



# The Finding of Fingall

A TALE OF THE NORTHLAND.

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ILLUSTRATED BY TOM O. MARTEN

"FINGALL! Fingall! Oh, Fingall!"

A gray mist was rising from the river, the sun was drinking it in delightedly, the swift blue water showed underneath it, and the top of White-faced Mountain peaked the mist by a hand-length. The river brushed the banks like rustling silk, and the only other sound, very sharp and clear in the liquid monotone, was the crack of a woodpecker's beak on a hickory tree.

It was a sweet, fresh autumn morning in Lonesome Valley. Before night the deer would bellow reply to the hunters' rifles and the mountain goat call to its unknown gods; but now there was only the wild duck skimming the river, and then rising and fading into the mist, the high hilltop, the sun, and again that strange cry: "Fingall! Oh, Fingall! Fingall!"

Two men, lounging at a fire on a ledge of the hills, raised their eyes to the mountain side beyond and above them and one said presently:

"The second time. It's a woman's voice, Pierre."

Pierre nodded, and abstractedly stirred the coals about with a twig.

"Well, it is a pity—the poor Cynthia!" he said at last.

"It is a woman, then. You know her, Pierre—her story?"

Pierre raised his head toward the sound; then, after a moment, said: "I know Fingall."

"And the woman? Tell me."

"And the girl. Fingall was such as Shon McGann, all fire and heart and devil-may-care. She—she was not beautiful except in the eye, but that was like a flame of red and blue. Her hair, too, then, would trip her if it hung loose. That was all, except that she loved him too much. But women—et puis, when a woman gets a man between her and the heaven above and the earth beneath, and there comes the great hunger, what is the good? A man cannot understand, but he can see and he can fear. What is the good? To play with life, that is not much, but to play with the soul is more than a thousand lives. Look at Cynthia."

He paused and Lawless waited patiently. He knew Pierre well.

Presently Pierre went on.

"Fingall was gentil. He would take off his hat to a squaw. It made no difference what others did; he didn't think; it was like breathing to him. How can you tell the way things happen? Cynthia's father kept the tavern at St. Gabriel's Fork over against the great sawmill. Fingall was foreman of a

gang in the lumber yard. Cynthia had a brother—Fenn. Fenn was as bad as they make, but she loved him and Fingall knew it well, while he hated the young skunk. The girl's eyes were like two fireflies when Fingall was about, and what he thought of her he said to me once. "They are the kind God made for the whole year round." He was a gentleman though he had only half a name—Fingall—like that! I think he did not expect to stay; he seemed to be waiting for something, for always when the mail came in he would be there, and afterward you wouldn't see him for a time. So it seemed to me that he made up his mind to think nothing of Cynthia, and to say nothing."

"Fingall! Fingall! Oh, Fingall!"

The strange, sweet, singing voice sounded nearer.

"She is coming this way, Pierre," said Lawless.

"I hope not to see her. What is the good?"

"Well, let us have the rest of the story."

"Her brother Fenn was in Fingall's gang. One day there was trouble. Fenn called Fingall a liar. The gang stopped piling. They expected the usual thing. It did not come. Fingall told him to leave the yard and they would settle some other time. That night there was a wicked thing. We were sitting in the barroom when we heard two shots and then a fall. We ran into the other room. There was Fenn on the floor dying. He lifted himself on his elbow, pointed at Fingall and fell back. The father of the boy stood white and still, a few feet away. There was no pistol showing—none at all. The men closed in on Fingall now. He did not stir; he seemed to be thinking of someone else. He had a puzzled sorrowful look. The men roared round him, but he waved them back for a moment and looked first at the father, then at the son. I could not understand at first. Someone pulled a pistol out of Fingall's pocket and showed it. At that moment Cynthia came in. She gave a cry. I do not want to hear a cry like that often. She fell on her knees beside the boy and caught his head to her breast. Then with a wild

look she asked who did it. They had just taken Fingall out into the barroom. They did not tell her his name, for they knew that she loved him.

"'Father,' she said all at once, 'have you killed the man that killed Fenn?'"

"The old man shook his head. There was a sick colour in his face.

"'Then I will kill him,' she said.

"She laid her brother's head down and stood up. Some one put in her hand the pistol and told her it



"He lifted himself on his elbow and pointed at Fingall."