call, "Come near", sounds welcoming because nothing has yet happened that can be named as a threat. That is the piskies' first advantage. The traveller turns away from safety by degrees, while home becomes far before the body has travelled any remarkable distance.

Sound-world

Fading birdsong, warm fingerpicked guitar, gentle harp and a distant tin whistle beneath a close, inviting female whisper.

Key images

- yellow light along the hedges
- the silent crossroads
- hearth-fire receding
- laughter beneath leaves
- the bridge without water, heard before it is seen

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An howl ow kotha down dres an tre, Treven splann ow gwaneby skon, Yma an dewylas ow sevel, An fordh gelles ow talleth dynergh.	<i>The sun falling deep down across the village, Splendid houses fading quickly, The twilight is rising, The lost path beginning to welcome.</i>
Golowgell war an keyow koth, Spern ow kria y'n awel lowen, Pyskis ow tregy yn-dann delyow, Ow mires orth an dhowr splann.	<i>Yellow light upon the old hedges, Thorns crying in the joyful breeze, Piskies dwelling under leaves, Watching the splendid water.</i>
Krowsfordh tawesek y'n tewolder, An tremenyas ow sevel yn tewl, Klew orth an pyskis ow hwerthin, Deas nes, deas nes orth an ke.	<i>Silent crossroads in the darkness, The traveller standing in the dark, Listen to the piskies laughing, Come near, come near to the hedge.</i>
Tan yn an oles re fias, Pell yw an lann ha'n treven, Gwyns ow hwytha dres an gors, An lost ow sevel yn-dann an loer.	<i>Fire in the hearth has fled, Far is the yard and the cottages, Wind blowing across the swamp, The end rising under the moon.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Gwandron dre'n lann, gwandron bell, Ty re gollas an ji koth, Golow-gwandry ow talleth skon, Skeusi dres an spern tewal.	<i>Wandering through the yard, wandering far, You have lost the old house, Wandering light beginning quickly, Shadowing across the dark thorns.</i>
Gwyth ow tregy yn an leyth, Kevnis ow gwia mappa muskok, An mên ow kewsel dhyso lowen, Keas dres an glesin down.	<i>Trees dwelling in the damp mist, Spiders weaving a crazy map, The stone speaking to you joyfully, Walk across the deep turf.</i>
An dregys ow sevel yn an pras, Dornow koth ow synsy golowgell, Hwerthin yn an awel loas, Ty ow trailas dhyworth an fordh.	<i>The mischievous ones standing in the meadow, Ancient hands holding yellow light, Laughing in the grey breeze, You turning away from the path.</i>
Slever yw an gwair down, Nyns oes dhyso barlen an tre, An gwandryas ow bockla yn tewl, Nos ow tegi an tewolder koth.	<i>Slippery is the deep grass, There is no lap [safety] of the village for you, The wanderer bogging down in the dark, Night bringing the ancient darkness.</i>
Klew orth an siffra yn an eyth, Pyskis ow chasya an ebron splann, Golowgell ow tewi yn lowen, Deas dres an pons heb dhowr.	<i>Listen to the whispering in the gorse, Piskies chasing the splendid sky, Yellow light falling silent joyfully, Come across the bridge without water.</i>
Tewal yw an nos, loer splann, Pyskis ow drowha an fordh koth, An kerres ow mos dhyworth an lann, Deas nes... deas nes.	<i>Dark is the night, bright moon, Piskies turning over the old path, The way going away from the yard, Come near... come near.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

Golowgell is a threshold rather than an event. The traveller is not seized, chased or frightened from the road. The road is quietly given a different meaning. What had been a route home becomes an invitation away from it.

The final glimpse of the bridge without water foreshadows the album's method. Familiar things will remain recognisable while losing the function that once made them safe.

Track 2 - Lloer ha Llowen

Moonlight and Mirth

Narrative role: *Moonlight makes the open fields seem clear and harmless. Laughter turns the first deviation from the road into a game.*

The sun has gone, but darkness does not arrive as simple blackness. The moon floods wet turf, stone and gorse with a silver surface-light. Everything can be seen, yet distance, depth and direction have become less trustworthy.

Mirth is the piskies' camouflage. Their voices promise company beyond the hedge, while the traveller's own lane slips out of the landscape. The more playful the music becomes, the less certain it is that the traveller has chosen any of the next steps.

Sound-world

Fluttering acoustic harp, light hand percussion, soft woodwinds and double-tracked whispers moving mischievously across the stereo field.

Key images

- silver moon on wet turf
- laughter behind the hedge
- shadows moving over stone
- the crossroads disappearing
- mirth guarded through the night

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An loer splann ow sevel yn an ebron, Dynergh dhyso gans golow sylver, Pyskis ow skwinn y'n glaw down, Ow donsya war an glesin gleb.	<i>The bright moon rising in the sky, Welcome to you with silver light, Piskies squinting in the deep rain, Dancing upon the wet turf.</i>
Skeusi dres an mên ha'n eyth, Dornow koth ow kwymy an mên, Hwerthin yn an leyth dowr, Golow-gwandry ow tewi yn nos.	<i>Shadowing across the stone and the gorse, Ancient hands combing the stone, Laughing in the damp water-mist, Wandering-light falling silent in the night.</i>
Ty re trailas dhyworth an tre, An keyow koth re vanishee down, Kuston yn an tewolder splann, Nos ow tegi dhyso lowen.	<i>You have turned away from the village, The old hedges have vanished down deep, Hidden in the splendid darkness, Night bringing itself to you joyfully.</i>
An dregys ow hwerthin down, Muryan ow gwia dres an pras, Deas nes gans an gwyns splann, Klew orth an siffra y'n spern.	<i>The mischievous ones laughing deep down, Ants weaving across the meadow, Come near with the splendid wind, Listen to the whispering in the thorns.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Pyskis ow kewsel yn an gors, Ow tregy yn-dann delyow gleb, An krowsfordh re gollas skon, Keas war an mên koth.	<i>Piskies speaking in the swamp, Dwelling under wet leaves, The crossroads is lost quickly, Walk upon the ancient stone.</i>
Unn sowpig ow krafa an dor, Gans dhorn koth ha krog ow synsy, Nyns oes dhyso barlen splann, Po an tewl a wra dha drowha.	<i>One woodlouse scratching the earth, With ancient and wrinkled hand holding, There is no splendid lap [safety] for you, When the darkness turns you over.</i>
Krambla dres an pras moal, Yn-mysg an muddled koth yn tewl, Pyskis ow donsya yn an glaw, Ow gwitha an lowen koth.	<i>Crawling across the barren meadow, Amidst the ancient muddled heap in the dark, Piskies dancing in the rain, Guarding the ancient mirth.</i>
Golow-gwandry ow fia pell dres an hal, Keunys ow siffra yn an awel, An tremenyas ow sevel gwan, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Wandering-light fleeing far across the moor, Reeds whispering in the breeze, The traveller standing weak, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Loer ha lowen war an pras, An mên ow kewsel dhyso skon, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, Gwithya an lowen koth dres nos.	<i>Moonlight and mirth upon the meadow, The stone speaking to you quickly, Come near, come near, my handsome, Guarding the ancient mirth through the night.</i>
Klew orth an pyskis ow hwerthin, Y'n awel loas yn-dann an loer, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the piskies laughing, In the grey breeze under the moon, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

Moonlight usually promises visibility. Here it reveals surfaces while hiding relationships between them. The traveller can see the meadow, the reeds and the stones, but no longer understands how they connect to the village left behind.

The title joins light with pleasure. That pairing matters: the album's trap works because wonder and danger are not opposites. They arrive in the same silver glow.

Track 3 - Pyskis ow Gnaffya

Piskies Borrowing

Narrative role: *The piskies make their first undeniable intervention. Keys, watch and walking staff disappear, and practical certainty goes with them.*

The scale of the mischief is deliberately domestic. Nothing grand is stolen. A key jingles from where it should not be; a pocket is suddenly empty; the watch has stopped; the staff is no longer in the hand. Each loss is small enough to be doubted and useful enough to matter.

"Borrowing" is more unsettling than theft because it refuses a clean ending. A stolen thing is gone. A borrowed thing may be returned at any time, and the owner is kept listening for it. The piskies turn each missing object into a sound somewhere ahead.

Sound-world

Plucky harp, quick hand percussion, dry metallic key-clinks and a teasing close voice that seems to move from pocket to pocket.

Key images

- the empty pocket
- the stopped watch
- the key caught in thorns
- the staff leaving the hand
- small fingers and a distant jingle

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An alwhey splann re gollas y'n eyth, Poket gwag ha dhorn gwan ow krafa, An pyskis ow fias gans an sighyn, Ow gnaffya an traow dhyworth an tre.	<i>The splendid key is lost in the gorse, Empty pocket and weak hand scratching, The piskies fleeing with the trifle, Borrowing the things from the village.</i>
Ple'ma an orloys koth? Tewi ow sevel, y'gans re stopyas, Golow-gwandry ow hwerthin yn nos, An dregys ow tregy y'n ladryans.	<i>Where is the old watch? Silence standing, indeed it has stopped, Wandering-light laughing in the night, The mischievous ones dwelling in the theft.</i>
An dorn ow mos yn-dann an gwair, Ty re gollas an dryft war an nos, Skon ow pilgy down yn an eyth, Pyskis ow drowha an poket gwag.	<i>The hand going under the grass, You have lost the track upon the night, Quickly slipping down into the gorse, Piskies turning over the empty pocket.</i>
An lath re fias dhyworth dha dhorn, An spern ow synsy an alwhey koth, Deas nes gans an gwyns splann, Hwerthin yn an leyth dowr.	<i>The staff has fled from your hand, The thorns holding the ancient key, Come near with the splendid wind, Laughing in the damp water-mist.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Poket kelles yn-dann an loer, An orloys splann ow sevel tewal, Kevnis ow gwia an tewl dhyso, Nos ow tegi dhyso lowen.	<i>Pocket lost under the moon, The splendid watch standing silent, Spiders weaving the darkness to you, Night bringing itself to you joyfully.</i>
Unn sowpig ow fisky an dorn, Ty ow chasya an golowgell splann, Nyns oes dhyso barlen an tre, An pyskis ow skwinn orth an tewl.	<i>One woodlouse frisking the hand, You chasing the splendid yellow light, There is no lap [safety] of the village for you, The piskies squinting at the darkness.</i>
An dregys ow donsya dres an keyow, Ow gnaffya an sikhyn koth yn tewl, Hwerthin yn an leyth dower, Golow-gwandry ow fia dres an eyth.	<i>The mischievous ones dancing across the hedges, Borrowing the old trifle in the dark, Laughing in the damp water-mist, Wandering-light fleeing across the gorse.</i>
Ple'ma an barlen koth? An keyow re vanishee down yn an eyth, An tremenyas ow sevel gwan, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Where is the ancient safety? The hedges have vanished deep down in the gorse, The traveller standing weak, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Loer ha lowen, poket gwag, An orloys ow kewsel dhyso skon, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, An pyskis ow gnaffya dres nos.	<i>Moonlight and mirth, empty pocket, The watch speaking to you quickly, Come near, come near, my handsome, The piskies borrowing through the night.</i>
Klew orth an alwhey ow klyppy, Y'n awel loas yn-dann an loer, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the key stealing away, In the grey breeze under the moon, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

This is the point at which the traveller can no longer explain the night as poor judgement or bad weather. An intelligence is present, but it announces itself through petty inconvenience rather than open confrontation.

The stopped watch is the crucial theft. Before the fairy ring appears, ordinary time has already lost its witness.

Track 4 - Golow an Pyskis

The Piskie Lights

Narrative role: A false lantern becomes the traveller's guide. Hope is kept just far enough ahead to draw each step from firm ground into the wet moor.

The wandering light imitates help. It might be a neighbour, a cottage window or another walker carrying a lamp. Each time the traveller approaches, the glow recedes, divides or appears somewhere else among the reeds.

The chase is not forced. The piskies let the traveller supply the urgency. Wet ground, darkness and distance become secondary because the next patch of light always seems close enough to justify one more step.

Sound-world

Airy female hums, shimmering bells, soft wind and a slow swaying pulse that remains hypnotic while the ground grows less secure.

Key images

- a lantern that never comes nearer
- light divided across wet reeds
- feet sinking in soft ground
- the moon above the chase
- a map woven by spiders

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Golow-gwandry yn an hal ow donsya, Yn-mysg an keunys ow tewi yn nos, Golow splann ow fia pell dhyworth, Gwandron nes yn-dann an loer.	<i>Wandering-light in the moor dancing, Amidst the reeds falling silent in the night, Splendid light fleeing far away, Wandering near under the moon.</i>
An dregys ow digwarhy an dor, Yma an gwair slever yn tewl, Mor soft yn-dann dha drees ow bockla, Deas nes gans an gwyns splann.	<i>The mischievous ones uncovering the earth, The slippery grass is in the dark, So wet beneath your feet bogging down, Come near with the splendid wind.</i>
Ty ow chasya an golow dres gors, An golow-gwandry ow hwerthin yn tewl, Gwandron dres an darnow gleb, Pell dres an pras moal.	<i>You chasing the light across the swamp, The wandering-light laughing in the dark, Wandering through the wet patches, Far across the barren meadow.</i>
Bockla down yn an leyth dower, Soft yw an gwyns ow hwytha dres nos, An pyskis ow skwinn yn an eyth, Ow donsya war an keunys gleb.	<i>Bogging down deep in the damp water-mist, Soft is the wind blowing through the night, The piskies squinting in the gorse, Dancing upon the wet reeds.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Pyskis ow kwymy golow yn nos, Milyow a darnow splann ow fia, Gwandron nes yn-dann an loer koth, Golow splann ow tewi yn nos.	<i>Piskies combing the light in the night, Thousands of splendid patches fleeing, Wandering near under the ancient moon, Splendid light falling silent in the night.</i>
Slever yw an dor yn-dann an glaw, Keas war an keunys yn tewolder, Kevnis ow gwia an mappa splann, An gwandryas ow bockla skon.	<i>Slippery is the ground under the rain, Walk upon the reeds in the darkness, Spiders weaving the splendid map, The wanderer bogging down quickly.</i>
Den gwan yn an soft ow drowha, Ty ow bockla down yn an leyth, Hwerthin yn an awel loas, An pyskis ow fia dhyworth skon.	<i>Weak man in the soggy mud turning over, You bogging down deep in the damp mist, Laughing in the grey breeze, The piskies fleeing away quickly.</i>
An fordh splann re gollas dres hal, An keyow re vanishee down yn tewl, Nos ow tegi dhyso an tewolder, Golow-gwandry ow fia pell.	<i>The splendid path is lost across the moor, The hedges have vanished deep in the dark, Night bringing the darkness to you, Wandering-light fleeing far.</i>
Golow yn an keunys ow tewi, Klew orth an dregys koth yn leyth, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann, Yn-dann an loer sylver.	<i>Light in the reeds falling silent, Listen to the ancient mischievous ones in the damp mist, Night bringing itself to you splendidly, Under the silver moon.</i>
Gwandron nes, me anson yn gors, Soft yw an dor down yn-dann glaw, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann, Golow-gwandry ow hwerthin yn tewl.	<i>Wandering near, my handsome, in the swamp, Soft is the deep earth under the rain, Night bringing itself to you splendidly, Wandering-light laughing in the dark.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The light is effective because it does not look supernatural at first. It borrows the shape of ordinary rescue. Only its behaviour reveals the trap: it preserves exactly the distance required to keep the traveller moving.

By the end, path and hedge have disappeared. The traveller has followed visibility into a place where nothing useful can be seen.

Track 5 - An Fordh Kelles

The Lost Path

Narrative role: *The trick succeeds. The traveller turns back and discovers that the route already walked no longer exists in any usable form.*

This is the album's central crisis. The hedges are still hedges, thorns are still thorns and the moon remains above the same ground, yet the arrangement has changed. Lanes close into briar, crossroads multiply and every attempted return becomes another turn within the maze.

The fear is relational rather than distant. The traveller may remain close to home in ordinary geography, but closeness is meaningless when no path connects one place to another.

Sound-world

Skittering fiddle loops, tense fingerpicked guitar, breathless overlapping whispers and dry twig-snaps in a claustrophobic acoustic space.

Key images

- briars caught in a wet coat
- the labyrinth under the moon
- crossroads without exits
- the lost walking staff
- thorns laughing in the wind

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An fordh gelles dres an keyow splat, Spern ow krafa dres an key splann, Chorlah retro, chorlah skon yn nos, An kael ow sevel yn-dann an loer.	<i>The lost path across the flat hedges, Thorns scratching across the splendid hedge, Turn back, turn around quickly in the night, The labyrinth rising under the moon.</i>
Drain ow tregy yn dha bows gleb, An dregys ow digwarhy an spern, Fest yw an drees yn-dann an dhowr, Deas nes gans an gwyns tewal.	<i>Briars dwelling in your wet coat, The mischievous ones uncovering the thorns, Trapped are the feet under the water, Come near with the dark wind.</i>
Ty ow pleyny dres an eyth splat, Po an keyow koth re vanishee down, Chorlah pell dhyworth an tre, Pyskis ow hwerthin yn an leyth.	<i>You complaining across the flat gorse, When the old hedges have vanished deep down, Turn around far away from the village, Piskies laughing in the damp mist.</i>
Maglen hager war an glesin down, Strik yw an dregys ow fia pell, Nyns oes dhyso barlen splann, An tewolder ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Ugly snare upon the deep turf, Swift are the mischievous ones fleeing far, There is no splendid lap [safety] for you, The darkness bringing itself to you.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Krowsfordh kelles yn an kael koth, Spern ow synsy an lath yn nos, Ty ow bockla down yn gors, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann.	<i>Lost crossroads in the ancient labyrinth, Thorns holding the staff in the night, You bogging down deep in the swamp, Night bringing itself to you splendidly.</i>
Slever yw an dor yn-dann dha drees, An fordh splann re gollas skon, Kevnis ow gwia an tewl dhyso, Pyskis ow skwinn yn an eyth.	<i>Slippery is the ground beneath your feet, The splendid path is lost quickly, Spiders weaving the darkness to you, Piskies squinting in the gorse.</i>
Den gwan ow pleyny yn an soft, Ty ow chasya an siffra koth, Hwerthin y'n awel yn tewl, An pyskis ow skeusi dres nos.	<i>Weak man complaining in the soggy mud, You chasing the ancient whispering, Laughing in the breeze in the dark, The piskies shadowing through the night.</i>
Ple'ma an barlen koth? An spern ow tregy dres dha dhorn, An tremenyas ow sevel gwan, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Where is the ancient safety? The thorns dwelling across your hand, The traveller standing weak, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Chorlah retro, chorlah pell, Loer ha lowen re gollas yn tewl, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, An pyskis ow gnaffya dres nos.	<i>Turn back, turn around far, Moonlight and mirth have been lost in the dark, Come near, come near, my handsome, laughing, The piskies borrowing through the night.</i>
Klew orth an alwhey ow klyppy, An spern ow hwerthin yn an nos, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the key stealing away, The thorns laughing in the night, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The command to turn back is itself part of the mockery. Back is no longer a direction. It is a remembered idea with no corresponding lane beneath the feet.

The title names more than a missing road. The traveller has lost the principle by which roads, landmarks and choices form a world.

Track 6 - Pons Heb Dowl

Bridge Without Water

Narrative role: A familiar landmark is found, but its function has been removed. The bridge stands over a dry hollow and delivers no path to the other side.

Recognition briefly promises escape. This is the old bridge crossed in ordinary life, the kind of landmark by which the traveller should be able to recover direction. Yet there is no running water beneath it and no dependable continuation beyond it.

The structure is intact while the world around it has withdrawn. That makes the bridge more disturbing than a ruin. It looks correct, but every purpose by which it was known has vanished.

Sound-world

Dry stone clacks, an unresolved circular fiddle phrase, sparse harp and a hollow echo with no answering water.

Key images

- the dry arch
- an empty river-bed
- a bridge looping back on itself
- the missing far bank
- stone clicks in place of water

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An pons heb dhowr ow sevel yn leyth, Gromder koth dres an gweskyn sych, Nyns oes dhowr ow redeg yn nos, An tremenyas ow sevel yn tewl.	<i>The bridge without water standing in the damp mist, Ancient arch across the dry empty bed, There is no water running in the night, The traveller standing in the dark.</i>
Ty ow krambla dres an mên koth, An dregys ow hwerthin yn an toll, Soweth an fordh re trailas skon, Deas nes, me anson yn-dann nos.	<i>You crawling across the ancient stone, The mischievous ones laughing in the hole [void], Alas, the path has turned quickly, Come near, my handsome, under the night.</i>
Kylas retro, kylas pell yn tewl, An pons koth ow drowha an drees, Nyns oes dhyso dhowr splann, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann.	<i>Looping back, looping far in the dark, The old bridge turning over the feet, There is no splendid water for you, Night bringing itself to you splendidly.</i>
Sych yw an dor yn-dann an pons, Spern ow tregy yn an gwair koth, An pyskis ow skwinn dres an key, Ow gwitha an lowen dres nos.	<i>Dry is the ground under the bridge, Thorns dwelling in the ancient grass, The piskies squinting across the hedge, Guarding the mirth through the night.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An dorn ow synsy an gromder down, Pell yw an lann ha'n treven splann, Krowsfordh kelles yn an kael koth, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann.	<i>The hand holding the deep arch, Far is the yard and the splendid cottages, Lost crossroads in the ancient labyrinth, Night bringing itself to you splendidly.</i>
Slever yw an mên-an-tol yn nos, Ty ow bockla down yn leyth sych, Kevnis ow gwia an mappa splann, An gwandryas ow sevel gwan.	<i>Slippery is the holed stone in the night, You bogging down deep in the dry mist, Spiders weaving the splendid map, The wanderer standing weak.</i>
Den gwan ow pleyny dres an pons, A-dryv dhyso an tewolder splann, Hwerthin yn an awel loas, An pyskis ow fia dhyworth skon.	<i>Weak man complaining across the bridge, Behind you is the splendid darkness, Laughing in the grey breeze, The piskies fleeing away quickly.</i>
Ple'ma an dhowr splann? An keyow re vanishee down yn tewl, Ty re gollas an dryft war an mên, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Where is the splendid water? The hedges have vanished deep in the dark, You have lost the track upon the stone, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Pons heb dhowr, pons heb fordh, Kylas dres an gors ow sevel, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, An pyskis ow gnaffya dres nos.	<i>Bridge without water, bridge without path, Looping across the swamp standing, Come near, come near, my handsome, The piskies borrowing through the night.</i>
Klew orth an alwhey ow klyppy, An gromder ow hwerthin yn an nos, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the key stealing away, The arch laughing in the night, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The bridge is a test of recognition. The traveller knows what it is, but that knowledge cannot produce a crossing. Name and function have separated.

This is the album's most purely uncanny landmark: not an impossible object, but an ordinary object from which the ordinary world has been removed.

Track 7 - Dans an Kell

Dance of the Lost

Narrative role: *The traveller is swept into the piskies' circle. Movement becomes ecstasy, confinement and the theft of measurable time.*

After the empty bridge, the album erupts into company, rhythm and colour. Hands take the traveller, fiddles accelerate and the ring seems to offer everything the night has withheld: direction, warmth, laughter and belonging.

Yet a circle has no exit. The faster the dance moves, the more completely it returns to the same ground. The stopped watch reappears because this is where seconds, hours and years cease to be distinguishable.

Sound-world

Frantic dancing fiddles, frame drum and tambourine, layered laughter and a spinning pulse that outruns any stable sense of bar or duration.

Key images

- the moon dancing above the ring
- hands holding the wanderer
- the stopped watch
- feet turning through wet grass
- mirth without an exit

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An loer splann ow donsya yn an ebron, An pyskis ow dregys yn an kelgh, Trowgyle retro, trowgyle skon yn nos, An gwegryn ow tewi yn leyth.	<i>The bright moon dancing in the sky, The piskies mischievous in the circle, Spin back, spin quickly in the night, The fairy ring falling silent in the damp mist.</i>
Dans an kell ow talleth dres an pras, Skooth yw an drees mes an tro ow bocklan, Pyskis ow skwinn yn an tewl down, Ow gwitha an lowen dres nos.	<i>Dance of the lost beginning across the meadow, Weary are the feet but the spin is leaping, Piskies squinting in the deep darkness, Guarding the mirth through the night.</i>
Ty ow donsya gans an dregys koth, Dornow koth ow synsy an gwandryas, Skon ow pilgy down yn an gwegryn, Nos ow tegi dhyso lowen.	<i>You dancing with the ancient mischievous ones, Ancient hands holding the wanderer, Quickly slipping down into the fairy ring, Night bringing itself to you joyfully.</i>
Pystry hager dres an mên koth, Krowsfordh kelles yn an kael down, Chorlah pell dhyworth an tre, Dans an kell ow tegi splann.	<i>Ugly magic across the ancient stone, Lost crossroads in the deep labyrinth, Turn around far away from the village, Dance of the lost bringing itself splendidly.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An orloys re stopyas yn-dann nos, Golow-gwandry ow fia dres an hal, Kevnis ow gwia an drolla splann, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann.	<i>The watch has stopped under the night, Wandering-light fleeing across the moor, Spiders weaving the splendid tale, Night bringing itself to you splendidly.</i>
Unn sowpig ow bocklan war an key, Ty ow donsya dres an eyth splat, Nyns oes dhyso barlen an tre, An pyskis ow skwinn dres tewl.	<i>One woodlouse bogging on the hedge, You dancing across the flat gorse, There is no lap [safety] of the village for you, The piskies squinting through the dark.</i>
Den gwan ow pleyny yn an tro, Skooth yw an dhorn, skooth an drees, Hwerthin yn an awel loas, An dregys ow fia dhyworth skon.	<i>Weak man complaining in the turn, Weary is the hand, weary the feet, Laughing in the grey breeze, The mischievous ones fleeing away quickly.</i>
Ple'ma an barlen koth? An keyow re vanishee down yn tewl, Trowgyle pell dhyworth an fordh koth, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Where is the ancient safety? The hedges have vanished deep in the dark, Spin far away from the ancient path, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Loer ha lowen, dans an kelgh, An mên ow kewsel dhyso skon, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, An pyskis ow gnaffya dres nos.	<i>Moonlight and mirth, dance of the circle, The stone speaking to you quickly, Come near, come near, my handsome, The piskies borrowing through the night.</i>
Klew orth an alwhey ow klyppy, An drolla ow hwerthin yn an nos, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the key stealing away, The tale laughing in the night, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The dance is the album's most joyful music and its most complete imprisonment. The traveller does not want to leave at first; that willing surrender is what gives the circle its power.

Time is not merely passed here. It is borrowed in the same manner as the key and watch, taken so lightly that the loss cannot be felt until the music stops.

Track 8 - Koslowi orth an Gwyns

Listening to the Wind

Narrative role: *The dance ends without warning. The circle is empty, the piskies are absent and the traveller is left with exhaustion as the only proof that anything occurred.*

The sudden silence is more disorienting than the dance. No dancers depart and no final note resolves the rhythm. One moment the traveller is held inside movement; the next, wet grass and cold air occupy the entire space.

Earlier tracks made absence playful: a missing key, a vanished path, a receding light. Here absence becomes total. Even mockery has withdrawn, leaving the wind to repeat fragments of the night without explaining them.

Sound-world

Cold wind textures, a single mournful harp or fiddle drone and a soft spoken murmur inside an intentionally empty acoustic field.

Key images

- the abandoned fairy ring
- cold wind over wet turf
- the vanished dancers
- the missing staff
- whispers with no visible speaker

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Koslowi orth an gwyns yn leyth, An kelgh splann re fias dhyworth, Nyns oes pyskis ow donsya yn tewl, An gwandryas ow sevel onern.	<i>Listen to the wind in the damp mist, deep, The splendid circle has fled away, There are no piskies dancing in the dark, The wanderer standing alone.</i>
Yen yw an awel dres an hal, An mên koth ow sevel tewal, Sighy ow tregy dres an eyth splat, Deas nes yn an tewolder splann.	<i>Cold is the breeze across the moor, The ancient stone standing dark, Sighing dwelling across the flat gorse, Come near into the splendid darkness.</i>
Ty re gollas an dans yn nos, An dregys re vanishee down, Tawesek yw an gwerbyn koth, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>You have lost the dance in the night, The mischievous ones have vanished deep down, Silent is the ancient fairy ring, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
An gwyns ow hwytha dres an pras, Mor wag yw an dor yn-dann dha dreas, Nyns oes dhyso barlen splann, An tewolder ow tegi dhyso.	<i>The wind blowing across the meadow, So empty is the ground beneath your feet, There is no splendid lap [safety] for you, The darkness bringing itself to you.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Krowsfordh kelles, pons heb dhowr, Spern ow synsy an lath yn nos, Kevnis ow gwia an tewl dhyso, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann.	<i>Lost crossroads, bridge without water, Thorns holding the staff in the night, Spiders weaving the darkness to you, Night bringing itself to you splendidly.</i>
Slever yw an glesin gleb yn nos, Ty ow sevel gwan dres an key, Hwerthin koth re fias skon, Koslowi orth an siffra.	<i>Slippery is the wet turf in the night, You standing weak across the hedge, Ancient laughter has fled quickly, Listen to the whispering.</i>
Den gwan ow pleyny yn an yen, An dorn ow krafa an bows gleb, Sighy y'n awel yn tewl down, An pyskis ow skeusi dres nos.	<i>Weak man complaining in the cold, The hand scratching the wet coat, Sighing in the breeze in the deep dark, The piskies shadowing through the night.</i>
Ple'ma an barlen koth? An keyow re vanishee down yn tewl, Ty re gollas an dryft war an mên, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Where is the ancient safety? The hedges have vanished deep in the dark, You have lost the track upon the stone, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Loer ha lowen, kelgh re fias, An mên ow kewsel dhyso skon, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, An gwyns ow sighy dres nos.	<i>Moonlight and mirth, circle has fled, The stone speaking to you quickly, Come near, come near, my handsome, The wind sighing through the night.</i>
Klew orth an awel ow klyppy, An spern ow sighy yn an nos, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the breeze stealing away, The thorns sighing in the night, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The traveller has been released, but release is not rescue. With the piskies gone, there is nobody to follow, resist or blame. The landscape offers no direction and no witness.

Listening replaces dancing. The body is still full of rhythm, but the world answers only with wind.

Track 9 - Yn-dann an Spern

Under the Hawthorn

Narrative role: Exhaustion becomes surrender. The traveller shelters beneath the hawthorn and enters a sleep that may lie outside ordinary duration.

The hawthorn appears as refuge after open moor, impossible bridge and abandoned circle. Its roots offer cover, the soil is soft and the voice at last becomes soothing rather than teasing. Yet the comfort is itself another threshold.

The repeated command to sleep removes the last act the traveller can still perform: remaining awake. Beneath the tree, path, body and memory are wrapped together in a shroud that may hold them for one night or for centuries.

Sound-world

Low bowed double-bass or cello drone, slow bell-like harp and a breathy lullaby-whisper that is comforting, heavy and faintly suffocating.

Key images

- the ancient hawthorn trunk
- wet soil beneath the roots
- heavy feet and eyelids
- the dream as a shroud
- laughter withdrawing from the night

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Yn-dann an spern gwynn ow sevel yn leyth, Gwas koth ow gwia an kosg yn nos, Nyns oes dhowr po donsya dres an hal, An tremenyas ow bowses yn tewl.	<i>Under the hawthorn standing in the damp mist, Ancient soil weaving the sleep in the night, There is no water or dancing across the moor, The traveller drowsy in the dark.</i>
Poos yw dha drees yn-dann an kyf koth, Hunros tebyl ow tregy yn leyth, An dorn ow synsy an gwas gleb, Deas nes yn an geler koth.	<i>Heavy are your feet beneath the ancient trunk, Shadowy dream dwelling in the damp mist, The hand holding the wet soil, Come near into the ancient shroud.</i>
Kosg down, kosg down yn an tewolder, An spern gwynn ow tegi an mappa splann, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann yn nos, Po an keyow re vanishee down.	<i>Sleep deep, sleep deep in the darkness, The hawthorn bringing the splendid map, Night bringing itself to you splendidly in the night, When the hedges have vanished deep down.</i>
Yen yw an dor, mor soft yw an gwas, Spern gwynn ow gwia an bows koth, Nyns oes dhyso barlen splann an tre, An tewolder ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Cold is the earth, so soft is the soil, Hawthorn weaving the ancient coat, There is no splendid lap [safety] of the village for you, The darkness bringing itself to you.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Kyf koth ow gwitha an kosg yn nos, Hunros splann ow tewi yn nos, An pyskis ow skwinn dres tewl down, Ow tegi an lowen dhyworth nos.	<i>Ancient trunk guarding the sleep in the night, Splendid dream falling silent in the night, The piskies squinting across the deep dark, Bringing the mirth away from the night.</i>
Slever yw an glesin, tawesek an nos, Ty ow bockla down yn-dann an spern, Kevnis ow gwia an geler splann, Kosg down, kosg down me anson.	<i>Slippery is the turf, silent is the night, You bogging down deep under the hawthorn, Spiders weaving the splendid shroud, Sleep deep, sleep deep, my handsome.</i>
Den gwan ow pleyny yn an soft weras, Skooth yw an dhorn, skooth an drees, Hwerthin koth re fias dhyworth, An pyskis ow skeusi dres nos.	<i>Weak man complaining in the soft soil, Weary is the hand, weary the feet, Ancient laughter has fled away, The piskies shadowing through the night.</i>
Ple'ma an barlen koth? An keyow re vanishee down yn tewl, Ty re gollas an dryft war an mên, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Where is the ancient safety? The hedges have vanished deep in the dark, You have lost the track upon the stone, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Loer ha lowen, kosg yn nos, An mên ow kewsel dhyso skon, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, An spern gwynn ow sighy dres nos.	<i>Moonlight and mirth, sleep in the night, The stone speaking to you quickly, Come near, come near, my handsome, The hawthorn sighing through the night.</i>
Klew orth an alwhey ow klyppy, An kosg koth ow hwerthin yn an nos, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the key stealing away, The ancient sleep laughing in the night, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The hawthorn is not simply a sinister tree. It genuinely shelters the traveller. That double function is what makes it a fitting piskie threshold: protection from the night may also mean removal from ordinary time.

The album reaches its deepest stillness here. The traveller is no longer lost while moving. The traveller has become a thing the landscape can keep.

Track 10 - Myttin ha Mur

Morning and Much

Narrative role: Dawn returns visibility but not continuity. The piskies have gone, the watch is useless and the amount of time lost beneath the hawthorn cannot be trusted.

Morning is pale, cold and apparently ordinary. Birds wake, the tree is only a tree and no laughter comes from the dark. Yet the traveller rises into a landscape whose age and distance no longer agree with memory.

The working tale permits two readings: the traveller may have slept a single night near the village gate, or may have woken after a far greater interval to find home altered beyond recognition. The album refuses to choose because the stopped watch cannot measure fairy time.

Sound-world

Waking birds, flowing fingerpicked guitar, spacious harp and a slow sweeping fiddle that offers resolution without restoring what was taken.

Key images

- pale light on the hawthorn
- the stopped watch
- cold damp clothes
- cottages distant or vanished
- a final laugh within the morning wind

The Words

The close rendering preserves the compression and repeated imagery of the performed text.

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Myttin ow dewy dres an gweras koth, An spern gwynn ow sevel yn an splann, Nyns oes pyskis ow hwerthin yn an nos, An tremenyas ow dewy yn tewl.	<i>Morning awaking across the ancient land, The hawthorn standing in the brightness, There are no piskies laughing in the night, The traveller awaking in the dark.</i>
Mur yw an termyn re fias skon, An treven splann re vanishee down yn mên, Kothman koth, ty ow sevel onern, Deas nes gans an myttin splann.	<i>Great is the time that has fled quickly, The splendid cottages have vanished deep into stone, Old friend, you standing alone, Come near with the splendid morning.</i>
Kosg re gollas, an ylow re tawesee down, An kael koth re fia dhyworth nos, Soweth an dorn ow synsy an mên, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann.	<i>Sleep has been lost, the music has fallen silent, The ancient labyrinth has fled from the night, Alas, the hand holding the stone, Night bringing itself to you splendidly.</i>
Yen yw an awel dres an gweras down, Kyf koth an spern ow sighy yn splann, Nyns oes dhyso barlen splann an tre, An tewolder ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Cold is the breeze across the deep soil, Ancient trunk of the hawthorn sighing in the brightness, There is no splendid lap [safety] of the village for you, The darkness bringing itself to you.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Duweth an drolla dres an pras splann, An orloys koth re stopyas dres nos, Kevnis ow gwia an tewl dhyso, Nos ow tegi dhyso splann.	<i>End of the tale across the splendid meadow, The old watch has stopped through the night, Spiders weaving the darkness to you, Night bringing itself to you splendidly.</i>
Slever yw an glesin gleb yn nos, Ty ow sevel gwan dres an key, Hwerthin koth re fias skon, Myttin ha mur, duweth an nos.	<i>Slippery is the wet turf in the night, You standing weak across the hedge, Ancient laughter has fled quickly, Morning and much, the end of the night.</i>
Den gwan ow pleyny yn an soft weras, Skooth yw an dhorn, skooth an drees, Hwerthin koth re fias dhyworth, An pyskis ow skeusi dres nos.	<i>Weak man complaining in the soft soil, Weary is the hand, weary the feet, Ancient laughter has fled away, The piskies shadowing through the night.</i>
Ple'ma an barlen koth? An keyow re vanishee down yn tewl, Ty re gollas an dryft war an mên, Nos ow tegi an tewl down.	<i>Where is the ancient safety? The hedges have vanished deep in the dark, You have lost the track upon the stone, Night bringing the deep darkness.</i>
Loer ha lowen, termyn re fias, An mên ow kewsel dhyso skon, Deas nes, deas nes me anson, An myttin ow dewy dres nos.	<i>Moonlight and mirth, time has fled, The stone speaking to you quickly, Come near, come near, my handsome, The morning awaking through the night.</i>
Klew orth an alwhey ow klyppy, An myttin splann ow hwerthin yn an nos, Deas nes gans an gwyns, Nos ow tegi dhyso.	<i>Listen to the key stealing away, The splendid morning laughing in the night, Come near with the wind, Night bringing itself to you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

Dawn does not disprove the night. It merely removes its visible agents. The key may return, the path may reappear and home may be close, but the traveller cannot recover a reliable account of what happened between dusk and morning.

"Much" is the perfect final uncertainty: much distance, much exhaustion, much time, or much that cannot be remembered. The walk ends where ordinary measurement fails.

The Morning Keeps No Account

Across the ten movements, the piskies rarely need to appear in a stable form. They are laughter beyond the hedge, fingers in a pocket, a light over wet ground, hands within a dance and a voice beneath the hawthorn. Their power lies less in what they are than in what they make unreliable.

The traveller begins with several ordinary measures of the world: a road, a key, a watch, a staff, a bridge and the visible lights of home. Each measure remains present long enough to fail. The road no longer connects. The key is heard but cannot be used. The watch stops. The staff leaves the hand. The bridge keeps its arch and loses its river.

By the dance, loss has moved beyond objects. Time itself is borrowed. When the circle empties, even the piskies withdraw as evidence. The body is exhausted, but no witness remains to say whether the music lasted minutes, hours or generations.

The hawthorn offers the only stillness in the cycle, and even that shelter has two meanings. It protects the traveller from the open night while holding the sleeper at the boundary of another duration. Morning may come after one night. It may come after much more. The album leaves both possibilities alive.

Dawn therefore restores sight without restoring account. The path may be visible again, the village may stand nearby and a key may yet return to its pocket. None of these things can tell the traveller what happened while ordinary measure was absent.

DEAS NES... DEAS NES.

Come near... come near.

An Fordh Kelles - The Lost Path

Music and concept: M C ALCHEMIST

Companion booklet text and design: M C ALCHEMIST, 2026

Cornish text and close renderings reproduced from the album working dossier.

All rights reserved.