

A CORNISH FOLKLORE COMPANION

Meyn ha Spryggans

Stones and Spriggans



ANCIENT GUARDIANS OF THE SACRED STONES

A Companion to the Album by M C ALCHEMIST

The stones do not sleep. They keep watch.

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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 warnings, ritual phrases and compressed landscape-images. Stone may be body, monument, door, witness or law. Gold may be metal, ore, value or temptation. A track may be a road underfoot, a trace through memory or the route by which darkness follows the trespasser.

Some lines therefore retain their strangeness. Courteous forms of address sit beside threats. The tourist is dismissed in the same voice that speaks of giants and sacred stones. English words occasionally remain embedded in the working Cornish. These features belong to the performed text and have not been smoothed away.

Repetition is deliberate. The spriggans keep watch by repeating the boundary: do not come near, do not trespass, listen to the earth. The words circle because the guardians do not tire and the land does not need to invent a new warning for each visitor.

A Note on the Folklore

Spriggans occupy an uncertain border between creature, spirit, ancestor and place. They are often described as wizened and grotesque, associated with old stones, barrows, remote moorland and buried treasure. Some traditions connect them with the diminished spirits of the giants who once crossed Cornwall, and allow their small bodies to swell to monstrous size when angered.

This album does not present a single canonical spriggan story. It builds a ten-part field guide from recurring attributes: guardianship, giant ancestry, change of scale, mineral wealth, weather, subterranean life, thresholds, laughter, paired watch and retreat into darkness.

The cycle also resists the harmless fairy-goblin of softened retellings. These guardians can be mocking, but they are not merely mischievous. Their hostility has a territorial logic. The intruder is threatened because stone, ore, path and hollow are already claimed by older obligations.

The Guardians in Brief

The sequence begins with self-identification. The spriggans speak from beneath flat stones and establish themselves as small in daylight, great in darkness and descended from giant power.

The second movement takes the listener below the monument into the mineral body of Cornwall. Treasure is dispersed through rock and shaft. The third and fourth movements reveal the compressed giant inside the dwarf and then allow that ancient scale to return.

The fifth movement transfers agency into weather. A sudden storm removes the path. The sixth turns in the opposite direction, shrinking the listener into the insect world beneath a

lifted slab. Tracks seven and eight bring threshold and mockery together at Mên-an-Tol and upon the lost night-road.

The ninth movement arranges the watch as a pair, with voices calling across the rock. The final movement gathers every image into a single darkness and lets bell, choir, granite and wind withdraw beyond hearing.

Stone, Ore and Threshold

Three materials organise the album.

Stone is the visible sign of an older order. It can be standing, flat, holed, piled into a cairn or hidden beneath turf. It remembers touch and registers the trespasser's step.

Ore is treasure before ownership. It lies spread through the earth rather than waiting as a finished prize. The spriggans guard the continuity between mineral, ground and place.

Threshold is where curiosity becomes risk. A holed stone, mine shaft, dark portal, path beneath gorse or simple gap under a slab may look open. The album repeatedly asks whether an opening was ever intended as an invitation.

A Listening Map

1. Declaration - the guardians speak.
2. Custody - buried wealth is denied to the thief.
3. Ancestry - the small body remembers the giant.
4. Transformation - ancient scale returns.
5. Weather - storm removes the path.
6. Under-stone - the hidden world scratches and counts.
7. Threshold - Mên-an-Tol is watched.
8. Mockery - laughter follows the lost traveller.
9. Vigil - two guardians answer across the rock.
10. Withdrawal - every warning sinks back into darkness.

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.

Track 1 - Ni yw an Spryggans

We Are the Spriggans

Narrative role: The guardians name themselves and establish the law of the album: small by day, immense in the night, rooted beneath old stone and older memory.

The opening movement does not ask whether spriggans exist. It lets them speak. Their first-person declaration turns the listener from observer into trespasser: the voice beneath the stone already knows who has entered, where the foot has fallen, and how little daylight protects the walker once the moor darkens.

Scale is unstable from the first verse. The spriggans are compared with ants among the gorse, yet the night restores a larger and more threatening form. This is not simply physical growth. It is the return of an older authority. The small body carries the memory of the giant, and the stone beneath which it crouches is both shelter and threshold.

Sound-world

A low C-drone, cold wind, wet stone resonance and a voice that seems to come from below the listener rather than in front of them.

Key images

- the flat stone
- ants among the gorse
- the old giant returning
- the hallowed portal
- the path erased in darkness

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Ni yw an Spryggans, koth ha krog, Ow tregy yn-dann an mên splat, A-dreus an gors, y'n nans tewal, Sennys gans an dhorn koth.	<i>We are the spriggans, old and wrinkled, Dwelling under the flat stone, Across the swamp, in the dark valley, Hallowed by the ancient hand.</i>
Byghan lowr y'n jydh ow koas, Avel muryan yn-mysg an eyth, Mes meur ha hager y'n nos, Gwithyasys a-gans an dor.	<i>Small enough as we go by day, Like ants amidst the gorse, But great and ugly in the night, Guardians of the earth.</i>
Klew orth an gwyns ow kria, Dres an karn koth ha moal, Yma an meyn ow kewsel, Yn-dann an loer splann.	<i>Listen to the wind crying, Over the old and barren cairn, The stones are speaking, Under the bright moon.</i>
An koth-gawr a dhasview omma, Yn-dann holergh an tewl, Gans spyrys koth an pras, Ow gwytha an porth sennys.	<i>The old giant relives here, Beneath the track of the darkness, With the ancient spirit of the meadow, Guarding the hallowed portal.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Na dhegynas orth an menhir, Na dheos nes, den jentyl, Po ty a wra dhasgrev, Yn-dann rew an jydth.	<i>Do not trespass against the standing stone, Do not come near, gentle man, Or you shall make your grief, Under the frost of the day.</i>
Yma ni ow hwerthin yn-dann lergh, Gans gallos an jydth koth, Kellyas an fordth yn-mysg an gors, Tewal yw dha dhewis nos.	<i>We are laughing beneath the track, With the power of the ancient day, Lost the way amidst the swamp, Dark is your chosen night.</i>
A-dhowr ha mên koth, Ni a wra dha dhasgrev, Gis on orth an emmet, Nyns oes dhyso omma.	<i>Of water and old stone, We shall make your grief, Rubbish to the tourist, There is no peace for you here.</i>
Krow koth, mên splat, Gwyns yn tewolder an nos, An Spryggans ow roia, Klew orth an dor ow tewi.	<i>Old hovel, flat stone, Wind in the darkness of the night, The spriggans roaring, Hear the earth falling silent.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The repeated commands to listen are important. Wind, cairn, stone and earth are treated as speaking bodies. The spriggans do not need to step fully into view because the whole landscape amplifies them.

The awkwardly courteous address to the intruder - "gentle man" - makes the warning more unsettling. It sounds almost hospitable, but every invitation is a boundary test. By the end, the earth falls silent only after the guardians have made themselves heard.

Track 2 - Gwithya an Tresor

Guarding the Treasure

Narrative role: The album descends from monument to mineral: treasure becomes ore, lode, shaft and the buried wealth of the Cornish earth.

The second movement corrects the easy picture of fairy treasure as a box of coins beneath a cromlech. Coins are heard, but the deeper image is geological. Gold is dispersed through earth and stone; value lies in the lode, the shaft and the hidden body of the ground. The treasure is not portable until somebody cuts it out.

That distinction changes the spriggans from hoarders into custodians. They are not clutching ornaments because they enjoy possession. They defend a buried order against the intruder who assumes that discovery creates ownership. The thief crosses a yard, touches a shaft and hears stone answer the step.

Sound-world

Heavy metallic clinks, slow scraping stone, low dissonant voices and the patient rhythm of a guard who has nowhere else to be.

Key images

- gold spread through the earth
- the thief of the night
- the mine shaft
- stone protesting underfoot
- dwarf-gold and giant-gold

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Y-dan an krow koth, Y-dan an mên splat ha loas, Yma an owr ow lentry, Y'n tewolder dres an nos.	<i>Under the old hovel, Under the flat and grey stone, The gold is glittering, In the darkness across the night.</i>
Lader an nos, na dheos nes, Ow klyppy dres an lann, Gans dhasgrev yn dha dhorn, An Spryggan ow gwytha.	<i>Thief of the night, do not come near, Stealing across the yard, With grief in your hand, The spriggan is keeping watch.</i>
An owr y'n dor a-les, Meyvys gans an gwyns koth, Kuston y'n dor down, Na dhygynys ow hreth.	<i>The gold is spread in the earth, Stirred by the ancient wind, Hidden deep in the ground, Do not trespass my hearth.</i>
Clink an owr splann, Klew orth an rann tewal, Yma ni ow kregi omma, Gwithyasys a-gans an barlen gorf.	<i>Clink of the bright gold, Listen to the dark share, We are hanging here, Guardians of the treasure-chest.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Gans dhorn koth ha krog, Ni a wra synsy an lath, Nyns oes dhyso an dryft, Nyns oes dhyso an owr.	<i>With wrinkled and ancient hand, We shall hold the shaft, There is no passage for you, There is no gold for you.</i>
An mên a dhasgrew, Yn-dann dha gamman hager, Kellyas yn-dann an pras, Gans troillgynys yn soweth.	<i>The stone shall protest, Beneath your ugly step, Lost beneath the meadow, Misled in misfortune.</i>
Owr an gorr, owr an gawr, Kryptys yn-dann an mên, Na gyf dhyso tro, An tewolder a wyth.	<i>Gold of the dwarf, gold of the giant, Hidden beneath the stone, Do not find a way, The darkness shall keep it.</i>
Clink an mên, clink an owr, Porth tewal y'n dor, Gwithya an tresor koth, Byth dhyso dhasgrev meur.	<i>Clink of the stone, clink of the gold, Dark portal in the earth, Guarding the ancient treasure, There shall be great grief for you.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The clinking sound is deliberately ambiguous. It can be coin, ore, tool or stone striking metal. The track keeps finished wealth and raw mineral in the same acoustic space, as though every polished object still remembers the wound by which it left the ground.

The final promise of grief is not sudden violence so much as denial. There is no passage and no gold for the trespasser. Darkness itself becomes the lock, and the guardians need only keep the old door closed.

Track 3 - Korfow a-gans Kevri

Bodies of Giants

Narrative role: The spriggan and the giant are revealed as two conditions of the same ancient being: diminished, waiting, and capable of return.

This movement gives the album its central genealogy. The spriggans are not simply neighbours of the giants. They are their after-image: bodies reduced by time, wind or enchantment, but still carrying the old scale within them. The grotesque little guardian is therefore not a parody of lost greatness. It is greatness compressed.

The track keeps asking where the giant resides. It is in the small body, in the stone, in deep water, in the soil and in the sound of the dark meadow. No single answer is sufficient. The giant has become distributed through landscape, while the spriggan is the point at which that ancient body can still look back.

Sound-world

Earth-shaking frame-drum pulses and struck stone suggest enormous footsteps travelling beneath the surface.

Key images

- the weak dwarf
- bodies made of stone
- the giant beneath the soil
- the ancient word
- dwarf and giant as one

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Korr yw an spryggan gwan, Kyn fo koth-gawr termyn koth, Spyrysow a'n gewri moal, Ow tregy y'n tewolder.	<i>Dwarf is the weak spriggan, Though he was an old giant in ancient times, Spirits of the bald giants, Dwelling in the darkness.</i>
Meur dres an gors yn nos, Sevel a-ragos yn tewl, Gans gallos an mên koth, Ow krafa an nor loas.	<i>Great across the swamp at night, Standing before you in the dark, With the power of the ancient stone, Scratching the grey earth.</i>
Ni a dhasvew an koth, Korfolow a-gans an mên, Gwithya an dowr down, Yn-dann an gwyns hager.	<i>We bring life back to the old, Bodies of giant size made of stone, Guarding the deep water, Under the ugly wind.</i>
Sinking y'n gwer down, Lest an gawr a dhehwel, Gans dhorn krog ha koth, Ow synsy an garth bro.	<i>Sinking into the deep soil, Lest the giant returns, With wrinkled and ancient hand, Holding the homestead country.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Klew orth an ger koth, Sonsow a'n tewolder pras, An korfow ow sevel, A-ugh an dryft moal.	<i>Listen to the ancient word, Sounds of the dark meadow, The bodies rising, Above the barren drift.</i>
Ni yw an gewri splann, Byghanis gans an gwyns, Mes gweres orth an dor, Gwithya an meyn koth.	<i>We are the splendid giants, Made small by the wind, But helpers to the earth, Guarding the old stones.</i>
Nyns oes dhyso tewes, Nyns oes dhyso lergh, Po an korfow a wra, Dha dhasgrev yn nos.	<i>There is no sand for you, There is no track for you, Or the bodies shall make, Your grief in the night.</i>
Korr ha gawr yn-un, Spyrysow an mên splat, An Spryggans ow sevel, Gwitha an nor koth.	<i>Dwarf and giant as one, Spirits of the flat stone, The spriggans rising, Guarding the ancient earth.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The phrase "bodies of giant size made of stone" turns monument and creature into one another. A standing stone can be read as a remnant of a body; a spriggan can be read as the moving fragment of a monument.

The claim that the giants are helpers to the earth complicates the horror. Their loyalty is not to the visitor, farmer or miner. It is to the ground itself. The threat begins when human use and the older custody of the land no longer agree.

Track 4 - Spryggans ow Tevi

Spriggans Swelling

Narrative role: Potential becomes event. Anger breaks the limits of the small body and restores the giant form in front of the trespasser.

The previous track establishes giant ancestry; this one stages the transformation. The spriggan does not merely become taller. The world around it changes scale. Yard, stone, cairn, meadow and wind are suddenly measured against a body that should not fit among them.

The repeated verb of swelling is almost a ritual command. Each recurrence adds height and pressure. What looked ugly, small and perhaps ridiculous by day becomes a hill-like force at night. The insult of diminishment is answered by excess.

Sound-world

A rising drone, scraping metal and dissonant female harmonies expand until the music itself seems too large for the room.

Key images

- the weak dwarf growing
- the hill-sized body
- the wrinkled hand across the wind
- power rising from deep earth
- the giant lived again

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Mir orth an korr gwan, Yma ev ow tevi splann, A-ugh an mên koth, A-ugh an lann tewal.	<i>Look at the weak dwarf, He is growing splendidly, Above the old stone, Above the dark yard.</i>
Meur avel bre hager, Krog ha loas y'n nos tewal, Yma an Spryggan ow, Sevel dres an gors.	<i>Great as an ugly hill, Wrinkled and grey in the dark night, The spriggan is, Rising across the swamp.</i>
Tevi, tevi, meur, Dhorn koth dres an gwyns, Gans llygasow splann, Ow skwinn orth an tewl.	<i>Swell, swell, great, Wrinkled hand across the wind, With splendid eyes, Squinting at the darkness.</i>
Nyns oes dhyso skiber, Nyns oes dhyso krow, Po an gawr koth, A wra dha dhasgrev.	<i>There is no barn for you, There is no hovel for you, Or the old giant, Shall make your grief.</i>
Gallos an dor down, Ow sevel yn-dann lerg, h, An Spryggan ow tevi, Dres an karn sennys.	<i>Power of the deep earth, Rising beneath the track, The spriggan growing, Across the hallowed cairn.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Ugly ha krog y'n jydh, Kawr hager y'n nos tewl, Ow roia dres an pras, Gans sennys koth.	<i>Ugly and wrinkled by day, An ugly giant in the dark night, Roaring across the meadow, With old hallows.</i>
Na dhygynys ow bro, Na dhygynys ow hreth, Po an Spryggan meur, A wra dha drowha.	<i>Do not trespass my country, Do not trespass my hearth, Or the great spriggan, Shall turn you over.</i>
Tevi dres an mên, Tevi dres an gwyns, An korr re dhasvewas, Avel gawr koth.	<i>Grow across the stone, Grow across the wind, The dwarf has lived again, As an old giant.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The visual horror lies in continuity. The face remains wrinkled, the hand remains ancient, and the eyes continue to squint. Nothing is replaced by a different monster. The same small guardian simply reveals how much of itself had been folded away.

This is also the album at its most direct about anger. Trespass against hearth or country is not an abstract offence. It supplies the energy of enlargement. The body becomes the boundary made visible.

Track 5 - Hager-Awel an Carn

Storm of the Carn

Narrative role: The guardian no longer needs to touch the traveller. Weather becomes the instrument of expulsion and the familiar path is removed.

Spriggan power spreads from body into weather. The storm is local, purposeful and almost architectural: it closes routes, erases shelter and places the carn at the centre of a moving wall of wind and water. The traveller is not simply caught in bad conditions. The conditions have been arranged.

The track repeatedly describes loss of way before physical harm. This is one of the cycle's most persistent terrors. A person can remain close to known ground and yet have no usable relation to it. Familiar distance becomes irrelevant once the path has been taken away.

Sound-world

A long storm build: cold wind, rain, wordless female choir, slow bass drone and solemn bronze bell.

Key images

- the way lost in gorse
- the carn standing inside the gale
- rain on old stone
- laughter in the storm
- darkness delivered to the traveller

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
An gwyns ow kria koth, An glaw ow kotha down, An Spryggans re drys, An tewel dhyso nos.	<i>The wind crying anciently, The rain falling deep, The spriggans have brought, The darkness to your night.</i>
Kellyas an fordh splann, Kellyas yn-mysg an gors, Nyns oes dhyso lenn, Nyns oes dhyso krow.	<i>Lost is the splendid way, Lost amidst the swamp, There is no shelter for you, There is no hovel for you.</i>
An carn koth ow sevel, Y'n hager-awel moal, Gans spyrysow an pras, Ow roia dres an dor.	<i>The old cairn standing, In the barren storm-wind, With the spirits of the meadow, Roaring across the earth.</i>
Na dheos nes, me anson, Yma an gwyns ow fia, Dres an meyn sennys, Yn-dann an loer tewel.	<i>Do not come near, my handsome, The wind is fleeing, Across the hallowed stones, Under the dark moon.</i>
Drip, drip, an dhowr koth, Ow kotha war an mên, An Spryggan ow hwerthin, Y'n hager-awel tewl.	<i>Drip, drip, the ancient water, Falling on the stone, The spriggan laughing, In the dark storm-wind.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Gis on orth an emmet, Nyns oes dhyso lergh, Po an storm koth, A wra dha drowha down.	<i>Rubbish to the tourist, There is no track for you, Or the ancient storm, Shall turn you down.</i>
Storm an gors, storm an pras, Dryvys gans an meyn, Gwitha an nor koth, Gwitha an owr splann.	<i>Storm of the swamp, storm of the meadow, Driven by the stones, Guarding the ancient earth, Guarding the splendid gold.</i>
Kria y'n tewolder, An awel ow roia dres, An Spryggans re dhasgrewas, An tewal dhyso nos.	<i>Crying in the darkness, The gale roaring across, The spriggans have risen up, The darkness to your night.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The bronze bell gives the storm the character of judgement. It is not a village bell guiding somebody home; it tolls from inside the weather, marking each stage by which the moor refuses the visitor.

The return to gold near the end reveals what the storm protects. Weather, stone and mineral are parts of one defensive system. The guardians rise, but the darkness they bring can do the work for them.

Track 6 - Sowpig ha Spryggan

Woodlouse and Spriggan

Narrative role: The scale collapses beneath a lifted slab. Insects, roots, damp soil and spriggans share a world hidden under ordinary footsteps.

After the giant and the storm, the album makes its sharpest change of scale. The listener is brought down to the underside of a stone where movement is minute, fast and close. A woodlouse scratching can sound as large as a tool upon rock; an ant becomes a companion or double of the spriggan.

The humour is black and slightly absurd, but the track is not comic relief. It argues that the old world is not confined to impressive monuments. It continues in the damp, crawling life beneath a slab, directly under the boot of anybody who thinks the surface is all there is.

Sound-world

Dry close-miked scratching, clicks and skittering textures dart between channels beneath a rapid whisper and counting pattern.

Key images

- one woodlouse and two ants
- the underside of the stone
- tiny wrinkled hands
- counting in darkness
- the night held at ground level

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Unn sowpig ow krafa, Dew vuryan gans rann, An Spryggan ow krowsa, Y-dan an krow koth.	<i>One woodlouse scratching, Two ants with a share, The spriggan talking, Under the old hovel.</i>
Klew orth an meyn down, Klew orth an nor splat, Ni a dregyn genes, Down y'n gwer tewal.	<i>Listen to the stones deep down, Listen to the flat earth, We will dwell with you, Deep in the dark soil.</i>
Skittering y'n tewl, Yn-dann an gors moal, Sonsow an dor down, Ow skwinn orth an loer.	<i>Skittering in the dark, Beneath the bald swamp, Sounds of the deep earth, Squinting at the moon.</i>
Na dhegynas ow chi, Na dhygynys ow hreth, Po an sowpig koth, A wra dha drowha.	<i>Do not trespass my house, Do not trespass my hearth, Or the old woodlouse, Shall turn you over.</i>
Korr ha korr yn nos, Ow krafa an meyn splat, Ni a wyth an dor, Yn-dann an gwyns koth.	<i>Dwarf and dwarf in the night, Scratching the flat stones, We will guard the earth, Under the ancient wind.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Unn, dew, tri, peswar, Spryggans y'n tewolder, Ow tregy yn-dann lergh, Gans dhorn koth ha krog.	<i>One, two, three, four, Spriggans in the darkness, Dwelling beneath the track, With old and wrinkled hand.</i>
Nyns oes dhyso colon, Kyn fo dhyso krogen, Po an Spryggan koth, A wra dha dhasgrev.	<i>You have no heart, Though you have a shell, Or the old spriggan, Shall make your grief.</i>
Sowpig ow krafa down, Muryan y'n dor loas, An Spryggans ow kregi, Klew orth an nor ow tewi.	<i>Woodlouse scratching down, Ant in the grey earth, The spriggans hanging, Hear the earth falling silent.</i>
Krow koth, muryan, Yn-dann an mên krog, Fasta yn an tewl, Ni ow synsy nos.	<i>Old hovel, ant, Under the wrinkled stone, Fast in the dark, We are holding the night.</i>
Running dres an pras, Byghan dhorn ow krog, Avel muryan splann, Gwyns yn tewolder.	<i>Running across the meadow, Tiny, wrinkled hand, Like a splendid ant, Wind in the darkness.</i>
Sowpig dres an mên, Muryan dres an eyth, Spryggans ow dhasgrev, Yma ni ow synsy.	<i>Woodlouse across the stone, Ant across the gorse, Spriggans protesting, We are holding on.</i>
Klew orth an krow down, Sonsow yn an nor, Unn, dew, tri, peswar, Ni a dregyn splann.	<i>Listen to the deep hovel, Sounds in the earth, One, two, three, four, We shall dwell splendidly.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

Counting gives the hidden colony a rhythm. "One, two, three, four" can be insects, guardians, footsteps or a work chant. The listener cannot tell whether the small sounds are multiplying or merely moving too quickly to locate.

The line between creature and texture finally disappears. The spriggans hang, scratch, run and protest until they are almost indistinguishable from the noises of the soil. Their invisibility is not absence. It is perfect camouflage within the life of the ground.

Track 7 - Gwithya an Mên-An-Tol

Guarding the Holed Stone

Narrative role: A celebrated opening in stone becomes a watched threshold. Passing through is an act of approach, not automatic permission.

The holed stone invites bodily participation. It can be looked through, approached and crawled through, so it appears more accessible than a sealed chamber or upright menhir. The track turns that invitation into uncertainty. An opening is not the same as an unguarded entrance.

The traveller comes seeking old strength, but the spriggans occupy the space beneath the track and around the hole. Their gaze is built into the stone. To pass through is to place the vulnerable body exactly where the guardians can measure intention.

Sound-world

Cavernous acoustics, slow bronze handbells, a low male choir and a voice paced to leave long spaces around the stone.

Key images

- the ancient hole
- the body crawling through
- strength sought in stone
- the dark portal
- the unseen watchers at Mên-an-Tol

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Mên-an-Tol, toll y'n tewolder koth, Gwithyasys ow skwinn dres an toll, Ow gwitha an lann hager, Yn-dann an loer splann yn nos.	<i>Mên-an-Tol, hole in the ancient darkness, Guardians squinting through the hole, Guarding the ugly yard, Under the bright moon in the night.</i>
Krambla dres an mên, krambla nes, Den gwan ow whatha nerth koth, Ni a dregy yn-dann lergh, Lest an mên a wra dhasgrew.	<i>Crawling through the stone, crawling near, Weak man seeking ancient strength, We dwell beneath the track, Lest the stone protest.</i>
Na dheos nes, me anson, na dheos nes, Po ni a wra dha dhasgrev down, Yn-dann an mên splat ha loos, Gans dhorn koth ow synsy nos.	<i>Do not come near, my handsome, do not come near, Or we shall make your grief down deep, Under the flat and grey stone, With ancient hands holding the night.</i>
Sonsow an dor ow klyppy splann, An Spryggans ow hwerthin yn tewl, Toll an mên yw porth koth, Yn-dann an gwyns dres an gors.	<i>Sounds of the earth stealing splendidly, The spriggans laughing in the dark, The hole of the stone is an ancient portal, Under the wind across the swamp.</i>
Klew orth an pyskis ow kria, Mes an Spryggan yw meur ha krog, Gwithya an mên sennys, Ni a wyth an porth tewal.	<i>Listen to the piskies crying, But the spriggan is great and wrinkled, Guarding the hallowed stone, We guard the dark portal.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Ty re gollas an fordh splann, Gis on, den jentyl, yn gwer down, Ow krambla dres an toll koth, Ni a wra synsy dha lath.	<i>You have lost the splendid way, Rubbish, gentle man, in the deep soil, Crawling through the ancient hole, We shall hold your staff.</i>
A-ugh an dryft, war gwedh an mên, An korr a-gans an spyrys koth, Skeusi yn tewal, skwinn orth an tewl, Ow gwitha Mên-an-Tol.	<i>Above the drift, upon the face of the stone, The dwarf with the ancient spirit, Shadowing in darkness, squinting at the dark, Guarding Mên-an-Tol.</i>
Mên-an-Tol, mên splat, Gwyns yn tewolder an nos, An Spryggans ow roia dres, Klew orth an dor ow tewi.	<i>Mên-an-Tol, flat stone, Wind in the darkness of the night, The spriggans roaring across, Hear the earth falling silent.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The bell and choir make the site sound like a stone church whose ritual has been displaced into a much older architecture. Yet the ceremony does not belong to the visitor. The listener hears only fragments of its law.

The track also marks a difference between piskies and spriggans. The piskies may cry or draw attention, but the spriggan is described as great, wrinkled and concerned with custody. Mischief stands outside the portal; judgement waits within it.

Track 8 - An Spryggan ow Hwerthin

The Laughing Spriggan

Narrative role: The traveller loses road and track while the guardian remains only partly seen. Mockery becomes more certain than shape.

Laughter is the most human sound the spriggans make, and therefore one of the least comforting. A roar can belong to weather or animal force; laughter implies attention, judgement and pleasure in the traveller's confusion. The unseen guardian knows exactly what has happened.

The track revisits earlier images - gold, Môn-an-Tol, cairn, storm and lost way - but now they arrive as fragments inside mockery. The album's landscape has become a memory palace for the spriggan and a maze for the intruder.

Sound-world

Dry stone clicks, hand percussion, rasping laughter and dissonant female harmonies that dissolve into whispering quiet.

Key images

- laughter inside stone
- the missing track
- the old muddled heap
- the traveller as tourist
- darkness turning the body over

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Hwerthin y'n mên, Hwerthin y'n nor koth, An Spryggan koth ow hwerthin, Hwerthin dhyso yn tewl.	<i>Laughing in the stone, Laughing in the ancient earth, The old spriggan laughing, Laughing at you in the dark.</i>
Ty re gollas an fordh, Ty re gollas an lergth splann, Tewal ha hager, Yw dha dhewis nos koth.	<i>You have lost the way, You have lost the splendid track, Dark and ugly, Is your chosen ancient night.</i>
Klew orth an meyn splat, Ow kewsyl yn an gors, Nyns oes dhyso dhasgrev, Po an tewl a wra drowha.	<i>Listen to the flat stones, Speaking in the swamp, There is no grief for you, Until the darkness turns you over.</i>
Gans dhorn koth ha krog, Ni a synsy an lath, Nyns oes dhyso lergth, Yn an lann sennys nos.	<i>With ancient and wrinkled hand, We shall hold the shaft, There is no track for you, In the hallowed yard at night.</i>
Gis on orth an emmet, An pyskis ow skwinn, Dres an toll koth, Yn-dann an loer splann.	<i>Rubbish to the tourist, The piskies squinting, Across the ancient hole, Under the bright moon.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Krambla dres an karn, Yn-mysg an muddled koth, Spryggan ow hwerthin, Y'n hager-awel moal.	<i>Crawling across the cairn, Amidst the ancient muddled heap, The spriggan laughing, In the barren storm-wind.</i>
Na dheos nes, me anson, An owr y'n dor a-les, Gwithyasys ow skwinn, Dha dhasgrev yn nos.	<i>Do not come near, my handsome, The gold spread in the earth, Guardians squinting, At your grief in the night.</i>
Krow koth, mên splat, An Spryggan ow hwerthin dres, Tewal... tewal... Klew orth an dor ow tewi.	<i>Old hovel, flat stone, The spriggan laughing across, Dark... dark... Hear the earth falling silent.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The word "tourist" is intentionally jarring. It drags the ancient warning into the present and refuses the safe distance of folklore. Curiosity, photography and casual access do not dissolve the old boundary; they may simply give trespass a modern name.

At the end, the laughter thins into darkness and the earth again falls silent. The spriggan has not departed. It has withdrawn below the level at which the listener can locate it.

Track 9 - Dewen an Garrek

The Two on the Rock

Narrative role: The solitary voice divides into a paired watch. Male and female guardians answer across distance as stone answers stone.

The album has often spoken with a collective "we", but this track gives that plurality a physical arrangement. Two guardians occupy separate points of watch and answer one another across the dark. Distance does not weaken the vigil; it completes it.

The pair can be heard as male and female voices, two stones, two spirits or two aspects of one custody. What matters is relation. The guarded landscape is not a series of isolated sites. Warning travels from rock to rock, and each watcher confirms that the other remains in place.

Sound-world

A ritual call-and-response duet over a slow heartbeat pulse, with almost no harmonic shelter around the voices.

Key images

- two spriggans keeping watch
- two stones and two spirits
- the paired warning
- the returning thief
- the heartbeat under the rock

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Dew Spryggan ow gwitha, Ow gwitha an mên splat, Down y'n dor koth, Tewal ha pel dres an nos.	<i>Two spriggans keeping watch, Guarding the flat stone, Deep in the ancient earth, Dark and far across the night.</i>
Na dhygynys ow hreth, Na dhygynys ow bro, Po an dewen koth, A wra dha dhasgrev down.	<i>Do not trespass my hearth, Do not trespass my country, Or the ancient pair, Shall make your grief down deep.</i>
Mên ha mên yn-un, Spyrysow an pras moal, Ow tregy y'n tewolder, Yn-dann an loer splann.	<i>Stone and stone as one, Spirits of the barren meadow, Dwelling in the darkness, Under the bright moon.</i>
Klew orth an dor down, Klew orth an nor loas, Gwithyasys an owr, Yn-dann an gwyns koth.	<i>Listen to the earth deep down, Listen to the grey land, Guardians of the gold, Under the ancient wind.</i>
Krog ha krog yn jydh, Hager dres an nos, Sevel a-ragos, Yn-dann an mên sennys.	<i>Wrinkled and wrinkled by day, Ugly across the night, Standing before you, Under the hallowed stone.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Dew vên, dew spyrys, Unnik yn-mysg an pras, Ow gwytha an tresor, Lest an lader a dhehwel.	<i>Two stones, two spirits, Lonely amidst the meadow, Guarding the treasure, Lest the thief returns.</i>
Na dheos nes, me anson, Na dhygynys ow hreth, Po an Spryggan koth, A wra dha drowha down.	<i>Do not come near, my handsome, Do not trespass my hearth, Or the old spriggan, Shall turn you down deep.</i>
Dewen an garrek, Ow gwitha an nor down, An Spryggans ow roia, Klew orth an dor ow tewi.	<i>The pair of the rock, Guarding the earth deep down, The spriggans roaring, Hear the earth falling silent.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The heartbeat pulse places a living rhythm beneath what otherwise appears mineral and static. It may belong to the spriggans, the earth, the returning thief or the listener. As it slows, those possibilities become harder to separate.

This movement is the last full statement of the watch before the finale absorbs all earlier images. Its calm is more severe than the storm. Nothing needs to be summoned because the system of guardianship is already complete.

Track 10 - Tewelder an Spryggan

Darkness of the Spriggan

Narrative role: The final movement gathers treasure, path, laughter, storm, threshold and paired watch into one receding ritual.

The finale does not add a new trait. It makes the earlier movements coexist. Gold lies below; the path is lost; the pair wait; Mên-an-Tol remains a portal; laughter moves through storm and stone. The album becomes a single guarded territory rather than ten separate encounters.

Voices accumulated across the cycle now join. The gravelled lead, low male choir and dissonant female harmonies form a ritual wall, while bell and granite supply the physical weight. The spriggans are no longer individual figures in front of the listener. They are the total darkness through which the listener is trying to move.

Sound-world

Male and female choirs merge with the spoken voice, bronze handbell and grinding stone before everything descends into wind and silence.

Key images

- darkness deep in earth
- the thief returning
- the old portal
- laughter in the barren gale
- Mên-an-Tol watched through the final night

The Words

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

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Tewelder an Spryggan, Tewal ha down yn an nor, Ow gwitha an mên koth, Yn-dann an loer splann yn nos.	<i>Darkness of the spriggan, Dark and deep in the earth, Guarding the ancient stone, Under the bright moon at night.</i>
Ty re gollas an fordh splann, Gis on, den jentyl, yn gwer, Ni a wra synsy an lath, Lest an lader a dhehwel.	<i>You have lost the splendid way, Rubbish, gentle man, in the soil, We shall hold the shaft, Lest the thief returns.</i>
Na dheos nes, me anson, na dheos nes, An owr y'n dor a-les, Krambla dres an toll koth, Po an dewen a wra dha drowha.	<i>Do not come near, my handsome, do not come near, The gold spread in the earth, Crawling through the ancient hole, Or the pair shall turn you over.</i>
Sonsow an dor ow klyppy splann, An Spryggans ow hwerthin yn tewl, Toll an mên yw porth koth, Yn-dann an gwyns dres an gors.	<i>Sounds of the earth stealing splendidly, The spriggans laughing in the dark, The hole of the stone is an ancient portal, Under the wind across the swamp.</i>

KERNEWEK	CLOSE RENDERING
Klew orth an pyskis ow kria, Mes an Spryggan yw meur ha krog, Gwithya an mên sennys, Ni a wyth an porth tewal.	<i>Listen to the piskies crying, But the spriggan is great and wrinkled, Guarding the hallowed stone, We guard the dark portal.</i>
Ty re gollas an lergh splann, Yn-mysg an muddled koth, Spryggan ow hwerthin down, Y'n hager-awel moal.	<i>You have lost the splendid track, Amidst the ancient muddled heap, The spriggan laughing deep down, In the barren storm-wind.</i>
A-ugh an dryft, war gwedh an mên, An korr a-gans an spyrys koth, Skeusi yn tewal, skwinn orth an tewl, Ow gwitha Mên-an-Tol.	<i>Above the drift, on the face of the stone, The dwarf with the ancient spirit, Shadowing in the dark, squinting at the darkness, Guarding Mên-an-Tol.</i>
Tewelder an nos, An Spryggans ow roia dres, Klew orth an dor ow tewi.	<i>Darkness of the night, The spriggans roaring across, Hear the earth falling silent.</i>

Meaning and Listener's Gloss

The ending repeats the command to hear the earth falling silent. Silence is not reassurance. It is the closing of access after the warning has been delivered. The watch continues beyond the audible record.

The final image leaves the spriggans neither defeated nor fully revealed. They return to the conditions that sustain them: deep ground, old stone, mineral darkness and the night around the holed stone. The traveller may leave. The guardians do not.

The Stones Keep Watch

Across the ten movements, the spriggans never become fully visible in one stable form. They are dwarf and giant, body and sound, watcher and weather, insect-scale movement and monumental weight. That instability is the source of their power.

They belong to a landscape in which the visible surface is only one layer. Beneath the path lies soil; beneath soil, ore; beneath the lifted stone, a minute world; beneath the monument, giant memory. The album keeps moving downward because guardianship is strongest where ownership is hardest to prove.

The trespasser repeatedly assumes that seeing an opening gives a right of entry, finding metal gives a right of possession, and knowing a path gives a right of passage. The spriggans answer each assumption with the same older law: the land was occupied before the visitor arrived.

By the final bell, no victory has occurred. The traveller has only been warned away. The voices withdraw, the stone closes acoustically, and the night returns to its previous shape.

AN MEYN, AN SPYRYSOW, HAG AN TEWELDER

The stones, the spirits, and the darkness.

Meyn ha Spryggans - Stones and Spriggans

Music and concept: M C ALCHEMIST

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