

Omdennanz den-bal kembrek

Pandr'a dal an bewnanz hwel
pan y kevir klevez fel?
Gareth Jones a be an spal;
hwetek bloedh yth eth dhe'n bal,
hag awoz an lavur ma
nynz yw ev yn yeghez da:
gyllyz yw y lev dhe gronn,
skevenz skethryz der an ponn.
Dewgenz bloedhweyth 'wre, heb wow,
yn-dann dhor ow palaz glow,
dewgenz blydhen yn-dann dhor;
nynz es gweyth a'n par y'n nor.
Gweyth an bal re'n gasas klav;
skant ny yll ev kerdhez skav,
grysys yw devedhyz re,
chi unn leur yw lemmyn tre:
ev a bas an polter plos,
pasa, pasa, dydh ha nos.
Byttegynz, yth yw yn fyw;
lies koweth marow yw,
ledhyz kynz ez donez koth,
marow kynz tri-ugenz bloedh.
Pandr'a dal an bewnanz hwel
pan er ledhyz yn-dann gel?

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mis-Est 2004*

Retirement of a Welsh miner

Literal translation

What is the mining life worth
when one gets a serious disease?
Gareth Jones is paying the price;
at sixteen he went to the mine,
and because of this work
he is not in good health:
his voice has gone to pieces,
lungs ripped by the dust.
Forty years he was surely
digging coal underground,
forty years underground; there is
no work like that in the world.
The mine-work has left him sick;
he can hardly walk quickly,
stairs have become too much,
a bungalow is now home:
he coughs the filthy dust,
cough, cough, day and night.
Nevertheless, he is alive;
many mates are dead,
killed before becoming old,
dead before sixty years old.
What is the mining life worth
when one is insidiously killed?