

Chapter IX

§ 57. One night as their portion was assigned them, three cats from the Cave of Cruachan were let loose to attack them, i.e. three beasts of magic. Conall and Loigaire made for the rafters, having left their food with the beasts. In that wise they slept till the morrow. Cuchulainn fled not from his place from the beast which attacked him. But when it stretched its neck out for eating, Cuchulainn gave a blow with his sword on the beast's head, but [the blade] glided off as 'twere from stone. Then the cat set itself down. In the circumstances Cuchulainn neither ate nor slept. As soon as it was early morning the cats were gone. In such condition were the three heroes found (lit. seen) on the morrow. "Does not that trial suffice for adjudging ye?" asked Ailill. "By no means," quoth Conall and Loigaire, "it is not against beasts we are striving, but against men."

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