

gained thus far, and in both these first battles Angus had help from Ceannan and Concobar, chiefs from Inishmaan, who stood him in good stead; but at length they quarreled fiercely over the plunder of the slain, and the Inishmaan's chiefs went away with all their fighting-men, leaving Angus to settle his own quarrel with Lorcan of the Red Spears.

At length he was driven to shelter behind the walls of his Dun, and then was it that he placed those rugged stones in rank outside the north door, so that from that side the fort could be defended easily by a few men skilled in hurling spears. The foemen could not rush in a crowd against the wall, but were broken in their charges by the stones, and many of them died there shrieking horribly, with brazen spears quivering between their ribs and blood spouting.

Findavar could not help but tremble and weep when she heard such shouting around the Dun, and when Angus came back from a sally, flushed and

sat always turning the empty quern and singing a shrill, fierce lay. And what she sang was a curse upon Angus, an incantation to all those mysterious powers that in the estimation of the pagan Irish ruled the destinies of men. Sun and wind, moon and stars, they worshipped, the spirits of evil or beneficent strength whom they called the sidhe—ghosts, men say, of the dead De-daanen warriors and women, who haunt the hills of Eri yet.

She called on them to punish Angus for his cruelty; to rob him of his bride, as he had robbed another; and to give his bones to the birds of the air or the fishes of the sea.

One day Angus rose up in his wrath, for he could endure her curses no more, and he struck her with his great fist upon the lips. With that blow he hurled her bark against the hearthstone so that her temple was struck, and of that hurt she died.

After this Findavar shrank from his embraces and feared his look; and his little son who had called the de-



"Findavar!" Her Father Called

triumphant with trophy heads of those he had slain, she shrieked and hid her eyes, fearing to see her father's face, or some one of her brethern.

And in her heart she secretly longed to be captured again and taken to her quiet home, and to be restored to her father's love, for though Angus showed her great tenderness, and though she rejoiced that she was not forsaken and that her beauty was praised, yet she doubted his faithfulness, and longed for the more steadfast shelter of fatherly love.

Sorely they suffered from hunger and from thirst. Their food was mainly salt fish stored against such a time as this; and for water one had daily to descend by a rope the face of the cliff to where a little spring trickled through the limestone.

The red-haired slave-woman of Kere had now little meal to grind, but she was crazy quite, and

woman mother, shrieked and spat if he came near; and he grew mad in his wrath and went out against the warriors of Lorcan, seeking death. None would fight him, for the king had vowed he should not die in battle, but be starved to death like a gray wolf in winter, or be burned alive in the Dun. But neither by starvation nor fire was he destined to perish, as you shall hear.

It was the middle of a night of balmy air and all was still. The chieftain slept within his grinnian; Findavar, vexed with homesick longings, lay still but slept not. Around the walls stood sentinels on guard, but half of them too were slumbering as they leaned upon their spears. Why should they watch when no foe was in sight? Lorcan and his warriors had doubtlessly encamped beyond the ridge of the rocky summit, intending no assault. One by one the weary sentinels forgot to watch, and each, leaving that care

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