The Convention of Druim Cett
“I j-u-s-t have to get this letter right and the page will be perfect.”

Colm Cille has been on Iona for 30 years. Apart from the odd excursion into Pictish territory, Colm Cille has spent his time praying, fasting, and his favourite activity of all, copying manuscripts. Except for that unfortunate incident with the Book of Psalms at Movilla in Ireland, his time drawing and writing has been trouble-free and productive.
Willable, Colm Cille’s ever-faithful assistant, has some interesting news for him.

“Word from Ireland, sir. They are holding a convention of the Kings at Druim Cett on the north coast. They want to make Scottish Dal Riada independent from east Ulster.”

“Yes. Go on.”

“They want you to speak at the convention, to add a little solemnity. They’re talking about expelling the pagan poets from Ireland, too.”

“Indeed?”

“Your followers in Ireland desperately want you to be there. They say they want to see you one last time before you die.”

“I’m not that old!”
What is Colm Cille to do? When he left Ireland thirty years ago he swore he would never return - his pilgrimage meant that he could never go back to the land of his birth. But it sounds as if they really want to see him. And it's true, he's not getting any younger - though he's not about to drop down dead yet, no matter what anyone thinks.

And the poets - he can't abandon them. They may be pagans, but apart from that they are good men.
"Hmmm..."

Colm Cille searches for inspiration. How can he go back to Ireland without going back on his promise that he would never again set foot on Irish soil, or set his eyes on the men and women of Ireland? Think. Think. There must be a way.

"Aha!"

Colm Cille has a brainwave.
“Sir,” puffs Willable as he struggles to control the little wooden boat that is to take them to Druim Cett, “do you really think this is a good idea?”

“Willable, this is the best idea I’ve ever had.”

And so it is that Colm Cille returns to Ireland for the Convention of Druim Cett. He preaches in front of an amazed, and bemused, crowd. He looks, somehow, different, than they remember. There’s something not quite right about him. Maybe it’s the eccentricity that comes with old age.
Colm Cille is standing in front of the crowd with two huge sods of Scottish turf stuck to his feet, and the hood of the cowl pulled down over his eyes.

He grins at his own inventiveness: he is blinded and shoeless, but triumphant. All the time he is at Druim Cett he will never once have set foot on Irish soil, or be able to look at the faces of the people of Ireland.