

Ta mee screeu shoh ayns thie-bee Costa ayns Caernarfon ayns twoaie yn Thalloo Vretnagh. She Caernarfon yn boayl lesh yn earroo syrjey ass y cheead dy loayrtee Bretnish 'sy çheer – ny smoo na 80%. Ta'n ghlare lajer mastey dy chooilley ayns jeh'n phobble, shenn as aeg. Shimmey co-loayrtys ayns Bretnish ta goll er mygeayrt-y-moom 'sy thie-bee.

Honnick mee troshid yn ghlare riyer tra hie mee dys lhunney lioar ayns bar-feeyney staydoil ayns mean y çhenn valley vean-eashagh. She boayl beg v'eh as v'eh orrym shassoo 'sy chorneil – er-lhiam dy row ny smoo na jeih as daeed dy leih ayns ad ooilley loayrt Bretnish. V'ad er jeet dy akin ben aeg Malan Wilkinson loayrt mysh yn lioar eck *Rhyddhau'r Cranc* ('Lhiggey'n raad da'n phartan' – ta shoh kianlt rish red ta taghyrt 'sy lioar). Ta'n lioar cur coontey jeh e bea hene, as yn aght t'ee er ghellal rish yn çhingys aigney aslaynt phersoonid chagliagh (*borderline personality disorder*). T'ee er ve ayns ward slaynt aigney 'sy thie-lheihys kiare keayrtyn, yn cheayrt s'jerree kuse dy veeaghyn er-dy-henney, choud's v'ee cur jerrey er y lioar.

Ta aynyn trome-chooishagh as dorragey 'sy lioar lesh tuarystalyn bioyr jeh'n aght ta'n çhingys gennaghtyn tra t'eh goaill greme er Malan, agh ta aittys aynjee neesht. T'eh smooinit dy vel çhingys aigney çheet er unnane ass dagh kiare dy leih traa ennagh ayns nyn mea, as ta Malan treishteil dy bee yn lioar cooney lesh sleih elley as skeayley fys mychione cooish ta foast moorane almorys, mee-hushtey as stigma bentyn jee.

Ta'n thie-prental ta cur magh yn lioar, Y Lolfa, er chloughey earroo dy lioaryn elley mychione çhingys aigney er y gherrit shoh. T'eh mie dy akin dy vel ymmyd goll er jannoo jeh myn-ghlare dy haggloo mysh lheid ny cooishyn. Blein ny ghaa er-dy-henney va'n ynnyd-eggey Meddwl ('aigney', 'smooinaghtyn') currit er bun raad ta coyrle as tuarystalyn persoonagh jeh çhingys aigney ry gheddyn ayns Bretnish. Ta shoh er-lheh scanshoil son ta ram sleih as Bretnish oc voish y chlean shegin daue loayrt rish fer-lhee-aigney ny fer-therapee ayns Baarle, glare nagh vel ad cliaghtit rish loayrt, er-lheh mysh ennaghtyn persoonagh. Ta lught-reill slaynt as sleih ta streeu son y ghlare, as son cooishyn çhingys aigney, treeal jannoo ny smoo dy lhiassaghey shirveishyn slaynt aigney ayns Bretnish, agh ta lane foast ry jannoo.

I am writing this in Costa coffee, Caernarfon, in North Wales. Caernarfon is the community with the highest percentage of Welsh speakers in the country – more than 80%. The language is strong among all sectors of the community, both young and old. Most of the people around me in the café are speaking Welsh to one another.

I saw the strength of the language last night when I attended a book launch in an upmarket wine-bar in the medieval town centre. It was a small venue and I had to stand in the corner – there must have been more than fifty people present, all speaking Welsh. They had come to see a young woman Malan Wilkinson talking about her book *Rhyddhau'r Cranc* ('Releasing the crab' – a reference to an anecdote in the book). The book is autobiographical, focusing on the author's struggles with the mental health condition borderline personality disorder. Malan has been in a mental health ward four times, most recently in the past year, while she was finishing the book.

Parts of the book are serious and dark with vivid descriptions of what the illness feels like when it takes a hold of Malan, but there is humour as well. It is thought that mental illness affects one in four people at some point in their lives, and Malan hopes the book will help other sufferers as well as raising awareness of an issue which is still too often the subject of ignorance, misunderstanding and stigma.

The book's publisher, Y Lolfa, has recently produced a number of other books on mental illness. It is good to see a minority language being used to discuss such topics. A couple of years ago the website Meddwl ('mind', 'thought') was set up which provides advice and personal testimonies in Welsh. This has been an important development as many Welsh native have had no choice but to undergo medical treatment and therapy in English, a language they may not be used to speaking, especially for talking about deeply personal feelings. Health authorities and campaigners for the language as well as for mental health issues are trying to ensure more mental health services are available in Welsh, but there is still much to do.