

THE COLD SLEEP OF BRIGHIDIN

There's a sweet sleep for my love by yon glimmering blue wave,
But alas! it is a cold sleep in a green-happed narrow grave.

O shadowy Finn, move slowly,
Break not her peace so holy,
Stir not her slumber in the grass your restless ripples lave.

My Heart's Desire, my Treasure, our wooing time was brief,
From the misty dawns of April till the fading of the leaf,
From the first clear cuckoo calling
Till the harvest gold was falling,
And my store of joy was garnered at the binding of the sheaf.

There came another lover, more swift than I, more strong,
He bore away my little love in middle of her song;
Silent, ah me! his wooing,
And silent his pursuing,
Silent he stretched his arms to her who did not tarry long.

So in his House of Quiet she keeps her troth for aye
With him, the stronger lover, until the Judgment Day:
And I go lonely, lonely,
Bereft of my one only
Bright star, Rose-blossom, Singing-bird that held the year at May.

The purple mountains guard her, the valley folds her in,
In dreams I see her walking with angels cleansed of sin.
Is heaven too high and saintly
For her to hear, though faintly,
One word of all my grieving on her grave beside Loch Finn?