

The Adventures of Connla the Fair

Why was Art the Lone One so called? Not hard to say. One day as Connla the Bold, son of Conn the Hundred-Fighter, was with his father on the Hill of Usnech he saw a woman unfamiliar dress. Said Connla, "Where do you come from, woman?"

The woman answered, "I come from the Lands of the where there is neither death nor want nor sin. We keep feast without need for service. Peace reigns among us strife. A great fairy-mound (sid) it is, in which we live; we are called 'folk of the fairy-mound' (aes side)."

"Who is it you are speaking to?" Conn asked his son; for could see the woman save Connla alone.

The woman answered, "He is speaking to a young and, woman of noble descent, who will know neither death nor old Long have I loved Connla, and I summon him to Mag Mell, Boadach the Eternal is king, a king in whose realm there has no weeping and no sorrow since he began his rule.

"Come with me, O bold Connla, with rosy neck, gleaming like a candle. The fair crown that sits above thy ruddy countenance is a token of thy royalty. If thou wilt follow me thy form shall never decrease in youth or beauty, even to the marvellous Day of Judgment."

Then Conn spoke to his druid (Corann was his name), for they had all heard everything the woman had said, although they did not see her:

I appeal to you, Corann,
Skilled in song, skilled in arts!
A power has come over me
Too great for my skill,
Too great for my strength;
A battle has come upon me
Such as I have not met since I took the sovereignty.
By a treacherous attack the unseen shape overpowers me,
To rob me of my fair son,
With heathen words of magic.
He is snatched from my royal side
By women's words of magic.

Whereupon the druid sang a magic incantation against the voice of the woman, so that no one could hear her voice, and Connla saw no more of her at that time. But as the woman departed

before the potent chanting of the druid, she threw Connla an apple.

Connla remained to the end of a month without food or drink, for no nourishment seemed to him worthy to be consumed save only the apple. What he ate of the apple never diminished it, but it remained always unconsumed.

Longing seized upon Connla for the woman he had seen. On the day when the month was completed Connla was seated with his father in Mag Archommin, and he saw the same woman coming toward him. She spoke to him thus:

A woeful seat where Connla sits!
Among short-lived mortals,
Awaiting only dreadful death.
The living, the immortal call to you;
They summon you to the people of Tethra
Who behold you every day
In the assemblies of your native land,
Among your beloved kinsmen.

When Conn heard the voice of the woman, he called to his attendants, "Summon me the druid. I see that her tongue is loosed to-day."

Then said the woman:

O Conn the Hundred-Fighter,
Thou shouldst not cling to druidry!
It will not be long before there will come
To give judgments on our broad strand
A righteous one, with many wonderful companies.
Soon his law will reach you.
He will annihilate the false law of the drus
In the sight of the black magic demon.

Then Conn wondered why Connla made no answer except when the woman came. "Has it touched your heart, what the woman says, O Connla?" asked Conn.

Then said Connla, "It is not easy for me. Although I love my people, longing for the woman has seized me."

The woman said:

Thou strivest-most difficult of wishes to fulfill-
Against the wave of longing which drives thee hence.
That land we may reach in my crystal boat,
The fairy-mound of Boadach.
There is yet another land

That is no worse to reach;
I see it, now the sun sinks.
Although it is far, we may reach it before night.
That is the land which rejoices
The heart of everyone who wanders therein;
No other sex lives there
Save women and maidens.

Then Connla gave a leap into the woman's crystal boat. The people saw him going away. Hardly could their eyes follow Connla and the maiden as they fared forth over the sea. From that day forward they were never seen again. And then said Conn as he gazed upon his other son Art, "To-day is Art left the lone one." Hence he came to be called "Art the Lone One" (Art Oenfer). [\[1\]](#)

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