

## Hou Finn Fand Bran

At the stert o aw things, the war the Kemps, an Finn the Wyce an his freins war no the laest o thir. Ferr frae it, for didna thay no dae gret deeds abuin aw ither men?

Here ae day, eftir a lang sair hunt, Finn an his freins war takkin thair meinits on a green knowe abuin the whyte saunds o the forelaund. An here a ship cam sailin skiffin fest owre the wattir, an it airtin for the herbor ablo the craig whaur Finn the Wyce wes restin himsell. Oot the ship lowpit a yung callant: heich an weill-faured wes he, an unco strang, for wi his ain twa haunds did he no pou his ship seivin length up on the whyte saunds? He did that an syne, lowpin owre the green links, he cam up ti whaur Finn wes an said:

“Ah im the keing o an ootlin kinrik an Ah hae cum the-day seekin help frae Finn the Wyce.”

An he laid his haund on Finn an spak aince mair.

“Lippen ti me, nou, for Ah im pittin glaumerie on ye, sae ye maun forder on, whuther ye be wullin or no. An ye dinna, ye sal traivel the haill wyde wald athout byte or sowp or the verra day ye dee.”

Deep doun in his verra banes, Finn felt the glaumerie, an weill he kent that the Keing spak the trtruith, sae he spak back til him an said, “Tell on! Ah im takkin tent til yeir wurd.”

Sae the Keing o the ootlin kinrik telt Finn his storie, sayin til him:

“Ma guidwyfe an me haes haen twa braw sons, but nae suiner wes ilkane born or he wes stown frae us. Nou we ir expekkin a third bairn an the shennachie tells me nane can sauf it binna Finn the Wyce. Sae ye maun follae me, this meinit!”

An wi thir wurdz, the Keing lowpit awa owre the gress-green knowes again, poued wi his twa haunds his ship back inti the swurlin wattirs o the sie, an sailed fest awa on the wunds o the world.

An Finn, staunin thare watchin him, kent weill frae the glaumerie in his banes that he maun gae eftir the Keing an dae a thing. But whaur an whitnalyke thing---? Dowie in his hert, he bad fareweill til his freins an gaed atowre the green links ti whaur the blue swaws o the sie slaistert onti the whyte saunds. He haed nae ship o his ain, sae he didna ken whit wey he wes gaun ti follae eftir the Keing. Nae mortal man can walk on the wattir, sae Finn daunert alang the saund bi the saut swaws skinklin i the bricht sunlight an bade his tyme.

He haedna ti wait for lang, for in a wee whyle, whit soud he see but seivin men aw walkin ti meet him? An whan Finn met up wi thaim, he spiert at thaim whaur thay cam frae an whit thay did? An the first ane said:

"Ah im a jynar. An Ah hae glaumerie in ma haunds. Wi thrie straiks o this aix, Ah can mak a heich ship frae yon tree trunk owre yonder."

"Atweill, that is a richt ferlie," said Finn. "Ai man, Ah wad fairlie lyke ti see that!"

An at aince, the jynar gied thrie dirds wi his aix, this wey an that, on the tree trunk, an thare stuid afore thaim a braw ship. An fair it wes ti see, wi whyte sails set, an reddie for a voyage.

Syne Finn spak til the saicont man o the seivin, an spiert at him whit he coud dae? An the saicont man said:

"Ah im a trekkar an the best in the warld. For Ah can trek the wyld deuks owre aw the wattirs o the warld, in nae mair nor nyne days."

"That's guid aneuch, shuirlie," said Finn. "Wul ye cum alang wi me whaurever Ah maun gae?"

"Ah'll dae that, an gledlie," said the Trekkar.

Finn turnt hissell ti the third o the seivin men, sayin, "Whit can ye dae, ma brither?"

An the third o the seivin men said, "Ah im a grupper. Whitever Ah grup a haud o, that thing Ah winna lat gang or ma arm is torn frae ma shouthers, or till the thing Ah haud cums ti me."

"Ah daursay Ah wul can mak uiss o you," said Finn. "Wul ye serr me?"

"That wul Ah, an gledlie," said the Grupper

Syne Finn luikit at the fowert man o the seivin, sayin:

"An you, frein. Whit is yeir skeil?"

"Ah im a sklimmer. Ah coud sklim a silken raip ti the sterns o the nicht gin a bodie wes ti fessen it thare."

"That was be a gret thing, Sklimmar," said Finn. It is in ma mynd that Ah'l hae mukkil need o the lykes o yeirself in whit Ah maun dae, tho Ah kenna yit whit that thing wul be."

"Ye can lippen ti me," said the Sklimmer.

"An nou, the fift ane o ye," said Finn. "Whit div ye dae?"

"Ah im a reivar," aunsert he, speikin quaetlyke.

"Ir ye a guid reivar, than?" spiert Finn.

"Ah im that guid," said the Reivar, "that Ah can reive an egg frae anaith a nestin burd, an she wadna ken, tho she war watchin me even on."

"Richt," said Finn, "Ah can uise you anaw. Cum you wi me!"

"Nou we hae but the twa left," said Finn. An whit can ye dae, for Ah'l be wantin aw the help in the weidth o the warld.."

"Syne ye wul shuirlie need me," the saxt man said, "for Ah im a guid listener an the'r no monie o thaе. Ah im that guid Ah can hear whit a man is whusperin at the ferr end o the warld.

An the seivint man spak. "Ye wul need me tae. For Ah im that guid a merksman Ah can shuit doun an egg i the lift, gin it war as heich as an arrae can flie."

Eftir hearin aw this, Finn's hert wes blyth in his breist an he telt the seivin men thay maun cum wi him on a voyage. Whaur, he kentna, but thay buid follae a ship that haed gaen til a ferr-awa kinrik, whaurever that might be. An whit wes he ti dae whan thay wan thare he didna weill ken aither. But thay maun gang, an mebbe thay wad finnd oot whit ti dae neist, whan thay wan til the place thay didna ken.

Sae Finn an the Jynar, the Trekkar an the Gruppar, the Sklimmar, the Reivar, the Listener an the Merksman gaed abuird the new riggit ship an sailed oot atowre the wyde wattirs o the mukkil tuim sie.

Bi the forenicht, thay cam til a steid, an on the forelaund o the steid, wha soud be waitin but the Keing o the outlin kinrik, the verra same that haed spierit help frae Finn. Wes that no an unco thing? Shuirlie the war glaumerie in it. The Keing made Finn an his seivin byordnar freins walcum, an feasted thaim in his castel. Syne he telt thaim a yairn the lykes o whilk thay haed never been telt afore.

"Sax year syne this verra nicht," said the Keing, "a son wes born ti me, an nae suiner haed he lat oot his first greit, whan doun the lum cam a mukkil haund that gruppit the bairn in its luif an taen it back up the lum never ti be seen nae mair. Thrie year syne this nicht, anither son wes born an whit soud befaw again but the verra same thing? Ma queen is in jizzen again an the-nicht, she wul gie me a third bairn. Ye maun sauf it for me, Finn, for nae ither can dae this thing."

Sae Finn an his seivin men hecht ti staun watch i the Queen's chaumer, an watch thay did. . At midnight, the laddie bairn cam inti the warld, an a mukkil haund cam at aince doun the lum an hystit the bairn intil its luif. As quick as ye lyke, Finn cawed on the Gruppar an the Gruppar taen a haud o the haund an poued. The Gruppar poued the ae wey an the mukkil haund poued the tither or the Gruppar wes streikit up on the tap o his taes. But the Gruppar wesnna duin! He gied ae mair yerk an the ettin's airm cam oot at the shouther! Yit afore the Gruppar coud tak the bairn oot the ettin's luif, the ettin taen it in his ither haund an whuskit it awa up the lum.

Gret wes the dule o the Keing, but Finn kent weill in his mynd that aw wesna tint. He aye hae mair men ti help him, an finnd the bairn thay wad, tho thay maun hunt the warld. At first licht, thay gaed back til the ship an Finn said:

“Trekkar, nou ye can shaw yeir skeil. You that can trek the wyld deuks athort the wattirs o the warld in nyne days, can shuirlie follae the trail o yae ettin! Tell me the gait ti steer an Ah wul dae as ye bid me!”

Sae Finn steered nou this airt an nou that, as the Trekkar bad him. Aw that day, thay saw nocht but the sie, an it a gret waste o tuim wattirs. But as the reid sun gaed doun, whit soud thay see but laund afore the ship? An in the first gray derk o the forenicht, thay cam near it an thare afore thaim touered a mukkil craig, raxin heich inti the ruif o the warld! On the verra tap, stuid a keep o gray whunstane, wi its ruif theikit wi eel skins that war that slippie, nae man coud finnd a richt grup or fuithaud on thaim.

But the war nae tyme ti staun an wunner. Thay maun laund on the mukkil craig an see gin thay coud finnd a wey inti the keep. Sae thay did juist that an thay huntit an socht, an luikit here an luikit thare, but nae wey in coud thay finnd. But whan thay war juist aboot reddie ti gie up, whit did thay see but a wee dure, set intil the ruif o eel skins, awa heicher up nor onie man coud ever howp ti speil.

Onie man but the Sklimmer, that is. He luikit an he leuch a smaw quaet lauch. Syne he said ti Finn:

“Watch me nou, Finn the Gret! Watch me weill!”

An wi ae mukkil lowp he wes up at aince on the slippie ruif o eel skins. Quaet as a shaidae the Sklimmer opent the dure an luikit inby. Syne he steikit the dure again as quaet as he haed opent it, an sklum back doun for ti tell Finn whit he hae seen.

“Ahint the dure the'r a chaumer whaur a mukkil ettin is sleepin on a bed o gowd. He liggs on satein wi silken claihs owre him an in the luif o his left haund, the'r a wee bairn lyin sleepin. An Ah can tell ye mair forby! For the'r twa wee laddies divertin thairsells wi a gowden baw til thair herts' content. Ah'm thinkin that nae dout thay wul be the first twa sons o the Keing o the outlin kinrik. An the war another thing Ah saw, tae. The'r a mukkil deer-hound streikit oot afore the ingil, lyin dreamin o huntin an rowed up sleepin asyde hir twa littil whalps.

Finn stuid for a whyle swutherin whit neist he soud dae. Shuirlie it wes the Reivar's haunds that war needit here, but whit wey wad the Reivar wun up ti the heid o the keep ruif?

“Gin that is aw is needfu,” said the Sklimmar, syne the'r nae fasherie, for Ah sal tak him up on ma back in a glisk. Lippen me, for im Ah no the gretest sklimmar in the haill warld? Shuir an Ah im!”

Sae the Sklimmar taen the Reivar on his braid shouthers, an wi anither gret lowp, he haed him at the dure at the heid o the eel-skin ruif. Lyke a shaidae in the mirk o the nicht, the Reivar opent the dure an slippit quaetlie doun inti the chaumer whaur the ettin wes sleepin. He kuist his een aroun an saw that awthing wes as the Sklimmar haed said, sae he set ti wark. First he gethert up the twa wee laddies, wha made never a soun, nor seemed ti wunner at aw at the sicht o the Reivar. He hystit thaim baith an set thaim doun asyde the Slimmar.

Syne, quaet as ye lyke, the Reivar taen the satein cuiverins frae ablo the ettin, an the silken anes that war happit owre him, an taen thaim oot anaw. An never a soun cam frae the sleepin ettin. Neist the Reivar doucelie liftit the bairn frae the ettin's left haund an passt him oot ti the waitin Sklimmar, thegither wi the gowden baw that the wee laddies haed ti daff wi. An aye the ettin dwaumed on, never lyke ti move. Hinnerlie, on feet as quaet as the nicht itsell, the Reivar gethert up the twa whalps whaur they war sleepin asyde the deerhound, an he wes that cannie that hir dreams war never brukken for as mukkil as a saicont,

Syne the Reivar an the Sklimmar rowed aw the bairns in a pack made o the ettin's silken cuivers, an pat the sleepin whalps in asyde thaim, alang wi the gowden baw. An the Reivar hystit the pack on his back an sklum up again on the braid shouthers o the Sklimmar, an aw wan doun again sauf, ti Finn an the lave.

Suin, wi the bairns an aw the things taen frae the sleepin ettin, Finn an his cumpanie war sauf back in the ship an sailin back til the outlin kinrik in mukkil content an pleisir wi whit they haed duin that nicht. But the nicht wesna owre yit. Ferr frae it, for the Listenar haed aye his bit ti dae an he said:

"Im Ah no listenin an can Ah no hear him? The ettin haes juist waukent up an he is fairlie wantin back awthing we hae taen frae him. This verra meinit he is sendin the mukkil deerhound eftir us. An gin she winna gang, he ettis ti cum eftir us himsell."

At his meinit, the ithers coud hear nocht but the sie, laipin at the sydes o the ship as she breinged hir wey throu the deep wattirs. But whan they luikit ahint thaim inti the mirk o the nicht, eftir a whyle they saw the deer-hound soumin eftir thaim, an threshin the saut wattir awroads lyke spindrift as she cam. For a wee, they war feart on the ship, but syne Finn haed a thocht an said:

"An she cums up wi us, throw ane o hir whalps intil the sie. She winna want ti see it droun, an wul cairrie it hame again whaur she can richt luik eftir it."

Sae they did juist that, an aw befell as Finn the Wyce said it wad, an again they sailed on content, or the Listenar spak aince mair.

"Ah im listenin an Ah can hear him! The ettin is cummin fest throu the deep wattir in the mirk o the nicht. He is wydin throu the sie, an he is that heich that the wattir haurlie raxes the hicht o his wame. An he'l no be lang in catchin up wi us, at the unco rate he is cummin.

Awbodie in the ship stertit ti trummil wi fricht, thinkin aboot whit the ettin micht dae whan he made up on thaim. Awbodie, that is, binna Finn the Wyce. For Finn haed in the back o his mou, a byuss kennin tuith, an he haed but ti pit his pinkie on this kennin tuith for him ti ken whatever he needit ti ken. Sae as quick as fyreflaucht, Finn pat his richt pinkie on the tuith an at aince he lairnt o the ae thing that micht aiblins sauf thaim. Atweill he did. This wes that the ettin wad leeve on foraye an the day eftir, binna he wes shotten bi an arrae in the mids o a smaw broun merk in the luif o his haund. The war nae ither wey o mittlin him or killin him.

Sae Finn telt his freins o this smaw merk an thay war aw a sicht mair feart nor afore—aw binna the Merksman. As quick as ye lyke, he fittit an arrae til his bou an syne he waitit wi his sherp een, quaetlyke, or the ettin cam up wi the ship. Nou the ettin hystit his haund for ti tak a haud o the mast o the ship an douk it doun til the verra boddom o the cauld derk wattirs o the sie. But nae suiner hae he hystit his haund, or the Merksman lat flie wi his arrae. An the sherp heid o it jaggit the verra mids o the smaw broun merk on the ettin's luif, an he fell doun wi a rair, intil the sie, an wes seen nae mair in the warld.

“The ir,” said Finn, “nae ither merksman in aw the warld that coud hae hutten that merk. An awbodie leuch an leuch for gledness. Awbodie binna the Reivar, an he said:

Ah im no lauchin lyke the lave, kis Ah dinna lyke ti gie back oniething Ah hae aince stown. The-nicht Ah stale thrie bairns, a pikkil silk an satein clraith, a gowden baw an twa wee whalps, did Ah no? But nou we hae but the tae wee whalp an the tither is hame again wi its deer-hound mither. This is giein me a sair hert, for Ah im a guid reivar.

At that, Finn the Wyce leuch lyke ti ryve.

“No anelie ir ye the best Reivar in aw the warld, ye ir the proudest ane anaw! But whit haes it ti dae wi you that the saicont whalp is hame wi its mither? Ye hae duin yeir wark weill for ae day an nae man can dae mair.”

At that, the Reivar brichtent up a wee, an syne, thay aw made for the outlin kinrik for ti gie back til the Keing, no juist ane, but aw thrie o his bairns. Weill, gret wes the delyte o the Keing an his Queen an aw the fowlk in the Kinrik. The Keing wes that weill pleased, he said Finn coud hae onie reward he micht care ti ask.

But Finn haed nae need or mynd for gowd, or treisurs or graund pailaces, an he spiered juist ti keep the deer-hound's whalp. An he cryit it, ‘Bran’, an fae that day forrit, never wad Bran quut his maister's syde, the perr o thaim gat on that weill thegither.

Eftir aw that, the Keing o the outlin kinrik heild a gret feast aw owre his kintrie, an the splore gaed on for a year an a day, afore Finn an Bran coud git leave ti gang hame til thair ain steid again.

