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grinian, only an awful void abyss that
yawned down, down, down. Ah! now
her peering eyes had pierced it, and
had seen the uncertain shimmer of
water, the silvery white swirl of
marbling waves, and faintly came the
plash and distant boom that told her
that this bridal bower was hung like a
scart's nest on the verge of a giddy
cliff above the restless sea.

It was when she turned shuddering
from the window that Angus, laying
his hand upon her brow, asked her
first what name he would call her by,
and of what race she sprang. He had
not troubled before. It was enough
that he found her fair. He had not
dreamed that she was royal.
"Findavar, daughter of Lorcan of the
Red Spears." He repeated the words
that she had spoken, in a tone of
wonder and pride. He was silent a
moment. Then he laughed aloud in
joy and scorn. He had stolen, though
he knew it not, a king's daughter, the
child of his fiercest enemy, a bride that
he would have to fight for and defend
from the strongest chiefs of Ireland,
till his life or hers was o'er. With love
hot in his heart, with Findavar safe in
his grinian, what recked he? He
laughed aloud in scorn. "My Dun is
strong," he said. "Fear not Findavar.
my Dun is strong; but thou shalt be
the cause, fair love, of as many wars
as the great bull of Cuailgne!" And
his laughter rang out into the void
and found no echo; but from far below
came the low booming murmur and
faint liquid plash of the ever-moving
sea.

III

The joy of blue-skied Beltane-tide
lit the rocky isle. The joy of love and
youthful life shone in the gentle eyes
of Findavar. She was well content
with the sea-prince of the Dun, and
never weary of watching the shade and
shine come and go over the immense
plain of wrinking ocean. The summit of
the island is a level floor of gray-white
limestone, on whose surface grows
neither grass nor any other herb.

Across the rock run great rifts, as
if a giant plough had been dragged
along, and Findavar, reaching her
slender hands down into the crevices,
brought them up full of the hair-stem-
med green quivering fern that is the
wonder of those islands to this day.
Like giant stairs, the rocky terraces
descend to the landward side of the
island, breadth and steep alternately,
and many a time Angus took the lady's
hand in his and led her down to the
very sea edge, and standing thus to-
gether they looked across the sound to
the Connacht shore. And she in
her innocent love would soon turn her
eyes away to look on the face of her
lord, nor did she pine for the mead-
ows where the grass is soft, or the
moorland where the heath is long and
brown, nor for the trees of the forest,
shaking their branches, with whisper
of light leaves overhead.

Dearer was the barren isle, because
of the prince who ruled it and who
swayed her heart.

And Angus, as he looked across the
sound, would be watching for any fleet
of curraachs coming in pursuit, laden
with warriors ready to do battle in re-
venge for the wrong done to Lorcan
of the Red Spears. But summer went
by till Samhain-time, and there was no
sign of the revengeful king. "Doubt-
less," thought the pirate, "he has learn-
ed to fear the name of Angus of the
Dun," and then he laughed to think
that one day a son of his own might
go forth across the stormy sound and
stand in the doorway of Lorcan's
palace, and claim before all his clan to
rule after that old king by right of
royal birth and warrior worth.

But when the babe of Findavar was
born, lo! it was a girl child, and Angus
strode apart in anger and cared not to
hide his disdain of that weakling thing.
He had no patience, this fierce sea-
robber, and even as the young mother
sat with her sweet eyes gladdening up-
on the little one at her breast, he called
to him the red-haired boy—his only
son—and fondled him in her very
presence, and would have him eat
beside him at the board. The
boy was bold and very wilful,
and Angus laughed at his baby
fierceness, and loved him for it. One
day he proffered him a share of the

bread sweetened with honey which was
set apart for Findavar and himself.

"Eat, young sea-eagle," said the
father. "This is the chieftain's bread,
and thou art the chieftain's child."

But the child flung aside the sweet
morsel.

"My mother's tears," he said, "are in
that bread. I saw them fall into the
meal as she bowed above the winnow-
ing sheet. I cannot eat of it. Why does
my mother weep?"

Angus did not answer, but brooded
awhile, with eyes of pride fixed upon
his son. Findavar thought, "Now I
shall lose his love, and my father's
love is lost long ago; he has not even
pursued me, and cares not that I am
gone." Her heart turned sadly home-
ward, till her tears fell down on the
face of the little babe, and, "Ah," she
thought, "soon I shall grind at the
quern, and another shall sit by his side
and feast on the bread kneaded with
my tears."

Soon that poor little child that was
her only comfort was taken from her
too, and laid cold in death in a crevice
of the rocks under the quivering fern,
and they had much ado to find earth
to cover even so small a thing.

Now was Findavar comfortless,
quite, and thought her reign of love
was over, and nothing more to do but
die.

She sat on the cliff edge and watch-
ed Angus with his warriors go away
on a foray. The great fleet of creak-
ing curraachs, full of armed men, went
with dipping oars across the azure of
the sea as a bird flock goes through
the blue of the sky.

Shiav, the red-haired woman of
Kerry, came and sat by her and looked
afar after them with longing eyes.
"Oh," said that poor exile, "would
that he would bear me back to my
native shore!" and she told how her
father's house had been ravaged on the
very night of her bridal feast, and she
torn from the arms of her chosen love
by Angus of the Dun. Findavar shud-
dered and thought, "What if he bring
home from this foray some newer and
fairer love? Ah, if he forget me, I can
only die! I could not live and look
upon their joy!"

But Angus came home sooner than
was dreamed, staying no more than a
night by the far Clare shore; and when
he entered the Dun, all spray-wet from
the sea, fiercely kissed Findavar, and
as fondly, she thought, as at his first
love-making.

Greatly she wondered. But Angus
had heard news which made her again
precious in his eyes. Lately he had
doubted that she was a princess at all,
for surely Lorcan of the Red Spears
would have pursued a royal daughter.
Now he learned the reason of that de-
lay.

In that very day on which Findavar
was stolen there had come against
Lorcan's clan and into his territory a
dread foe from eastward of the Shan-
non. All the summer and autumn-
tide had been spent in war. In winter
he took time to recover from that
strife and to muster new force; be-
sides, the tempest of that season pro-
tected the island chief; but now was
spring come again, and with it came
the day of Lorcan's vengeance.

Angus heard word in Clare of how the
dread king was mustering his allies
and preparing his curraach fleet; so
swiftly he came back to Dun-Angus to
defend his bride, and now that she was
cause of war, dearer was she than
ever, his one love and his queen,
whom he would hold against all
others.

IV

I need not tell you of the battles that
were fought ere Lorcan made good his
landing in the island. The first strife
was on the sea, the warriors of either
host in curraachs hurling spears at each
other, to rend the coward that was
stretched on the frames of the light
vessels. Many a curraach, rent thus,
sucked water and sank down, leaving
its rowers and fighting-men to swim
for life, whilst their enemies speared
them like seals; the clear green of the
ocean was stained with gurgling blood.
The long leathern weed that stretches
waving arms from the sea-floor en-
wrapped many a sinking corpse.

The next struggle was on the shlo-
perry sea-rocks when the invaders had