

Borrow George

Young Swaigder: or, The Force of Runes, and Other Ballads



George Borrow

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of Runes, and Other Ballads**

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YOUNG SWAIGDER or THE FORCE OF RUNES

It was the young Swaigder,
With the little ball he played;
The ball flew into the Damsel's lap,
And pale her cheeks it made.

The ball flew into the Damsel's bower.
He went of it in quest;
Before he out of the bower came,
Much care had filled his breast!

“The ball, the ball thou shouldst not fling,
Shouldst cast it not at me;
There sits a maid in a foreign land,
She sighs and weeps for thee.

“Thou never more shalt peace obtain,
Or close in sleep thine eyes,
Till thou has freed the lovely maid,
In thrall for thee that lies.”

It was the young Swaigder,
Placed his cap upon his head,
And into the high chamber
Unto his knights he sped.

“Here, quaffing mead from out the shell
Sit ye, my Courtmen bold,
Whilst I go to the mountain drear,
Speech with the Dead to hold!

“Here, quaffing mead and ruddy wine,
Sit ye my men so brave,
Whilst I go to the mountain drear,
With my mother speech to have!”

It was the young Swaigder,
And he began to call —
Riven were wall and marble stone,
And the hill began to fall.

“Who is it breaks my sleep,
And works me such annoy?
Deep, deep below the earth so swart
Can I not peace enjoy?”

“O, it is the young Swaigder,
The son thou lovest dear;
He fain would good advice from thee,
His darling mother, hear.

“For I have now a step-mother,
So harsh she is of mood,
And she upon me Runes has cast
For a maid I ne’er have view’d.”

“I will give thee a noble horse,
Shall bear thee at thy need,
And he will run upon the sea
As on the verdant mead.

“And I will to thee a napkin give,
’Tis of Ager wool entire,
Before thee on the board shall stand,
What meat thou shalt desire.

“I will to thee a deer’s horn give,
Mark well its golden gleam;
All the drink thou wishest for,
From the golden horn shall stream.

“And I will give to thee a sword,
Hardened in Dragon’s blood;
It will glitter like a beam
When thou ridest through the wood.

“I will give to thee a barque,
Its white sails silk shall be;
Shall move as well on the verdant earth
As on the foaming sea.”

Their silken sails on the gilded yard
So wide, so wide they spread;
Away they sailed to the distant land,
Where dwelt the lovely maid.

And they have cast their anchors
Upon the yellow sand;
It was the young Swaigder

Who stepped the first to land.

It was the young Swaigder,
His ship to the shore he steers;
And the first man there that met him,
Was a man of many years.

It was then the ancient man
Was the first to make enquire:
“O, what is the name of the young swain
With the sword, and the look of fire?”

“O, he is hight young Swaigder,
So wide his fame doth fly;
And he for a maid is pining sore
On whom he ne'er set eye.”

“There is within this land a maid,
Who pining long hath been
For a swain that hight is Swaigder,
And him she ne'er has seen.”

“If longs she after a young swain
On whom she ne'er set eye,
And he is hight young Swaigder,
He is here in verity.

“Now do thou hear, thou ancient man,
If it as thou sayest be,
Become I King upon this land,
I'll make a Count of thee.”

“Midst of yonder verdant wood
Stands the castle of the maid;
The house is of gray marble stone,
The court with steel belaid.

“The house is of grey marble stone
The court with steel is floored,
The portal is of ruddy gold,
Twelve bears before it guard.

“In middle of the maiden's court
A linden spreads its shade,
If truly thou art Swaigder,
Hie forward unafraid.”

Away then rode young Swaigder,
Cast towards the gate his eye;

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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