

FOR THE WHITE CHRIST

blue and soft, gazed at the Northman from beneath their long lashes with an alluring glance.

"Surely the price is not too heavy," she murmured.

"Men still hold me not uncomely —"

"Lord Christ — and to think! Ah, my world-hero, father of my betrothed! Far better the outlaw's lot! And in my anger I would have left you — beguiled by the plotters!"

"Olvir — Olvir! my hero, — my gersfalcon! Do not shrink from me — do not go — stay with me, Olvir! All the night I sat watching your ships sail away into the cold North. I cannot bear it! Men say the Norse maidens are fair — My heart! another will lie in your arms. Stay — stay with me, bright hero! See; I beg — I, the queen, on my knees to you. My God — he goes! Turn again, Olvir, only turn. You shall have that also, — I pledge it on your knife, — the girl also, — everything! only turn!"

But Olvir neither paused nor turned about to the frantic woman. His eyes, clear and luminous with inward light, were upraised as though he looked into the blue sky, and his lips smiled as they murmured the hard sayings of the Carpenter's Son: "'Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely. . . . Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.'"

"He is mad — mad! I have stung him to madness!" cried the kneeling woman; and she struggled up to peer out through the hangings after the Northman. But when she saw him returning directly to the door of the king's chamber, she clutched at her bosom, and glided swiftly out after him. A blow between the helmet-rim and the gold collar of the hauberk —

But already the outlaw was at the other door. The