

BARDIC LORE

The journals of Amergin Ó Míl

The Fachan

Shortly after leaving my home in Daingean, my legs took me into the highlands of Alba, an unending sea of hills and mountains covered in a thick blanket of ancient forests and ghostly fog. I had been following a beaten path from the lowlands, but somewhere along the way, too subtle to notice, the path had ended and I had wandered into the depths of the forest, where the sun barely showed through the copse, and where behind every tree there lurked millennial eyes surveying my travel. With evening fast approaching, I was glad to find a small glen where I could camp for the night. Little did I know the grave mistake of my assumption. Not yet done unpacking, I heard the growl echo all around me, every hair in my body standing on end. I reached for my sword, but it was too late, as I felt something breathing down my neck. I turned around, intent on facing my enemy and instead I faced my nightmares. In front of me stood a creature fully a head taller than I, its

single, bloodshot eye staring at me with all the hatred in the world. It had a broad and muscled body with a single arm jutting from the center of its chest, and a single, powerful leg, propelling it forth towards me. I tried to raise my blade, to defend myself, but it was to no avail; I stumbled backwards, tripped over my feet, dropped my sword, and ran for my life. I could hear the creature pursuing me, tearing through the darkening thicket, taking powerful jumps that drew it closer and closer; I thought I was done for. Fortune must have wanted me to live, as I able to mutter a spell of haste just at the right moment. I keep the jerkin I wore that day, with the back torn by the creature's claws, as a reminder of how close my wanderings came to an end shortly after they had begun. It was days later I learned what kind of creature it was, and I can honestly say I hope to never run into a fachan ever again.

— From the journal of Amergin Ó Míl

